

To: City Executive Board

Date: 13th April 2011

Item No: 8

Report of: Head of Policy, Culture & Communications

Title of Report: CORPORATE PLAN 2011-15

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To introduce the Corporate Plan 2011-2015

Key decision: Yes

Executive lead member: Cllr Bob Price

Report approved by: Cllr Bob Price, Peter Sloman

Finance: Nigel Kennedy

Legal: Jeremy Thomas

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan 2011-15

Recommendation(s):

To agree draft copy and targets for those sections of the Corporate Plan 2011-2015 that require extensive updating and to RECOMMEND Council to adopt the Corporate Plan update into the Policy Framework.

To delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to make minor editorial changes or corrections post-approval and pre-publication.

Background

1. This report introduces copy and targets for those sections of the Corporate Plan 2011-2015 that require extensive updating.
2. The City Council's corporate plans over the last three years have affirmed the Council's ambition – developed with our partners, including business, community organisations, the health and education sectors and the County Council – to make Oxford a world-class city for everyone. They have also affirmed our plans for transforming the way that the Council performs. We intend to be an efficient and effective council, delivering high quality services and excellent value for money for all our citizens.

3. The Corporate Plan 2011-15 reaffirms these ambitions. However, the policy and financial frameworks which have been put in place by the new central Government have significantly changed the contexts in which we are attempting to realise these ambitions. This plan sets out the changed policy and financial contexts in which we are working and the City Council's response to this changed environment.

This year's plan

4. The City Council has moved to a four-year budgeting and planning cycle and this is reflected in this Corporate Plan.
5. We remain committed to our core ambitions of building a world class city for everyone and continuing to transform our own performance. We have refocused the priorities that underpin our core ambition in the light of the needs of our city in this changed environment and the budget adjustments that we have had to make. The City Council's priorities for the next four years are:
 - A vibrant and sustainable economy
 - Meeting housing need
 - Strong and active communities
 - Cleaner greener Oxford
 - An efficient and effective council.
6. Key themes in the Corporate Plan are:
 - protecting vulnerable communities, e.g. by improving the quality of Council housing and houses in multiple occupation in the private rented sector; and reducing the numbers of people in temporary accommodation.
 - Investing in Oxford's future, e.g. by building new houses; and improving leisure facilities by building a new competition pool at Blackbird Leys.
 - Embedding the principles of sustainability and carbon reduction. These principles are at the heart of everything that the Council does and cut across all the Council's corporate priorities.
 - Strengthening community participation, e.g. by developing area committees into more inclusive neighbourhood forums; and ensuring that the Council is open and transparent.
 - Providing leadership to the city, e.g. by supporting proactive partnership initiatives such as the Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership, Low Carbon Oxford, and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to create the right environment for economic growth in our area; and the transition to a low carbon economy.
7. The plan has significantly reduced the number of measures attached to each of the priorities. Over the next four years we plan to focus on a

smaller number of measures that more accurately reflect our strategic ambitions.

8. This plan stresses that many of the key issues that are important to the well-being of our city and its people are beyond the direct control of the City Council. A vigorous and committed partnership approach is required if these issues are to be successfully addressed.
9. The plan, when finally published, will be designed in the same accessible style as in previous years.

Risk implications

10. Details of projects and actions which contribute to the delivery of corporate priorities will be found in the Council's Service Plans. Risk assessments against these projects and actions will also be found there.

Equalities implications

11. The City Council's overriding concern in formulating its budget and Corporate Plan has been to protect vulnerable communities. The People and Equalities team prepared a full Equalities Impact Assessment of the budget and its implications.

Consultation

12. The draft Corporate Plan 2011-15 has been amended in the light of consultation, which took place from 23rd February to 18th March. This consultation consisted of feedback from:
 - Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 22 February 2011
 - Key stakeholders and community groups.

Responses to the draft plan were generally very positive and helpful. The County Council:

- “applauds the improved performance and delivery of efficiency savings by Oxford City Council over the last three years”
- supports the City Council's priorities
- “hopes to continue our regular dialogue over policy issues of the day and work together toward a joint objective wherever possible”
- is “particularly committed to working with the City Council on the regeneration of the West End” and the development of Frideswide Square and improving rail links to Oxford
- would be interested to work with the City Council around any devolution of business rates and aligning use of this funding to locally agreed priorities for investment to the benefit of local businesses
- supports our ambition to improve the quality, quantity and accessibility of volunteering and looks forward to working with us and other partners to take this forward
- remains concerned about the government's position with regard to the Northern Gateway (Wolvercote) development. “The withdrawal of regional funding for the Access to Oxford project has meant the

cancellation of transport improvement projects that would have provided the majority of the enabling infrastructure for this project . . . We hope to resolve this in partnership with the Government and the City Council . . .”

Colleagues from the PCT thought the plan was “clear and informative and focused” and suggested helpful additions to the copy relating to health.

A local resident “found it very interesting” and was surprised “by all the good things that I didn’t know”.

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee made their usual thorough analysis which has helped to clarify the plan. VAP’s comments are attached at Annex 1.

Distribution

- 13 The Corporate Plan will be distributed in the following ways:
- The full-length document will be published in PDF format on our website. A link to this PDF will be forwarded to all Councillors, key stakeholders, staff and libraries.
 - A summary leaflet version of the plan will be produced and distributed to all Councillors and all members of staff. Copies will be available for further distribution at Council outlets and elsewhere. A PDF of the summary version will also be posted on the website.
 - A highlight summary will be included in *Your Oxford*.

Recommendation:

- 1. To agree draft copy and targets for those sections of the Corporate Plan 2011-2015 that require extensive updating and to RECOMMEND Council to adopt the Corporate Plan update into the Policy Framework.**

- 2. To delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to make minor editorial changes or corrections post-approval and pre-publication**

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Version number: 2

Annex 1.

Comments of the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee met on 23rd February to consider the draft Corporate Plan. VAP's comments, organised into a note covering 14 points, were very useful and have helped to clarify several points in the plan.

The Corporate Plan has significantly reduced the number of measures attached to each of the priorities. Last year's plan had 53 measures; this year's plan has 20. While no measures have been lost, they have been allocated according to a hierarchy. Measures that reflect our corporate strategic ambitions appear in the Corporate Plan. Measures that are more obviously service-related appear in Service Plans.

General Comments

1. The CP lacks a concise view of how it fits within the strategic drive of the Council i.e. the "golden thread" or line of sight through frameworks, strategies, service plans and performance appraisals. The expectation is not of a long laboured description but a concise outline to the reader of its place, status and delivery

Response. The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic drive of the Council over the next four years. It is the Council's key strategic document and it is the source of the "golden thread" that flows through to service plans and individual performance appraisals. Additional copy has been inserted into the Foreword from Group Leaders to reflect this.

This plan explains that the external frameworks and partnership strategies that previous Corporate Plans have fitted within – although still very important to the Council – are being deprived of statutory force. A diagram to reflect these strategic arrangements has been inserted in the *Working with Others* section.

2. The CP year coming to an end outlined a number of delivery targets and promised ("we will") actions by 2013. Whilst accepting that this CP is about the future there should be either under each object or as a separate section:
 - Outcomes against each target for 10/11 with a link to a target for 11/12 if that is appropriate

- A look at forward promises made for March 2013 either linking these to a target in 11/12 or an explanation for the removal or changing of the target if this is the case

Response. Year-end results for 2010-2011 targets are not yet available. These will be reported in the usual way to City Executive Board in July. That report will include information on forward promises made for March as requested in the second bullet point above. The Council's annual report will also be published in July. This will be published in *Your Oxford* and on our website. In future we plan to publish six-monthly progress reports.

A vibrant, sustainable economy

3. In the introductory comments made to this section there is no mention of the significant difficulties in deprived communities around education and skills. These difficulties mean that residents in our deprived wards are economically excluded and as growth becomes more high tech and high brow this exclusion becomes deeper. This is recognised in the Regeneration Framework. In essence the economic drive missing here is for the City Council to use its influence and partnership working to lever support for up skilling and "work readiness" amongst pupils, from those high tech high brow companies wishing to make Oxford or Oxfordshire their base

Response. Agreed, and additional copy has been inserted into that section.

4. The measure reflecting visitor numbers does not reflect our corporate ambition. This is to improve the quality of the "tourism offer" and keep as many of the economic benefits of that within the City. This needs recasting

Response. As discussed in the scrutiny meeting, we agree that this measure does not fully reflect our corporate ambitions. Michael Crofton-Briggs and the tourism staff believe, however, that it is the best measure currently available.

5. The final measure needs to reflect in a more focused way our aim to support people from deprived communities. For example rather than apprenticeships and capital investment project generally we should be looking at positive action to support youngsters from deprived communities into apprenticeships and measuring how we achieve against this.

Response. Agreed. We will use our procurement processes to leverage the positive action set out above. We will do this by using the 'added value' questions in the tender, which can relate to apprenticeships and employment of people from deprived areas of the city. In future tenders we will add a clause to the contract referencing "a KPI agreed with the

supplier prior to contract execution" that will enable us to measure achievement.

Meeting Housing Need

6. Whilst the Core Strategy is mentioned the Housing Strategy and the changes in Housing Finance aren't. Both of these will be a focus for the coming year and beyond with the new Housing Strategy providing our policy response to change and housing finance changes having significant effect within our budgets and delivery potential. Some of these significant strategy responses need to be converted to performance measures

Response. The new Housing Strategy, which will provide our policy response to changes in housing finance is being developed over the coming year and will, in due course, result in performance measures. It is too early for these measures to appear in this Corporate Plan.

7. It is not clear why the number of affordable homes target has been dropped as a corporate drive

The number of affordable homes to be delivered over the next 2 years (2011/12 and 2012/13) is going to be low – around 250 - as a direct result of the impact of the recession in the construction industry in 2008/09. We have delivered against target for 2009/10 and 2010/11 for affordable homes as schemes were in development or plans well advanced and financed when the recession hit. The main focus of the council for delivery of new affordable homes in the short and medium term is going to be in the Barton development so this is being prioritised as an area for corporate focus.

Strong Active Communities

8. It is recognised that we must provide for better and broader engagement and influence by our communities. One of the main focuses for our Communities Development and Regeneration Team is to do exactly this. We need to have a measure that allows us to see how successful we are in this area through the mechanisms we put in place and the outcomes we achieve

Response: The Communities Development and Regeneration Team will be developing these measures, which will appear in their Service Plan.

9. Some of the key targets within the "breaking the cycle of deprivation" programme should be elevated to the corporate plan level to recognise their importance in bringing about sustainable change and allowing a broader public view of progress and achievement.

Response: Key targets within the “breaking the cycle of deprivation” programme are reported to CEB annually. Highlights from this report will be published in the Annual Report.

A cleaner, greener city

10. It is not clear why we do not have a corporate recycling target. This was 50% - in the last CP and our ambitions are beyond this. This target has a high public, corporate and partnership profile so should be here

Response. The Council’s recycling target – contained within the Direct Services service plan - is to maintain 50% in 2011/12 and to increase this to 53% by 2014/15. Tim Sadler feels strongly that, the amount of waste sent to landfill per household per annum is at the top of the waste hierarchy and is the measure that should be included in the Corporate Plan. However, the recycling target does have a high public priority and copy has been added to the relevant section in the Corporate plan stating what the target is. The Annual Report will report on this measure in addition to the new Corporate Plan measure.

11. Environmental targets such as “satisfaction with the cleanliness of our streets” and others are not best judged by a Panel. We would suggest that these are reworked within this objective and given to Area Forums to judge outcomes for their areas

Response: The Council’s consultation officer will be working with the Area Forums to agree a way of achieving this.

12. The Carbon management and reduction theme should be built through all areas of the plan

Response: Agreed, and the Corporate Plan has been amended to reflect this.

Efficient and effective Council

13. The main efficiency drive of the council is through our agreed budget and the effectiveness drive is detailed in service improvement outcomes in the Council 2012 programme and fundamental service reviews. These are mostly all mentioned in the preamble but not converted to measures. These are key service deliverables leading to the delivery of key corporate objectives so the measures here should be rethought to reflect these improved outcomes for service users

Response: The Corporate Plan has been amended to reflect this.

Working with others

14. It is agreed that the national, regional and county picture of partnership working is in flux. The CP is about our drive and priorities for our City

some of which is delivered by others or in partnership with others. Rather than have a section that simply says a group exists but we don't know what will happen, it would be more positive to detail from the City's point of view:

- If we believe the current partnership is fit for purpose
- What we would hope to achieve in the various areas from partnership working
- If there are areas where new or expanded partnership working is needed

In short what we aim to achieve for the City from the various partnerships that exist or maybe don't exist

Response: The Corporate Plan has been amended to reflect this.