

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board

19th May 2016

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

MRS K. JONES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: ALL

**Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Business Plan
2016/17**

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Business Plan for 2016/17 to the Cabinet Board for information

Executive Summary

2. The Council's performance management framework requires each head of service to produce at least one business plan at the beginning of each financial year.
3. The business plan identifies the strengths and challenges facing the department over the next three years.
4. Specific priorities for action are identified for the next 12 months, with broad areas of focus identified for the following two financial years.
5. Performance targets are identified, where relevant, alongside financial savings strategies.

Background

6. The Council's performance management framework has been developed in recent years to make a stronger link between the Council's overall priorities and those priorities being pursued by individual departments. The framework also provides for a clearer link to be made at departmental level between the resources (both human and financial) available and the performance outputs of services and functions. This is of growing importance given the continuing climate of austerity.
7. The business plan for the Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services department for 2016/17 has been developed with input from staff employed across the department and builds on the priorities identified in previous years.
8. Of particular note this year is the range of new legislation that has been enacted by the Welsh Government which has introduced new duties and responsibilities for local government – the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015; the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015; the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015; the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. For the most part, new duties have not been accompanied by additional resource and it is proving to be a challenge to accommodate the work associated with the new duties within a reducing budget.
9. Implementing the Digital by Choice Strategy is another major area of focus for the business plan this year, with the department leading work to expand the range of services provided by the Council on line; working with partners to tackle digital exclusion; whilst also exploiting the benefits of digital technologies within the department in the delivery of the services and functions that sit within the portfolio.
10. Work is also continuing to place CCTV on a sustainable footing. Members agreed during 2014/15 that pursuing a combined service with the City and County of Swansea appeared to offer the best option for sustaining the service and during 2016/16 a business case will be brought forward to bring this work to a conclusion.

11. The business plan provides a clear framework for the department over the next 12 months. Each service manager will prepare a report card setting out in more detail how their individual sections contribute to the overall plan, and personal objectives agreed between the head of service and accountable managers will reflect those arrangements. These arrangements will be further supported by the employee appraisal system which has been revised in 2016/17 to make the system better fit for purpose.

Financial Impact

12. The Council needs to deliver further reductions in its net revenue expenditure following several years of budget cuts. In 2016/17 the department is expected to deliver savings of 10% and a further 10% in 2017/18.
13. The required savings attached to Customer Services and the loss of grant available to support the work of the Public Services Board will have significant impact on the department.
14. In addition, the new duties and responsibilities for local government with the introduction of a range of legislation have not been accompanied by additional resource and this is proving to be a challenge to accommodate the work associated with the new duties within a reducing budget.

Equality Impact Assessment

15. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment

Workforce Impacts

16. Whilst it was considered that the department could operate effectively with significantly fewer staff, there have been additional, unfunded new areas of work that have been introduced during the year due to a range of new responsibilities created through legislation by the UK and Welsh Governments. It is planned that the department will use its specific reserve to create the capacity needed to absorb these additional workloads in the short term.
17. A comprehensive training needs analysis was conducted in 2015/16. Work is in progress to ensure staff are accessing the learning and development opportunities that have been identified.

18. As a consequence of reductions in expenditure and the resultant reduction in staff numbers, increased workloads are inevitable. However, a particular focus will be given to ensuring staff have manageable workloads and are operating in an environment that promotes their wellbeing

Legal Impacts

19. There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

Risk Management

20. An analysis of the risk in achieving the department's objectives and the plans to mitigate those risks, has been undertaken and is included in the business plan, attached at Appendix 1.

Consultation

21. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item

Recommendations

22. That Members of the Cabinet Board note and endorse the Business Plan for 2016/17 enclosed at Appendix 1.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

23. In accordance with the requirements of the Council's corporate performance management framework

Implementation of Decision

24. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

Appendices

25. Appendix 1 - Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services Business Plan for 2016/17.

List of Background Papers

26. None

Officer Contact

27. Mrs Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

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