

BODY: CABINET

DATE: 11 December 2013

SUBJECT: Corporate Plan – 2010-15 refresh including analysis of community evidence and proposals for the 2015-20 plan

REPORT OF: Peter Finnis – Head of Corporate Development

Ward(s): All

Purpose: To present a summary picture of ongoing community evidence and a timeline for the final year refresh of the 2010-15 Corporate Plan and set out the intended high level proposals for the production of the next corporate plan.

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Recommendations:

1. That corporate priority theme portfolio holders and lead officers take into account the community evidence and trend analysis, summarised in the appendices, and in particular the key headlines set out in appendix 5, when formulating proposed priority projects and activity for inclusion in the 2014/15 edition of the plan.
2. That the timetable and activity involved in producing the 2014/15 edition of the current corporate plan, as set out in paragraph 4 of this report, be approved.
3. That Cabinet endorse the proposed actions and timelines relating to the review of the overall lifespan of the 2010-15 corporate plan and the production of the new 2015-20 corporate plan, as set in paragraph 5 of this report.

1.0 Background/Introduction

1.1 The corporate plan is the overarching strategic document of the

council setting out its priority themes, visions and activities over a 5-year period. The current corporate plan (2010-15) is about to enter its final year. This report focuses on work and evidence associated with the final year refresh of the current plan and the high level timeline for reviewing the achievements of the current plan and the production of a new plan from 2015.

- 1.2 Along with comparative local, regional and national data placing Eastbourne in context, a significant driver of the corporate plan priorities has to be the needs of the local community backed up with evidence. Public consultation activity has been ongoing ahead of and during the life of the current corporate plan at different levels and we now have the opportunity to take stock of what we have learned over this period. It is important to understand that we use a combination of strategic and operational consultation to provide a cascade of evidence from priority setting to action planning to delivery and, finally, to customer feedback. This can be illustrated as:

Consultation Activity	Primary Purpose	Consultation Type and Timeline
Generic high level consultation on corporate priorities	To establish what the high level corporate priorities should be	Strategic 5-yearly ahead of new plan
Specific high level consultation on what activities should be prioritised	To set specific priority projects to achieve the high level visions	Strategic annually as part of plan project refresh
Specific consultation relevant to the outcomes of individual projects	To identify and understand the desired outcomes and objectives of each project	Operational as part of individual project milestones, eg. Cultural Strategy and Welfare Reform
Generic customer feedback service delivery and activity outcomes	Builds picture of satisfaction of council's actions as perceived by community	Operational ongoing through customer contact

- 1.3 This report will analyse the feedback and trends arising from these consultation activities over the period of the current plan, and explore community feedback obtained in the current year. Over time, we are building a picture of these key messages that adds value to our corporate priority setting.

2.0 Sequence of Consultation

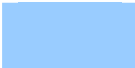
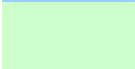


- 2.1 Ahead of the first publication of the 2010-15 corporate plan, a budget consultation exercise was undertaken in 2009 to establish what the community felt our priorities should be.

- 2.2 During 2010, 2011 and 2012, we held bespoke public consultation exercises on the 2010-15 corporate plan ahead of each annual refresh in order to monitor whether our intended priority projects were still in line with the priority needs of the community.
- 2.3 Going into the final year of the corporate plan, the establishment of a community engagement team has enabled us to draw on recent community feedback such as the Youth Fair, the new ward walk initiative, and the 'Big Local' project in west Devonshire ward.
- 2.4 Finally, after five full years of operation, we can provide a high level breakdown of devolved ward budget schemes over the period. This initiative was ground breaking on introduction and has proved to be an innovative way in which the community can engage with ward councillors on local needs and receive funds to make it happen with minimal bureaucracy.

3.0 Analysis and Trends

- 3.1 High level feedback from all the above mentioned consultation activities is summarised in the appendices to this report which concludes in appendix 5 with a list of key messages that we can draw from the evidence that has been gathered over this period of time. Full details of all the results obtained from these consultation activities are available in background papers.
- 3.2 One of the key things learned over the consultation period is that, whilst we may focus on long term strategic change, community feedback will often be influenced by "matters-of-the-moment". This was particularly seen in the 2009 consultation when, in the midst of a hard winter, highway maintenance issues figured prominently. It was also a factor in 2012 where crime prevention issues figured highly due to serious individual crime incidents at the time.
- 3.3 It is also interesting to see in the 2010 to 2012 consultations that, as the national economic position began to affect more people, there was a small but perceptible trend-shift in community priorities away from "wants" such as leisure and culture towards "needs" such as employment generation and decent housing.
- 3.4 Notwithstanding the above variations, there have been some constants. Throughout all consultations, the importance placed on the quality of Eastbourne's built and natural environment by the Eastbourne community has been maintained. Initiatives around recycling, waste collection, parks and open spaces and tackling eyesores are always well supported. Also, the future economic prosperity of the town is consistently illustrated by the fact that, throughout this period, the redevelopment of the town centre has been, overwhelmingly, considered to be the most important major project to maintain.

- 3.5 In 2012 we were keen to ask people if they thought the priorities set out in our corporate plan were correct. Across all 19 corporate priority theme project initiatives, 13 polled a highest response rate of "very important" and the remaining 6 polled a highest response rate of "important". Across all priority theme areas, 84% of respondents considered that the Council's current choice and range of priorities to be important or very important.
- 3.6 We now have a large amount of feedback from our communities and we will continue to build on this. Although much of the feedback is specific to certain localities, at a strategic level, we can glean some key findings and messages to take forward as part of our corporate priority setting. Where possible in the appendices, I have colour-coded feedback as follows:

	Economic related feedback
	Environmental related feedback
	Community/Social related feedback
	Feedback that cuts across two or more themes

4.0 High level timeline – 2010/15 plan final year

- 4.1 The proposed high level timetable for refreshing the corporate plan for 2014/15 is as follows:

- During January - Senior Heads of Service in liaison with Cabinet portfolio holders to agree priority projects
- End of January - Leadership Team to agree draft priorities
- 11 February – Presentation of emerging year 5 plan content to Scrutiny committee seminar
- February/March - Finalising of refreshed Corporate Plan chapters for 2014/15
- 19 March - Cabinet to receive and approve refreshed Corporate Plan for recommendation onto Council
- 7 May - Council final ratification of 2014/15 refreshed Corporate Plan

5.0 High level timeline – review of 2010/15 plan and formation of new 2015-20 plan

- 5.1 It is important that we take the time to review the achievements against objectives of the 2010-15 plan as it nears the end of its life, both from the point of view of communication and accountability to our community, and as evidence for future external inspections. Therefore, two pieces of work will be undertaken as follows:

Firstly, we will be providing the Cabinet with an indicative review of the 5-year performance against the plan. This will occur during the

Autumn of 2014 and will be primarily used to aid public communication.

Secondly, there will be a comprehensive technical review produced in the summer of 2015 as part of the year-end process. This will primarily serve as our future evidence document for external inspection but will also be a useful working reference for setting future priorities and will also identify continuation of those long-term projects that will need to roll over to the 2015-20 plan.

- 5.2 In commencing the work towards the production of the new 2015-20 corporate plan, we need to recognise that this will be after the 2015 local elections. Therefore it is imperative that both political groups on the Council are involved in the planning and consultation on its content.
- 5.3 As a result, it is proposed that, during the summer of 2014, both groups will be asked for their ideas and proposals in respect of:
- What the new corporate priority themes should be.
 - What the priority vision goals under each theme should be.
 - What should be included as priority year 1 projects.

We then intend to organise the information we receive from both groups and commission a comprehensive consultation exercise on those proposals. It is therefore crucial that both groups are ready to provide us with this information at that time.

6.0 Financial and Probity Implications

- 6.1 The setting of corporate plan priority actions is undertaken alongside the formulation of the medium term financial strategy and annual budget setting and, as such, allocating appropriate funding levels for the delivery of key projects is an integral part of the process. Detailed information on the delivery of specific services and projects are set out in service and financial plans.
- 6.2 In setting out its corporate priority actions, it should be noted that this does not contain all areas of activity undertaken by the council. Other areas of core service delivery and statutory functions also need to be delivered and resourced. The corporate plan only sets out those activities that are prioritised as new initiatives or are existing areas identified for improvement or intervention.

7.0 Equality Considerations

- 7.1 In developing and refreshing the content of the current corporate plan throughout its lifespan we have sought input from all sectors of the community and held specific sessions with the Council's equality groups. We have also refined the content and layout of the corporate plan, testing its "plain English" accessibility. All priority

projects set out in the corporate plan are required to address equality impact issues.

8.0 Summary

- 8.1 Over the last five years, the Council has consulted widely both at a high strategic level and at a more operational level in order to build a picture of the needs of the town as a whole and of specific communities. Over this period, over 900 members of the Eastbourne resident and business communities have participated in various consultation activities and provided us with information on what should be prioritised for the future benefit of the town. As we know from experience, it can be difficult to get engagement on strategic priority setting as opposed to high profile specific issues. All participants are to be thanked for taking the time and effort to engage with us.
- 8.2 With regard to feedback obtained in the current year, I would also place on record my thanks to the managers mentioned in this report, namely Monica Ray and Pat Taylor, who have all been responsible for leading new community initiatives that increase the ways in which we are able to engage with the wider community and use the information to guide our corporate priorities.
- 8.3 The cumulative consultation and feedback over the last five years ensures that the council can point to a robust and ongoing bank of community evidence as a guide to setting its priorities. Taken alongside local, regional and national data, government led initiatives and legislative changes, and the insight of local elected members, this provides a sound basis for the setting of high level goals backed up by priority projects for the future.

Peter Finnis **Head of Corporate Development**

Background Papers:

- 2013/14 Corporate Plan
- Budget consultation outcomes from 2009
- Corporate plan consultation outcomes from 2010, 2011 and 2012
- Community feedback results from 2013 ward walks
- Community feedback from 2013 Devonshire Ward 'Big Local' project

The above background papers are available for inspection from the report author whose contact details are set out at the front of this report.

(cabinet/corp-plan-consultation/13-12-11)