

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9

COUNCIL

Date **26 February 2015**

Title **FINAL CORPORATE PLAN 2015-18**

1. PURPOSE/SUMMARY

For Council to consider and approve Fenland’s Corporate Plan 2015-18.

2. KEY ISSUES

- The Corporate Plan 2015-18 identifies the key challenges and opportunities for Fenland over the next three years.
- Our three streamlined corporate priorities focus on Communities, the Environment and the Economy – ensuring staff and resources are focused on the projects that matter the most to local people. We remain committed to stimulating, attracting and supporting business growth to stimulate the economy, creating local jobs and improve the life changes for our young people.
- Like the rest of the public sector, the Council continues to experience a number of challenges; particularly around its budget. By the end of 2015/16, the Council will have delivered £8m of savings which is a significant proportion of its total budget. The Council remains committed to achieving savings with minimal impact on its high quality frontline services, whilst maintaining excellent customer service.
- Savings to date have primarily been achieved through embracing service transformation, exploring new ways of working and reviewing processes to reduce bureaucracy. The new Whittlesey Community Hub, following the success of the Chatteris Hub model, is one example of how savings have been created by maximising public sector assets without compromising on the quality of service.
- To meet future challenges and reshape the Council to meet future needs, we will continue to embrace new ways of working and maintain strong working relationships with partners. Joining ARP to deliver the Council’s Revenues and Benefits service, along with CNC to deliver Building Control, is just two examples of how partnership working has delivered savings without compromising on the quality of service offered.
- We will also look to increase community capacity and resilience to better manage customer demand; supporting residents to do more for themselves and their communities.

- Despite continued financial pressures, we are still able to do a lot of good work to bring prosperity to Fenland; examples include the opening of new Cromwell Road development and improvements to the George Campbell Leisure Centre in March. We continue to campaign to get additional investment in the district, with recent success in being awarded initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a £2million Townscape Heritage bid for the Wisbech High Street project. We also continue to work with partners to lobby for a rail connection between Wisbech and Cambridge, as well as improvements to the A47.
- The draft Corporate Plan 2015-18 was presented and approved by the Overview and Scrutiny panel on 19 January 2015.
- Public consultation about the draft Corporate Plan was undertaken between January 5 and February 9 2015. The questionnaire asked residents which council services were the most important to them and asked how they, their family or the community could support the council in delivering its priorities. The consultation questionnaire was available on the Council's website, Fenland @ your service shops, Chatteris and Whittlesey Community Hubs, Leisure Centres and Business Centres. It was also translated into Lithuanian, Russian and Polish for community locations.
- Appropriate performance measures will be developed to ensure effective delivery of the Corporate Plan which will be reported to Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and Council.

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)
 For Council to consider approve Fenland's Corporate Plan 2015-18

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference No. (if applicable)	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Clark – Leader of the Council
Report Originator	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Carol Pilson, Corporate Director Rob Bridge, Corporate Director Gary Garford, Corporate Director Richard Cassidy, Corporate Director
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Carol Pilson, Corporate Director Gary Garford, Corporate Director Rob Bridge, Corporate Director Richard Cassidy, Corporate Director
Background Paper(s)	Cabinet 18/12/14 - Draft Corporate Plan 2015/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Fenland District Council

Corporate Plan 2015 - 2018

Introduction by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

Welcome to Fenland District Council's Corporate Plan for 2015-18.

This explains the Council's priorities for the next three years, and how we will focus our resources on the things that matter the most to local residents. Our priorities are under three main headings: Communities, the Environment and the Economy.

New ways of working

Like all Councils, we continue to be challenged by significant budget cuts and pressure on services. By the end of 2015/16, the Council will have delivered £8m of savings, whilst still delivering high-quality services for the community. This has been achieved by working differently; transforming the way services are delivered and making our processes more straight-forward. We will continue to focus our resources to deliver the most important priorities – making sure we support the residents who need our services the most, whilst making the necessary savings to our budgets.

Working with partners

We know that the next three years will continue to be challenging, but are in a good position to make sure the Council is fit for the future. We will build upon our good relationships with partners to make sure public money is being spent well; proactively working together to deliver savings when there is a strong business case to do so. Last year, we joined ARP to deliver our Revenues and Benefits services and CNC to deliver our Building Control function. Both local partnerships, these are two examples of how money has been saved without compromising upon the quality of service. Following on from the success of the Chatteris Hub, the Whittlesey Community Hub has also generated savings by maximising the use of public sector assets.

We recognise that other public sector organisations, private sector companies and voluntary organisations also provide important services to our residents. Many of these link with our services and build upon the priorities we are trying to achieve for the district. We must make sure that the lead organisation is the right one, and encourage people to be self-sufficient where possible. As part of this, we will build community capacity and increase resilience; supporting residents to do more for themselves and their communities.

Successes and the future

Despite the challenges we face, we still do a lot of work to make the district a happy, safe and prosperous place to live. Alongside partners, we deliver projects that improve the quality of life of our residents, and continue to campaign to get additional investment in the district. The Cromwell Road development with new shops, restaurants and a multi-screen cinema provides an improved retail and leisure offering in Wisbech. The improvements to the George Campbell centre, part financed by Sport England, will encourage more people to become more active, more often.

We continue to lobby for improvements to the A47 and are supporting Cambridgeshire County Council with improvements to the Kings Dyke rail crossing in Whittlesey. The new two-hourly railway service at Manea has seen a 356% increase in passenger journeys, and we continue to lobby for an hourly service between March, Manea and Whittlesey. In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, we are also campaigning for the Wisbech to March railway line to be reopened, as well as a rail link to be created between Wisbech and Cambridge.

About Fenland

Fenland is a vibrant rural district in North Cambridgeshire. It has four market towns and twenty-nine villages, with strong community spirit and pride in its heritage. Around 95,300 people live in Fenland, with 75% of residents living in the four market towns of Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech.

A growing population: planning for the future

Our population is growing quickly. It is predicted that by 2031 there will be over 113,000 people living in Fenland. We continue to work with partners to make sure the right services and infrastructure are in place to meet the needs of our residents. Our newly adopted Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Strategy explains how we will build new homes, increase employment opportunities and improve transport links - encouraging growth and bringing economic prosperity to Fenland over the next twenty years. The regeneration at the Nene Waterfront site and work delivered through the Wisbech 2020 Vision are just two examples of how derelict land and local amenities are being improved for residents and future generations.

The needs of our residents

Our population is also getting older. 25% of our residents are pensioners, predicted to increase to over 41% within the next 10 years. 1 in 7 pensioners in Fenland live alone, many in isolated areas with no modes of transport. This means that many vulnerable residents face challenges in accessing services that are crucial to living a good quality of life. We will continue to work with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, Cambridgeshire County Council and other community groups to support older people to live independent and fulfilled lives.

Facing challenges

Some residents face particular challenges in their lives, especially compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire. This is to do with issues such as education, income, health, housing and employment. The priorities explained in our Corporate Plan are designed to support residents to overcome these challenges. The Fenland Strategic Partnership, Together for Families and the Health & Wellbeing partnership are just a few examples of how partnership working is successfully tackling inequalities across the district.

Our Priorities: what we're aiming for

Our priorities support the overarching aim of improving quality of life in Fenland. This is by addressing the social, environmental and economic needs for residents to live happy, fulfilled lives.

To make sure the Council has a clear focus on its three corporate priorities, we have explained what areas we will focus on through a series of sub-priorities and actions. Our cross cutting theme of 'Quality Organisation' also explains more about how the Council will be run effectively, with sound governance.

Over the next few pages, the Council's priorities and sub-priorities for 2015-18 are explained in more detail.

Summary of Corporate Priorities:

Quality Organisation	Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support vulnerable members of our community• Support our ageing population and young people• Promote health and wellbeing
	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service• Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and our streetscene• Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and promoting social cohesion
	Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attract new businesses and jobs, and support existing businesses in Fenland• Raise aspirations and improve learning opportunities• Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination• Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland.

Communities

Support vulnerable members of our community

- Support residents to claim the benefits they are entitled to. Process applications promptly and accurately through our shared service with Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP)
- Respond to changing government policy regarding the processing of housing benefits applications and future Welfare Reform announcements
- Deliver the Homelessness Strategy and our statutory Housing Duties
- Work with partners to build community capacity and resilience to help residents support themselves and their community
- Work with partners to develop a Multi-Disciplinary Team approach to deliver earlier interventions to those in need, through more integrated commissioning

Support our ageing population and young people

- Deliver a programme of Golden Age events, encouraging a range of partners to support the programme and its development to include the health and well-being agenda
- Maintain our commitment to engaging with young people and raising their awareness of democratic processes, through the Youth District Council and events such as Democracy Day
- Work in partnership with the Children's Trust and Fenland and East Cambs Children's and Young People Partnership to improve life chances for children and young people

Promote health and wellbeing

- Deliver the key priorities set out in the Leisure Strategy:
 - Continue to provide an efficient service
 - More people, more active, more often
 - Support the development of community sport
 - Explore alternative delivery options for leisure services
- Develop and implement an overarching Health & Wellbeing Strategy and set appropriate key priorities
- Work with local commissioning groups and others to develop a joint plan to deliver effective approaches to improve community health outcomes focusing on alcohol misuse, smoking cessation, obesity, coronary heart disease and the needs of older people

Environment

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

- Work with partners to divert at least 50% of household waste from landfill
- Maximise the value of materials collected for recycling
- Deliver clean streets and public spaces as set out in the local code of practice
- Work with key stakeholders to deliver an advanced waste partnership in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and our streetscene

- Deliver the Streets Ahead Action Plan to improve the appearance of the Fenland streetscene including dilapidated buildings, via working with property owners, funders and local partner groups
- Deliver the Street Scene Officer service and a fair approach to enforcement of environmental standards across the district through education, guidance and the appropriate use of the Councils powers
- Ensure properly maintained open spaces in partnership with The Landscape Group and community groups such as Street Pride, In Bloom and 'Friends of' groups, including maintaining existing Green Flag awards for Fenland parks
- Work with businesses to inform and promote innovative environmental practices through the Green Business Club
- Work with Town Councils and the community to provide market town events, local markets and activities to improve the viability of our town centres through the Four Seasons events

Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion

- Work with our partner organisations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Fenland through the Community Safety partnership action plan
- Support the Fenland Businesses Against Crime (FENBAC) group to tackle crime against them including theft, arson and damage to premises
- Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland Community Cohesion Strategy
- Provide information and guidance to new arrivals to raise their awareness of their rights, responsibilities and how to access local services.

Economy

Attract new businesses and jobs, and support existing businesses in Fenland

- Deliver outcomes related to the adopted Economic Development Strategy including targeting new investment in key growth sectors of agri-tech, engineering and port and marine.
- Provide and facilitate proactive business support through the Fenland for Business forum and Chambers of Commerce
- Proactively engage with the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to attract external funding (including European) for business, skills and infrastructure projects to Fenland
- Promote and develop our business premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and our light industrial estates to encourage investment, job creation and skills diversification
- Promote the delivery of mixed use housing/retail/leisure/maritime proposal for the Nene Waterfront along with the delivery of our wider regeneration objectives
- Deliver a proactive and effective Marine Service to meet our statutory obligations and promote business opportunities for the River Nene environment
- Actively support the county wide partnership project to deliver super-fast broadband across Fenland and Cambridgeshire
- Further develop, proactively contribute to and deliver the Wisbech 2020 Action Plan

Raise aspirations and improve learning opportunities

- Work with education providers to assist in improving aspirations and links to employers
- Work with businesses and education providers to ensure local skills and courses support the needs of local businesses

Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination

- Support the Fenland Tourism Board to develop and deliver a comprehensive Tourism Strategy for Fenland through the 'Visit Cambridgeshire Fens' branding

Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

- Deliver a proactive and effective Planning Service to enable appropriate growth and development
- Develop an effective and viable developer contribution framework via Section 106 to support associated infrastructure provision
- Develop, enable and deliver economic, infrastructure and regeneration strategies/projects for Fenland through the Regeneration Action Plan
- Promote sustainable transport (infrastructure and community) initiatives within Fenland including rail, road and community transport
- Actively engage with partners on the feasibility and delivery of major infrastructure project across Fenland, including A47 and A605 improvements and the Wisbech-March-Cambridge rail link
- Use the Council's surplus assets to support and deliver sustainable economic and residential growth across the district

Quality Organisation

We have committed to have a 'Quality Organisation' to support effective service delivery. There are many important foundations in delivering an effective organisation to ensure the day to day running of the Council and the achievement of our priorities are completed successfully.

Good Customer Service – Provide good quality customer service through our Fenland @ your Service shops and Community Hubs in line with the national standards of Customer Service Excellence, responding to customer feedback to improve service delivery, and making services more accessible through the use of technology

Strong Governance, Financial Control & Risk Management – Maintain robust and effective financial standards, robust internal controls and effective risk management as evidenced by our Annual Audit Letter from External Audit and through the Council's Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy and Risk Management Strategy.

Transformation & Efficiency - Continue to embrace innovation and new ways of working to transform the Council and find savings, supported by an appropriate IT Strategy. Where a strong business case exists pursue shared services, joint working arrangements and collaborations with other key service providers ensuring robust performance management arrangements are in place.

Consultation and Engagement – Continue to work with residents and stakeholders by carrying out appropriate consultation and engagement on service delivery and proposals.

Performance Management – Continue to set challenging performance targets to ensure effective delivery of the Corporate Plan and report regularly on performance to CMT, Councillors and the public.

Equalities – Meet the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act through our core service delivery and publish on a yearly basis an Annual Equality Report.

Asset Management – Continually review the Council's asset base to ensure suitability and sustainability whilst maximising service and income benefits. Continue to work in conjunction with public, private and third sector partners to promote joint working.

Workforce Development – Maintain an effective workforce with the right skills to deliver the priorities of the Council.

Enforcement – To take a fair and equitable approach to enforcement to positively improve living, working and environmental standards within the District

Health and Safety – Maintain effective Health and Safety policies and systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the Council's workforce, stakeholders and the wider community.