
Growing Success: A Corporate Plan

Report by the Chief Officers Management Team

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2004 the Council adopted a new corporate plan – “Growing Success”. The Plan has been reviewed by Members of both the Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet in relation to the continuing development of the Council’s comprehensive performance management framework and prioritisation of objectives; performance in the achievement of a range of outcomes; and target setting for the forthcoming year.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In April 2004 the Council adopted a new corporate plan, which built on considerable work by both the Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet around the Council’s priorities and the implementation of a comprehensive performance management framework.

- 2.2 The plan is a key part of the Council’s policy framework which –

- ◆ supports the Community Strategy and through this, wider regional and national objectives;
- ◆ provides the context within which the comprehensive performance management framework will operate;
- ◆ helps in our prioritisation and sets direction for other processes, such as the medium term plan and service reviews; and
- ◆ integrates improvement planning with the Council’s overall business planning.

- 2.3 The aims and outcomes of the plan play a significant role in the service planning process. They will continue to be used to develop and revise corporate strategies and service plans and to be reflected in the key performance areas of employees.

- 2.4 In previous years the Council has been required also to publish a Best Value Performance Plan, which replicated much of the information in “Growing Success”. As an excellent authority, the Council is in a position to take advantage of “freedoms and flexibilities” concerning the publication of Best Value Performance Plans. Information that is still required to be published, including the outturn data and future targets for the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs), has been incorporated into the corporate plan.

- 2.5 Following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Council adopted an improvement plan, which also has been incorporated into

Growing Success. This high-level improvement plan identifies areas that have been earmarked for development and some of the key activities that will be required to secure improvement. Each topic is supported by a specific action or project plan.

- 2.6 The delivery of the improvement plan is the subject of a study by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources), which has established a Member Sub-Group for this purpose. The Sub-Group have met with the Council's "Relationship Manager" appointed by the Audit Commission who has confirmed that the improvement plan identifies all the development areas earmarked as part of the CPA process, together with other issues to address the likely requirements of future assessments. The Sub-Group are examining the individual action plans that support the overall improvement plan. Progress in the achievement of the improvement plan will be monitored through the Council's comprehensive performance management framework.
- 2.7 During the last year work has continued to develop the Council's corporate performance management framework, particularly in the area of prioritisation. The Council's six key priorities have been assessed and categorised as high, medium and low in accordance with perceived current needs. It is envisaged that the categorisations will change over time in the light of the achievements made against the priorities and in relation to the needs of the area generally. The impact of Council services on these priorities has also been assessed and ranked similarly as high, medium or low. Combined with the classification of the six priorities, the two exercises provide an important aid to service planning, service review and the allocation of resources. A similar exercise has been conducted in relation to the outcomes identified in both the process and learn and grow perspectives of the corporate plan.
- 2.8 The "scorecard" appended to the plan provides the results of performance (where available) and is shown against the targets set for the last year. Many of the performance measures have been collected from an annual survey – a copy of which is available on request from the Head of Policy. As Members will be aware, the introduction of the framework and process with the attendant need to identify targets and set measures for their attainment has been a significant and innovatory piece of work for the Council. In some cases baseline information was incomplete or simply unavailable and revised targets have, therefore, been suggested where performance data or additional information since has become available. In some areas data is still not yet available, either because it is in the course of collection – such as from a staff survey, which is being commissioned – or because work is still underway to develop the systems and criteria against which performance will be measured.
- 2.9 The Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet now will receive quarterly reports on performance against targets in the plan and other indicators. Monitoring will focus on interim or "leading" measures, which are intended to provide assurance that performance at the end

of the year will meet the targets set or highlight the need for remedial action in the meantime.

2.10 The Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet have considered the contents of Growing Success, reviewed performance data and the revised targets for 2005/06, and in so doing have —

- ◆ sought clarification on aspects of performance for the past year;
- ◆ suggested that the priorities referred to in the Plan should be used to support future decision-making, particularly when allocating resources; and
- ◆ commented on the categorisation of services in terms of their perceived impact on the achievement of the Council's priorities.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 **Against the background of the deliberations by the Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the development and monitoring framework proposed in the document, the Council is requested to —**

- ◆ **adopt the updated corporate plan – “Growing Success”.**

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