

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision

10 July 2017

Portfolio:	Policy and Resources
Subject:	Draft Corporate Strategy 2017-2023
Report of:	Director of Finance and Resources
Strategy/Policy:	Corporate Strategy
Corporate Objective:	All Corporate Objectives Apply

Purpose:

To present a draft Corporate Strategy covering the period 2017 to 2023.

Executive summary:

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.

The Corporate Strategy normally covers a five-year period and is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that we can monitor progress and make amendments as per changing circumstances. At the end of the five-year period a new Corporate Strategy is prepared, in consultation with the local community.

The current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2011 to 2016, so work has been undertaken to prepare a new draft Corporate Strategy for the next five years.

This report explains the background to the preparation of the new Corporate Strategy, including a review of our achievements over the last five years, a consultation exercise on the relevance of our priorities, and a review of the statistical data relating to the Borough's population and groups within it.

It also includes a draft Corporate Strategy for the next five years which, if approved, would be subject to a period of consultation.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Executive:

- a) approves that the draft Corporate Strategy be circulated for public consultation; and
- b) approves the implementation of the equality objectives in paragraph 32, for the next four years, as required by the Equality Act 2010.

Reason:

To meet the requirements of the Council's performance management framework.

Cost of proposals:

The financial implications of the Council's priorities will form part of the Council's medium term financial strategy.

Appendices:

- Appendix A:** Achievements 2011 - 2016
- Appendix B:** Profile of the Fareham Borough
- Appendix C:** Draft Corporate Strategy

Background papers: None

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Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	10 July 2017
Subject:	Draft Corporate Strategy 2017-2023
Briefing by:	Director of Finance and Resources
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. Our Corporate Strategy sets out our vision and priorities for the Borough.
2. 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.
3. The Corporate Strategy normally covers a five-year period and is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that we can monitor progress and make amendments as per changing circumstances. At the end of the five-year period a new Corporate Strategy is prepared, in consultation with the local community.
4. The current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2011 to 2016, so work has been undertaken to prepare a new draft Corporate Strategy for the next five years.
5. This report explains the background to the preparation of the new Corporate Strategy, including a review of our achievements over the last five years, a consultation exercise on the relevance of our priorities, and a review of the statistical data relating to the Borough's population and groups within it.
6. It also includes a draft Corporate Strategy for the next five years which, if approved, would be subject to a period of consultation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

7. It is important to put the achievements in delivering the current Corporate Strategy (2011 to 2016) into context.
8. Due to the recession, which started back in 2008, the Corporate Strategy was prepared, and has been delivered, against a backdrop of national austerity and significant reductions in Government funding.

9. In the period before the Strategy was launched, the Council's annual net budget was approximately £12 million a year and we employed around 525 people. In 2016 our annual net budget is less than £9 million with an employee headcount of 430. So, during the period of the Strategy, we have successfully identified millions of pounds in annual (ongoing) savings whilst continuing to provide a wide range of high quality services. We have managed to achieve this at the same time as reducing our number of employees by some 20%.
10. Given these circumstances, the achievements listed in Appendix A are particularly noteworthy. As well as providing a wide range of excellent services to our customers on a day to day basis we have delivered several major high profile projects.
11. This includes, for example, the adoption of the Welborne Plan, the emergence of Daedalus as an important new economic hub within the Borough and the much-awaited construction of a new leisure centre and swimming pool at Holly Hill.
12. Many other achievements are listed in Appendix A and we should recognise that these have only been realised through a great deal of hard work and commitment from both elected members and officers who have all been determined to do their very best for the local community.

CONSULTATION ON OUR PRIORITIES

13. In preparation for the new Corporate Strategy we have carried out an online survey with the local community to test whether our existing priorities are still appropriate and relevant. The following percentages of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that these should be the priorities of the Council: -
 - (a) Protecting and enhancing the environment (91%)
 - (b) A safe and healthy place to live and work (94%)
 - (c) Maintaining and extending prosperity (83%)
 - (d) Leisure opportunities for health and fun (85%)
 - (e) Balanced Housing Market (76%)
 - (f) Strong and inclusive communities (79%)
 - (g) Dynamic, prudent and progressive council (78%)
14. The response clearly indicates that our priorities remain relevant and appropriate.
15. Where asked what other priorities the respondents think the Council should focus on, the ten most common themes and comments were: -
 - (a) Improvements to public transport;
 - (b) Support for schools, education and youth provision;
 - (c) Cycle lanes;
 - (d) Healthcare;
 - (e) Policing;
 - (f) Infrastructure (concerns over Welborne impacting on the current infrastructure and

causing traffic issues);

(g) Maintaining strategic gaps and providing affordable housing;

(h) Vandalism, littering and dog fouling; and

(i) Business support, including reducing market stall rates and encouraging new business

16. As we have found in previous surveys, there is a great deal of confusion regarding the role of the Borough Council and the role of the County Council. Items (a), (b) and (c) are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council and are therefore not appropriate to include in our Corporate Strategy. Neither are 'healthcare' or 'policing' which are the responsibility of the NHS and Hampshire Constabulary.
17. The remaining issues raised in (f), (g), (h) and (i) have many commonalities with our existing priorities. The general conclusion from the survey was that the existing priorities continue to remain appropriate, but may require some clarification to better explain what they mean.
18. For example, the reference in (i) to business support is implicit within the current priority "maintaining and extending prosperity".
19. Having taken account of the consultation process, we have reviewed the wording of our corporate priorities to provide greater clarity. As such, it is proposed to make the following amendments: -
 - (a) "A safe and healthy place to live and work" and "strong and inclusive communities" have been combined into a single priority of "strong, safe and inclusive communities".
 - (b) "A balanced housing market" has been revised to "providing housing choices" to reflect our focus on enabling the delivery of a variety of different types of housing, rather than just affordable homes.

OUR LOCAL POPULATION

20. As part of the process of preparing the new Corporate Strategy we have undertaken a review of the statistical data relating to the Borough's population and groups within it. The points below outline the key themes that emerged from the research. A more detailed overview of the research can be found in Appendix B.
 - (a) The Borough's population is increasing and is projected to continue to do so;
 - (b) More people are living alone;
 - (c) Deprivation is low overall, although there are some small pockets with relatively high levels;
 - (d) Residents are relatively well educated;
 - (e) Housing is expensive when compared to local salaries;
 - (f) The Borough has an increasingly ageing population, with this trend set to continue;
 - (g) Residents are generally healthy, although illnesses such as breast cancer and diabetes are slightly high; and

(h) the level of diversity within the local community is relatively low when compared to the South-East average.

21. These factors have been considered when identifying the areas for improvement within the new Corporate Strategy.

INDICES OF DEPRIVATION

22. The Indices of Deprivation statistics break up the Country into neighbourhood areas, known as Lower Super Output Areas, which typically contain around 1,500 people. The Indices measure levels of relative deprivation on a range of indicators covering seven different criteria.

(a) Income

(b) Employment

(c) Education, Skills and Training (includes children, young people and adults)

(d) Health and Disability

(e) Crime

(f) Barriers to Housing and Services

(g) Living Environment (both within homes and the surrounding local environment)

23. Every neighbourhood area, in England, is given a score for each criterion. The different scores are combined to create an overall score for ranking each neighbourhood area. These scores are then summarised to provide a ranking of deprivation at a local authority level.

24. Of 326 local authorities in England, Fareham is ranked 312th (1 being the most deprived and 326 being the least deprived). The only lower district in Hampshire is Hart, which is ranked 326th out of 326. Whilst Fareham is one of the least deprived local authority areas in England, there are some pockets of concern.

25. Having an overall deprivation score does not mean that a neighbourhood area is deprived in each criterion. For example, Fareham Park is one of the 30% least deprived areas for crime in England. However, it and the Stow Estate area are in the 10% most deprived areas for education, skills and training. The combination of criteria means that Fareham Park is ranked in the 30% most deprived areas in England.

26. The techniques and methodology used have not significantly changed between 2010 and 2015. The changes in the ranking are therefore the result of a like for like comparison rather than a comparison of different measures. The increases in relative deprivation reported do not mean that an area has become more deprived in absolute terms – it may be just becoming less deprived at a slower rate than the rest of England.

A NEW CORPORATE STRATEGY

27. Having reviewed our achievements over the last five years, undertaken a consultation exercise on the relevance of our priorities, and carried out a review of the statistical data relating to the Borough's population and groups within it, officers have prepared a new draft Corporate Strategy for consideration by the Executive.
28. The proposed "Corporate Strategy 2017 to 2023" is attached as Appendix C.
29. The document includes a list of proposed improvements to be delivered over the next five years.
30. We have reviewed the wording of our vision statement so that it clearly reflects the need for housing growth. It is proposed that the vision statement is therefore amended as follows, with the additional wording highlighted:-

Fareham is a prosperous, safe and attractive place to live and work. This has occurred through careful management and development, as well as constant attention to our environment and the needs of our communities. Our vision for Fareham's future is based upon the assumption that residents want to preserve all that is good about Fareham, whilst increasing prosperity, **providing new homes for our growing communities** and making it an even more inclusive and attractive place to live and work.

31. If approved, the draft Corporate Strategy document will be subject to a public consultation for a period of twelve weeks. The results of that consultation and the draft Corporate Strategy will then be presented to the Scrutiny Board for consideration.
32. Following consultation with Scrutiny Board, the Executive will then recommend the final draft Corporate Strategy to Council for adoption.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

33. The Equalities Act 2010 requires local authorities to have at least one equality objective. The existing objectives expire this year so new objectives are required. The points below outline the proposed objectives:
 - (a) Monitor the diversity of employees and customers, where appropriate, to understand who is and isn't accessing services or employed by the Council.
 - i. Customer data will only be collected where appropriate and in a proportionate way to the work being undertaken
 - ii. Employee data will always be used in an anonymised way
 - (b) Improve awareness and understanding of hate crime and methods of reporting within the Borough.
 - i. Hate crime is a topic of rising prominence and is recorded by Hampshire Constabulary

34. The Equality Act specifies that equality objectives are renewed every four years, so it is proposed that these objectives be implemented at the start of 2017 and run until 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

35. The financial implications of delivering the Council's priorities will need to be recognised within the medium term financial strategy.

PROPOSAL

36. There is a direct link between the Council's Corporate Strategy and its Medium Term Financial Strategy. As such, once the new Strategy has been approved, the financial strategy will be amended and presented to councillors for approval.

CONCLUSION

37. The Corporate Strategy is a key document within the Council's performance management framework. It influences our medium-term budget planning, our day to day service delivery and the large-scale projects that we will undertake in the future.
38. Once approved, the draft document would be subject to a period of public consultation. The results of that consultation and the draft Corporate Strategy would then be presented to the Council's Scrutiny Board before final consideration by the Executive.
39. The new Corporate Strategy would then be presented to Council for approval.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Christopher Cotmore, Corporate Policy Officer (Ext. 4552).