

Central Bedfordshire Council

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 August 2015

Central Bedfordshire's Five Year Plan 2015-20

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Purpose of this report

1. To invite feedback from the Committee on the emerging five year plan for Central Bedfordshire Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and provide feedback on the proposed framework for the plan including high level outcomes and proposed programmes of work.

Issues

Corporate Planning within Central Bedfordshire

1. The election of a new Administration in May 2015 creates an opportunity to review of the Council's existing priorities.
2. These were articulated in the Council's previous Medium Term Plan and were collectively designed to ensure Central Bedfordshire remains a great place to live and work.
3. Activity in pursuit of these priorities has been rigorously monitored and performance is reported quarterly to the Executive under the three categories of People, Place and Making it Happen (organisational development).

4. Progress on Place measures – has included:

Securing the funding and support for major infrastructure developments including the A5-M1 link road, roll out of superfast broadband, development of the economy through the growth of existing companies and relocation of new businesses within the area.

Development of new community based services including a new Leisure Centre in Flitwick, major refurbishment of Leisure and Library services in Dunstable and investment in independent living schemes across Central Bedfordshire.

5. Progress on People measures has included:

A growth in customer satisfaction with the Council (from a baseline of 35% to 73%), which is likely to have been influenced by enhanced perceptions of Value for Money.

Improved educational outcomes for children and young people in Central Bedfordshire and increasing levels of dignity, choice and control for vulnerable adults as services become less institutional and more personalised.

6. Progress on organisational development measures has included:

A drive for efficiency in order to maintain front line services from reductions and protect council tax payers from increases in their charges for Central Bedfordshire Council services. More than £80m has been saved through efficiency measures since the Council was created.

A New Five Year Plan

7. In order to build on the progress the Council has achieved in the past and maintain the momentum of improvement, a process for developing a refreshed five year plan is proposed..
8. Attached at (Appendix A) is a set of slides which outline the approach for the development of the plan which includes:
9. The purpose of the plan
10. The context for its development
11. Provisional outcomes related to community resilience, jobs and prosperity, education and skills, character of place, protecting the vulnerable, health and housing, value for money and becoming a more responsive Council.
12. Proposed refinement of these outcomes and core programmes of activity.

Developing the Plan

13. Members of the Committee are invited to contribute to the development of the plan in giving their feedback on the proposed approach.
14. Other stakeholders who will be engaged are:
15. Central Bedfordshire Council staff – a representative sample of employees from all services and at all levels will be invited to participate in a series of engagement sessions on the plan.
16. Partners including Town and Parish Councils, neighbouring local authorities, the NHS, business community, emergency services and advocacy groups will also be engaged through either individual or group meetings.

Finalising the Plan

17. Following the engagement exercise, it is expected that a revised and more fully developed plan will be considered by Executive on 6 October and recommended to Full Council for approval on 19 November 2015.

Council Priorities

18. In 2012, the Council confirmed its priorities within the previous corporate plan.

These were:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Improved educational attainment.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.
- Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
- Value for money – freezing council tax.

19. The election of a new Council in May 2015, has prompted a review of progress against the plan and these priorities. Subject to further engagement and consultation with Members and stakeholders, the revised plan will include amended priority outcomes. Were this to be approved by Council they would replace those listed above.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

20. There are no legal implications in developing the five year plan.

Financial Implications

21. Once a refreshed plan is adopted, the future Medium Term Financial Plan will become the financial expression of what the Council aspires to achieve through the priorities and targets set out in the five year plan.

Equalities Implications

22. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Conclusion

23. The development of the next five year plan is an important process. It will allow the Council to clearly articulate what it is seeking to achieve between now and 2020. It will form the basis of our core programme of activity against which performance will be measured.

24. The Council will be held accountable by its success or failure to deliver against the plan by the public, stakeholders and staff.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:

Developing our vision for the next five years – 2015 – 2020
Powerpoint Presentation

Background Papers

1. The following background papers, not previously available to the public, were taken into account and are available on the Council's website:

Delivering our Priorities – the previous Medium Term Plan of Central Bedfordshire Council.