
13th June 2006

Executive

Report of the Head of Performance Improvement

Corporate Strategy

Summary

1. This report presents members of the Executive with an updated draft of the 2006-2009 Corporate Strategy including a summary version which has been developed to communicate the Strategy to a wider audience.
2. The Executive is asked to approve the Corporate Strategy and delegate approval for final editorial/presentational changes to the Leader and Chief Executive.

Background

3. The development of a Corporate Strategy is a significant step forward in helping to set out the direction and priorities of the Council over the medium-term. It is an essential component in CPA terms. It also addresses issues about “lack of direction” identified in a number of corporate reviews.
4. In the absence of such a strategy, in corporate planning terms, we have relied on the annual Council Plan/BVPP to articulate the Council’s strategy and direction albeit largely and necessarily for a 12 month period. The Corporate Strategy fills this void. It sets out a longer-term direction for the Council and means that the Council Plan in future will be the Council’s “in year” delivery plan supporting the Corporate Strategy as well as the Council’s other key strategies. The Council Plan also fulfils statutory BVPP requirements.
5. The Executive considered an initial draft 3-year Corporate Strategy on 16th May. Members of the Executive fully supported the priorities in the draft but requested that a number of further actions and customer satisfaction measures be added to the Strategy. These have now been added to the updated version (attached at Annex A).
6. Members also asked for the wording in the Strategy to be refined and a more accessible version to be designed. A shorter summary version of the Strategy highlighting a specific range of tangible actions and measures, and omitting much of the narrative in the main Strategy, has now been developed. This is attached at Annex B.

Consultation

7. At the heart of the Corporate Strategy are the thirteen Improvement Statements which have been developed over the past few months. These have been directly informed by the views expressed by, and priorities of, residents of the city. These have been developed jointly by all chief officers with input from the Leader and Executive and as such have a high degree of ownership and buy-in. This will be key to ensuring that the Corporate Strategy generally, and the Improvement Statements specifically, succeed in helping to give clarity and focus; key requirements in CPA terms.

Options

8. Members of the Executive have previously approved the need for, and importance of, having a Corporate Strategy which sets out the direction and priorities of the Council over the medium-term. This report seeks to finalise the detailed content and presentation of the Strategy.

Corporate Objectives/Priorities

9. The Corporate Strategy which is at the heart of this report will set the Council's priorities for the next three years. The main Corporate Strategy also sets out clearly how the Improvement Statements fit with the Council's Corporate Aims and the wider Community Strategy themes. This helps link different levels of the planning framework together and maintains the essential "golden thread". Reference to these planning links have however been omitted from the summary version of the Strategy. The Council Plan will provide more information on these elements detailing all performance indicators and key actions.
10. Taken together, the 3-year Corporate Strategy will express the corporate priorities for the Council and annual council plans will set out the actions to deliver them. Clear and effective signposting between both documents will therefore be essential, as will signposting between the Council Plan and other key strategies.

Implications

11. In developing the Strategy, the likely implications of prioritising the thirteen Improvement Statements have been considered. These implications are significant and are described in detail in the Strategy. They include:
 - being the focus of senior management attention
 - shaping CMT/Executive agendas
 - influencing resourcing decisions (financial, people, property, IT)
 - providing the focus for corporate performance monitoring
12. Work is now underway which will ensure that the Corporate Strategy will "make a difference" in practice. This will include developing and implementing a wide range of actions which will result in the changes detailed in paragraph 9 above.

13. The Strategy includes key one and three year actions which are in existing plans, and existing key measures. These are however intended only to be illustrative. It is anticipated that these actions will be reviewed as part of detailed work being undertaken on each priority with the possible addition of new actions and amendment or deletion of others. It is also anticipated that “better measures” (not necessarily those measures which currently exist) will be developed to measure/monitor progress against the Improvement Statement outcomes.
14. The Corporate Strategy will need to be reviewed annually to inform annual Council Plans. We may also need to update the document to take account of the Local Area Agreement for York and any revised actions or measures. We do not however anticipate that the priorities would change within the currency of the 3 year Strategy. This will provide the required longer-term focus.
15. The main version of the strategy will be important to all our stakeholders including partners, elected members and government bodies (for example, the Audit Commission) but will remain principally an internal document. The summary version will be the external face of the Strategy and be key in communicating the priorities to the general public. It will also be important in helping to communicate the Council’s priorities to our staff and to help maintain focus on them.
16. The attached drafts have been updated but will still need some degree of final editing and further improvements to their presentation prior to publication. Subject to approval of overall content of the Corporate Strategy by the Executive, it is anticipated that the main Corporate Strategy will be produced by end of June – and the summary version will be produced as soon as possible afterwards. In order to achieve this date, the Executive is asked to delegate approval to final editing/presentational changes to the Leader and Chief Executive.
17. **Financial** - There are no specific financial implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.
18. **Human Resources** - There are significant HR implications arising from the proposed Corporate Strategy as there will need to be considerable changes in the way the Council manages and organises it's human resources in order to achieve the corporate strategy. These will include the reprioritisation of resources and the realignment of the HR Strategy in order to underpin the work required in this area. The specific implications of each of the priorities will be identified in turn and considered at the appropriate time.
19. **Equalities** - There are no specific implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.
20. **Legal** - There are no specific legal implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.
21. **Crime and Disorder** - There are no specific implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.

22. **Information Technology** - There are no specific implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.
23. **Property** - There are no specific implications arising from this report but there may be implications within each of the priorities and will be identified on an individual basis. These will be considered at the appropriate time.

Recommendations

24. Executive is asked to:
 - a) Agree the draft 2006-9 Corporate Strategy documents - attached as Annex A and Annex B.
 - b) Delegate approval for any final editorial/presentational changes to the Leader and Chief Executive with a view to producing the main Corporate Strategy by end June 2006 and the customer version as soon as possible after this date.

Contact Details

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For further information please contact the authors of the report

Annex A Draft Corporate Strategy – main version
Annex B Draft Corporate Strategy – summary version