



REPORT OF:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
TO:	POLICY COUNCIL
ON:	THURSDAY 1st DECEMBER 2011
TITLE:	COUNCIL VISION AND PRIORITIES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- This report presents the Council's vision and corporate priorities for Elected Member consideration and decision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Policy Council is asked to affirm the Council's vision and priorities for 2012/13. The vision and priorities will guide the business planning process and provide context for Finance Council in 2012
- Policy Council is also asked to provide a mandate for internal changes within the Council in 2012-13 by agreeing an internal strap-line for the Council's Transformation Programme.

3. BACKGROUND

Vision

The Council's existing vision, outcomes and priorities are mapped out in detail in the Corporate Plan. As agreed at Policy Council in 2010, the vision statement currently draws on the 2030 Vision priorities as follows:

"Creating a Connected, Prosperous, Clean, Safe and Healthy Blackburn with Darwen"

Priorities

Policy Council in 2010 agreed Council objectives in two broad categories: -

a) Community outcomes – reflecting the long term priorities of the 2030 Vision;

- Prosperous
- Connected
- Clean
- Safe
- Healthy

b) Organisational outcomes – reflecting the short / medium term priorities for the Council and residents;

- Managing Risk – including keeping streets clean and roads in good condition

- Delivering Transformation – including improving town centres and encouraging residents to play a more active role in their local area

4. RATIONALE

The Community Outcomes were derived from the 2030 Vision, which has only very recently been through an exhaustive engagement and validation process. Delivery plans are now in place against the outcomes in the Vision to ensure that local partners deliver against these.

These objectives were used as the basis for the Corporate Plan which, having been developed through considerable consultation with elected members, has recently been agreed at Executive Board in August.

The Council's Corporate Plan therefore outlined that, following extensive community consultation, the Council's short term priorities for 2011-13 were: -

- Ensure the cleanliness of our streets and open spaces
- Ensure our roads are in a good condition

The Council is also aware however, that at a time of great challenge for Blackburn with Darwen, we must continue to invest in priorities for future generations and support our residents and businesses to bounce back from recession.

Alongside the short-term priorities above, we therefore also committed to: -

- Keep our children and vulnerable adults safe
- Improve Blackburn and Darwen town centres
- Help our residents into work
- Improve the health of our residents
- Improve the housing offer and condition
- Continue to improve educational performance
- Encourage our residents to play a more active role in their local area
- Ensure that the Council makes the best use of its resources and continues to deliver services which offer value for money

Policy Council is therefore asked to affirm the Council's vision and priorities for 2012/13 above, as recently highlighted within the Corporate Plan.

Transformational Strap-line

Elected Members also have the scope to consider how the Council achieves these priorities and positions itself for the future, particularly by defining what radical changes need to be undertaken to take the Council in a new direction and achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness for residents.

The list of priority strategies and interventions considered under item 5 goes some way to provide this political mandate for the Council's Transformation Programme. Consultation prior to Policy Council has resulted in the suggestion that the Council could also define an 'internal strap-line' to guide the activities of the programme, and provide staff with clarity around areas of focus.

On the basis of consultation to date, it is proposed that the following strap-line be adopted by the Council's Transformation Programme: -

A 'Co-operative Council' – partnering, supporting and working together to deliver the best service we can.

This strap-line is underpinned by the following assumptions about the Council's approach to change: -

- The Council will provide, commission or outsource services according to the best solution and business case for each function.
- The Council will support, empower and listen to residents to either take control of their own services or design the service alongside the Council.
- The Council will proactively support, empower and listen to staff to excel in their professional roles and to aid their personal development.
- The Council will work with a wide range of partners from all sectors to create new, integrated approaches to public service delivery.
- The Council will exploit new and existing technology/engagement models in order to work closer and better with residents.
- The Council will promote democracy and will be proactive in advocating the interests of residents in a wide array of new public sector governance arrangements.
- The Council will encourage residents to make positive choices, take control of their own lives and (in doing so) will reduce demand on high cost services in the longer term.

Policy Council is therefore asked to affirm the strap-line for the Transformation Programme outlined above.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report presents the Council's vision and corporate priorities for Elected Member consideration and decision.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The vision and priorities will guide the business planning process and provide context for Finance Council in 2012

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

9. CONSULTATIONS

Extensive consultation has taken place throughout October and November 2011 regarding corporate and partnership priorities in order to develop the content of this report. Partners have been consulted via the Local Public Service Board, Executive Members via portfolio briefings and cross-party members via the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee with a Leader's presentation and follow-up consultation.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee wholly endorse the corporate priorities outlined within this report. The committee supports the emphasis on investment in the long-term future of the borough; with a particular focus on economic growth, health and education, in addition to short-term pressures. It is felt that the review of the Capita contract is a key priority for the Transformation Programme and this will be built into the scrutiny work programme in 2012-13 alongside corporate priorities highlighted above.

We have developed a robust understanding of the issues that matter to residents and the key priorities they would like the Council and Local Strategic Partnership to address. This approach began with the 2008 Place survey and continued in 2009/10 through a comprehensive research consultation and engagement process to develop the priority ambitions for Vision 2030. Further focussed consultation and engagement centred on budget cuts following the 2010 Spending Review included the Citizen's panel and a series of engagement workshops with a diverse cross section of the community (both geographical areas and thematic interest groups) between November 2010 and February 2011. Such consultation fed into the priorities for the medium term financial strategy and Corporate Plan 2011.

Following the introduction of Ward Solutions Meetings in July 2011, residents have continually been engaged at ward level. The aim is to promote engagement driven locally by communities themselves with a stronger role for ward councillors and community groups. Residents are actively encouraged to work together with the council and partners to resolve their own issues. All meetings are held in local ward venues and Councillors have chaired 35 of the 37 meetings undertaken so far. The table below summarises residents' priorities: -

Area	Meetings	Attendance	Issues Raised	Top issues
East Blackburn	11	103	91	ASB Litter Speeding Highways
West Blackburn	15	147	103	Traffic ASB Bins
Darwen and Rural	11	226	100	ASB Planning Litter Bins Grass Cutting
Total	37	476	294	Total top 3 issues` ASB Litter Traffic

The sum of this understanding of the aspirations and priorities of our residents provides a robust evidence base for our vision for a more prosperous, clean, connected, safe

and healthy Blackburn with Darwen. Furthermore, this resident feedback guided the Council's Budget and Corporate Plan in 2011 with priorities around community safety, street cleansing and refuse collection and an emphasis on protecting vulnerable children and adults. Resident feedback therefore aligns with the proposed re-affirmation of the Council's vision and priorities for 2012/13 above.

Chief Officer

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