CABINET

13 OCTOBER 2004

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE STRATEGY: 2005 - 2008

REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: SIMON EDEN   Tel No: 01962 848230

RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Council's Corporate Strategy sets out the organisation's key priorities for the medium term – a period of three years. The Strategy is reviewed annually to take account of changing local aspirations and circumstances. It is a key document in translating these aspirations into specific improvements in quality of life that the Council seeks to deliver, and is also a central part of the Council's financial and service planning framework. The CPA Report on the Council, published in January of this year, urged us to continue to develop the Strategy as part of our Corporate Planning framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1   That Cabinet recommend to Council the Corporate Strategy be adopted as embodying their priorities for the medium term, and that it become the basis for preparing the Budget for 2005/06 onwards, the 2005/06 Performance Plan and 2005/06 Departmental Business Plans.

2   That Cabinet authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and relevant Cabinet Members, to make any further amendments as necessary to the draft Strategy prior to its consideration by Council on 3 November, and that a report be submitted direct to Council containing any such additional amendments.
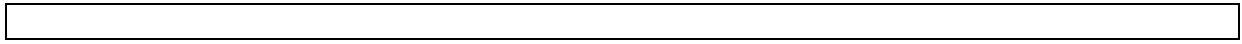
CABINET

13 OCTOBER

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE STRATEGY: 2005 - 2008

REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DETAIL:

1   Introduction

1.1   The Council's approach to Corporate Planning should provide a framework within which Members can identify priorities for improving the services we provide and the way we work, and ensure that our budgets and, ultimately, the targets we set Departments reflect those priorities. The Corporate Strategy is a key part of that process, and is the document through which Council articulates the direction it wants to take over a medium term period (3 years). Winchester is building such an approach to Corporate Planning, in line with the improvement plan agreed following the CPA Inspection, and the Strategy sits alongside our Business Plans and the annual Performance Plan in our framework. It also draws from the District's Community Strategy, discussed elsewhere on this agenda.

1.2   Coherent medium term planning is important if the Council is to continue to make improvements to the way it works and the services it delivers, and an essential part of that is consistency. We should not be seeking to re-define our Corporate Strategy anew every year, and for this reason this draft at Appendix 1 builds on last year's Strategy. The service improvement themes proposed (under the heading *Better Services*) take as their starting point the six themes in last year's Strategy. These have been reviewed and updated taking account of current pressures, citizen concerns and local priorities. Thus, for example, *Community Safety* has become a theme in its own right, when last year it was part of *Homes & Environment*.

1.3   To ensure we maintain focus on outcomes – the real differences local people should experience - each theme identifies specific improvements that the Council commits to making over the period of the plan to improve quality of life in the District. These improvements will guide the detailed annual targets set in Departmental Business Plans and reflected in the Performance Plan. They will be monitored over the year and progress set out in the annual Performance Plan.

1.4   To ensure the Corporate Strategy is robust, it is important we can demonstrate that the service themes and improvements do reflect local aspirations and priorities. The evidence to support these updates is set out in Appendix 2, and draws on the aspirations set out in the Community Strategy, the annual Citizens Panel Survey and a variety of other sources.

1.5   One significant change Members will notice from the current Corporate Strategy is the inclusion of a section entitled *Working Better*. The Corporate Strategy should set out the improvements we are seeking to make across the board. Whilst the Strategy has, in recent years, focused on service improvements, it should also be the vehicle by which we make public our commitment to improving the way we work. The CPA Inspection identified a number of changes we should make to our management and business processes to ensure we are best placed to drive service improvement, and

Council agreed in spring of this year an action plan to deliver these changes – the *Modernisation & Improvement Plan* (M&IP).

1.6   Rather than keep the M&IP as a separate document, it is sensible to ensure the operational priorities it sets for the Council are acknowledged alongside the service improvements we seek to make. The five themes identified under *Working Better*, and the improvements bulleted underneath them, are drawn from the M&IP. As with service improvements, they provide the basis for business planning and action over the period of the Strategy. Members will note that improving customer care, formerly a service priority, is now identified as one of the areas for improvement under the theme of *How we Work*, reflecting its importance as an underpinning principle to good service delivery, rather than an activity in its own right.

1.7   A final element of the development of the Strategy is to bring to the front of the document both a clear statement of the vision for the District and of the Council's values. The former is drawn from last year's Strategy; the latter pull together the various statements we have made as an organisation, whether through previous Corporate Strategies, our Investors in People submission or key strategies such as those dealing with Sustainability or Communication. Our values are an important set of principles which will guide day to day management of the organisation as well as the formulation of policies and programmes.

1.8   In conclusion, Cabinet and, in due course, Council will wish to ensure we have a robust, evidence-based Corporate Strategy which provides a focus for the way in which we seek to improve as an organisation and the improvements we seek to make in people's quality of life. Such a document provides a solid basis for budget debates and business planning, and so allows us to make real progress in effective corporate planning as part of our post-CPA improvement agenda.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

2   RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

2.1   Adopting the Corporate Strategy will influence the allocation of resources (money and staff time) made in the budget and reflected in Business Plans.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Winchester District Community Strategy (CAB 950)

Evidence sources summarised in Appendix 2

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Strategy 2005 – 2008

Appendix 2: Corporate Priorities Evidence Base

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL: CORPORATE STRATEGY 2005-2008

THE COUNCIL'S AIM AND VALUES

The Community Strategy for this District, developed through the Winchester Local Strategic Partnership, sets out a vision for improving quality of life across the District over the period to 2014. As our contribution to delivering this vision, Winchester City Council:

… wants people to be able to live, work and enjoy life in the District with a real sense of belonging. It will provide leadership for the area and will work with partners to ensure that services are provided in ways that best meet the needs of the residents, now and in the future.

The City Council recognises that the way we work and our values as an organisation determines the quality of services we provide. The Council strives to be an organisation which:

- makes our residents top priority
- is guided by strong political leadership
- is financially prudent
- communicates openly and honestly
- constantly improves by learning from others and seeking creative and innovative ways of working
- delivers in partnership
- values diversity and equality of opportunity for all
- acts in a sustainable way and encourages others to do likewise

In delivering the priorities set out in this Strategy, the Council will act according to these values.

BETTER SERVICE

Taking account of the Community Strategy and the vision set by the Council and having considered the current circumstances of the District and the views of citizens, the Council has identified the following as the key service areas in which we will make improvements over the period of the Corporate Strategy:

1.   **Homes**
        To address the longer term aim of providing decent affordable homes for all sectors of our community we will:
        - deliver against housing targets imposed upon the City Council by Government and strategic authorities in response to the needs of the District;
        - work with all Parishes and other public sector bodies to identify suitable exception sites for affordable rural housing;
        - work with the Housing Forum to address the housing needs of vulnerable elderly people in the light of the Supporting People review of Sheltered Housing;
        - by 2010, meet the outcomes dictated by the Housing Options Appraisal so far as the decent homes standard for Council housing is concerned.

2.   **Community Safety**
        To further reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the District we will:
        - be a vigorous and challenging member of the Community Safety Partnership and fulfil our obligations under the new Community Safety Strategy;
        - make use of powers available to us to assist the police in targeting anti-social behaviour;
        - provide a neighbourhood warden scheme in Stanmore and Highcliffe and consider extending this as resources allow;
        - review the contribution that CCTV is making to community safety and consider the future role of CCTV.

3.   **Green Agenda**
        To minimise pollution and waste and to make efficient use of resources, we will:
        - significantly increase recycling rates and reduce landfill;
        - promote more sustainable approaches to transport in order to reduce congestion and pollution and in so doing improve air quality in central Winchester as set out in the Air Quality Action Plan;
        - increase the number of routes into Winchester where Park & Ride is available and press Hampshire County Council to develop a second Park & Ride site urgently;
        - work with Hampshire County Council to improve the condition of roads and pavements.

4.   **Social Inclusion**
        To ensure that everyone can play a full part in the life of their community we will
        - work towards the aims set out in the Council's Social Inclusion Strategy
        - review the contribution that externally provided services are making towards the joint aims agreed in the Community Strategy, Community Safety Strategy and Social Inclusion Strategy.
        - take our services and those of other agencies to remoter settlements.

5.   **Economic Prosperity**
        To achieve a strong and diverse urban and rural economy which builds on local strengths and offers opportunities for all, we will:
        - create opportunities for start up businesses working with local universities and colleges;
        - recognise, support and develop local businesses in both Winchester and the rural areas of the District.
        - revitalise the commercial areas of Winchester, including Winnall Industrial Estate and the Broadway / Friarsgate area.
        - develop a vision for the evening economy.

6.   **Cultural and Leisure Opportunities**
        To increase access to cultural and sporting activities, we will:
        - encourage healthy lifestyles by promoting use of local facilities;
        - promote Winchester and District as a centre for culture, education, conferences and tourism;
        - develop new ways to provide better public access to heritage services, where possible in partnership with the County Council and other local organisations;
        - invest in projects and partnerships which will provide for the leisure and cultural interests of young people and in those which may help to reduce anti-social behaviour.

WORKING BETTER

To deliver services efficiently and effectively, the Council must be well managed. In seeking to improve management, we also seek to work according to our agreed values. The Council has identified the following as its key areas in which we will improve corporate management over the period of the Corporate Strategy:

7. **Aims & Priorities**
    Have in place a robust planning framework to link the vision set out in the Community Strategy and priorities set out in this Corporate Strategy with day-to-day targets and objectives. Over the period of this Strategy we will:
    - work with partners on the Local Strategic Partnership to ensure the Community Strategy is regularly reviewed and progress towards the improvements it identifies monitored;
    - review the Corporate Strategy annually to ensure it identifies priorities which meet the District's needs;
    - develop and maintain a Performance Plan and departmental business plans which provide a basis for identifying improvements to implement this Corporate Strategy and monitor its delivery
    - develop and implement a medium term (3-year) service and resource plan

8. **Performance Management**
    Have in place a robust system for setting targets, monitoring progress against those targets and guiding corrective action where necessary. Over the period of this Strategy we will:
    - report the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Strategy and business plan targets on a quarterly basis
    - drive continuous service improvement by undertaking an annual programme of reviews, as agreed with Cabinet and Principal Scrutiny Committee
    - continue to demonstrate high standards in managing the taxpayers' money - being open to scrutiny, providing services that are efficient and at reasonable cost, avoiding profligacy, maintaining sensible levels of reserves and planning ahead

9. **Council Structures and Procedures**
    Have efficient structures and procedures to provide political leadership to the Council and District, and effective organisational arrangements and management to deliver continuous service improvement. Over the period of this Strategy we will:
    - review annually decision-making structures and procedures to ensure they remain efficient, open and accountable;
    - review the Council's arrangements for scrutiny of the Executive to hold Cabinet to account and contribute constructively to policy and service development;
    - maintain an overview of staff levels and management to ensure they can deliver the Council's priorities effectively

10.

How We Work

Follow work practices which are consistent with our corporate values. Over the period of this Strategy we will:

- improve arrangements for communicating the Council's aims, objectives, policies and performance to Members, staff and the wider community
- make customer service a key priority in all that we do by seeking to improve access to our services, the timeliness and accuracy of advice and information we provide, and to provide services which reflect the needs of citizens
- improve working across departments and with external partners to provide innovative and efficient services
- ensure our staff are well trained and properly resourced to provide excellent services

11.   **Corporate Policy Framework**

The Council has developed a number of key policies which guide its effective management. Over the period of this Strategy we will keep these under review and implement improvements identified in the:

- Communications Strategy;
- Procurement Strategy;
- Risk Management Strategy;
- Sustainability Strategy;
- Corporate Access Programme;
- Corporate policy for the protection of vulnerable children and young people;
- Corporate protocol for project management;
- Policies and programmes for enhancing electronic access to services.

Corporate Strategy 2005 – 2008: Evidence Base

Priorities identified in this Corporate Strategy have regard to a number of different strands of evidence looking at both local and national issues. They seek to balance between the Council's role in responding to its local communities and its role in giving leadership by seizing opportunities and identifying and addressing potential future threats.

The information below summarises the key factors which have led to the selection of these priorities for action. Further information on the sources of information can be found as indicated in the references at the end of this document.

Homes
- Through the Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04, a representative sample of Winchester residents identified 'affordable decent housing' as the third most important factor for making somewhere a good place to live and the factor that most needed improvement in this area.[1]
- In the same survey[1], nearly 40% of residents considered that the situation with affordable decent housing had got worse over the last three years, compared to less than 5% who considered it had got better.
- Land Registry figures[2] show that prices for a semi detached property in Winchester are significantly higher and rising more sharply than the average figure for both Hampshire and the South East Region as a whole.
- The 2002 Housing Needs Survey[3] identified that some 780 new units of affordable housing are required each year to meet current needs.
- The emerging Community Strategy for the Winchester District[4] identifies 'Housing the Community' as one of its 'big issues', with particular emphasis given to housing for vulnerable elderly people.
- The Government has identified the need for more housing in the south east as a key target in its 'Sustainable Communities' initiative[5], with the South East of England Regional Assembly (SEERA) currently preparing a response to this through the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).
- The Government requires all local authorities to ensure that their own housing stock achieves an agreed 'decent' standard by 2010[6].

Community Safety
- Through the Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04, a representative sample of Winchester residents identified 'low levels of crime' as the most important factor for making somewhere a good place to live.[1]
- In the same survey, the top three issues concerns relating to anti-social behaviour were 'vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles', 'teenagers hanging around on the streets' (see section on **Cultural and Leisure Opportunities** below) and 'people being drunk or rowdy in public spaces'[1].
- In the same survey, just over a third of those asked felt that levels of crime had got worse over the last three years, compared to only about 3% who felt it had got better[1]
- The 2004 audit of crime and disorder[7] in this area identified alcohol related anti-social behaviour as a major cause for concern across the District.
- The Council has a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work in partnership with other agencies to prepare and deliver a strategy to tackle crime and disorder and the fear of crime.

- There is a need to review CCTV provision in light of the level of demand for cameras, age of the current equipment, proposals for redevelopment of the Broadway/Friarsgate area and fact that the current monitoring arrangements are near the end of their contract.
- The Citizens' Panel survey carried out in June 2004[8] asked specifically whether CCTV should be extended and if so where. Only 1.9% said there were too many CCTV cameras, another 18.5% thought there were enough and 64.8% said more should be provided (14.7% had no opinion). Both greater coverage of car parks and extending CCTV to other town and village centers were supported by those wanting more cameras.
- The emerging Community Strategy for the Winchester District[4] identifies 'Investing in Youth' as one of its 'big issues', with one aims being to deter young people from anti-social behaviour.

Green Agenda
- Through the Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04, a representative sample of Winchester residents identified 'low levels of traffic congestion' as the fifth most important factor for making somewhere a good place to live and the factor that was second most in need of improvement in this area.[1]
- In the same survey 'road and pavement repairs' and 'public transport' were rated as third and fourth most in need of improvement in this area[1].
- In the same survey[1], nearly 66% of those responding considered that levels of traffic congestion had got worse in the last three years, compared to less than 2% who felt they had got better. Similarly nearly 40% felt that road and pavement repairs had got worse compared to only 7% who felt they had improved and just over 20% felt that public transport had got worse compared to less than 7% who felt it had improved.
- The Citizens' Panel survey carried out in June 2004[8] asked those people who had not chosen to use Park & Ride why they had not done so (respondents could select more than one response). Just under half (46.4%) said it was not convenient for the part of city they visited and 35.2% said it was the wrong side of the City from where they live.
- As background to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2003, the Audit Commission identified the City Council as falling in the worst performing quartile nationally in terms of progress towards meeting the recycling target set for it by central Government[9].
- Research carried out into waste collected in this area has demonstrated that a separate collection of green waste will most help the Council achieve better recycling levels[10].
- Measurement of levels of air pollution has identified poor air quality in Winchester town centre, with this area being designated as an Air Quality Management Area[11]. The main factor leading to poor air quality is traffic fumes and the Council is now required to prepare an 'Air Quality Action Plan' to improve air quality in this area.
- The emerging Community Strategy for the Winchester District[4] identifies 'Reducing and Recycling our Waste' as one of its 'big issues'.

Social Inclusion
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004[12] (IMD 2004) identifies a number of areas of relative deprivation within the District, particularly in Stanmore, Highcliffe, Winnall, parts of St Bartholomew's and part of Wickham
- In addition, the IMD 2004[12] shows that many rural areas within the District have poor access to local services, other than by private car.
- The emerging Community Strategy for the Winchester District[4] identifies 'Improving Access' as one of its 'big issues'.

Economic Prosperity
- Through the Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04[1] nearly 40% of a representative sample of Winchester residents considered that wage levels and the local cost of living had got worse in the last three years, compared to just over 1% who felt it had got better.
- The emerging Community Strategy for the Winchester District[4] identifies 'Investing in Youth' as one of its 'big issues', with part of this aspiration being to retain young people who attend university or college in this area and encourage them to develop new enterprises within the District.

Cultural and Leisure Opportunities
- The Comprehensive Performance Assessment[13] identified the Council's perceived lack of services for and interaction with young people as a weakness that needed to be addressed.
- Through the Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04, a representative sample of Winchester residents identified 'activities for teenagers' as the factor that was fifth most in need of improvement in this area.[1]
- In the same survey[1] 'teenagers hanging around on the streets' was identified as of second most concern out of a list of issues relating to different forms of anti-social behaviour.
- In the same survey[1] residents identified 'Cultural Facilities' and 'Sports & Leisure Facilities' as the 15th and 17th most important factors respectively (out of a list of 20) for making somewhere a good place to live and ranked them 15th and 11th respectively in terms of needing improvement in this area.
- In the same survey[1], 48% of residents were very or fairly satisfied with cultural and recreational services, with a further 48% indicating that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- In the same survey[1] 11% of residents felt that cultural facilities had got better over the last three years, compared to only 3% who felt they had got worse. The rest either felt they had stayed the same or did not express an opinion.
- The picture was similar regarding 'Sports and Leisure Facilities', with over 5% considering they these had got better over the last three years compared to 3% who felt they had got worse. The remainder either felt they had stayed the same or did not express an opinion[1].

References
1.   Winchester City Council General Satisfaction Survey 2003/04
2.   A Profile of Hampshire, produced by Hampshire County Council
3.   Housing Needs Survey 2002
4.   Community Strategy for Winchester (see report CAB 950)
5.   Sustainable Communities
      (http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_communities/documents/sectionhomepage/odpm_communities_page.hcsp)
6.   Government requirement for Decent Homes Standard
7.   2004 Audit of Crime and Disorder
8.   Citizens' Panel Survey June 2004
      (http://www.winchester.gov.uk/Documents/Research/CitPan/CP9%20Questionnaire%20with%20results.pd)
9.   Analysis of national Performance Indicators prepared by the Audit Commission in background to the 2003 Comprehensive Performance Assessment.
10.   Project Integra research
11.   Report declaring central Winchester as an Air Quality Management Area
12.   Extract from the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 relating to the Winchester District
13.   Comprehensive Performance Assessment for Winchester City Council