

Meeting:	Council
Meeting date:	14 July 2017
Title of report:	Leader's report to Council
Report by:	Leader of the council

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To receive a report from the leader on the activities of the executive (cabinet) since the meeting of Council in March 2017, on progress made in the previous year towards achieving the council's priorities and priorities for the coming year.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) **the report be noted.**

Alternative options

- 1 There are no alternative options; it is a requirement of the council's constitution.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 To ensure members are aware of the activities of the executive.

Key considerations

- 3 A list of the decisions taken by cabinet and cabinet members since the last report to Council (covering the period between 11 February and 16 June 2017) is provided at appendix 1. Five key decisions were taken under the general exception provisions (giving more than five but less than 28 days' notice). None were taken under the urgency provisions (less than five days' notice) or were subject to call in.

- 4 To ensure that progress towards achieving our corporate plan priorities is reported transparently we have, for the first time, approved an annual report which is available on the council website and attached at appendix 2 for information. The report also sets out our areas of focus for the coming year and greater detail is provided in the corporate delivery plan agreed by cabinet in April. I would encourage all members to read the document. We have much to be proud of, continuing to deliver essential services to improve outcomes for some of the most vulnerable in the community whilst also delivering ambitious plans to support the growth of our economy and improve quality of life for our residents.
- 5 We are currently preparing a corporate parenting strategy for Herefordshire. The aim of the strategy is to ensure that we all understand our responsibilities as corporate parents and ensure that we are working together to improve outcomes for this group of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable. The draft strategy will be taken to the children's scrutiny committee early in July for their consideration before being considered by cabinet. We will continue to provide support to members to ensure they understand fully what being a corporate parent means for them, and the strategy will identify particular actions for all members to ensure we fulfil this role effectively.
- 6 We are a learning organisation and take every opportunity to understand our performance and where it can be improved. The council's safeguarding services for children and young people recently had a peer review conducted by the Local Government Association. It's pleasing to note that a number of strengths were identified including the commitment of our staff, the positive effect of their work, their knowledge of the children and families and their passion for improving the outcomes for the children. Areas identified for improvement including improving social work administrative practice and being clearer about what early help means in Herefordshire. A further, more in depth peer review is scheduled for September which will provide more valuable learning for us.
- 7 We will be considering how best to offer health visiting and school nursing services over the next period as new contracts need to be in place from April 2018. These considerations will include clarifying our approach to children centre services and early help, to continue to focus on our corporate plan priority to keep children safe and give them a great start in life.
- 8 In support of our corporate plan priority to enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives by the end of the calendar year we will have:
 - implemented a new programme of training for our adult social workers to ensure that social work assessments are focused on what people and communities can do for themselves
 - redesigned the access and referral team to improve customer experience by more effective signposting to alternative resources or rapid referral into the correct part of the care and support system
 - established a new locality based role that will develop creative support plans by incorporating local community resources to supplement any formal care provision. The new service will be a key element of supporting people to regain or retain independence and hence reduce the need for social care
 - launched a new "Home First" offer that will focus on enabling people to remain in their own homes during periods of crisis and on supporting discharge from hospital in time to assist with managing winter pressures
 - worked with the provider Addaction to drive improvements to substance misuse

services

- 9 Following the successful launch of our economic vision on 23 June at Eastnor Castle we have a number of committed ambassadors who will work with us to help secure investment to deliver the vision.
- 10 Our thoughts go out to all those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire. Whilst Herefordshire does not have any high rise buildings, we are nonetheless working closely with colleagues in the fire service, housing providers, and our own property services to identify risks and, as appropriate, ensure action is taken to mitigate them. We have reminded care home providers and schools of the need to ensure that their fire risk assessments are up-to-date and of the need to have regular evacuation drills. All householders are encouraged to ensure they have smoke detectors fitted and that these are regularly tested; advice on home safety measures is available on the Hereford and Worcester Fire Service website at: <https://www.hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice/>.
- 11 The council's policy decision to dispose of the smallholdings estate is being implemented as agreed and following an extensive marketing of the site the deadline for tenders has now passed; interest has been positive.
- 12 We have launched our consultation on future budget priorities, details of which are available on the council's website. The support of all members in encouraging those in their wards to respond to the consultation would be appreciated.
- 13 In line with the framework for assessment agreed by the employment panel, the annual personal performance and development programme for the chief executive has been undertaken and a summary of the agreed objectives is attached at appendix 3 for information

Community impact

- 14 The community impact of any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken. Reporting to Council the activities of the executive demonstrates the council's commitment to the code of corporate governance principle of implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Equality duty

- 15 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the "General Duty" on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct ... prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 16 The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services; these considerations are set out in each of the relevant reports informing the decisions listed at appendix 1.

Financial implications

- 17 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The financial implications of any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken.

Legal implications

- 18 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The legal implications of any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken.

Risk management

- 19 There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report. The risks associated with any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken.

Consultees

- 20 None.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Decisions taken between 11 February and 16 June 2017

Appendix 2: Annual performance report 2016/17

Appendix 3: Chief executive's objectives 2017/18

Background papers

- None identified.