

REPORT TITLE: COUNCIL STRATEGY REFRESH

17 JANUARY 2018

REPORT OF CABINET (THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL)

Contact Officer: Joseph Holmes Tel No: 01962 848 220 Email
jholmes@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The Council Strategy 2017-20 was adopted by Council on 23 February 2017.

The Strategy document outlines the actions, commitments and measures to deliver our outcomes by March 2020.

This report sets out a refreshed Council Strategy that takes account of external changes but also to sharpen the Council's focus on the delivery methods and intended outcomes. Furthermore, the refresh has provided the opportunity to review target dates.

Given the relatively recent adoption, the refreshed Strategy does not set out to change the strategic outcomes, with the exception that the aims under the outcome to deliver an entrepreneurial approach to efficient public services have been incorporated into one of the other four outcomes. The Strategy will be delivered following an entrepreneurial approach.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Cabinet approves the refreshed Council Strategy covering the period 2018 – 2020 and recommends adoption to full Council.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 This report sets details of the activities the Council will undertake over the next two years to deliver the four priority outcomes included in the refreshed Council Strategy.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 None directly included in this report. The Strategy, along with Outcome Based Budgeting will be the guiding document behind how the financial resources will be allocated in the future. Proposals for budget growth will be brought forward for approval as required.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None in the Strategy, though individual projects and actions will be subject to review as required by Legal Services.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None directly arising from the Report, to deliver the aims and objectives in the Council Strategy resources will need to be assigned as required, following the principles as laid out in the Workforce Strategy.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None in the Strategy, though asset management and investment is a core part of the delivery of the Strategy, as well as the Efficiency Plan.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Executive Leadership Board and Senior Managers have been consulted on the content of the refreshed Strategy. All Cabinet members have contributed to the refreshed strategy.
- 6.2 Given the limits to the proposed changes to the Strategy it is not proposed there will be any formal public consultation, although liaison with key partners sharing delivery or who are affected by any amendments will be undertaken.
- 6.3 This report has also been considered by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4 January 2018 (Report OS180 refers).
- 6.4 At that meeting Members made the following comments:
- The Risk Management section on page 3 of Report OS180 should be reviewed, having regard (in particular) to potential financial risk from the Council being more entrepreneurial in its approach to delivering its strategic outcomes. It was accepted that for each project brought

forward to help enable these, each would be accompanied by detailed risk assessments, where relevant.

- It was acknowledged that the Strategy should make specific reference to protecting the district's important historic heritage, including archaeology.
- The Strategy could refer to the uncertainties and risks associated with Brexit – although it was difficult at this stage to see how this would impact on the Council's economic position.
- Volunteering should be encouraged and extended to support all local services, in addition to sporting activities and events.
- With regard to references to improve recycling levels (Improving the quality of the district's environment outcome), the Council would look to improve existing contamination rates of recyclable waste. Success in this area could significantly influence an improvement to overall recycling rates.
- Reference was also made to apparent health inequalities across the district and whether there should be specific measures and actions to address this. Dementia was also a key issue to be referenced within the performance measures.

6.5 Comments were also made on the need for base-line, trend and comparator data. This will be shown in the quarterly monitoring reports for 2018/9.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 None directly included in the report, however the Council Strategy includes aims to reduce carbon emissions across the District and take steps to improve air quality that contribute to improving the health and happiness of our community and improving the quality of the District's environment outcomes.

7.2 The importance of positive health outcomes was referenced at The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and is integrated into the Health and Wellbeing Outcome.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 None, although individual projects included in the Strategy may be subject to an equality impact assessment if required.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property - none</i>		
<i>Community Support</i>	Provide engagement opportunities especially through key projects	Further opportunity to engage with our residents and community.
<i>Timescales – delivery against</i>	Quarterly monitoring of the measures included in the	

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
	Strategy by Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
<i>Project capacity</i>	Project Team structure supports the aims as set out in the Strategy.	Ensuring that all new schemes include appropriate project support as well as support service costs, as part of the business case.
<i>Financial / VfM – Entrepreneurial Council</i>	The Council's Risk Appetite as set out in the Risk Management Policy 2017 defines the amount of financial risk that the Council is willing to consider. All major projects have their own risk register which identifies among others, financial risks and includes relevant actions to manage these risks.	New revenue streams are proposed, as well as enhancing existing schemes to enhance the Council's financial position.
<i>Legal</i>	Each significant item will be subject to its own legal consideration in appropriate reports.	
<i>Innovation</i>	Innovation through the Strategy alters the risk profile. In one way, there is increased risk through exploring new ways of working and new projects which have not been considered before.	This Strategy proposes some innovative proposals, and innovation is a theme which is proposed to support the delivery of the Strategy. The risk of remaining the same is significant in that funding reductions are such that the Council would be unable to fund some of its core services.
<i>Reputation</i>	The risk of delivering the Strategy is mitigated through the monitoring of the outcome measures contained within the Strategy, and ensuring corrective action is taken. Not delivering on some of these items, especially some of the major projects will have a large financial risk to the Council through impacting on future	This Strategy gives the opportunity for the Council to enhance its reputation through establishing a more targeted ambition for the District, that is based on clear measures. Success against these key measures will enhance the Council's reputation to move key programmes of work forward

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
	revenue streams.	and deliver for residents of the District.
<i>Other - none</i>		

10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

10.1 The Council Strategy was developed one year ago and formally adopted by the Council on 23 February 2017. This report presents the refreshed Council Strategy for adoption.

10.2 Formerly known as the Community Strategy, the current Council Strategy outlines the Council's key ambitions and focus for resources for the coming three years in five areas, namely:

- Delivering an entrepreneurial approach to efficient public services
- Winchester District will be a premier business location
- Delivering quality housing options
- Improve the health and happiness of our community
- Improving the quality of the District's environment

10.3 The Strategy document outlined 68 measures across 34 actions and commitments to be deliver the five outcomes by March 2020. This document is now guiding the Council's work and recent financial and performance monitoring (set out in [OS183](#), 20 November 2017) indicates that good progress is being made on the 68 actions.

10.4 Given the relatively recent adoption, the refresh does not set out fundamentally change the content of the document, however it has provided the opportunity to:

- Review the aims under the strategic outcomes.
- Take account of changes such as issues relating to Brexit, the government's industrial strategy, changes from the housing bill, business rate retention, universal credit roll-out, etc.
- Sharpen our focus on our delivery methods and intended outcomes;
- Refine the measures / metrics we are using to prioritise our resources and guide progress (a point noted at the recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet meetings);
- Revise any target dates to reflect changed circumstances;
- Align with any service changes being progressed as part of the Outcomes Based Budgeting process; and
- Ensure the listing of Lead Officers is up-to-date and in line with the ongoing re-organisation.

10.5 By reviewing the strategic outcomes it is evident that the Council is being entrepreneurial in its approach to achieve all of the outcomes included in the

Strategy and this is now an established way of working rather than an outcome.

- 10.6 For this reason the specific outcome to deliver an entrepreneurial approach to deliver efficient public services has been removed from the refreshed Strategy but is now an approach that continues in support of the delivery of the four outcomes.
- 10.7 There have been a number of external and macro-political changes since the Strategy was approved earlier this year that impact on the Council Strategy. The most fundamental will be tied up with the challenges and opportunities that will arise from the ongoing **Brexit** process. Whilst these are being monitored there are no specific implications at present. The following paragraphs provide brief details of some of the other key changes.
- 10.8 The Government published its **Industrial Strategy** Green Paper on 23 January 2017. The purpose of the strategy is to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country.
- 10.9 The Government is yet to set out an approach to delivering the Industrial Strategy across local economic areas. Whilst areas that have secured devolution deals have a much clearer approach to delivering the strategy, there is a lot of uncertainty for areas that have not secured such deals. Onus currently appears to be on local economic areas to develop their own approaches to delivering a locally led industrial strategy.
- 10.10 With this in mind, the Council needs to be mindful of its approach to driving business growth in the district, and not be reliant on a top-down approach from central government.
- 10.11 **The Local Government Finance Bill** sets out provisions for local authorities to retain 100% of business rates which if implemented would support the Council to achieve self-funding.
- 10.12 The progress of the Bill was delayed due to the 2017 General Election, impacting upon the projected implementation timetable. The Bill has now re-entered the parliamentary process and the Second Reading is due to the House of Commons on 23 February 2018.
- 10.13 Government has recently announced plans to further pilot 100% business rates retention across more areas in 2018/19, yet there is likely to be further delay to full implementation. The Council Strategy assumed that the Council would be financially self-sufficient from 2019, and whilst there is speculation that the 100% retention of business rates can be achieved without the need for primary legislation, this is uncertain.
- 10.14 A substantial housing document, **The Housing White Paper**, was published in February 2017. The White Paper sets out how the Government proposed to boost housing supply and, over the long term, create a more efficient housing

market whose outcomes more closely match the needs and aspirations of all households and which supports wide economic prosperity.

- 10.15 The Government remains committed to addressing Britain's housing market, having recently pledged to extend Help to Buy, increase house building targets in local areas and bring forward a Green Paper on social housing in England.
- 10.16 Taking account of these movements and the sharing the desire to build more homes, the City Council has recently committed to doubling its target of affordable homes from 300 to 600 over the strategy period.
- 10.17 Other changes proposed in the refreshed Council Strategy include the rewording of a number of sport and physical activity performance measures. These changes are in line with the changes made by Sport England to their annual survey which now focussed on active lives in place of active sport. The relevant performance measures have been updated to reflect this.
- 10.18 Since the Council Strategy was approved earlier this year, a number of actions have been completed or will be completed before the 31 March 2018. The actions that have been completed so far are referred to in the quarterly financial and performance monitoring report (see report [OS183](#), 20 November 2017).

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 The Council could choose not to have a Council Strategy or not to refresh the existing document. It is the Council Strategy that sets out the key delivery programme for the Council and enables effective business planning for teams. Not to have a Strategy is not recommended.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

[CAB2899](#) Council Strategy 2017-20

Other Background Documents:-

None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Proposed refreshed Council Strategy

Appendix 2 – Proposed Performance Measures