

CABINET- 31 MARCH 2004

PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29 MARCH 2004

COUNCIL – 14 APRIL 2004

MODERNISATION & IMPROVEMENT PLAN

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Simon Eden Tel No: 01962 848230 seden@winchester.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In recent months the way the City Council works has been considered from a number of perspectives. This includes the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the Peer Challenge that preceded it, an inspection by the Benefits Fraud Inspectorate, the IDeA Procurement Fitness Check and the annual Audit Letter. In addition to this external challenge, the Chief Executive spent some time after his arrival taking an overview of the Council, its internal practices and procedures, its partnerships and the services it delivers.

The Cabinet has also considered the next steps in our response to the Government's 'modernisation' agenda: the move towards a Leader and Cabinet system of governance supported by strong scrutiny arrangements.

These various analyses lead to a number of policies, programmes and procedures which it is recommended be put in place as a response to the continuing pressures to 'modernise' and 'improve'. These are set out in the *Modernisation & Improvement Plan* annexed to this paper. The Plan, which is divided into eight broad improvement themes, includes actions ranging from development of the Council's performance management framework through improvement of communications and introduction of a revised corporate procurement strategy to a mix of service improvements. In a number of cases, the actions reflect the next stage of a programme of work already underway.

Members will note that the Plan identifies outcomes sought and sets out the actions necessary to deliver these outcomes over a three year period. In a number of instances, the action identified may itself lead to further targets (for example, because the first stage is to produce a strategy, which will have its own action plan). It is proposed the Plan be reviewed and updated annually, as part of the Corporate Strategy, when new targets to continue progress will be identified as appropriate.

The Plan reflects discussions in CMT, with Group Leaders, the Chair of Principal Scrutiny and Cllr Nelmes, who leads for the Cabinet on Performance Management. It also reflects discussion with the Audit Commission and our external auditors. The elements of the Plan are already included in relevant Business Plans for 2004/05, and will be an important part of corporate performance monitoring by both Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny.

The Audit Commission's CPA report noted that the Council is "putting in place many of the key building blocks needed to improve services". The policies, programmes and procedures set out in the Modernisation & Improvement Plan will ensure we maintain this progress. It is

important that we see these not as a separate set of objectives which are simply a response to external challenge, but rather as an integral element of our ongoing drive to improve the way we manage the organisation and strive to provide the highest quality services. It is intended that they be incorporated in the Council's Corporate Strategy when it is next reviewed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That Principal Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council endorse the Modernisation & Improvement Plan as a programme for action over the coming year.

CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

The Corporate Strategy outlines how we seek to work as a Council, and identifies the Council's strategic service priorities for the coming year. The actions in the Modernisation & Improvement Plan will support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy by helping shape the way we work and build a firm base for delivering excellent services.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The actions set out in the Modernisation & Improvement Plan will require either financial resources or staff time, sometimes both. In all cases, these have been taken into account in departmental Business Plans for 2004/05, and no additional resources will be required to deliver the targets set out here.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Comprehensive Performance Assessment: Winchester City Council
<http://ntserver7/intranet/Winchester%20CPA%2022%20Jan%2004.pdf>

APPENDICES:

Modernisation & Improvement Plan

WCC MODERNISATION & IMPROVEMENT PLAN: OVERVIEW

This Plan sets out the key themes which reflect our corporate priorities for action. These themes are drawn from, *inter alia*, the Audit Commission's CPA Report for the Council, as well as IDeA's Peer Challenge and our own assessment of areas for improvement. It also reflects our ongoing response to the Government's agenda for the modernisation of local government.

The Plan identifies eight themes, and under those specific outcomes sought and targets for the period 2004/05 to 2006/07 (as appropriate). The achievement of these targets indicates progress towards the desired outcomes, dates are end points for activity. Whilst it may not always be explicit from the target, delivery will reflect the direction of change identified in the CPA Report.

Two strands run through these themes:

- the Council is establishing a clear relationship between the Community Strategy and its vision for the District, our aims and objectives, our planning and our approach to performance management. Outcomes under the first four themes contribute to this task, and all will be delivered with this interconnectivity in mind.
- the Council has acknowledged a need for a 'culture change' in the way we conduct business. The theme addressing 'How we work' seeks to capture the main aspects of this, but it is equally important that we recognise the change in culture which underpins all other themes. Whilst we do not consider an explicit 'change management' programme should be introduced, the Corporate Management Team, with external support, will continue to address with staff all aspects of our culture.

The outcomes and targets identified in the Plan will all be included in relevant Department Business Plans, and Portfolio Holders and Performance Improvement Committees will monitor progress. However, it is also intended that CMT, Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny Committee will monitor overall progress against the Plan as a whole, alongside their monitoring of progress against the Council's Corporate Strategy. In particular, those activities listed under the theme of 'Service Excellence' will be monitored corporately as being relevant to our own Strategic Priorities and the national priorities set by Government. PICs and others will be involved in actions as appropriate. The Chief Executive will retain overall responsibility for delivery of the Plan.

This has been discussed in CMT, with Department Management Teams, and with Cabinet, Principal Scrutiny and Group Leaders. Comments have also been sought from the Council's Audit Commission Relationship Manager, our External Auditor and other partners. Formal approval will be sought from Principal Scrutiny (29 March), Cabinet (31 March) and Council (20 April).

The Plan will be reviewed and updated annually for the beginning of each financial year. New targets or objectives will, in many cases, follow from those already identified, for example once a strategy is adopted.

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
1. Community Strategy	To have in place a Community Strategy which reflects the views of partners and citizens and provides clear ambition and direction for Winchester District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish draft Community Strategy for consultation (March '04) • LSP to endorse first Community Strategy (July) • Council to consider adopting Community Strategy (September) • LSP to agree Community Strategy Action Plan (July) • Undertake review of LSP membership and supporting partnership network (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete annual review of Community Strategy (July) • LSP to agree Community Strategy Action Plan (July) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete annual review of Community Strategy (July) • LSP to agree Community Strategy Action Plan (July)

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
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2. Aims and Priorities	<p>To have a clear set of City Council medium term (3 year) priorities agreed annually, reflecting Community Strategy and providing a basis for medium term planning</p> <p>NB. – Corporate Strategy to take account of Citizen's Panel Survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Strategy, identifying medium term priorities, set by Council (October) Departmental Business Plans implementing Corporate Strategy to be approved by Cabinet (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Strategy set by Council (October) Departmental Business Plans implementing Corporate Strategy to be approved by Cabinet (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Strategy set by Council (October) Departmental Business Plans implementing Corporate Strategy to be approved by Cabinet (March)

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
3 Service and Financial Planning	To put in place a robust mechanism for identifying key priorities over the medium term (3 years), to ensure the resource implications of these priorities are clear, and to ensure the annual budget process reflects these priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete comprehensive review of spending programmes against priorities (September) • Agree with Cabinet protocol for setting budget (September) • Review business planning process and issue corporate guidance (November) • Prepare medium term service and financial plan (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree protocol for setting budget (September) • Review business planning process and issue corporate guidance (November) • Review medium term service and financial plan (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree protocol for setting budget (September) • Review business planning process and issue corporate guidance (November) • Review medium term service and financial plan (March)

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
4 Performance Management	<p>To have in place a performance management system which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sets clear targets to achieve Corporate Strategy allocates resources in accordance with Corporate Strategy provides effective monitoring of progress against Corporate Strategy by CMT, Cabinet, Principal Scrutiny and PICs <p>NB. - work under the improvement themes of "Aims & Priorities" and "Service & Financial Planning" will deliver key components of the Performance Management regime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance management regime agreed by Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (March '04) Quarterly reporting of performance against Improvement Plan and Corporate Strategy to CMT, Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (ongoing) Quarterly reporting of performance against Business Plan targets to Portfolio Holders and PICs (ongoing) Programme of Reviews and revised policy on conduct of reviews to be agreed with Portfolio Holder (May) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management regime to be reviewed (May) <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of reviews to be agreed with Portfolio Holder (May) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance management regime to be reviewed (May) <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of reviews to be agreed with Portfolio Holder (May)

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5 Council Structures	To give the Council the democratic and support structures it needs to provide effective community leadership and efficient management of business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree job descriptions for Portfolio Holders (June) Agree schedule for delegation of decisions to Portfolio Holders (March '04) Agree with Cabinet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review decision making arrangements and practices (March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review job descriptions (May) Review decision making arrangements and practices (March)

		<p>written protocol for Cabinet, Portfolio Holder and Director working practices (April)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the role, remit and operation of scrutiny bodies (December)• Review role and operation of Corporate Management Team (December)		
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IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
6 How we work	To communicate our aims and objectives, policies and performance to staff, Members and the wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree with Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny a Communications Strategy and Action Plan (May) • Review implementation and impact of Consultation Strategy (December) • Agree with Cabinet detailed proposals for Customer Service Centre (February '04) • Agree with Cabinet Customer Care Strategy and Action Plan (July) • Agree, through Business Plans, key cross-departmental priorities and mechanisms for tackling (April) 	<p>[targets to follow from action plan]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Customer Service Centre (May) <p>[targets to follow from action plan]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review cross-departmental priorities (April) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review implementation and impact of Consultation Strategy (December) • Review cross-departmental priorities (April)
6. How we work (cont'd)	To provide a good standard of care to all our customers, with timely and accurate information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMT to agree remit and role of key Corporate Groups (April) • Review of district-wide partnerships to identify clear role and remit (December) • Agree with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Corporate Working Groups (April) <p>[targets to be agreed]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Corporate Working Groups (April)
	Effective working across departments and with external partners			

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		04/05	05/06	06/07
	To have well trained staff with the resources they need	WDAPC/HAPTC protocol for working in partnership with Parish and Town Councils (October) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure liP re-accreditation (December) Review training programmes against Corporate/ Improvement priorities (January) Council to decide next steps on long term options for accommodation (tbc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review training programmes against Corporate/ Improvement priorities (January) [programme according to policy decisions]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review training programmes against Corporate/ Improvement priorities (January)

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
7. Council-wide Policies	To put in place the Council-wide policies and programmes to underpin improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan agreed by Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (December) Corporate Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan agreed by Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (May) Corporate Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan agreed by Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (December) Corporate policy for the protection 	[targets to follow from action plan] [targets to follow from action plan] [targets to follow from action plan]	

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		04/05	05/06	06/07
7 Council-wide policies (cont'd)		<p>of vulnerable children and young people agreed by Cabinet (September)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Access Policy and Action Plan (in respect of DDA reqs) agreed by Cabinet (September) • Corporate protocol for project management agreed by Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny (May) 	[targets to follow from action plan]	

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
8. Service Excellence	Achieving top quartile performance in local priority services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme for achieving Decent Homes Standard agreed with Cabinet (July) • Review responsive housing maintenance service to improve customer service (targets to be agreed) • Quarterly monitoring of completion of new houses across the District (ongoing) • Programme for achieving Govt. recycling targets agreed by Cabinet (July) • Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan agreed with Cabinet and LSP (November) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor delivery of Decent Homes Standard (ongoing) 	<p>→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→</p> <p>→→→→→→→→→→→→</p>
8. Service Excellence (cont'd)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review approach to monitoring and management of natural environment (September) • Review approach to providing support and services for children and young people (December) • Quarterly monitoring of 	<p>[actions to be determined following review]</p> <p>[actions to be determined following review]</p>	

IMPROVEMENT THEME	OUTCOME	TARGET / OBJECTIVE		
		04/05	05/06	06/07
		improvements in Revenues and Benefits (targets in Finance Business Plan)		