# Reviewing the Council's vision, objectives and priorities for 2006/09

## SUMMARY

1.1    This report highlights the outcomes of an informal workshop held by Cabinet Members on 12 October 2005 to determine corporate priorities for 2006/09.  The workshop covered:

- the development of clearer links between the Council's vision and the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

- the revision of current objectives and priorities alongside existing national and local priorities, current performance issues and manifesto commitments

- the implications for the Council's budget and planning framework

- how the format of the Corporate Plan could be made more relevant to local people.

1.2    It is proposed that four overarching objectives supported by key priorities will guide resource allocation over the next three years, in line with the approach agreed by the Cabinet on 12 July 2005.  The objectives are:

- to improve the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods

- to encourage lifelong learning and achievement as a catalyst for economic growth

- to build healthy and independent communities

- to deliver excellent services, performance and value for money.

1.3    The Council's vision will be revised to reflect the new Community Strategy.

1.4    Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1    To agree the draft objectives and priorities as a basis for referral to Scrutiny Management Commission and consultation with employees, partners and the public.

2.2    To note the implications of the draft objectives and priorities for the budget and planning framework, and the refreshed Community Strategy for the Council's vision.

**COUNCIL CABINET**
**29 November 2005**

Report of the Director of Finance

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## Reviewing the Council's vision, objectives and priorities for 2006/09

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| SUPPORTING INFORMATION |
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### 1. Informal workshop held by Cabinet Members to review priorities

1.1 An informal workshop was held by Cabinet Members on 12 October 2005 to develop draft objectives and priorities for 2006/09. The workshop considered:

- the development of clearer links between the Council's vision and the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

- the revision of current objectives and priorities alongside existing national and local priorities, current performance issues and manifesto commitments

- the implications for the Council's budget and planning framework

- how the format of the Corporate Plan could be made more relevant to local people.

### 2. The development of clearer links between the Council's vision and the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

2.1 There is a need to demonstrate through the strategic planning framework clearer linkages between the Council's Corporate Plan and other key areas such as the Derby City Partnership – DCP – Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

2.2 The Community Strategy is currently being refreshed for 2006/09 although it is expected that high level priorities will be:

- to create 'a city centre for all ages' by putting in place actions to improve the city centre and make it accessible for all

- to improve Derby's deprived neighbourhoods, so that the gap in opportunities between people living there and the rest of the city is reduced.

2.3 The Local Area Agreement – LAA – is also being revised for 2006/07. As this is a key delivery mechanism for the Community Strategy it is expected that outcomes will be broadly aligned to the priorities shown above.

2.4     It is important for the Council's vision to be consistent with both of these documents and it is therefore proposed to produce a revised vision statement once the Community Strategy has been finalised.

**3.      The revision of current objectives and priorities alongside existing national and local priorities, current performance issues and manifesto commitments**

3.1     The priorities workshop included exercises in which Members reviewed a long list of priorities and their relative importance.  Members also discussed whether priorities could be grouped into broader headline areas, providing a smaller number of overarching objectives.

3.2     Eight key priorities were identified during this process, which Members were asked to rank.  The results of the exercise are shown below:

| Rank | Shortlisted priorities |
|------|------------------------|
| 1 | Neighbourhood working |
| 2 | Tackling poverty and deprivation |
| 3 | Raising educational achievement - reflecting a wider agenda incorporating schools in causing concern |
| 4 | Reduce crime and fear of crime - including social cohesion and stronger communities |
| 5 | Cleaner streets and public facilities |
| 6 | Minimise council tax and increase value for money - including Building on Excellence |
| 7 | Childrens services integration and improvement |
| 8 | Modernising adults social care |

3.3     The first four priority areas attracted significant support as would be expected; they closely reflect government priorities and local manifesto pledges.  There is however scope for rationalisation as priorities ranked 1, 2 and 4 are very similar - focused on stronger local communities, promoted by neighbourhood working arrangements.

3.4     'Modernising social care' and the 'integration and improvement of childrens services' are both priorities in 2005/06.  Discussions at the workshop indicated that they continue to be high priority for Cabinet Members.

3.5     Members felt that many of the inwardly focused priorities from 2005/06, such as improving business processes, were implicit in improving service delivery.  It is therefore proposed to have a single priority reflecting the need to minimise Council Tax levels through developing more efficient processes and improving value for money.

3.6 Based on discussions with the Cabinet, the following four objectives are proposed for inclusion in the Corporate Plan…

| High-level objectives | Priorities | Priority position |
|---|---|---|
| 1. To improve the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods | <ul><li>To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour</li><li>To reduce inequalities between neighbourhoods</li><li>To reinvigorate the city centre and river areas</li><li>To make Derby cleaner and greener</li><li>To provide greater opportunities for people to participate in decisions about the area they live in</li></ul> | 1, 2, 4 & 5 |
| 2. To encourage lifelong learning and achievement as a catalyst for economic growth | <ul><li>To provide early and effective support for under performing schools to reduce the number of 'causing concern' schools</li><li>To improve educational attainment at Key Stage and GCSE levels</li><li>To raise skill levels to improve the chances of securing employment</li></ul> | 3 |
| 3. To build healthy and independent communities | <ul><li>To promote healthier communities</li><li>To improve the standard of social care for vulnerable adults and older people</li><li>To deliver joined up services for children and young people that meet the needs of the local community</li></ul> | 7, 8 |
| 4. To deliver excellent services, performance and value for money | <ul><li>To reduce inefficiency by improving business processes and ability to perform - implementing the Building on Excellence programme - customer service, accommodation, procurement, e-Derby, people and performance, communication and engagement</li><li>To minimise Council Tax levels and increase value for money</li></ul> | 6 |

3.7 These objectives and priorities will be refined over the next few months to facilitate the development of supporting actions and targets.

**4.      Implications for the Council's budget and planning framework**

4.1     The Council's objectives and priorities guide resource allocation and more detailed service planning to promote improvements in service delivery.  It is not intended to identify everything the Council will do.  Limiting the number of priorities highlights areas for significant improvement or change, and provides a focus for service development actions and resources.

4.2     Cabinet on 12 July 2005 approved an approach to integrate Corporate Plan priorities with the budget planning process.  The Council's financial position has significant implications for the Council's ability to fund priorities so it is important that the two processes remain closely aligned.

4.3     The proposed priorities and the way in which they are phased over the three years is a key element of the budget process and consultation.  It is proposed that the 13 priorities for 2006/09 will be supported by clear outcomes and targets timelined over a three year period – 'do' actions in year one with 'plan' activities for years two and three.

4.4     The current organisation of priorities into high-level objectives is at this stage draft and will be refined.  Targets will be set for priorities, and reported under the relevant objective, including the priorities from the previous year.  The Corporate Plan will highlight supporting actions and timescales to deliver these.

**5.      Making the Corporate Plan more relevant to local people**

5.1     Members expressed a desire to produce a more 'user friendly' summary of the Corporate Plan, which would include high-level priorities and outcomes only.  Members recognised the need to retain a detailed document for internal stakeholders and external regulators.

**6.      Next steps**

6.1     Review the Council's vision for appropriateness in light of the refreshed Community Strategy.

6.2     Present draft objectives and priorities to Scrutiny Management Commission and start consultation with employees, partners and the public.

6.3     Establish a framework for the three-year budget process, in line with the approach agreed on 12 July 2005, and the development of Corporate and Business Plans.

6.4     Further define the objectives and priorities where required to ensure clarity and facilitate the development of specific actions and targets.

6.5     Develop a 'user-friendly' summary of the Corporate Plan.

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**Background papers:**          None
**List of appendices:**          Appendix 1 – Implications

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial**

1. The priorities will be a key driver in determining the allocation of resources in the budget process over the next three years.

**Legal**

2. None directly arising from this report.

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising from this report.

**Equalities impact**

4. None directly arising from this report.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

5. The report makes proposals to replace the existing objectives and priorities.