

Meeting of the Council - 14th July, 2008

Report of the Cabinet

Council Plan 2010: 2008 Annual Review

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek endorsement for the proposed structure of the Council Plan policy framework for 2008/09, in light of the long term priorities of the Community Strategy and the relationship with the Next Generation Local Area Agreement and the medium term financial strategy.

Background

2. The Council adopted the Community Strategy in December 2005. This sets out the agreed partnership vision and aspirations for the borough over the next 15 years. The key purpose of the Strategy is to influence all other strategies and plans produced by the Council and our partners, to ensure they work to a common set of goals. In line with the Strategy, the proposed Council Plan has been assessed to ensure that the Council's priorities meet these challenges. The key priorities of the Community Strategy are:-
 - Creating a prosperous borough
 - Promoting a sense of wellbeing and good health for everyone
 - Celebrating our heritage and the diversity of local culture
 - Safeguarding and improving the environment
 - Promoting individual and community learning
 - Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live
3. The Community Strategy has also been the starting point in developing the Next Generation Local Area Agreement (NGLAA). This is a three-year agreement between the Government and the Council and local partners that takes effect from April 2008. Through the prescribed LAA framework, there are four high-level outcome areas for the local area.

The Four high-level outcome areas cover the following:-

- Healthy Communities
- Wealthy Communities
- Safer and Cohesive Communities
- Environmentally Aware Communities

The NGLAA will focus on where working in partnership, and setting of local targets with associated funding, can add value and improve services in our borough.

4. Public Consultation: As part of the ongoing consultation process to inform budget and Council Tax proposals, the Council undertook a further public consultation exercise during September and October 2007, using the Citizens Panel and the Internet. The results of the 2007/08 budget questionnaire presented at the Cabinet meeting held on 9th January, 2008 identified the public's spending priorities.
5. It is against these key factors, their time frames and current Council performance we have reviewed the Council plan framework and developed a revised Council Plan framework for 2008-09.

Proposed Policy Framework for the Council Plan 2008 Review and Directorate Strategic Plans

6. The current Council Plan approved by the authority runs out in March 2010. However each year we need to review our progress and address areas which are influenced by performance of service delivery, financial aspects and consultation with residents. The 2008 Council Plan framework review describes the direction for the authority over the coming years to meet the aspirations of the community strategy and the priorities outlined in the Next Generation Local Area Agreement, matched to what is achievable with the planned resources available.
7. The proposals for the continued direction of the six thematic priorities for the Council Plan are:-
 - **Caring Matters**
We want to improve access and support services for vulnerable people to improve their independence and wellbeing. We will also encourage people to lead healthy and active lives and provide more choice of cultural and leisure facilities.
 - **Environment Matters**
We want our environment - parks, open spaces and town centres to be clean and attractive places to be enjoyed by everyone. We will work towards a decent standard of homes and encourage everyone to recycle and compost more of the waste we all produce.
 - **Learning Matters**
We want people of all ages and backgrounds to achieve their potential and ensure all children and young people are equipped to be successful to make a positive contribution in society.
 - **Regeneration Matters**
We want to create a prosperous borough where our town centres are busy thriving places. We will support existing and new businesses to flourish and provide local people with the necessary skills to gain well-paid employment.
 - **Safety Matters**
We want the Dudley borough to be a safe and peaceful place to live, work and visit. We will work with partners to continue the reduction in crime, anti-social behaviour and ensure that children and young people stay safe.

- **Quality Service Matters**

We want to build on our success for high quality cost effective public services. We will develop greater choice and flexibility for people accessing our services with a focus on strong partnership working, best use of technology and improved productivity.

8. The proposed Policy framework outlined above sets out the direction for future Council Plans in terms of short, medium and longer-term strategies (see Appendix 1)
9. It can be seen that there exists a strong association between the overall aspirations of the Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement, the results of public consultation and the Council Plan thematic priorities. Similarly there are clear links with national and local policy issues facing the Authority.
10. Subject to approval on these priorities forming the overall focus for the Council, the Council Action Plan will be developed to set out a portfolio of key objectives for each priority. These will be underpinned by specific detailed actions which are short-term time sensitive intermediate steps and generally output driven that influence the overall long-term outcomes. The performance management framework for the Council during 2008/09 will be based upon the measures, targets and milestones outlined in the Council Action Plan, and reported to Members through the quarterly performance reports. The Council Plan 2008 review will also include the Best Value Performance for 2007/08. (Publication of the BVPP is required by 30th June, however requirements for publication conflict with the Council's calendar of meetings meaning that approval of the BVPP is not possible before publication).
11. In addition, to ensure that the Council Plan effectively drives the priorities of the whole Council each Directorate produces a Strategic Plan which relates to the objectives of the Council Plan through to the work of individual teams. These will be completed and published in line with the policy framework.
12. On consideration of the information contained in this report, the Cabinet, at its meeting on 11th June, 2008, approved the recommendations contained in paragraph 17 below.

Finance

13. Delivering Council Plan objectives depends upon the Council reviewing its resources for redirection into key priorities. This is achieved by linking Council Plan objectives clearly into the Annual Revenue and Capital Budget processes and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy. All costs and associated funding requirements are considered as part of those processes.

Law

14. The Council has adopted a Constitution under the provisions of Part II of the Local Government Act 2000. In line with Regulations made under the 2000 Act, the full Council must set the budgetary and policy framework. Article 4 of the Constitution sets out the Policy framework and includes the Council Plan as one of the specified documents which must be approved by full Council.

Equality Impact

- 15. Consultation on the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement involved a wide range of different communities and organisations, including disabled people, Black and Minority Ethnic communities and children and young people. Their views were incorporated in the final strategy and the identification of their priorities expressed.
- 16. Implementation of the Council Plan framework will involve actions to promote equality and in relation to children and young people.

Recommendation

- 17. That the Council endorse the policy framework of the revised Council Plan and note the alignment of the Council Plan and Directorate Strategic Plans to the Community Strategy.

David Caunt

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LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Appendix 1

Council plan policy framework- Long-term plan

Community Strategy 2005-2020	Local Area Agreement	Timeline	Next Generation of Council Plans (3 year plans)	Directorate Strategic Plans (annual plans)	
<p>Community vision looking ahead over 15 years to 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a prosperous borough • Promoting a sense of wellbeing and good health for everyone • Celebrating our heritage and the diversity of local culture • Safeguarding and improving the environment • Promoting individual and community learning • Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live 	<p>NG-LAA year 1</p> <p>NG-LAA year 2</p>	<p>April 2007</p>	<p>Council Plan 2007-10</p> <p>Annual update April 2008</p> <p>Annual update April 2009</p>	<p>2007-08</p>	<p>3 year focus</p>
		<p>2008-09</p>			
		<p>2009-10</p>			
	<p>NG-LAA year 3</p>	<p>April 2010</p>	<p>Council Plan 2010-13</p> <p>Annual update April 2011</p> <p>Annual update April 2012</p>		<p>3 year focus</p>
	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Council Plan 2013-16</p> <p>Annual update April 2014</p> <p>Annual update April 2015</p>		<p>3 year focus</p>	
	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>March 2016</p>		<p>3 year focus</p>	
	<p>April 2016</p>	<p>Council Plan 2016-19</p> <p>Annual update April 2017</p> <p>Annual update April 2018</p>		<p>3 year focus</p>	
	<p>March 2019</p>				

Council plan policy framework- Hierarchy of plans

