

DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2005-08

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree to the current draft Corporate Plan for 2005-08 being used immediately as the basis for the preparation of the Council's Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans for 2005-06.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

- THAT**
- (a) the draft Corporate Plan for 2005-08 at Annex 1 should be used immediately as the basis for the preparation of the Council's Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans;**
 - (b) the final versions of all these plans should reflect budget decisions and the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2G) between the Council and the UK Government; and**
 - (c) the proposed final version of the Corporate Plan be approved in February, prior to its consideration by Council in March.**

Reasons

The Corporate Plan establishes the Council's priorities and what will be done to achieve them. Its success depends on an Annual Operating Plan for the Council as a whole, and directorate and service plans, carrying the Corporate Plan objectives into detailed effect year by year. The Corporate Plan and the Annual Operating Plan for 2005-06 will need to be approved by the Council in March. In the meantime, there is a need to use the draft Corporate Plan to drive the preparation of the detailed plans for 2005-06.

Considerations

1. Cabinet agreed the new corporate planning process at its meeting on 9 September 2004. It also agreed the broad structure and content of the Corporate Plan for 2005-08. The draft Plan at Annex 1 has been prepared on this basis.
2. The Plan must be affordable. It has therefore been prepared using prudent assumptions about the financial resources that are likely to be available to the

Council over the next three years. These are explained in the draft Plan.

3. The final version of the Plan – and specifically the targets for what the Council aims to achieve by the end of March 2008 - will need to take into account the impact of this year's grant settlement and decisions on Council Tax for 2005-06. Given the annual basis of the settlement, it will be necessary for this Corporate Plan to rely on prudent assumptions about financial resources for 2006-07 and 2007-08. The Plan will, however, be updated annually so that it always looks forward three years.
4. It will be necessary for the Plan to take into account the new Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2G) with the UK Government. Negotiations about the Agreement should be concluded during February 2005. The Plan will need to include the stretch targets, which may require some modification of those included in the draft Plan.
5. The final Plan will also need to reflect the emerging national framework within which the Council will implement the "Every Child Matters" agenda and the Children's Act

Financial Implications

The draft Plan is designed to be deliverable within the financial resources available to the Council. It will be finalised on the basis of up-to-date information.

Alternative Options

Cabinet has decided what kind of Corporate Plan it wants. In agreeing this draft Plan it is determining its priorities and rejecting alternative options. It will, nonetheless, be able to review the options in considering the proposed final Plan in February.

Risk Management

The Plan identifies the risks to its implementation and says how they will be managed.

Consultees

There has been extensive public consultation in recent months about future budget options. Cabinet will take the results into account, together with the advice of the Budget Panel on 2005-06 budgets, in considering the proposed final Plan in February.

It is intended to share the draft Plan with the members of the *Herefordshire Partnership* Board, and to take their views into account before finalising it.

Background Papers

None identified.