

CABINET

Ambitions: Our Council Plan 2018-22 26 June 2018

Report of Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To present the draft Council Plan 2018-22 ahead of recommending the finalised Council Plan to Council for approval.				
Key Decision		Non-Key Decision	X	Referral from Cabinet Member
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision		24 May 2018		
This report is public				

RECOMMENDATION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

- (1) That Cabinet considers the draft Council Plan 2018-22 and, subject to approval of the final document, recommends the Plan for approval by Full Council.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In early 2017, Cabinet members identified the need for the Council to refresh its strategic priorities in order to support future decision-making and planning, maintain operational and financial sustainability, and build resilience in a rapidly changing world.
- 1.2 A series of discussions based on a broad evidence base identified four strategic priority areas, known as 'Ambitions' as they represent the Council's aspirational aims for the District.
- 1.3 The Ambitions are underpinned by four key Principles, which will apply across the whole of the Council's work.
- 1.4 Cabinet members then worked with officers to develop a more detailed strategic direction in support of each of the Ambitions.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 Stating the Council's Principles and Ambitions for the period 2018-22 in an overarching strategic plan will provide a framework for decision-making and service delivery within the Council, and a reference point for anyone engaging with the Council as a customer or partner.
- 2.2 It is therefore proposed that Cabinet approves, for recommendation to Council, a finalised version of the draft Council Plan 2018-22.
- 2.3 Alongside the Principles and Ambitions, the draft Council Plan also contains information on recent achievements, a summary of the scale and breadth of the Council's operations, and detailed information in support of each of the Ambitions.

- 2.4 The consideration of risk underpins the Council Plan and the Council's draft strategic risk register has been reviewed and is currently being updated. It will be reported through for Members' consideration in due course. Alongside this, Officer responsibilities regarding the risk management framework are also under review. In the meantime, it is intended that during the course of this year, Internal Audit will undertake some development work and risk management workshops, alongside ongoing development of the business planning and performance management framework. Furthermore, it is the intention that any significant changes in the Council's risk profile will be reported for consideration as part of the usual quarterly monitoring arrangements.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 The Council Plan 2018-22 has been developed using information from a wide range of sources across the Council as well as an externally commissioned evidence base.
- 3.2 A draft version of the Plan was presented to Budget & Performance Panel members on 14 November 2017.
- 3.3 A draft version of the Plan was discussed at a workshop on Friday 2 March 2018 involving a large number of external partners and stakeholders along with Cabinet members and senior officers.
- 3.4 Councillors and the general public have also been invited to a series of informal drop-in sessions across the district to share their views.
- 3.5 The Plan will be reviewed each year to take account of any significant changes in strategy or context, based on ongoing engagement with our communities and partners.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Cabinet has given significant consideration to developing its strategic priorities, to guide the organisation in aligning its strategy and resources in implementing a number of key projects and initiatives.
- 4.2 Setting out a new Council Plan at this stage creates an opportunity to clearly state the Council's vision for the Lancaster district, and as such must be approved by Council.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Principles and Ambitions contained within the Council Plan will form a central part of the Council's policy framework, providing a key reference point for decision-making over the period of the Plan.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):

The Plan does not itself impact directly on service delivery, but provides a framework for decision-making over the period of the Plan. The broad scope of the Plan means that it would not in itself have a direct beneficial or detrimental effect on any particular group.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None directly arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None directly arising from this report. (See s151 Officer's comments below).

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:

None directly arising from this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

In order to establish ambitious yet deliverable plans and protect the Council's financial sustainability, ideally the Council's strategic, operational and financial plans should be broadly in line, recognising that some scope for flexibility will inevitably be required. It is currently forecast that by 2021/22 the Council will have an annual budget deficit in the region of £2.4M. This means that based on its current operations and expectations (i.e. if nothing changed), the Council would not be sustainable; significant net budget savings, through efficiencies, income generation and/or service reductions, are expected to be needed by then to ensure its ongoing viability. The draft Council Plan recognises that need, and it is essential for the Council to translate its new Council Plan into a sound, deliverable and prioritised programme of change for implementation as soon as practicable. Work is currently underway on establishing this for Cabinet's consideration. The Council has reserves in place to help facilitate and implement such a programme, but clearly these are one-off resources that in themselves, do not present an ongoing financial solution. In support, an external financial health-check will be undertaken in the coming months, the results of which will be reported to Members, and it is envisaged that any action plan arising will also help the Council in tackling the challenges ahead.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

On approval by full Council the Council Plan will become the policy framework document under Article 4.01 (a) Corporate Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft Council Plan 2018-22

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