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**REPORT TO:** Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Commission  
Environment Services Overview & Scrutiny Commission  
Resources Overview & Scrutiny Commission

**DATE:** 5th September, 2005  
12th September, 2005  
19th September, 2005

**DEPARTMENT:** Corporate Policy & Improvement Resources

**REPORTING OFFICERS:** Executive Director - Corporate Policy & Improvement  
(Kevin Douglas)  
Director of Resources  
(John Sowden)

**SUBJECT:** **MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY/  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2008**

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** All

**FORWARD PLAN REF:**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Following the corporate restructure, the Council has reviewed its corporate planning process to bring consideration of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Strategic Plan together.
- 1.2 It has also revised its timetable to ensure the Scrutiny Commissions consider the draft documents prior to Cabinet in order that they take those into account.
- 1.3 Also, the proposal is to have a single corporate document, to be known as the Strategic Plan, which articulates the Council Vision, Goal, Corporate Priorities and Strategic Priority Actions.
- 1.4 The Cabinet approved the draft MTFS on 13th July, 2005 and the Draft Strategic Plan on 24th August, 2005 for planning and consultation purposes.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to provide an approach for the Commission to consider their responses.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Overview Commissions consider the MTFS and the Strategic Plan and make any comments to Cabinet.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDED REASONS FOR DECISIONS

3.1 It supports the corporate planning approach agreed by Council.

## 4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION

4.1 None.

## 5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 The Commissions are asked to consider two key documents and to forward their comments to Cabinet. These are:-

- (1) **Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2006/2007 to 2008/2009:** A copy of this report was sent to all Members as part of the Cabinet Papers of 13th July, 2005 and this report should be brought to the meeting.

Following consideration of the report, Cabinet agreed the following recommendations:-

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ◇ | Increase the overall budget by 3.4% to £20.634m in 2006/2007.  |
| ◇ | Increase the budget for 2007/2008 by 3.2% to £21,234m and by 3% to £21.834m in 2008/2009.  |
| ◇ | Increase fees and charges by 3%.   |
| ◇ | No increase on non demand-led expenditure.   |
| ◇ | Make efficiency savings of 2.5% of which 1.25% to be cash savings.   |
| ◇ | A continued working balance target of £2.75m.  |
| ◇ | The following spending pressures be considered as growth items in the detailed budget process:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recycling - Capital and Revenue</li><li>• Access to Services/Customer Services</li><li>• HR Strategy (Single Status)</li><li>• Memorial Safety</li></ul> |
| ◇ | The Council plan on the basis of a 2% grant increase from Government.  |

Subsequent to the meeting, the efficiency savings target has been raised from 2.5% to **3.5%** of which 2% is to be cash savings. This is a total saving of £851,000. Therefore, the Commissions should base their consideration on this percentage figure.

(2) **Strategic Plan 2005-2008:** A copy of this report was sent to all Members as part of the Cabinet Papers for 24th August, 2005 and this report should be brought to the meeting.

Following consideration of the report, Cabinet agreed the Draft Strategic Plan for planning and consultation purposes. This included the following:-

### Vision

**“To make the Harrogate District a better place to live, work and visit”** by:-

- ◇ preserving its heritage;
- ◇ enhancing its unique environment;
- ◇ delivering first-class public services;
- ◇ encouraging everyone to share in its success.

### Organisational Goal

**“To be GOOD by 2007 and EXCELLENT by 2010”.**

### Corporate Priorities

- ◇ **Affordable Housing** - ensure people have access to housing opportunities throughout the District.
- ◇ **Traffic and Transport** - ensuring the provision of a transport network that will provide access to public transport and integrated facilities.
- ◇ **Keeping the District Safe** - ensuring communities are even safer and securer and feel safer.
- ◇ **Caring for the Environment** - ensuring enhancement and protection of natural and built environment.
- ◇ **Supporting our Local Economy** - ensuring a robust and varied economy that benefits local people and creates employment opportunities.
- ◇ **First Class Public Services** - ensuring services delivered meet the needs of customers, are accessible and of a high quality.

In undertaking the review and in adopting its organisational goal, the Council has added a seventh corporate priority focusing on the organisation and its ability to deliver its outward-looking priorities.

**Organisational Improvement** - a commitment to investing in improving the organisation by being a good employer, building its organisational capacity to deliver increased performance.

### **Strategic Priority Actions**

**Community Planning** - shaping the future of the Harrogate District up to 2021 on transport, housing and the environment.

**Resources and Priorities** - ensuring that the Council uses its resources to provide value for money services.

**Long-term investment in the Harrogate International Centre** - assessing the feasibility of refurbishing the existing exhibition space and other facilities to support the local economy.

**Royal Hall** - completing this agreed heritage restoration project on time and within budget.

**City Region/Northern Way** - securing the Harrogate District local economy's place within the wider economic region on Leeds.

**Holiday Tourism** - supporting an effective holiday tourism strategy in the District's market towns and rural areas.

**Cultural Services** - sustaining a viable District-wide provision (sports, parks, art and museums).

**Customer Services** - providing local people with a point of contact and access via telephone, internet, etc, for Council information and services, eg, paying bills, booking a squash court, etc.

**IT Investment** - enabling the Council to deliver more services electronically to local people.

**People Management** - developing Council staff to enable them to deliver high quality services to the public.

**Leadership** - ensuring Councillors and senior managers have the right skills to meet the changing needs of the modern public sector.

**Rural Community Investment** - investment in rural areas and market towns to improve transport, housing, quality of life and address rural diversity issues.

The Commissions therefore need to bare their considerations on the above recommendations.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 In addition to the consultation with the Overview & Scrutiny Commissions, there is a wider consultation with the following groups:-

- (i) Staff - via Intranet.
- (ii) Members - individual questionnaire.
- (iii) Parish Councils - individual questionnaire.
- (iv) District Panel - individual questionnaire.
- (v) Chamber of Trade/Businesses - individual questionnaire.

6.2 The outcomes of these will be reported to Cabinet at the meeting in September.

## 7.0 SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION

7.1 Whilst it is up to the Commissions how they would wish to comment to Cabinet, the Policy Unit has utilised an approach based around the pro-forma attached as Appendices 1 to 3.

7.2 This is included only as guidance for Members to help shape the discussion.

7.3 Comments on all aspects of the draft documents are welcomed.

## 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The two documents are key in developing the services of the Council and therefore it is important that all Members have an opportunity to comment and feed into the final documents.

8.2 The decision to utilise the scrutiny process to engage with Members provides an opportunity for the comments to be fed into Cabinet.

8.3 Along with the wider consultation, it will mean that any final decision can be made with the benefit of detailed engagement.

**OFFICER CONTACT:** Please contact Kevin Douglas if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at the Department of Corporate Policy & Improvement, Council Offices, Crescent Gardens, Harrogate by telephone on 01423 556705 or by email - [kevin.douglas@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.douglas@harrogate.gov.uk)

## SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT/POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

		Implications are		
		Positive	Neutral	Negative
A.	Economy		✓	
B.	Environment		✓	
C.	Social Equity		✓	
(i)	General		✓	
(ii)	Customer Care/People with Disabilities		✓	
(iii)	Health Implications		✓	
D.	Crime and Disorder Implications		✓	

If all comments lie within the shaded areas, the proposal is sustainable.

