

**Agenda Item:**

**Report to:** Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> February 2007

**Report from:** Chief Executive

**Title of report:** DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2007/08 – 2009/10

**Purpose of report:** To present a draft of the Corporate Plan which sets out the proposed priority areas of activity and investment for 2007/08 – 2009/10 and invite the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this and the related Budget proposals.

**Recommendation:** That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2007/08 – 2009/10 and Budget be referred to Cabinet.

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*It is not possible to publish the Draft Corporate Plan Part 2 on the Internet due to the complex images it contains. If you require a copy, please contact Katrina Strong on 01424 451747 or email [kstrong@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:kstrong@hastings.gov.uk)*

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has moved towards a three-year strategic planning cycle as previously outlined in the report to Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006. The output of this work is the attached draft Corporate Plan with a 3-year time horizon, as well as detailed performance targets and milestones for 2007/08.
- 1.2 Under section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999, all local authorities are required to publish a Local Performance Plan by the end of June each year. However, for all authorities categorised in Comprehensive Performance Assessment as 'excellent' or 'good', the Government will accept their annually updated corporate plan as meeting the statutory requirement to prepare a Performance Plan providing that it is identified as such.
- 1.3 Additionally, all local authorities must prepare summary performance information by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year. This is included with Council tax bill mailings.

## 2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 At Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006 it was agreed that the Council would consult the Citizens Panel and the Overview & Scrutiny Committees on the principles that would underpin the development of our plans and resource allocation.
- 2.2 Feedback from this consultation is summarised below, cognisance has been taken of the comments and they have been used to inform decisions about plans and priorities for 2007 – 2010.

### **Citizens' Panel Survey (Appendix A)**

- 2.3 839 panel members responded to the consultation. Results indicate majority support for all the principles as outlined in Appendix A, Question 1, and particularly high levels of support (over 90%) for:
  - Provide good quality, customer focussed cost effective services
  - Focus on affordability and recognise that our financial position means we have to make every penny count
  - Keep Hastings Borough Council's Council Tax increase as low as possible whilst providing the services the town needs
- 2.4 Respondents were also asked to identify:
  - what they consider core services to be
  - services we should no longer provide
  - services they feel need to be improved

Please see Appendix A Question 2 for results.

## **Citizens' Panel Focus Group**

- 2.5 Twelve members of the Citizens' Panel were selected at random to take part in a discussion on what they consider core services to be; to identify services they feel need to be improved and to identify what activities services we should no longer provide.
- 2.6 The focus group agreed that the Council provides a wide range of services and acknowledged that identifying core services and therefore those services we should no longer provide was no easy task.
- 2.7 Core services identified were:
- **Working with the police to reduce crime** particularly the perception of crime which they felt gave Hastings a bad press
  - **Keeping the streets clean**
  - **Collecting Council Tax** was highlighted as an important activity to enable the Council to finance all the other activities
  - **Boosting employment**
  - **Preserving our heritage** through Conservation and Design
- 2.8 Services most in need of improvement were:
- **Recycling** – all of the focus group members were aware of the recent press surrounding recycling issues
  - **Public conveniences** – the group highlighted that toilets were closed during some evening events attended by large numbers of families e.g. bonfire night. HBC response: We will review the arrangements and ensure toilets are open for big events in future.
- 2.9 The focus group found it difficult to identify services we should no longer provide.

## **Overview & Scrutiny Committees**

- 2.10 Members agreed to comment in detail when the draft Corporate Plan and budget were available for consultation.
- 3.0 The Next Steps
- 3.1 As in previous years a full consultation programme will be undertaken with Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the business and community sector to include: Staff, Neighbourhood Forums, the Chamber of Commerce, Young Persons' Council, Citizens' Panel Focus Group, the Black & Minority Ethnic Community, Hastings Urban Bikes, Older People, the Disability Forum, the Rainbow Alliance, Local Strategic Partnership, Partners and Agencies, local people via website and media

- 3.2 Comments and amendments to the draft Corporate Plan will be submitted to the Budget Cabinet Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007.
- 3.3 The Budget Council meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February will be asked to approve the Budget and the Corporate Plan. At this time the Council will also be made aware that production of Part III of the Corporate Plan, for which information is not yet available (i.e. data on the current year's performance and performance indicators, will not take place until June 2007. The Council will be asked for delegated authority to be given to Cabinet to approve this final document.
- 3.4 A joint Summary and Council Tax Leaflet, based on the year 1 activities of the Corporate Plan 2007/08 –2009/10, approved by the Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006, will then be prepared and distributed by 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- 4.0 Financial and other Policy Implications
- 4.1 The Corporate Plan and the associated Budget together form the Council's overarching strategic policy and financial direction for the period up to 2009/10. The Plan sets out the Council's goals and where it wants to be in three years time, the Budget identifies the resources available to achieve these goals.
- 4.2 These are probably the Council's most important documents. Future policy developments, financial commitments, activities and performance management will be geared towards achieving the goals set out in this Plan.
- 5.0 Overview and Scrutiny Comments
- 5.1 Members comments are invited on the draft Corporate Plan and draft Budget. All comments will be welcomed, however it will be particularly helpful if Members could address the areas of responsibility for their Committee.

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