

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

**CABINET
23 MARCH 2010**

Subject: REPORT ON THE CORPORATE PLAN 2010-2014

Cabinet member: Councillor Jane Scott, Leader of the Council

Executive summary

This report outlines the Corporate Plan for the council covering the period 2010-14. It includes the nine priorities that were agreed by Cabinet in October 2009. These priorities will provide a focus for the organisation over the next four years. This means resources may be directed or redirected towards their delivery and where appropriate the council will work through partnerships to maximise achievement.

Proposal

That the Cabinet:

1. Review the Corporate Plan and make any amendments prior to Full Council approving the plan on 18 May 2010.
2. Note the next steps to publish and communicate the plan internally and externally and to produce departmental delivery plans

Reason for proposal

1. All high performing organisations have a Corporate Plan or equivalent to direct and focus their work.
2. An ambitious and effective Corporate Plan will focus and galvanise the organisation's resources to deliver its strategic priorities during the next four years.
3. The new Corporate Plan is now ready for final approval by Cabinet and Full Council following consultation and engagement both internally and externally.

**Laurie Bell
Service Director - Policy, Research and Communications**

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Purpose of report

1. This report presents the council's Corporate Plan covering the period 2010-14. The plan has been substantially rewritten since the first draft was considered by Cabinet in October 2009 and it takes account of the comments and feedback received. It also includes the proposed key outcomes for each of the nine priorities.

Background

2. The council is changing and developing rapidly and faces many significant challenges ahead. It will have to manage a wide and diverse range of services with decreasing resources and heightened customer expectations. The core business of the council and the relationship it has with the community and individuals will change radically over the next few years. The council will focus its work on making a positive difference to the lives of people living in Wiltshire, with an emphasis on helping people to live independently with minimum dependency on public services. It is vital that the council plans how it will manage these challenges and produces a Corporate Plan that clearly sets out its vision, goals and priorities for the next four years closely aligned to its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and its Business Plan that sets out the business it is in.
3. The plan clearly states to our customers, communities and stakeholders what the council is prioritising and why, and where it will be allocating its resources to ensure the priorities are delivered and the goals and vision are realised. It provides a guide for councillors and officers to ensure that all decisions and activities support the effective achievement of the vision, goals and priorities. Our priorities are based on clear evidence of community needs and aspirations determined through robust research and local consultation.
4. The Corporate Plan also reflects the targets set out in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Wiltshire, which have been agreed and are being monitored by the Government. The Corporate Plan will be assessed by the Audit Commission as part of Wiltshire Council's Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). An effective Corporate Plan aligned to the work of the council will be vital in achieving successful inspection results.
5. This plan will replace the First Year Plan 2009-10. However, the overarching vision and goals remain the same. The vision is to **create stronger and more resilient communities** with three key goals:

- **High quality, low cost, customer focused services**
- **Local, open, honest decision making and,**
- **Work together to support Wiltshire's communities**

The new Corporate Plan

6. The new Corporate Plan has been coordinated by the Policy, Research and Communications Service with support from Corporate Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Team and a working group of senior officers representing all service departments. This has helped to ensure there is full engagement and commitment in the process and the plan. The involvement of councillors and other partner agencies has occurred at various points.
7. The Corporate Plan is attached at Appendix 1. The Plan sets down the vision, goals, priorities, outcomes and actions for the council. It also includes information about the relationship between the MTFP and the Corporate Plan. This version is primarily directed at councillors and senior officers within the council. A short summary will also be produced for communication to the public and partner audiences.
8. In preparing the plan, the working group took account of many influences but particularly the evidence and intelligence about Wiltshire, the financial pressures we are facing, the Local Agreement for Wiltshire (LAW) and the Local Area Agreement (LAA), the corporate programme of projects, political priorities, and the promises made in the original LGR bid to government. Together they provided the framework for drafting the plan and setting out the challenges and priorities facing the council.

The priorities

9. The nine priorities agreed at Cabinet in October 2009 are:
 - Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families
 - Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential
 - Local, open, honest decision-making
 - Improve our roads and road safety
 - Support the local economy
 - Meet housing needs
 - Reduce our environmental impact
 - Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money
 - Focus on our customers and improve access to our services

The reasons why these priorities have been selected relate to a variety of issues. They include being of particular concern to the community; reflecting key national

socio-economic factors; being required to deliver promises made in the bid to be a unitary council; and finally local political mandates. More information on why the priorities have been selected is included in the Plan.

Outcomes

10. Under each priority a small number of key outcomes have been identified to be achieved over the next four years. More detailed information on actions, timescales, the responsible service director and links to more detailed plans will be included in departmental delivery plans. These are currently in preparation and should be in place by the end of May.

Impact of Corporate Plan

11. The Corporate Plan will have wide ranging implications for the council. It will affect all services and will require a 'can do' culture, inter-departmental working, and more effective partnership working if it is to be delivered successfully. Its impact against the standard report headings include:

- Environmental impact: The importance of the protecting and enhancing the local environment is fully recognised in the plan, with one of the priorities focusing on reducing our environmental impact.
- Equalities impact: The national equalities scheme for local government has been taken into account in the plan.
- Risk assessment: An ineffective Corporate Plan has a number of risks including:
 - A lack of clear focus and direction for the organisation
 - The possibility of conflicting priorities occurring between strategies, political aspirations, and services
 - One council cultural change may be more difficult to achieve
 - Employees not understanding how their role fits into the council's work
 - Potential failure to realise LGR benefits
 - Corporate planning, budget planning, community planning, and performance management cycles not properly linked together
 - A negative CAA area and organisational assessment

Managing risks will be an integral part of departmental delivery plans.

- Financial implications: The corporate plan will have financial implications and strong links have been made to the MTFP to ensure the Plan is realistic and affordable. Funding is being identified in the MTFP specifically to finance the delivery of councillor priorities.
- Legal implications: there is no statutory requirement to produce a corporate plan. However, the Comprehensive Area Assessment and other inspections often use a corporate plan as a key piece of evidence to identify and understand the priorities set by the council.

Conclusions and next steps

12. The new Corporate Plan will be in place for implementation from May 2010. It must be a key driver for action in the council and should set the agenda for focusing its work through partnerships. This will be achieved via business planning and the budget setting process, and underpinned by delivery plans and key supporting strategies and plans. The Corporate Plan will be an influence on the Cabinet's forward plan. Externally, the council is taking the lead through the Wiltshire Assembly, the Public Services Board and the Wiltshire Coordinating Group. Many of the priorities and actions will only be fully achieved via joint work through these partnerships.
13. The Plan is closely linked to a number of other corporate documents and processes:
 - A new business plan for the council
 - The MTFP 2010-2014 and budget proposals for 2010-11.
 - The Local Agreement for Wiltshire (LAW) and Local Area Agreement (LAA)
 - The corporate programme of projects and the work of corporate programme office
 - Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)
 - The development of other supporting strategies
14. Communicating the plan internally and externally will be crucial to ensure councillors, staff, partners and the wider community are aware of the priorities and future direction of the council. It should allow for example, staff to understand how their contribution and role is important and fits into the wider picture. If successful a 'golden thread' should be evident linking the Corporate Plan priorities to delivery plans and individual action plans and appraisals. The development of clear outcomes will enable us to know what success will look like, and we will be able to measure performance against these outcomes.

Versions of the plan will be produced for different audiences, including a short summary for communication to the public and partner audiences.

15. A new business plan for the council will be prepared in the next six months. It will be a visionary strategic plan for all council services that will drive the ambition to be the best local authority in the country. It will focus on further efficiencies, more effective ways of working in partnership, systems improvements and service performance improvements as well as the council's influence and standing within Wiltshire, the south west region and nationally.

The plan will set measures for the council's success based on efficiency, performance, how the council works with others and its customer and stakeholder

satisfaction. The level of local people influencing the direction of services and spend will also be a clear measure that the council has changed the way it does things.

16. Delivery plans will also be produced by departments over the next couple of months to support the achievement of the priorities and outcomes in the Corporate Plan. They will build on the strengths of the current planning arrangements and will minimise additional work.
17. The Corporate Plan will be submitted to Full Council on 18 May 2010 for final approval. The plan will then be reviewed and refreshed each year to formally assess progress against the priorities and to ensure its continued relevance.

Laurie Bell
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2 March 2010

Background papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Corporate Plan Working Group notes and discussion papers

Feedback from CLT, ELT, service directors, and partner agencies

Appendices

Appendix 1 Corporate Plan