

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Scrutiny Board

**Date**                    **23 November 2017**

**Report of:**            **Director of Finance and Resources**

**Subject:**              **REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE STRATEGY AND CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider the proposed Corporate Strategy 2017-2023 and review the results of the public consultation about the document. The Director of Finance and Resources will refer any proposals or comments of the Board to the Executive meeting on 4 December 2017.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That any proposals or comments of the Board be referred to the Executive at its meeting on 4 December 2017.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Our Corporate Strategy sets out our vision and priorities for the Borough. It is a key document which influences our medium-term budget planning, our day to day service delivery and the large-scale projects that we will undertake in the future.
2. On 10 July 2017, the Executive considered the Council's draft Corporate Strategy 2017-23 and approved for it to be circulated for public consultation. It also approved the six main priorities in the strategy following an earlier consultation:
  - (a) Priority One: Providing Housing Choices
  - (b) Priority Two: Protect and Enhance the Environment
  - (c) Priority Three: Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities
  - (d) Priority Four: Maintain and Extend Prosperity
  - (e) Priority Five: Leisure Opportunities for Health & Fun
  - (f) Priority Six: Dynamic, Prudent & Progressive Council
3. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix A for information.

## **CONSULTATION**

4. A twelve-week public consultation ran between 24 July and 16 October. The consultation was publicised via press release, Facebook, Twitter, the Council's website and Council Connect. Email invites were sent to the E-Panel's 2,240 members and 1,500 letters (100 in each Ward) were sent to randomly selected addresses.
5. A static consultation display was stationed in Fareham Shopping Centre and Portchester Library throughout the consultation period. Face-to-face engagement events also took place in Ferneham Hall, Locksheath Shopping Centre, Stubbington Village Centre and Portchester Village Centre as well as at a Youth Conference held in the Civic Offices.
6. The six main priorities proposed in the updated Corporate Strategy were agreed following an earlier public consultation. The focus of the recent 12-week consultation was on the proposed improvement actions supporting the six main priorities.
7. Respondents were asked to rate from low to high, how much of a priority they considered each of the proposed improvement actions. They were also asked to comment on the individual priorities and make suggestions for additional improvement actions.

## **CONSULTATION RESULTS**

8. Overall, 778 people completed the survey. Most respondents considered each of the Council's proposed improvement actions to be a priority. The following section outlines each of proposed improvements and the percentage (in brackets) of respondents who said it was either a medium, fairly high or high priority. This is then followed by an analysis of comments given and other improvement actions proposed by respondents (see Appendix B for more details):

## **9. Priority One: Providing Housing Choices**

- (a) Enable the delivery of Welborne Garden Village, providing new homes, jobs, schools and leisure facilities (74%).
- (b) Prepare a new Local Plan, which will plan for new homes and employment space across Fareham up to 2036 (83%).
- (c) Implement a new Housing Strategy to include affordable options (86%).

10. The highest number of comments given by respondents were linked to the provision of affordable housing, particularly for younger people. Adequate infrastructure e.g. roads and services such as health and education to meet the needs of a growing Borough residents were also common themes to emerge from comments. The Council does not provide roads or education and health services. However, we are consulting with partners such as Hampshire County Council and Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group as part of the Draft Local Plan consultation, so that they can plan for future service and infrastructure provision.

11. When asked what other improvements could be included in the Corporate Strategy the focus was again on infrastructure, services and affordable housing. It should be noted that affordable housing options are included in the Welborne Plan, Draft Local Plan and will form part of the future Housing Strategy.

## **12. Priority Two: Protect and Enhance the Environment**

- (a) Transform the fields and verges on the boundary of Daedalus into an exciting new area of public open space (75%).
- (b) Create a new Country Park at Titchfield (74%).
- (c) Transform woodland areas at Coldeast to create new public open spaces (65%).
- (d) Deliver major coastal defence schemes at Portchester and Hill Head (90%).
- (e) Increase our recycling rates and reduce the amount of household waste (92%).

13. The main themes to emerge from the comments on Priority Two were related to increasing recycling, keeping green space and protecting wildlife. These themes also came out strongly when asked about further actions the Council could focus on. It can be argued that improvement actions for Protecting and Enhancing the Environment already tackle these themes. Improving air quality was another proposed improvement action some respondents suggested.

## **14. Priority Three: Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities**

- (a) Promote and support the delivery of a Garden Village at Welborne over the next 20 years (69%).
- (b) Extend Holly Hill cemetery by 400 burial plots to increase the number available in the west of the Borough (64%).
- (c) Review our approach to Community Safety to ensure that we make the Borough

as safe as possible (92%).

15. The majority of comments about Priority Three related to a perceived lack of Police presence within the Borough. Some residents also wanted an increase in Police numbers as an improvement action. Whilst it is not the role of the Council to allocate Police resources, the proposed review of Community Safety will require us to continue to work closely with the police on how we can make sure the Borough is as safe as possible. It is important to note that Fareham has the third lowest recorded crime rates in Hampshire. Air quality was again raised as an area of concern amongst some residents.

#### **16. Priority Four: Maintain and Extend Prosperity**

- (a) Start the regeneration of Fareham Town Centre (90%).
- (b) Construct an extension to our successful Innovation Centre at Daedalus (74%).
- (c) Enable the redevelopment of Portchester Village Centre (81%).
- (d) Continue to support the creation of new jobs at Daedalus (88%).
- (e) Support the construction of major new highway schemes (86%).

17. The highest number of comments related to Priority Four were about infrastructure, particularly roads. This was also the most popular theme to emerge when asked about other actions the Council could be doing. Improving transport infrastructure falls within the proposed improvement action to 'support the construction of major new highway schemes.' A number of comments, particularly from younger respondents, focused on the need to improve the provision of A Levels within the Borough.

#### **18. Priority Five: Leisure Opportunities for Health & Fun**

- (a) Transform Westbury Manor Museum into a vibrant "culture stop" in Fareham Town Centre (67%).
- (b) Develop long term plans to bring the Ashcroft Arts Centre and Ferneham Hall together into a new and exciting single arts and entertainment venue (68%).
- (c) Provide new sports pitches and children's play area at Coldeast (77%).
- (d) Provide a new allotment site in the Stubbington area (64%).
- (e) Improve the facilities at Cams Alders Recreation Ground (70%).

19. Many of the comments provided were complimentary about the Council's provision of leisure facilities. However, some wanted more facilities across the Borough. Whilst some respondents commented that they did not want Ferneham Hall and the Ashcroft Centre replaced with a new venue, the majority supported this.

20. When asked about other improvement actions, there were a range of responses. The main theme to emerge was the provision of more facilities for both young and old people. However, few examples of what they could be given.

## **21. Priority Six: Dynamic, Prudent & Progressive Council**

- (a) Continue to work within a balanced and sustainable budget, recognising the reduction in Government funding (94%).
- (b) Continue to implement the Vanguard Methodology, a new way of working that puts the customer at the heart of Council services (90%).
- (c) Develop the Civic Offices to be an attractive working environment for existing and prospective tenants (70%).
- (d) Review all Council owned land and buildings to ensure we make the best use of our assets (95%).
- (e) Be alive to new opportunities for further investment in commercial properties to boost income (88%).
- (f) Continue to explore opportunities for closer working with neighbouring Councils (89%).

22. There were a range of comments related to this priority. Most expressed support for the proposed improvement actions above. Some respondents said that we should only invest in commercial properties within the Borough, others that we should ensure that we only make sound investments.

## **23. Proposed additional Improvement Actions**

24. Following analysis of the supporting comments given by respondents during the consultation it is proposed that two further improvement actions are included in the final Corporate Strategy.

25. The first relates to air quality, which is a topic of interest both nationally and locally. A number of respondents raised this as an issue that should be included in an improvement action within the new Corporate Strategy.

26. On 9 October 2017, the Executive agreed to extend Gosport Road and Portland Street Air Quality Management Areas. A member led steering group and a technical officer group were also established to exploring approaches to improving air quality in areas where the levels of NO<sub>2</sub> exceed national guidelines. Taking these factors into account, it is proposed that the following improvement action is included in Priority Three: Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities:

- (a) Explore the best approaches to improving air quality in areas where the levels of NO<sub>2</sub> exceed national guidelines.

27. The second new improvement action relates to the provision of A Levels within the Borough. This was an area of concern, particularly amongst younger respondents.

28. Fareham College started providing a limited range of A Levels linked to specific Btec courses in September 2017. However, most young residents need to go outside of the Borough to study for A Levels. Although it is not the Council's role to plan for or provide education, it can encourage and support the relevant partners to do so. It is therefore proposed that the following action be added to Priority Four: Maintain and Extend Prosperity:

(a) Encourage the provision of more A Level courses with the Borough.

29. The results of the consultation clearly indicate that all the proposed priorities and improvement actions in the Corporate Strategy 2017-23 (appendix C) are supported by most residents. Including the two further actions identified above demonstrates that resident concerns expressed during the consultation have been listened to and the Council will work towards tackling them.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

30. There is a direct link between the Council's Corporate Strategy and its Medium Term Financial Strategy. Whilst both the priorities and improvement actions can be met from within existing resources, growing financial pressures increase the risk that spending plans exceed desirable levels.

## **CONCLUSION**

31. The Board is asked to review the proposed Corporate Strategy 2017-23 (Appendix C) and consider whether it wishes to submit comments for consideration by the Executive.

### **Background Papers:**

### **Reference Papers:**

#### **APPENDICES:**

**Appendix A:** Report to Executive 10 July 2017

**Appendix B:** Analysis of Consultation Comments

**Appendix C:** Draft Corporate Strategy 2017-23

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Roy Brown. (Ext 4409)