



Report to Cabinet

Subject Strategic Corporate Plan 2005/08 (incorporating Best Value Performance Plan and Performance Indicator Targets)

Date 2 June 2005

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1. Purpose of the Report

- § To request Cabinet to consider the draft Strategic Corporate Plan 2005/08 and recommend to Council that the Plan be adopted.
- § To report to Cabinet the results against national and local performance indicators for 2004/05.
- § To recommend to Cabinet targets for Performance Indicators for 2007/08 where these are required, for onward recommendation to Council.
- § To recommend to Cabinet changes to selected Performance Indicator targets for 2005/06 and 2006/07, for onward recommendation to Council.

2. Background

The Council made a commitment in its CPA Improvement Plan to produce a medium-term Corporate Plan, setting out its vision for the Borough and how it will progress towards this. It was also agreed that this Plan should set out the Council's refined priorities and how these are to be progressed over the next three years.

The Council also has to produce a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) on an annual basis. However, as a "good" authority, these requirements have been relaxed slightly for Gedling BC (as reported to Cabinet 26 February 2004). This has reduced the amount of information that must be included¹.

¹ The only information that such authorities must include to fulfil their statutory BVPP requirements is:-

- Outturn data for Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for the previous year.
- Targets for BVPIs for the current year and the subsequent two years.
- Confirmation that they are adopting the Code of Practice in their approach to workforce matters and contracting.

The changes also allow the Council to combine the document with its Corporate Plan or similar document, reducing the number of separate plans that the Council has to produce.

The Council therefore took up the option of combining its BVPP with the Strategic Corporate Plan.

The first Strategic Corporate Plan produced under these new arrangements was agreed by Cabinet and Council in June 2004. However, it was also recognised at the time that the Plan represented a “work in progress”, to be developed further as work on the CPA Improvement Plan was delivered.

It was therefore agreed that the Plan should be updated and rolled forward on an annual basis.

3. Function of the Strategic Corporate Plan

The Strategic Corporate Plan is a high-level document that seeks to translate the Council’s ambitions into a set of strategic priorities.

It sets out desired outcomes relating to those priorities, alongside measures to assess progress towards those outcomes and targets for each measure. It also includes selected examples of improvement tasks being carried out to make progress towards those outcomes.

The Strategic Corporate Plan does not aim to be a statement of everything the Council does. More detailed annual Budget/Service Plans, and service-related plans and strategies fulfil that function. It does, however, seek to set a strategic direction around which these more detailed plans and strategies can be developed and implemented.

By linking with the wider Community Strategy, and with Budget/Service Plans and service-related plans and strategies, the Strategic Corporate Plan forms a key part of the “golden thread” that links the Council’s strategic priorities directly to the work of every employee.

4. Draft Strategic Corporate Plan

An updated draft Strategic Corporate Plan (SCP) has now been developed, rolling forward the Plan to cover the period from 2005/2008. Draft copy is attached for members’ consideration at **Appendix A**.

The Plan continues to be built around the Council’s vision for a Borough that is “Healthy, Green, Safe and Clean”, and its’ three priorities to: -

- Improve Community Safety

- Develop facilities, activities and a safe environment for children and young people
- Enhance the physical environment of the Borough

The SCP also stresses the Council's commitment to deliver against other national and regional priorities.

Building on last year's document, the updated SCP includes a wider range of proposed measures and targets to assess progress against the Council's priorities. These have drawn substantially on the Community Profiling exercise, agreed as a CPA Improvement Task in 2004.

The Plan also reports back on progress with the overall CPA Improvement Plan and highlights key improvement tasks for progression in 2005/06 and beyond.

Performance indicator statutorily required for inclusion in a BVPP will be appended to the SCP and is considered in more detail below.

The full SCP must be published by 30 June to comply with Best Value regulations. It will be made available for reference at Council reception points and libraries, and posted on the Council's Internet and Intranet sites. Copies will be sent to all members and a range of local stakeholders.

It is intended to produce a summary version of the SCP, with copies circulated to all employees and more widely in the community.

5. Performance Indicator Outturns and Targets

The full schedule of national and local performance indicators, including results for 2004/05 and proposed targets for 2007/08 is attached at **Appendix B**.

The schedule includes comparisons with upper quartile results for other authorities for the latest year these figures are available (2003/04). As outlined above, this schedule will be appended to the Strategic Corporate Plan and is a formal part of that Plan.

5.1 – 2004/05 Out-turn Results - The year-end results for 2004/05 are included in the schedule attached at Appendix B.

In general terms, performance has largely reached targets set. Explanations of variations from targets are attached for members' information at **Appendix C**, where these variations are significant. Steps are being taken to address these variations where required.

In a limited number of instances, it is felt that future targets need to be amended – details are set out in section 5.2 of this report.

Under the Audit Commission's latest proposed Comprehensive Performance Assessment proposals, it is likely that councils will receive a "direction of travel" assessment, that considers whether performance overall is moving in a positive or negative direction. It is likely that results against performance indicators will be an important means of making this assessment.

Opportunity has therefore been taken to include a "direction of travel" assessment for all performance indicators (national and local) set out in the attached schedule where comparisons can be made between performance on a year-on-year basis. In summary terms, from these results, the Council has: -

- 34 indicators improving (a positive direction of travel)
- 11 indicators deteriorating (a negative direction of travel)
- 7 indicators where performance has stayed the same.

Members are **recommended** to note these results.

5.2 – Targets – The Council is required to set three-year targets for most national Performance Indicators, and it is good practice to do so for local Performance Indicators. This is also in line with the three-year focus of the SCP.

Targets for 2005/06 and 2006/07 were set and agreed by members when considering the relevant Corporate Plans/Performance Plans for the year(s) in question. Given that these targets set the direction of the Council's planned future performance, these targets should generally only be changed in exceptional circumstances.

Agreed targets for those two years, and proposed targets for all relevant indicators for 2007/08 are included in the schedule attached at Appendix B, for members' consideration.

However, there are instances where it is felt that targets previously set for certain indicators for these years need to be reassessed, in the light of changing circumstances.

A schedule of proposed changes to targets is attached at **Appendix D** for members' consideration. The schedule includes reasons for the proposed changes.

To allow members to appreciate the implications of the changes proposed, these revised targets have been included in the schedule at Appendix B.

Members are **recommended** to recommend that Council adopts the changes to targets for 2005/06 and 2006/07 as set out in Appendix D.

6. Resource Implications

The resource implications of the development of the SCP are included within existing budgets.

However, in adopting the SCP, Council will need to continue to ensure that future developments and Budget/Service plans address these priority issues and contribute to the desired outcomes.

In some cases, this may require moving resources from some current areas of work that are less of a priority to fund work on priority issues.

7. Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to recommend to Council that: -

- The draft Strategic Corporate Plan 2005/08 be adopted.
- The year-end performance indicator results for 2004/05 included in Appendix B and explanations of variances attached at Appendix C be noted.
- The performance indicator targets for 2007/08 included in Appendix B, and amendments to performance indicator targets for 2005/06 and 2006/07, as set out in Appendix D, be agreed.