

CABINET**8 February 2017****Minute Extract****606. COUNCIL STRATEGY 2017-2020**

(Report CAB2899 refers)

Councillor Horrill drew Members' attention to the five key areas of the Strategy, as summarised in Paragraph 8.2 of the Report, and emphasised that the aim was for the Strategy to be a "living document". Over 400 responses had been received to the consultation on the Strategy, with overall support for the Council's aspirations. The table at Paragraph 9.3 of the Report summarised the highest number of comments received and the Council's proposed response. Councillor Horrill highlighted that the Council's focus should be outward rather than inward and involve listening and learning from local residents and businesses, and also other local authorities.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Thompson, Porter and Bell addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Thompson believed that the Strategy remained largely unchanged since the previous version and her concerns remained as stated at that stage. There was no overall prioritisation of projects and no cross-reference of outcomes between Portfolio Plans. She emphasised that consultation responses had emphasised environment issues as a key concern, but this area lacked targets, and the proposed entrepreneurial approach was the least liked. She remained concerned about the risks involved in this approach, in particular with the Strategic Asset Purchase Scheme which could include purchase of assets outside of the District. She also highlighted that the Council-run Guildhall was currently operating at a loss.

Councillor Porter welcomed the proposed new title of Council Strategy. However, she expressed concern about any proposals to adopt "Pay to Stay" for Council tenants. She also highlighted the following areas:

- the importance of mental health, particularly with regard to young people;
- working with other organisations promoting health, for example The Ramblers with health walks;
- tackling air quality issues, particularly poor air quality at children's height on walk/cycle to school routes;
- whilst popular with some, local large events did cause some concerns for nearby residents;
- flood prevention works should be a priority.

Councillor Bell acknowledged the Strategy included the environment as one of its five key areas but believed further steps could be taken and also highlighted the lack of cross-referencing between different Portfolio Plans.

For example, the Housing Portfolio Plan could include the importance of renewables and energy efficiency and Business Partnership Portfolio Plan could refer to “green business”. She also concurred with Councillor Porter’s concerns regarding air quality, particular at children’s walking levels and queried progress on new cycle routes funded from CIL receipts.

Councillor Horrill acknowledged the comment regarding cross-referencing but highlighted that it was a matter of judgement in how the Strategy was presented in order to keep its content to a reasonable length. However, there was a great deal of integration between proposals and a large amount of detail in other plans and strategies, which sat beneath the Council Strategy. Councillor Horrill also highlighted that it had been agreed that all Council reports would now include a section on environmental considerations in acknowledgement of its importance.

Cabinet also noted that the Council would seek to be working in partnership with other organisations in delivering the stated outcomes. Members commented that the Portfolio Holders worked closely with each other, with ongoing discussions and cross-referencing. Cabinet agreed that to include further detail risked making the Strategy too lengthy and consequentially less user-friendly.

Cabinet thanked the Corporate Director (Professional Services) and other officers involved in the preparation of the Strategy.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

**THAT THE REVISED COUNCIL STRATEGY 2017-20 BE
AGREED.**