

Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Committee Recommendations on the Draft Corporate Plan, Budget and Risk Register 2016-2017

General Cabinet Response:

- ▶ Cabinet welcomes the comments of the Scrutiny Committee and thanks them for their work.
- ▶ Many of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee have been included in the corporate plan and budget 2016/2019.
- ▶ It should be understood that the corporate plan, risk register and budget are designed to strategic documents and are not designed to contain all the detail of the council's operations. They are underpinned by a number of other more detailed plans and strategies to ensure delivery, a number of which are considered by the Scrutiny Committee from time to time.
- ▶ As part of the Council's overall Performance Management Framework, regular reports on the corporate plan, risk register and budget will continue to be provided to Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee and Governance Committee.
- ▶ Cabinet will work with the Scrutiny Committee to look at how best to engage on the process of preparing the corporate plan, risk register and budget in future years.
- ▶ Detailed comments on each of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations are included in the tables below.

Scrutiny Committee Comments from 8 December 2015

General comments:

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
▶ Actions and targets should be more SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and timebound)	Cabinet is comfortable that the corporate plan is robust and includes the objectives, key actions and measures that will help the Council deliver its vision and priorities. The corporate plan is underpinned by other plans and strategies, including detailed operational service plans, to ensure performance is managed effectively.

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Objectives, actions and measures don't always follow or link together 	<p>Again, Cabinet remains comfortable that the approach adopted ensures the Council's vision and priorities are delivered effectively.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Add an action around a combined authority for Lancashire 	<p>This has been added to the Corporate Plan 2016/2019.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Process, consultation and research in coming up with the Corporate Plan, medium-term financial strategy and risk register should be more explicit 	<p>The covering report for the Cabinet report presenting the draft Corporate Plan and Risk Register for 2016/2019 is more explicit with this information provided.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In the interests of transparency, asks that the latest draft of the Corporate Plan, medium-term financial strategy and risk register is presented to the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 January 2016 	<p>Due to time constraints this year unfortunately this wasn't possible. However, as part of reviewing how Scrutiny is involved in the draft corporate plan, risk and budget for future years this can be considered.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More robust resident satisfaction survey work is conducted to measure the success of the corporate plan (possibly utilising Lancashire County Council's representative residents' panel) 	<p>Many of the resident satisfaction targets have been increased for 2016/2019. The way these targets are measured is currently being reviewed in light of the e-citizen system and the capability to carry out electronic surveys.</p>

Clean, green and safe

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More specific on delivering key aspects of the new vision and action plan for Worden Park 	<p>Worden Park is a key action in the 2016/2019 corporate plan and is supported by the more detailed Worden Park Vision Plan and the strategic review of the Council's property assets.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Extend the actions around creating the new Central Park 	<p>This has been included in the 2016/2019 corporate plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Include a target of the number of fixed penalties issued for cleansing, particularly around dog fouling and litter 	<p>Not supported or included at the present time. This will be reviewed once the outcome of the Business Transformation enforcement project is complete.</p>

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
▶ Implement a communications campaign using existing tools and resources to change behaviours and encourage civic pride around litter, dog fouling and people looking after their local area at no cost	The council does engage local communities in campaigns of this nature from time to time, such as Clean for the Queen..
▶ Action around work being undertaken to mitigate the risk from the Waste Cost Share Agreement	This is a key risk in the risk register and will be closely monitored by Cabinet and is being addressed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy as a key financial issue
▶ Specific action about the future use of Worden Arts Centre and Worden Hall Derby Wing	The strategy property and assets review has been added as a key action in the corporate plan 2016/2019.

Strong South Ribble in the heart of a prosperous Central Lancashire

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
▶ Be specific on which town and village centre schemes will be implemented and when	This is being taken forward as part of the City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Plan and My Neighbourhood Plans.
▶ Include a target on the percentage of empty properties to be brought back into use	A target has been added to the corporate plan 2016/2019.
▶ The measures should include the economic vibrancy of other town centres and not just Hough Lane	This target has not been included in the corporate plan 2016/2019 as there are wider measures of success in the City Deal programme.
▶ Add an action to implement and monitor the new Housing Strategy	This has been added as an action in the corporate plan 2016/2019.
▶ The number of affordable homes delivered measure should be more ambitious and linked with the 30% affordable housing in the relevant planning policies	A measure on implementing the Housing Framework has been include in the corporate plan 2016-2019.

Strong and Healthy Communities

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
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▶ Add key actions from the Chorley and South Ribble Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	This is not supported. Updates on the Health & Wellbeing Partnership will be provided to the Health Scrutiny Steering Group.
▶ What is the current situation with Air Quality Zones?	A separate update will be provided to Scrutiny Committee Members.
▶ Carry out a strategic review of leisure and future needs of borough, including the potential to expand leisure trust remit to parks and football pitches etc.	This is being considered as part of the strategic property and assets review included in the corporate plan 2016-2019.

Efficient, effective and exceptional council

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
▶ Strategic property and asset review should be included	This has been added as a key action in the corporate plan 2016-2019.
▶ The measures of success should include employee sickness absence rates	This measure is included in the Our People Plan, which is presented to the Scrutiny Committee each year. It is also monitored on a continuous basis by officer at a corporate and operational level.
▶ Business rate collection rates would be good measure to have	This has been added as a measure to the corporate plan 2016-2019.
▶ Could a strategic review of fees and charges across the Council be carried out to ensure we are maximising and doing all we can to bring more into the Council?	This is reviewed regularly by Cabinet Members as part of the budget challenge each year. The budget for 2016-2019 includes new fees and charges.
▶ Improving external communications should be a specific action, linked to 'we're going digital', website and e-citizen and social media	This has been included as a key action in the corporate plan 2016-2019.
▶ Business transformation areas are explicitly listed in the corporate plan with the anticipated benefits, savings, timescales etc.	This has been included as a key action in the corporate plan 2016-2019, with the more detailed project documentation information being reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny on a six-monthly basis, in similar manner to when considering the Portfolio update earlier in the financial year.

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<p>► Include an action and target around energy efficiency in the council's properties about saving money and the environment</p>	<p>This will be considered as part of the strategic review of the council's property assets included in the corporate plan 2016-2019. This is monitored at an operational level.</p>

Scrutiny Committee Comments from 4 February 2016

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
<p>Corporate Plan</p>	
<p>1. Disappointed no feedback had been provided on the Scrutiny Committee's consultation response to the Cabinet towards the Corporate Plan, Budget and Risk agreed on 8 December 2015 and looks forward to receiving a response.</p>	<p>Unfortunately this wasn't possible within the tight timescales. However, this will be reviewed for future years.</p>
<p>2. Notes that out of the 27 comments made by the Scrutiny Committee, just six appeared to have been taken forward in the draft Corporate Plan 2016/2017, with one action taken out.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>3. The Corporate Plan was largely the same as previous years, without SMART actions and success measures, making it difficult to manage performance, be transparent and accountable. It was not felt possible to hold the Council, Cabinet and senior officers to account.</p>	<p>Cabinet is comfortable that the corporate plan is robust and includes the objectives, key actions and measures that will help the Council deliver its vision and priorities. The corporate plan is underpinned by other plans and strategies, including detailed operational service plans, to ensure performance is managed appropriately and effectively as part of the Council's Corporate Performance Management Framework</p>

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4. The Corporate Plan didn't always link with the budget/financial strategy.	Proactive steps have been taken this year to ensure that the budget makes greater links with the corporate plan, with the priorities highlighted in the budget report.
5. Clean, Green and Safe - the zero tolerance approach to litter and dog fouling seemed to have been diluted in key action 4. Disappointed that the Cabinet member for Neighbourhoods & Street Scene referred to zero tolerance at the last scrutiny meeting extensively and that it had now been removed and should be put back.	The Council's approach to this key action has not been "diluted" and investment continues to be made in this area. It is felt that the Council's approach to litter and dog fouling is best articulated in the action contained within the corporate plan 2016-2019. The Cabinet Member gave his commitment to tackling littering and dog fouling at the Scrutiny Committee meeting and will provide future updates to the Scrutiny Committee.
6. Welcomed that many of the resident satisfaction targets have increased and were more realistic, but they could have been more ambitious.	Not supported.
7. The Scrutiny Committee had previously mentioned that Gateway's customer survey could not robustly measure general satisfaction and asked that this situation be improved.	The comment about the robustness of the survey data is not accepted. That said, we are looking to enhance the pool of customers surveyed to cover those who have registered as e-citizens and to make use of electronic surveys.
Budget	
1. Welcomes, whilst still a lengthy document it was easier to read than in previous years, broken down in 'chunks' and key principles.	By its very nature the corporate plan and budget cover the whole of the Council's operations. It is therefore necessary to provide sufficient information to enable all councillors to understand the key issues so that they can vote accordingly. We have amended the format of the report this year and will continue to take feedback for future years. Also we will supplement throughout the year with additional financially based Member Learning Hours to build-up member knowledge in this area.
2. Page 1 - Recommendation 6: In the interests of transparency and accountability decisions around	Cabinet are comfortable that the arrangements for agreeing the internal staffing arrangements, these have

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<p>staffing should not be delegated. From the budget report the decision and impact was likely to be significant (potential £400K to be taken out of staffing budgets through re-structures etc., see page 33). The proposals should be presented to Scrutiny before Cabinet makes a decision.</p>	<p>been in place for the best part of eight years. The Council continue as in previous years as it provides a robust and transparent system, with decisions taken under delegation published and shared with councillors in the normal manner, to enable staffing changes to be agreed in a timely manner minimises any potential disruption to services.</p>
<p>3. Page 3 - A. Forecasted Outturn 2015/2016: forecasted underspend of £607k this financial year, whilst welcomed news as not as much needed to be taken from reserves - consideration should be given as to effectiveness of budgeting, financial planning and assumptions made. Improved confidence in the process was sought along with greater explanation.</p>	<p>The Council has been commended by our external auditor for our financial management. The forecasted underspend is part of the Council's prudent financial management and making the best use of resources and opportunities available. Full detail of this was set out in the report and also considered by the Governance Committee. Consideration will be given as to whether information reporting can be improved in the future.</p>
<p>4. Page 9 - 1. Business Rates Retention: Councils allowed to retain a proportion of any additional income generated from growing the tax base of business in their areas. Linked to this £100K was being invested in business support and place promotion (see page 18). Should growing the tax base for businesses be a measure in the Corporate Plan (similar to Chorley) so that the outcome could be measured and monitored.</p>	<p>Growth in the business rates tax base is one of the success measures within City Deal. This is a City Deal rather than corporate plan measure as it requires a partnership approach to bring forward some of the borough's key employment sites (infrastructure etc). That said we can report progress in this specific area as and when we provide updates on City Deal.</p>
<p>5. Page 16 - Review of fees and charges - £80K: Proposal to charge for car parking at Withy Grove Park and Worden Park. An impact assessment on what effect this would have on local residents and roads around the parks should be carried out, LCC as highways authority should be consulted. Rationale for choosing these parks as opposed to others (and</p>	<p>A full programme of consultation was planned as part of the review and introduction of car parking charges. Council has now agreed that additional time to complete this review and to conclude the conversations with LCC concerning the integration of both on/off-street parking enforcement.</p>

Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Cabinet Response
<p>would they follow). Communication and engaging with residents and other agencies on introducing parking charges at these parks was really important.</p>	
<p>6. Page 19 - Commends new Investment and Funding: The links with the corporate plan - outcomes and what was expected to be achieved should be explicit to ensure a return on investment.</p>	<p>Cabinet is comfortable that the corporate plan 2016-2019 covers this point and that the investment links back to outcomes within the corporate plan.</p>
<p>7. Page 20 - E. Budget Consultation: No budget consultation was taking place. The report stated that consultation would take place on the Corporate Plan, but not how. There was no invitation in the reports or on the Council's website to encourage residents and businesses to provide their views (unlike other councils such as Chorley and the County Council etc.)</p>	<p>As in previous years, interested parties are being asked for their views via a dedicated budget page on the Council's website.</p>
<p>8. Page 21 - Summary: Welcomes ambitious capital programme over three years - was the capacity, skills and resources available to delivering the programme and how effective was the council's project management framework - any improvements needed. Re-assurance capacity to deliver all in a timely fashion. An example was given in that the Leyland My Neighbourhood's Leyland Loop Project had been delayed due to capacity issues.</p>	<p>Each project will be assessed for the capacity needed to deliver it as is usual practice and can involve the use of external specialists where required. Additional staffing resource has been specifically proposed in the budget to support the City Deal programme of capital works and the priorities identified within the new Housing Framework</p>
<p>9. Page 21 - Clean, green and safe - Worden Park Toilet Facilities (£150K) - pleased to see provided as raised at last week's Scrutiny Committee. Coin entry units to be provided - assumed users would have to pay to use them and the associated issues. Consideration be given to these facilities being introduced in other areas across the borough (including</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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parks).	
<p>10. Page 25 - revenue reserves: Commends Borough Investment Account - little information about what this was, the governance, transparency and decision-making process, ensuring there was the commercial skills and experience involved to invest wisely, with examples of assets such as The Derby Wing being empty.</p>	<p>A two stage strategic review of the Council's reserves has been commissioned, the second phase being concluded when we close the accounts in June 2016. Further information on the investment strategy and governance arrangements for the Borough Investment Account will be brought forward once the budget has been agreed. However it is worth drawing a distinction between the Council's operational and commercial property portfolio, the latter of which currently enjoys an occupancy level of around 97%</p>
<p>11. Page 25 - revenues reserves: Other - £1.3M appeared quite a lot of money to group together (non-specific), could this be presented in a more meaningful way.</p>	<p>Further consideration will be given to how this information is presented in future years.</p>
<p>12. Page 33 - Budget efficiency programme 2016/2017: A number of efficiency targets were included (Business Transformation: Environmental Health £100K, Neighbourhoods £50K) - what were the efficiencies, how were they going to be achieved, what would be the impact on services etc. Also, £236K to be taken from vacant posts, what kind of posts and the potential impact on services. More transparency might be helpful. Would the efficiency of £50K in Neighbourhoods affect enforcement and responding to littering and dog fouling issues etc.</p>	<p>Updates on progress against the budget efficiency programme are provided to the Governance Committee and Scrutiny Committee as part of the usual performance management framework.</p>
<p>13. Page 38 - New investment in capital projects: Welcomes the investment in Withy Grove Park (£250K) to bring up</p>	<p>The revenue implications of projects and proposals is a key consideration for all council initiatives. This will be</p>

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<p>to the Green Flag standard - however, possibly be mindful of the revenue cost implications and commitment involved (following the last Green Flag feedback report on Worden Park).</p>	<p>taken into account as improvements and investments are made to Withy Grove Park.</p>