

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 8 March 2011.

Present: Councillor Jones (Chairman), Councillors Bentley, Elkin, Glazier, Lock, Maynard, Reid and Mrs Stroude and B. Tidy

1. Council Plan 2011/12

1.1 The Council Plan is the Council's main business planning document and is produced as part of the Reconciling Policy and Resources process. The draft Plan for 2011/12 builds on the portfolio plans agreed by the Cabinet in January 2011 and sets the medium term performance targets required to achieve the Council's Policy Steers for 2011/12 – 2013/14. A copy of the draft Plan has been circulated separately as Appendix 1 to this report. The Plan is in draft form and it will continue to evolve as more information becomes available. The Plan will be published by 1 April and refreshed in July when final outturn figures for 2010/11 will all be available.

1.2 The introduction highlights some of the key Council initiatives for the coming years. It also highlights how the Council is responding positively and seeking opportunities to meet the challenge posed by the national reduction in public sector spending.

1.3 The Council Plan is primarily an internal working document but it is also allows the public, partners and anyone with an interest in the Council's business and financial planning to get an overview of the service improvement priorities and strategic direction the Council is taking. The Council Plan is, therefore, in keeping with the new emphasis on transparency and strong local accountability.

1.4 Having regard to this wider public audience the level of technical detail provided in the Plan has been reduced. The focus is on providing a clear explanation of the Council's priorities and how the Council's financial resources will be used to deliver the Council's Promise to residents. This year the intention is not to include the complete Financial Budget Summary. Instead the financial section of the Council Plan will provide a summary of how financial changes have been made to support policy decisions. It will include a summary of the Council's gross and net expenditure and high level departmental budgets, but will not replicate the more technical Financial Budget Summary, which will be available on the website.

1.5 Each portfolio chapter has a strategic focus on delivery of the policy steers through their associated key performance measures and targets. These are used to monitor the Council's progress against its priorities each quarter and annually. These performance measures should reflect the core aim of the policy steer, be supported by resource allocation and show what we are aiming to achieve for our residents.

1.6 In recent years the Council Plan has included National Indicator Set (NIS) references and all Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets where the Council was the lead partner. In line with its commitment to reduce central control the Coalition Government has:

- abolished the National Indicator Set for data reference;
- abolished national targets for local government;
- stated that councils are no longer required to produce a LAA as of 1 April 2011;
- begun consultation on the new single data list of the data national government requires from local government;
- produced business plans for government departments with sections on transparency that may include measures relevant to the Council; and
- introduced a focus on transparency, open data and local accountability.

1.7 The Council is now free from national performance frameworks but there is an increased focus on local accountability. The Council Plan will, therefore, continue to provide robust measures and targets against local priorities. The detail of what will be included in the Government's data list is not yet available. As ever, we will use any national indicator or data set, if it fits local priorities.

Children's Service Portfolio

1.8 It is proposed that policy steer 5.8 be deleted from the Children's Services portfolio because the lead for the activity and targets that will deliver this policy steer fall under portfolios elsewhere in the Council Plan. This includes work to reduce carbon emissions from local authority operations - policy steer 1.2.

The policy steer is:

Ensure children, young people and families have opportunities to shape the development of a sustainable future for the county and with it's work with partners.

Publication and refresh

1.9 The Plan will be published on the internet by 1 April 2011. It will be updated in July to include any newly available 2010/11 outturns and add any targets that were not available at the time of the first publication in April.

1.10 The Cabinet **recommends** the County Council to -

☆ (1) approve the draft Council Plan for 2011/12 and authorise the Chief Executive to make any changes pre and post publication; and

(2) delete policy steer 5.8 from the Children's Services portfolio

2. Council Plan Monitoring 2010/11

2.1 The Cabinet monitors performance against targets in the Council Plan. As previously agreed, performance measures are scored in the quarter after which delivery is due. Therefore the performance measures considered by the Cabinet in March are those that were planned to be completed by the end of December 2010. The Cabinet has welcomed the following notable successes and achievements:

Portfolio for Strategic Management and Economic Development

The Council is now part of a Local Enterprise Partnership covering Kent, Greater Essex, and East Sussex, working together to promote economic growth across the region. For East Sussex this means we will be able to continue with regeneration in Hastings and Newhaven but also develop green technologies, improved broadband, and better links between public and private sectors. Personnel and Training have obtained the contract for provision of Human Resources advice to the Brighton Aldridge Community Academy.

Portfolio for Corporate Resources

The proposed 2011/12 revenue budget was finalised for approval by Council, together with the 4 year capital programme, supporting the Council's future planning and tax strategy. All items of spend over £500 are now being published, complying with the Government initiative to make spending data transparent and open to public scrutiny. The new Bexhill High School was completed early and within budget and opened on 8 November. The new school is an ICT rich environment with more than 1300 netbooks and wireless, audio and video technology. New primary schools at Hurst Green and Frant and a new library at Rye were handed over on time and within budget.

Portfolio for Community Services

Planning permission has been received for 'The Keep', a historical resource centre. It will be built at Woolards Field near Falmer at a cost of £19 million. We completed our project, 'Lives of Tradition', during which the East Sussex Record Office worked with Looked After Children, the University of Sussex, Brighton's Crew Club, the Weald and Downland Museum and singers, to explore Sussex traditions. 19 new businesses were approved for the Buy With Confidence scheme. The Council's continuing support of Ditchling Museum's Education programme strengthened their bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, resulting in a development grant to the museum of £835,600.

Portfolio for Adult Social Care

The Care Quality Commission (December 2010) rated services as 'performing well' in six of seven categories and 'excellent' for making a positive contribution to the community. A Department of Health report 'Use of Resources in Adult Social Care': Guidance to Local Authorities', highlights the Council as a positive example of how value for money can be achieved and good quality services provided. We continue to provide effective intermediate care and rehabilitation; between April and December 2010 87.43% of older people were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital. 60.1% of staff

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from independent sector providers have received safeguarding adults training, an increase on the 2009/10 figure of 48%. Margaret House opened on schedule on 1 November; 26 flats were allocated to people with a range of needs. As at December 2010, we have supported 1,852 people aged 18-64 with a disability, 736 people aged 18-64 with a learning disability, 797 people aged 18-64 with mental ill health, and 7,596 people aged 65 and over, to live at home.

Portfolio for Children’s Services

Ofsted rated services for safeguarding children at risk, and for children who are in care, as ‘good’ with some outstanding elements, our capacity to improve further was rated as “outstanding”. In the 2009/10 academic year, the aggregate performance of the Hastings Federation Schools achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and maths was 41.8%, exceeding the target of 35.6%.

Portfolio for Transport and Environment

The KSI indicators (6.2a and b) are rated red in the exception report because they are based on a 3 year rolling average. However, our investment in this area is paying off; this year there was the lowest annual rate of road casualty figures in over five years. An extensive, two year, quality checking programme to improve the standard of reinstatement works to our roads by utility companies has begun. A range of measures to deal with the ‘in-year’ cuts were implemented. The Council has been accredited to the Carbon Trust Standard in recognition of the work it has done, and is planning to do, to reduce its carbon footprint. The Council responded well to the severe winter weather which has seen the coldest temperatures on record for over 100 years.

2.2 The exception report considered by the Cabinet (Appendix 1 of the report submitted to the Cabinet) contains the detailed commentary for those indicators scored amber or red this quarter. A summary of performance is as follows:

	Policy Steers	Performance Indicators	Quarter 3 RAG scores			
			Green	Amber	Red	Proposed amendment
Total	67	179	135 (75.4%)	16 (8.9%)	23 (12.8%)	5 (2.8%)

2.3 Many of the indicators in Children’s Services rated red or amber this quarter relate to educational attainment. The large number is partly due to the detailed breakdown for some of the indicators e.g. attainment results are provided for all pupils as well as for Looked After Children and those in receipt of Free School Meals. The fact that many ended as Red was partly due to a national target setting methodology which did not enable the Council to fully take into account local circumstances. These very high national targets have, therefore, often masked an improving picture and we are pleased the

Government has decided that, from 2012 exams, we can set our own local targets that, while still needing to be challenging, will better reflect local circumstances.

2.4 There are five proposed amendments to targets this quarter and were included in the exception report. These are:

1.03c (planning to adapt to climate change) proposed for deletion because the Government has withdrawn the requirement to report on this National Indicator and the methodology was considered inappropriate and unnecessary.

2.04a (improved value for money) proposed for deletion because the model used for measuring this has been suspended.

4.01b (older peoples extra care schemes) – target amended as the second half related to Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding which is outside of our control.

4.05b (raising awareness of safeguarding) – target amended as more time is needed to analyse the findings.

4.10d (older peoples engagement events) – target amended to bring it into line with the amendment to the measure made at quarter 2.

2.5 There are fewer ambers this quarter than at quarter 3 last year, when 30 indicators were rated amber. Extra effort is being taken to ensure that a judgement is made to rate measures green or red where it is already clear if they will or will not be met instead of waiting until quarter 4.

2.6 The Cabinet **recommends** the County Council to

☆ approve the recommendations made regarding the proposed amendment to targets as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

PETER JONES
Chairman

8 March 2011

