

**Agenda Item No:** **Report No:**  
**Report Title:** **Council Plan 2007/08**  
**Report to:** **Council** **Date:** **23rd May 2007**  
**Lead Councillor:** **Councillor A De Vecchi**  
**Ward(s) Affected:** **All**  
**Report By:** **Corporate Management Team**  
**Contact Officer(s):** **Sue Harvey, Corporate Performance Officer**

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**Purpose of Report:**

To approve the Council Plan 2007/08 for publication, subject to any necessary typographical and textual changes.

**Officers' Recommendations:**

That the draft Council Plan (shown at Appendix 1 to the report) be approved for publication.

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**Reasons for Recommendations**

- 1 The Council is required, under the Local Government Act 1999 and subsequent statutory regulations and guidance, to produce and publish an Annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). Government sees the BVPP as the principal means by which the Council reports its performance, sets forward performance targets, outlines its proposals for key projects/investments and summarises other corporate arrangements designed to achieve improvement in service delivery and performance.
- 2 The BVPP is seen as providing a summary of the Council's plans, performance and improvement priorities. It is primarily produced for as a tool for councillors, managers, staff, key partners, Government and national bodies such as the Audit Commission. The Council has incorporated statutory BVPP requirements into its annual 'Council Plan'.

**Background Information**

- 3 Because the Council was rated 'good' in the CPA assessment in 2003 and has been on a positive 'Direction of Travel' since that time, it has some discretion as to the content of its Council Plan. The current requirements are that the Plan should include as a minimum:
  - (i) Outturn data for previous financial year's best value performance indicators (BVPIs) – these will be highlighted in colour (Red, Amber, Green) to show whether performance has met target or improved since 2006/07 (Green), not improved but remains within tolerance limits (Amber) or shows a deterioration beyond normal tolerance levels (Red). Councillors can view the colour coded version on the Council's website;

- (ii) Performance targets for BVPIs in the current year (2007/08) and subsequent two years;
- (iii) A brief statement confirming that the Council is adopting the national Code of Practice in their approach to workforce matters and contracting (shown on page 14 of the draft Plan);

## Producing the Plan

- 4 The Council Plan must be published before the end of June each year and can include any additional information that helps improve understanding of its improvements plans and priorities. It has become a key document for the Council. As well as containing relevant statutory performance information, it also provides a full account of the Council's achievements in the previous financial year and outlines its main work programmes for the year ahead. In summary the Council Plan provides information on the following:

**Part One – Introduction:** Containing information about the District, elected councillors, decision-making and management arrangements. This section also provides a high level statement of the Council's ambition and key aims, a brief overview of the Council's main strategies and plans, a summary of progress made against some of the planned improvements for 2006/07 and a forward look at some of the key projects and activities over the next 3 years.

**Part Two – Strategies and Business Management:** Outlining the Council's work in support of a number of key strategies and business management plans such as the Community Strategy, crime and disorder, equality and diversity, sustainability, the Local Development Framework, risk management, customers and consultation and use of resources.

**Part Three – Service Plans and Performance:** Outlining past performance, planned work programmes and future targets across the Council's main service areas.

- 5 The format and framework of the Council Plan remains largely unchanged from last year. The information contained therein is not new but has been drawn together from a number of existing strategies, service improvement plans and planned projects.
- 6 The Corporate Performance Officer has drafted the Council Plan in consultation with Corporate Management Team and senior officers. Councillors are reminded that the Plan at Appendix 1 is still in draft form as in some cases final outturn performance information is still being collated and calculated. Therefore the draft Plan contains some estimated outturn data which will be updated prior to final publication.

## Publishing the Plan

- 7 The Council Plan must be published by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007, although it is planned to publish earlier, subject to all data being available. Following approval by Council and any further necessary textual updates, the Council Plan will be published on the Council's website and in a limited number of hard copies. Copies will be distributed to all councillors, key officers and key partner organisations, placed on public deposit in reception areas and libraries and made available to the public upon request. The Plan can also be made available in other formats and languages upon request.

- 8 Around 200 printed copies of the Plan will be required. As in the last two years printing will be by the Council's in-house print services, keeping costs to a minimum.

### **Monitoring and reporting progress of the Plan**

- 9 Once published, progress of the Council Plan will continue to be monitored in accordance with the Council's performance management arrangements. As in previous years, this involves a quarterly progress report to CMT and other key officers, showing progress in achieving key milestones and improvement targets. In addition, there will be a quarterly report to Cabinet on the Council's key improvement targets and performance against key national Best Value Performance Indicators and local performance indicators.

### **External Audit of the Plan**

- 10 There is a requirement that the Plan (including a sample of Best Value Performance Indicators) is audited by external auditors to ensure the minimum statutory requirements are being met. This is likely to be in the late summer.

### **Risk Appraisal**

- 11 I have completed a risk assessment in accordance with the Council's risk management strategy and the following risks and mitigating factors have been identified. The main risk arises if the Council fails to meet its statutory duty to prepare and publish the Council Plan. This could result in criticism from the Audit Commission and could have an adverse impact on future CPA inspections. Mitigation is achieved by ensuring full involvement in the production of the Plan by key councillors and officers and booking design and printing time well in advance.

### **Financial Appraisal**

- 12 Production and publication of the Council Plan is within estimates. We will continue to make a cost saving from using internal print services and by reducing the print run. Monitoring the Council Plan is also within existing estimates.

### **Environmental Implications**

- 13 I have completed the Environmental Implications questionnaire and there are no significant effects as a result of the recommendations in this report.

### **Background Papers**

- ODPM Circular 05/2006
- All key strategies and departmental service plans for 2007/08

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Council Plan 2007/08