

## CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

**Report to:-** Council

**Date of Meeting:-** 9 September 2008

**Agenda Item  
No:-**

<b>Public</b>		<b>Policy</b>	<b>Delegated: No</b>	
<b>Accompanying Comments and Statements</b>			<b>Required</b>	<b>Included</b>
Environmental Impact Statement:				No
Corporate Management Team Comments:				Yes
Financial Comments:				Yes
Legal Comments:				Yes
Personnel Comments:				Yes
Impact on Customers:				Yes
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<b>Title:-</b>	<b>REVIEW OF CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007-2010</b>			
<b>Report of:-</b>	<b>Head of Policy and Performance</b>			
<b>Report reference:-</b>	<b>PPP 82/08</b>			

### Summary

The review of the Corporate Improvement Plan was first considered by the Executive, 30 June 2008 (PPP 61/08) when it was agreed that the review would be endorsed and referred to the Overview & Scrutiny Committees for consultation. The attached report (PPP 72/08) presents the results of the consultation.

The review of the Corporate Plan is being considered alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan which will link the priorities of the Council to the allocation of resources. The documents together set out the policy and financial planning framework for the Council.

The report on the review of the Corporate Improvement Plan was considered by the Executive, 26<sup>th</sup> August 2008 and referred to Council for approval. The report and minute extracts are attached for members consideration.

### Recommendation

The Executive recommends that the Council adopt the review.

**Contact Officer:** Carolyn Curr

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# REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

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## PORTFOLIO AREA: FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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**Date of** 26 August 2008

**Meeting:**

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**Public** Yes

**Key**

**Decision:** Yes

**Recorded in Forward Plan:** Yes

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**Inside Policy Framework** Yes

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**Title:** REVIEW OF CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007-2010

**Report of:** Head of Policy and Performance

**Report reference:** PPP 72/08

### Summary:

The review of the Corporate Improvement Plan was first considered by the Executive, 30 June 2008 (PPP 61/08). This report presents the results of consultation with Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The review of the Corporate Plan is being considered alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan which will link the priorities of the Council to the allocation of resources. The documents together set out the policy and financial planning framework for the Council.

### Recommendations:

The Executive is requested to:

1. Consider the comments of the Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees and how they inform the priorities of the Council.
2. Consider how the review of the financial plans of the Council, and subsequent allocation of resources, are informed by the priorities.
3. Reconsider the national and local drivers identified in report of 30 June, and the opportunities they offer to inform and influence Council business.

### Reasons for recommendations:

1. To ensure the finite resources of the Council are allocated to the priorities.

2. To ensure the Corporate and Financial plans of the Council take account, and prepare for, emerging national and sub regional policy.

**Contact Officer:** Carolyn Curr

**Ext:** 7017

## 1. BACKGROUND

The Corporate Improvement Plan published 2007, set out the Councils' priorities that had been defined in consultation with local people and with partners. The priorities provided a focus for improvement and for promoting well-being and quality of life for all of our local communities. The priorities were:

Carlisle  
renaissance

*Cleaner, greener & safer*



The review of the Plan considered Cleaner, Greener, Safer and Learning City. Reporting arrangements for Carlisle Renaissance are being determined. The review considered levels of performance and satisfaction with Council services and with the Council overall. It also identified a number of factors, nationally and locally, which are influencing, or have the potential to influence Council business. These included:

- The financial position of the Council and the current savings strategy including vacancy management and service improvement reviews, falls in income, rising inflation, cost of job evaluation and rising energy costs.
- Prioritisation of the Capital Programme including housing strategy, Tullie House, Sands development, the pools, theatre and the current review of assets.
- The White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007 and the recent White Paper, Communities in Control. All of which focus on the importance of local authorities engaging with their local communities and involving them in developing more responsive, local services.
- Comprehensive Area Assessment from April 2009 and its emphasis on how statutory and non-statutory partners work together to improve outcomes for their area, and particularly for vulnerable groups.
- The priorities identified within the Community Plan for Carlisle:

- Climate change and the environment
  - Children and young people
  - Economic development and enterprise
  - Healthy communities and older people
  - Rural community planning
- Targets within the new Local Area Agreement for Cumbria, many of which support the Government's Community Empowerment Agenda, e.g. National Indicator 4, % of people who feel they can influence decisions locally, to be measured by the Place Survey, autumn 2008.

## **2. CONSULTATION**

**To date:** Senior Management Team  
Strategic Planning Group  
Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees  
Carlisle Partnership

Consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committees and with the Carlisle Partnership showed broad support for the current priorities of Cleaner, Greener, Safer and Learning City. It was felt that there was scope for more focus on the places people lived, i.e. local neighbourhoods and for better co-ordination of resources on the ground. This supports and is supported by the community empowerment pilots being developed in Harraby and Longtown. Street cleaning, parking bays, access to sport and leisure, quality parks and environments, i.e. those away from the centre, were all mentioned as issues for some residents.

There was a particular emphasis on affordable housing and social housing for rent, particularly for young people, and particularly as the current Housing Strategy ends in 2009/2010.

## **3. CONCLUSION**

Defining a clear set of priorities within the Corporate Improvement Plan, has helped the Council to focus on achieving improvement in those service areas that matter most to local communities:

- Significant reductions in many types of crime including criminal damage, domestic burglaries, robberies, vehicle crime, and a 19% reduction in anti-social behaviour on last year.
- Alternate weekly waste collection service and extended plastic and cardboard recycling collection; almost 50% household waste recycled
- A commitment to environmental improvement and responding to climate change; 19% reduction of carbon emissions from our own buildings
- Top satisfaction locally with the recycling service, sports and leisure, museums and galleries, and parks and open spaces<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> When compared to Allerdale Borough Council, Barrow, Copeland and Cumbria County Council, Tracker survey results, 2007

- Centre of Excellence proposal to accommodate and support the homeless, to include access to life skills, training and health services
- Bid to Government for major capital investment in provision for our gypsy and traveller community in Carlisle
- Surplus Council owned land identified for sale at below market value to be used for rented and low cost housing
- £2,250,000 investment through the Housing Strategy 5 year programme achieved the decent homes in the private sector, 2007, ahead of the 2010 target
- “Punching above our weight” with the Learning City priority. “The Council has shown vision and community leadership in directly promoting knowledge and skills development to support community aims<sup>2</sup>”.

However, inequalities still exist in our urban and rural communities. There are factors impinging on the priorities of the Council, not least the financial constraints, made worse by the current economic downturn. The review of the priorities, along side the financial plans of the Council, provides opportunity to reflect on our successes so far and how we might build on them. There is also opportunity to consider changes in the external environment and how we might “future proof” our plans. All of these considerations, and recent consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, help to define how the priorities might be developed and refined in order to bring some clarity and focus to what still needs to be done.

### **Key issues and options:**

#### **i) A better focus on the places where people live**

This fits well with the current Cleaner, Greener, Safer priority but could be refined further in response to the different needs of local communities in order to address inequality. More bespoke service delivery should be informed by the two community empowerment pilots being developed in partnership in Harraby and in Longtown. The objectives of the pilots include:

- To determine the needs of our communities and particularly those most vulnerable
- To involve the community in design and delivery of services
- To empower the community to consider, prioritise and act upon the issues that matter to them
- To test out the potential to develop Neighbourhood Management as a means of achieving empowerment

The longer term view is to determine a community engagement model that can be rolled out across Carlisle.

Working in partnership with others to improve services by ensuring better and equal access for users has been highlighted in the past as an area in which the Council could improve (Audit Commission). Comprehensive Area Assessment will focus on how partners work together to improve outcomes for their local area with a particular focus on those most vulnerable.

#### **ii) Strategic housing role**

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<sup>2</sup> Direction of Travel Report, Audit Commission, 2007/08

The Housing Strategy for Carlisle is a programme of investment and improvement that is due to end in 2009/10. Within the context of the Cumbria Strategy, Carlisle should present a strong position that considers the implications of its successful bid to be a Growth Point. The Council should be explicit about all it does, much of it innovative, to support the accommodation needs of those most vulnerable [and should consider how it may escalate its programme of affordable housing using its own surplus land].

The Council's strategic housing role does much to tackle the wide health inequalities across Carlisle and across different, mainly vulnerable groups within our communities. There are other service areas, not least environmental health, planning, sports and leisure, parks and open spaces, and the Learning City priority that are also concerned with improving health and well-being.

The Council is a Spearhead area meaning it scores poorly for the general health of local people when compared to the rest of the country. There is opportunity for the Council in its Community Leadership role, and through the Carlisle Partnership, to be more explicit about how it influences the "broader determinants" of health and for this to support the Partnership's bid for Carlisle to be designated Healthy City.

#### iii) Climate change

This remains high on local, national and global agendas. The Carlisle Partnership's Community Plan contains targets for reducing CO2 emissions per capita which in turn supports the Cumbria Local Area Agreement. The Council is working with the Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust and has produced a Green Travel Plan in support of this work. A Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan are currently being prepared in support of the Council's commitment to responding to climate change through the Nottingham Declaration and will require resourcing.

#### vi) Learning City

There is scope to further refine and to develop this priority in support of organisational development and improving skills across the district. For example, apprenticeships offer an opportunity to "grow our own" and to tackle skills shortages. Events previously funded by Carlisle Renaissance include Adult Learners Week, Celebration of Learning and the Joint Schools Council. Alternative resources will have to be found if these are to continue.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing / Resources – The Corporate Plan is being reviewed alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan which will link the priorities of the Council to the allocation of resources.
- Equality and disability – The review will be subject to equality impact assessment and further scrutiny through Cumbria Disability Network and AWAZ as part of the consultation process. The Council's target is to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by March 2008. Resources required to achieve this will be considered along with other priorities.
- Financial – As Staffing / Resources

- Legal – When considering its priorities, the Council should consider how it will address the new duty to involve local people as contained in The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007.
- Corporate – The Corporate Plan and subsequent reviews form a substantive part of the Council's policy and performance management framework. Monitoring our performance means our stakeholders, including local people, are able to form a judgement about how effective the Council is in achieving its priorities and providing value for money.
- Risk Management – The review will help us to manage any potential financial and reputational risk to the Council by ensuring its priorities take account of all the major factors that influence whether or not they are likely to be delivered.
- Environmental – Cleaner, Greener, Safer is a priority within the current plan. The review reported progress on this priority to date including carbon emissions and energy use.
- Crime and Disorder – Cleaner, Greener, Safer is a priority within the current plan; the review reported progress to date.
- Impact on Customers – The review will assess progress so far in delivering the priorities, including current performance and customer satisfaction. The Council's ability to determine priorities and develop services that meet the needs of its different local communities will improve as our understanding of the needs of local people improves. The review of the Corporate Plan and associated budget consultation is part of this process.