

CORPORATE PLAN 2006/2009

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

26TH JANUARY, 2006

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree the Corporate Plan 2006/2009, subject to any changes that may be needed before recommending it to Council for approval at its meeting on 10th March, 2006.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT the Corporate Plan be recommended to Council for approval subject to any changes being made to reflect the new *Herefordshire Plan*; depending on its timing, the *Local Area Agreement* with Government; and budget decisions.

Reasons

The Corporate Plan sets out what the Council intends to achieve in the coming three years and how it proposes to do so. It is therefore the basis for setting priorities and the means to achieve them, including the management of key risks. It also provides the basis for the Annual Operating Plan, directorate and service plans and performance management. Under the Constitution, the Corporate Plan has to be approved by the whole Council as part of the Policy Framework.

Considerations

- 1 At its meeting on 17th November, 2005, Cabinet approved a draft of the Corporate Plan to be used as the basis for the preparation of the Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans for 2005-06.
- 2 The proposed final Plan for Council approval (subject to any changes that are necessary following the approval of the new *Herefordshire Plan*; depending on its timing, the *Local Area Agreement* with the Government; and budget decisions) is at Appendix 1.
- 3 The Corporate Plan has been further developed taking into account:
 - ❑ the resources likely to be available, having regard to recent announcements of the UK Government about future grant in 2006/07 and 2007/08;
 - ❑ the UK Government's expectation that annual Council Tax increases will not

exceed 5%;

- ❑ the need to make significant efficiency savings over the period of the Plan, which will require substantial up-front spend-to-save investment, so as to achieve a balanced budget and ensure the sustainability of modern and effective services that meet customers' needs;
 - ❑ the need for targeted additional investment on high priority services, notably those for vulnerable adults, including older people, and to tackle homelessness amongst young people and families;
 - ❑ the likely content of the new *Herefordshire Plan*, which is scheduled to be approved by the end of March;
 - ❑ the key areas for improvement following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2005, including the Corporate Performance Assessment and the Joint Area Review of services for children and young people;
 - ❑ Cabinet's wish to see fewer, more strategic performance indicators; those selected include all those included in the *Local Public Service Agreement 2G*, which will be subsumed in the *Local Area Agreement (LAA)*; the indicators may need some further amendment in due course to reflect the LAA.
- 4 Although there have been numerous changes to reflect these considerations and improve the presentation, the priorities and the other fundamentals in the Plan remain. A foreword by the Leader has been added.
 - 5 The most important presentational change is the substitution of a narrative Action Plan for the tables that appeared in the earlier draft and in the existing Corporate Plan for 2005/08. This is intended to make the Plan easier to read; it also makes it considerably shorter.
 - 6 In addition to any changes needed to reflect the approved *Herefordshire Plan* and the LAA, some adjustments may need to be made to targets to take account of further work on their robustness, including the implications of budget decisions.
 - 7 The Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for 2006/07 will be finalised in the light of the agreed Corporate Plan. The AOP will be brought to the Cabinet for approval in February. Providing that it is consistent with the Corporate Plan, it does not need to be approved by the whole Council but will be reported to it.

Financial Implications

The Corporate Plan has to be affordable. It has been prepared in the light of prudent assumptions about available resources.

Alternative Options

Alternative options have been considered as part of the process by which the Cabinet has established the priorities included in the Plan.

Risk Management

The risks to the achievement of the Plan are identified as an integral part of it, as are the steps the Council will take to manage those risks.

Consultees

The Plan takes into account the outcomes of the in-depth public consultation on service and budget priorities in the late 2004 and subsequent consultation and public involvement, particularly that associated with the development of the new *Herefordshire Plan*. It also takes full account of partner involvement and will be sent to the Council's principal partners to give them the opportunity to comment before the Plan is finalised for Council approval.

Background Papers

None identified.