

Meeting of the Council – 16th April 2007

Council Plan Review 2007/10

Report of the Cabinet

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the proposals of the Cabinet regarding the proposed structure of the Council Plan policy framework for 2007/10, in light of the long term priorities of the Community Strategy and the relationship with the Local Area Agreement and the medium term financial strategy. (See appendix 1)

Background

2. Members will be aware that the Community Strategy was adopted by full Council in December 2005. This sets out the agreed partnership vision and aspirations for the borough over the next 15 years. The key purpose of the Strategy is to influence all other strategies and plans produced by the Council and our partners, to ensure they work to a common set of goals. In line with the Strategy, the proposed Council Plan has been assessed to ensure that the Council's priorities for the next three years meet these challenges.

The key priorities of the Community Strategy are:-

- Creating a prosperous borough
 - Promoting a sense of wellbeing and good health for everyone
 - Celebrating our heritage and the diversity of local culture
 - Safeguarding and improving the environment
 - Promoting individual and community learning
 - Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live
3. The Community Strategy has also been the starting point in developing the Local Area Agreement (LAA). This is a three year agreement between the Government and the Council and local partners that will take effect from April 2007. Through the prescribed LAA framework, there are four national priorities for the local area.

The Four LAA blocks cover the following:-

- Healthier Communities
- Children and Young People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Economic Development and Enterprise

The LAA will focus on where working in partnership, and setting of local targets with associated funding, can add value and improve services in our borough.

4. Members will be aware that the results of the 2006/07 budget questionnaire presented at the Cabinet meeting held on 9th January 2007 identified the public's spending priorities.

Of those who voted the priorities for spending were:-

- Crime Prevention and Public safety (66%)
- Maintenance of Roads & Footpaths (60%)
- Care & Support for Older People (57%)
- Care and support for People with Mental Health Problems, Learning or Physical disabilities (50%)
- Street Cleaning and litter removal (48%)
- Schools (42%)
- Refuse Collection, Disposal and Recycling (40%)

In addition the Local Government User Satisfaction Survey 2006 (LGUSS) identified the public's local priorities for improving the borough.

LGUSS identified priorities are:-

- Low levels of crime
- Clean streets
- Traffic congestion
- Activities for teenagers
- Road and pavement repairs
- Facilities for young children

5. It is against these key drivers and their time frames we have developed a revised Council Plan framework.

Proposed Policy Framework for Council Plan 2010 and Directorate Strategic Plans

6. The current Council Plan approved by the authority runs out in 2007. The new Council Plan framework describes the business direction for the authority over the next three years to meet the aspirations of the community strategy and the priorities outlined in the Local Area Agreement, matched to what is achievable with the planned resources available.

7. The proposed six thematic priorities for the Council Plan are:-

- **Caring Matters**

We want to improve access and support services for vulnerable people to optimise their independence and wellbeing. We will also promote and encourage participation in healthy and active lifestyles for everyone and provide more choice of cultural, leisure and sports facilities.

- **Environment Matters**

We want our environment; parks, open spaces and town centres to be clean and attractive places to be enjoyed by all. People are able to live in homes of a decent standard and encouraged to recycle and compost more of the waste we produce.

- **Learning Matters**

We want people of all ages and backgrounds to achieve their potential and ensure all children and young people are equipped to be successful to make a positive contribution in society.

- **Regeneration Matters**

We want to create a prosperous borough where our town centres are busy thriving places. We will support existing and new businesses to flourish and equip local people with the necessary skills to gain well paid employment.

- **Safety Matters**

We want the Dudley borough to be a safe and peaceful place to live, work and visit. We will continue to work with partners to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the impact of alcohol and drug misuse and ensure that children and young people stay safe.

- **Quality Service Matters**

We want to build on our success and develop a strong reputation for high quality cost-effective public services. We will work in developing greater choice and flexibility in accessing public services with a focus on strong partnership working, exploiting technology and improved productivity.

8. The proposed Policy framework outlined above sets out the direction for future Council Plans in terms of short, medium and longer-term strategies. (See appendix 2)
9. It can be seen there exists a strong association between the overall aspirations of the Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement, the results of public consultation and the Council Plan thematic priorities. Similarly there are clear links with national and local policy issues facing the Authority.
10. Subject to approval from Members on these priorities forming the overall focus for the Council, the Council Action Plan will be developed to set out a portfolio of key objectives for each priority. These will be underpinned by specific detailed actions which are short-term time sensitive intermediate steps and generally output driven that influence the overall long-term outcomes. The performance management framework for the Council during 2007/08 will be based upon the targets and milestones outlined in the Council Action Plan, and reported through to Members as part of the Best Value Performance Plan in June 2007.
11. In addition, to ensure that the Council Plan effectively drives the priorities of the whole Council, each Directorate produces a Strategic Plan which relates to the objectives of the Council Plan through to the work of individual teams. These will be completed and published by April 2007.
12. On consideration of the information contained in the report, the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 21st March, 2007, resolved to recommend the Council to approve the proposals as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 below.

Finance

13. Delivering Council Plan objectives depends upon the Council reviewing its resources for redirection into key priorities. This is achieved by linking Council Plan objectives clearly into the Annual Revenue and Capital Budget processes

and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy. All costs and associated funding requirements are considered as part of those processes.

Law

14. The Council has adopted a Constitution under the provisions of Part II of the Local Government Act 2000. In line with Regulations made under the 2000 Act, the full Council must set the budgetary and policy framework. Article 4 of the Constitution sets out the Policy framework and includes the Council Plan as one of the specified documents which must be approved by full Council.

Equality Impact

15. Consultation on the Community Strategy and the LAA involved a wide range of different communities and organisations, including disabled people, Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and children and young people. Their views were incorporated in the final strategy and the identification of their priorities expressed.
16. Implementation of the Council Plan framework will involve actions to promote equality and in relation to children and young people.

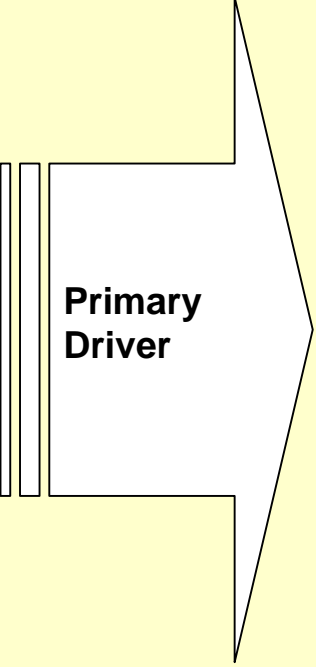

Recommendations

17. That the policy framework of the revised Council plan be approved.
18. That the alignment of the Council Plan and Directorate Strategic Plans to the Community Strategy be noted.

David Caunt

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Leader of the Council

Appendix 1
 Council plan policy framework- Long-term plan

Community Strategy 2005-2020	Local Area Agreement	Timeline	Next Generation of Council Plans (3 year plans)	Directorate Strategic Plans (annual plans)	
Community vision looking ahead over 15 years to 2020 	LAA year 1	April 2007	Council Plan 2007-10	2007-08	3 year focus
	LAA year 2 		Annual update April 2008	2008-09	
	LAA year 3	March 2010	Annual update April 2009	2009-10	
		April 2010	Council Plan 2010-13		3 year focus
			Annual update April 2011		
		March 2013	Annual update April 2011		
		April 2013	Council Plan 2013-16		3 year focus
			Annual update April 2014		
		March 2016	Annual update April 2015		
		April 2016	Council Plan 2016-19		3 year focus
			Annual update April 2017		
		March 2019	Annual update April 2018		

