

# Scrutiny Report



REPORT NO

Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: Scrutiny Committee

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## Corporate Plan 2012-2016 - year one review

### Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the results of the year one review of the corporate plan. It provides an update on progress with the key actions, targets and measures included in the plan.

### Strategic Objectives

2. The Corporate Plan 2012 -16 sets the Council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities. It provides a framework for the allocation of resources and to guide the council's decisions over the lifetime of the plan.

### Background

3. The plan was developed following widespread consultation with residents and stakeholders. It is a key document which sets out our vision, strategic objectives and corporate priorities. For each of our corporate priorities, key targets, actions and measures show how they will be achieved and measured.

### Progress in 2012/13

4. We have made good progress in delivering on our corporate plan commitments in year one. A summary of progress in 2012/13 against measures, actions and

targets in the corporate plan is attached in appendix one. Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on progress made to date.

## **Financial Implications**

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **Legal Implications**

6. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **Conclusion**

7. We have made good progress in delivering the council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities in the first year of the new corporate plan as set out in appendix one to this report.

## **Background Papers**

- Corporate plan 2012-2016

# **Appendix One - Vale of White Horse District Council Corporate Plan year one progress 2012/13**

1. This report seeks to give the highlights of progress made against the corporate plan covering the period 2012 to 2016. As with any long term plan much of year one is about gaining appropriate base line data to agree key targets. We will continue to monitor progress against targets to ensure efficient delivery. Baseline data has been collected during 2012, from which new targets for 2013/14 have been set.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: EXCELLENT DELIVERY OF KEY SERVICES**

2. Customer Service Excellence: though there has been some delay in the original time frame, a new action plan has been developed and our new target for corporate assessment is Spring 2014.
3. Baseline data on customer satisfaction has been collected from the Vale residents' survey 2012 and new targets have been proposed as follows:
  - percentage of people who say they are satisfied with the way the council runs things. Performance 75.7 per cent; recommended target 79 per cent
  - percentage of people who agree with the statement that 'the council does a good job for people like me'. Performance 68.5 per cent; recommended target 72 per cent
  - percentage of people satisfied with the way the council dealt with their enquiry (all methods of contact). Performance 69.8 per cent; recommended target 73 per cent.
4. Baseline data on how well informed our customers feel has been collected from the Vale residents' survey 2012 and a new target has been proposed as follows:
  - percentage of people who feel informed by the council about the services it provides. Performance 71.8 per cent; recommended target 75 per cent.
5. Recycling rates have decreased this year, which mirrors the national picture. Our rate has fallen from 69.3 per cent to 65.2 per cent, though we are still one of the top councils in the country for recycling. We have introduced two new services a doorstep collection of batteries and bring banks for the disposal of small electrical items. A district wide communications campaign is also planned to halt the downward trend.

6. Baseline data on customer satisfaction with regards to the provision of sports and recreational activity, waste collection and cleanliness of streets and pavements from Vale residents' survey 2012, has been collected and new targets agreed; and our leisure contractors achieved ratings of 'fair' and 'good' in their contractor review of performance.
7. We just missed the target of a 5 per cent reduction in fly tipping from a 2012 baseline. It's worth remembering however that the Vale has the lowest levels of fly tipping in the county so the target is a challenging

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES**

8. The council tax was 12th lowest of 201 English district councils, high quality services were delivered for £2m less than budgeted.
9. We have reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across the council's operations by 19 per cent in the last year against a target of 20 per cent, as the current carbon management programme comes to end. Our plan to develop a new energy reduction plan is delayed as this is dependent upon being able to agree energy saving targets in the leisure contract; Biffa implementing bio fuels on the waste contract and decisions on office accommodation. This will be in place by the end of March 2014.
10. There has been a reduction of nine per cent in business mileage across both councils in the year and a joint target of five per cent reduction is proposed for 2013/14.
11. Examples of joint working include the procurement of a joint leisure management contract which is currently underway whilst 2012/13 sees the completion of the fifth year of energy reduction through joint working. Whilst the county council have agreed to rent part of the Abingdon offices which will potentially relocate whole South-Vale teams to Crowmarsh.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: MEETING HOUSING NEED**

12. There is no five year land supply at present but the Core Strategy will identify sites which can contribute to supply. This is on track for adoption in October 2014, however in light of the County- wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment which suggests that housing requirements for the district is greater than that being planned for; progress may need to be reviewed.
13. Targets for determining major and minor planning applications have been revised in line with national targets (60 per cent and 65 per cent respectively). Our performance to date is 63 per cent and 60 per cent respectively.
14. The council's policy on the Community Infrastructure Levy is scheduled for review by Cabinet in summer 2013.

15. The council achieved 39 per cent of new housing as affordable housing in the year against a target of 40 per cent. Affordable housing schemes completed in year plus projections for agreed sites either under construction or due to start are:
  - 72 per cent rented achieved against a target of 75 per cent
  - 28 per cent shared ownership achieved against a target of 25 per cent.
16. During 2012/13 four new housing developments have commenced. The officer development delivery group is in place and monitoring all sites, key actions include: setting internal targets for completion of S106 administration, working with developers to understand site blockages and proposing solutions, securing registered providers to work alongside developers to deliver affordable housing and reporting on sites to cabinet members.
17. New neighbourhood development plans are in preparation for Faringdon and Drayton.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: BUILDING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

18. Progress of market town actions plans is on target and reviewed regularly. Whilst the retail vacancy rate in our market towns is below the national average at 8.4 per cent the footfall decline continues to grow above the national average in Faringdon (10 per cent), and is static in Wantage and Abingdon.
19. The number of new local units in VAT/PAYE based enterprises has increased (1.4 per cent) but this is lower than the English average increase (2.6 per cent).
20. There will be a delay in the procurement and implementation of free Wi-Fi services for Faringdon due to difficulties in gaining consent from all interested parties, a new supplier with an alternative solution has been appointed with a revised operational date of March 2014 agreed.
21. Milton Park Local Development Order (LDO) was delayed due to the lengthy Environmental Assessment regulations, however it was finally adopted in December 2013. Harwell Oxford have decided that the fast track planning protocol is more suited to their needs and so do not require an LDO.
22. The Abbey Shopping Centre refurbishment has been completed and is open for business.
23. After the successful completion of a developer consultation on the Botley retail development, the conditional exchange of contracts of the Botley West Way site has been completed. A planning application is expected in December 2013.

24. The feasibility study of building a new leisure centre in the Wantage / Grove area has been completed and reported to Cabinet. The preferred location and budget requirements will be investigated and agreed by March 2014.
25. Businesses were encouraged to take part in the Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) OXonline survey so that their needs can be taken into account as part of the county procurement process. We are currently awaiting the outcome of the Oxonline project.
26. 26 new businesses have located to the Enterprise Zone. 100 new jobs have been created. Milton Park has completed 2,300 sq m of offices and workshops.
27. Harwell has completed 5,200 sq m of offices and workshops
28. The first report on business rates growth will be issued later in 2013 a year on from the baseline targets set in September 2012.
29. £7m funding has been allocated to fund infrastructure to support delivery in the Enterprise Zone. This funding originated from the growth in business rates in the Zone.
30. Vale residents feel very safe walking alone in their community in the daytime (99 per cent) and after dark (89 per cent), an improved picture compared to the resident's survey 2012. The annual community safety report which will monitor performance against the community safety strategy in detail will be published in summer 2013.
31. The number of Abingdon loyalty card holders, 1,800, is on target to reach 2000 by 2016. A new Board, of business leaders from key business sectors has been established and they will be part of the Vale wide business forum (Vale4Business) launched on 17 June 2013 at Williams F1.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES**

32. The planning service structure is under review to establish 'planning champions'. These champions will work with Parish Councillors to offer support and provide advice on local planning enforcement issues. Pilot Parishes have yet to be identified.
33. 21 applications have been received and determined under the new Capital Grants scheme, implemented in the summer of 2012. The council awarded a total of £387,128 in capital and revenue funding towards 44 projects, organisations and festivals in the district.
34. There were 143 different users of Wantage Civic hall generating 1,474 bookings with a net expenditure for 2012/13 of £135,550. Baseline data has been collected and targets for bookings and expenditure set for the next three financial years. A business case has been agreed commencing with a staff restructure in October 2013, new events programme, price review and rebranding.

35. There are no specific examples, to date, of services devolved to Parish Councils and community groups however the council has supported the development of twelve Community Led Plans (CLPs) (three completed and nine underway), with a new target of five for the next financial year. With the help of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and OCC a CLP actions audit is underway. Following this we will set targets by October 2013 for the number of CLP actions the council can support the implementation of.
36. The electoral arrangements for the District Council have been revised by the The Local Government Boundary Commission, which recommended the District Council should be represented by 38 councillors, 13 fewer than at present. This change is due to come into effect for the May 2015 elections.
37. Local neighbourhood groups have been provided with information and advice about developing Neighbourhood plans on the Council website. The message has and will continue to be reinforced by the Annual Town and Parish Forum and briefings sessions throughout the year.