

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....21st February 2019

1. Title of Item/Report

Council Plan 2019-2022

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the Council Plan for 2019-22.

The Council Plan set out the vision and key objectives of the Council. It aimed to provide clarity and focus for Councillors, managers, staff, members of the public and partners about the Council's ambitions.

The Council Plan was a rolling 3 year plan that summarised the Council's key objectives. It was reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet and Full Council and Cabinet received six monthly update reports on progress against the key objectives.

The Council Plan described the Council's four policy principles that support decision making:-

- Protect the vulnerable
- Create economic prosperity
- Tackle inequality
- Help people to be healthier

The key objectives in the Council Plan 2019-22 had been rolled forward from the previous version. It was recommended that members review the Council Plan and the key objectives after the local elections in May 2019 in preparation for a revised Council Plan being approved in early 2020.

Discussion sessions had been arranged for 15 and 19 February 2019 for elected members to discuss the Council Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

A copy of the Council Plan was attached to the report.

The Council continued to face huge challenges with the continuous and sustained reductions to local authority and other public sector budgets. This was very clearly a position and context that the vast majority of

people delivering public services believed was not viable going forward.

The Council had adapted to funding reductions of £52million over the last six years and the Council was still confronted with having to find further savings. At the same time demand for services particularly adult social care and children's services continued to rise.

The Council was in as strong a position as it could be. The Council had a strong track record of sound financial management and the Council had been dealing with these problems successfully for many years. Finding additional savings by 2020/21 wouldn't be easy. Further difficult decisions would have to be made.

The scale of the challenge the Council was facing during the period of the Council Plan made it inevitable that there would be further job losses and cuts to services and the harsh reality was these cuts would become increasingly more notable. In making the tough decisions that inevitably face the Council it would continue to use our policy principles to support its decision making:

In spite of all of this the Council remained fiercely proud of what had been achieved over the last year across all of the themes within the Council Plan.

Many of the residents and visitors to the Borough positively commented on how welcoming and inviting the place was, how pleased they were with the changes made to the town centres, housing regeneration schemes and the 'invest to save' street lighting improvements. The year-round programme of events, the majority of which were free, remained hugely popular and successful both in terms of people experiencing them and the additional income they brought in to the Borough.

The Council would continue to do the very best that it could for the children and young people in its care, often in difficult circumstances, and remained resolute on the commitment to this as corporate parents. The Council was challenging and supporting of schools to carry on making improvements and were actively encouraging local businesses to create more apprenticeship opportunities as well as developing them in the Council.

The Council was heartened by the most recent independent Borough-wide residents' survey which indicated that the people of the Borough were satisfied with and trust the Council, believe that it acted on resident's concerns and that it provided value for money.

With the strong political and executive leadership, committed and resourceful employees, solid partnerships and robust financial and corporate governance the Council firmly believed it was better placed than many to rise and respond to both the challenges and the opportunities.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Council Plan be endorsed.
2. The proposal for members to review the Council Plan and the key objectives after the local elections in May 2019 in preparation for a revised Council Plan being approved in early 2020 be endorsed.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

3. The Council Plan be approved.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To update Members on the Council's financial position.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, Friday, 1 March 2018 for recommendations 1 and 2 only.

Proper Officer  
25 February 2019