

Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 28th March 2010

2010-2015 Corporate Strategy; 2011-12 action plan update

Report of the Leader of the Council

Accountable member	Leader of the Council
Accountable officer	Policy and Partnerships Manager, Richard Gibson
Accountable scrutiny committee	All
Ward(s) affected	All
Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	The Council agreed the corporate strategy 2010-2015 in March 2010 which sets out our 5 objectives and 11 outcomes and what we want to achieve by 2015. The 2011-12 action plan has been prepared and is coming to Council for approval.
Recommendations	Council approves the 2011-12 corporate strategy action plan (appendix A.) and uses this as a basis for monitoring the council's performance over the next twelve months.

Financial implications	<p>None as a direct result of this report. The corporate strategy has been developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure that there are sufficient budgets in place to deliver the outcomes as proposed. In addition, the corporate strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account our changing budgetary position.</p> <p>Contact officer: Paul Jones, Head of financial services E-mail: paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 775154</p>
Legal implications	<p>The corporate strategy 2010-2015 is the "corporate strategy" for the purposes of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000. The Executive is responsible for preparing the plans which must then be submitted to and approved by council.</p> <p>Contact officer: Nicolas Wheatley E-mail: nicolas.wheatley@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 775207</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>Capacity to deliver the strategy must remain a key focus for the senior leadership team. Effective forward planning, use of project management techniques, re- prioritising work streams are some of the tools available to ensure resource to deliver the strategy is achieved.</p> <p>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, HR Operations Manager E-mail: julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 26455</p>

Key risks	<p>We recognise that if the council does not establish prioritised, realistic and achievable ambitions there will be continued pressure on organisational capacity and staff to maintain core services, and an external perception of poor performance due to over ambitious or ill-informed planning.</p> <p>The risks for each outcome have been identified and reference given to which risk register the risk sits on and be managed.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>The corporate strategy sets out a revised framework for our corporate priorities.</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>The corporate strategy sets out the council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change.</p>

1. How we have prepared the corporate strategy action plan for 2011-12

- 1.1** The development of the 2011-12 action plan has taken place against the background of the financial crisis which has resulted in significant cuts in public expenditure. The budget gap for 2011/12 between what the Council needed to spend to maintain services at current service levels and what it has available to spend, taking into account both the grant settlement and the impact of depressed income levels, was £2.87m.
- 1.2** The Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet Members have reviewed the structure of the corporate strategy and, despite the pressures on finances, agreed that the focus on the 5 objectives and 11 outcomes, set out in the 2010-2015 corporate strategy, should be retained.
- 1.3** However, a much reduced action plan for 2011-12 is being proposed (with 10 less improvement actions compared to last year) that restricts our improvement actions to those that meet the following criteria:
- Actions which will cut management and administration costs through the sharing of back office functions to deliver efficiencies and savings which result from reviewing the way we deliver services whilst improving the services to our customers.
 - Actions that will deliver the council's commitment to commissioning.
 - Actions that will deliver the current priorities which include projects that are seen as important for the future of the borough (the Art Gallery and Museum extension, Joint Core Strategy, St. Pauls, taking forward the civic pride project, tackling climate change) or associated with building community and VCS capacity.

2. Consultation and feedback

- 2.1** The draft action plan has been considered by the three overview and scrutiny committees and their feedback is captured in the table below:

Social and Community O+S comment (28 Feb 2011)	Response
Cllr. Smith – concerned that the supply of housing indicators are not within our direct control.	Keep the indicators for monitoring purposes without targets and designate them as community-based indicators.
Cllr. Mrs Hay – sought clarification about staffing arrangements for economic development and the future of Gloucestershire First	The Economic Development Manager is going on maternity leave but this still leaves the Economic Development Officer, plus the Business Partnership Manager. Gloucestershire First remains the county economic partnership and CBC is in discussion with GCC and the 6 districts about its future role.
Cllr. Teakle – sought some clarifications about the workforce challenges set out in the draft strategy.	Workforce challenges will remain a high priority moving forward; executive board will continue to authorise any recruitment decisions.
Cllr Smith – concerned that the chosen indicator for stronger communities “ <i>number of VCS organisations supported that have gone onto deliver former public services</i> ” does not capture the breadth of activity in this outcome.	Cancellation of place survey has removed source of data for the community satisfaction indicators that were previously used. Officers to consider other suggestions.
Environment O+S comment (2 March 2011)	Response
Cllr. Wheeldon – suggested adding the term “sustainable” into the wording of the housing outcome.	We have agreed to retain the wording of the outcomes as agreed in March 2010. These will be reviewed this year for the next corporate strategy.
Cllr. Wheeldon – suggested looking at the proposed baseline for the CO2 reduction figure – currently using 2009-10, but he suggested that we use 2005-06 in line with the DEFRA figures.	Agreed – baseline has now been re-set to 2005-06.
Cllr. McCloskey – was concerned that the proposed indicator for the natural and built environment was a measure how quickly we process planning applications. Could other indicators be used?	Three additional indicators have been added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in the number of long term vacant dwellings; • Number of projects implemented as a result of working with local interest groups on street redesign projects; • Proportion of planning decisions upheld when taken to appeal.
Cllr. Fletcher – was very keen that the corporate strategy recognises the importance of apprentices.	Additional text added into the workforce challenges.
Cllr. Hall – felt that the workforce challenges section was a very good summary of the current situation.	Noted.
Cllr. Hall – was concerned that some of the figures were not available for the committee in terms of cleanliness and community safety.	The baseline information and targets have now been added to the action plan.
Cllr. Wheeldon – was surprised by the	Noted.

significant increase in the targets for homeless acceptances and number of households living in temporary accommodation.	
EBI O+S comment (7 March 2011)	Response
Cllr. Stennett – felt that the introduction was too long and could be shortened by reducing repetition.	Four pages deleted from the introduction.
Cllr. McLain – concerned that both the economic development and tourism sections lack vision and need to be more ambitious.	Both sections reflect the current situation; in terms of economic development, with LABGI funding gone and only £12,700 base budget, 1 officer post and 1 town centre manager post (whilst the economic development manager is on maternity leave) we have to be realistic about the difference we can make.
Cllr. Cooper – would like to see better information about income generation.	Noted – in terms of monitoring income levels that are part of the 2011-12 budget, the advice from the s.151 officer was to combine the various income streams into the indicator “ <i>BtG programme target savings 2011/12</i> ” which will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1** The corporate strategy sets out our intended milestones, performance indicators and risks associated with the 11 outcomes and provides the basis for monitoring the council's performance over the next twelve months. The indicators are made up of performance indicators (based on the former national indicator set) and local performance indicators (chosen by ourselves).
- 3.2** This year, we have distinguished between service indicators, where we feel that we can directly influence the outcome, and community indicators, which reflect wider quality of life issues but for which the council is not directly responsible for. Accordingly we have set targets for the service indicators and set out our intention to monitor the community indicators against national and local benchmarks.
- 3.3** To promote accountability, our Senior Leadership Team will receive quarterly performance reports that will set out progress made against corporate strategy milestones and performance indicators.
- 3.4** Monitoring reports will be brought to the overview and scrutiny committees at least twice a year, mid-way through the performance cycle and at the end of the year as elected members have indicated their satisfaction with this timescale. However, an additional report at the end of the third quarter will be made if members and officers feel that this would help them take any remedial action where performance shortfalls are identified. In addition, the annual report detailing performance from the previous financial year will be brought in June to Council for consideration.

Report author	Richard Gibson Policy and Partnerships Manager 01242 235354 richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk
Appendices	1. Draft Corporate Strategy action plan 2011-12
Background information	1. 2010-2015 Corporate Strategy, Report to Council, 29 th March 2010.