

**SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)****Refreshing the Best Council Plan for 2017/18****Introduction**

At its meeting on 16 January 2017, the Scrutiny Board received a report from the Deputy Chief Executive providing an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Best Council Plan for 2017/18, prior to further consideration by Executive Board and Council in February 2017.

Providing scrutiny with the opportunity to comment on refreshing the Best Council Plan was in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

**Attendance**

In addition to members of the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources), the following were in attendance at the meeting to present the current draft Best Council Plan for 2017/18, and to address questions from the Scrutiny Board.

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Alan Gay – Deputy Chief Executive
- Mariana Pexton – Chief Officer (Strategy & Improvement)

The following representatives from other Scrutiny Boards<sup>1</sup> were also present for the discussion:

- Councillor B Anderson – Citizens & Communities (Chair)
- Councillor Ann Blackburn – Environment and Housing
- Councillor P Gruen – Adult Social Services, Public Health and NHS (Chair)

**Main Issues**

The draft Best Council Plan (BCP) in terms of its presentation and layout was generally well received, but it was noted that much of the detailed narrative and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were still to be determined and included within the draft Plan.

The Scrutiny Board recognised the need for the BCP narrative and KPIs to remain flexible in order to allow for minor in-year revisions based on any budgetary or policy changes.

Nonetheless, as part of the detailed narrative, the Scrutiny Board identified the need to clearly explain the context and relationship of the BCP in relation to the Council's

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the Chair of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) was also a member of Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) and was in attendance.

financial strategy, other Council and partnership plans and general partnership arrangements.

The Scrutiny Board also emphasised the need to ensure there is particular and specific cross-referencing to the existing Breakthrough Project Objectives within the BCP.

The remainder of the Scrutiny Board's comments primarily focused around the newly proposed 7 priority areas. In summary, the main comments of the Board included:

- Particular reference to housing related matters; including whether housing warranted its own dedicated priority area. The Scrutiny Board agreed 'housing' needed to be prominent within the BCP and whilst acknowledging 'housing' would currently feature within 6 of the 7 proposed priority areas, the Scrutiny Board identified the need for this to feature in all priority areas, including the Child Friendly City priority area.
- Reference to the importance of 'play' as a key developmental activity and suggested that this is also featured within the Child Friendly City Priority area.
- Reference was made to the previous 'Objective 5: Dealing effectively with the City's Waste' as this was now considered too narrow and needed to reflect wider sustainability priorities.
- The Scrutiny Board stressed the importance of including KPIs that are meaningful and easily measurable, particularly when determining local impacts.
- The Scrutiny Board believed that measuring outcomes and impact at a local level was paramount to keeping local members informed of progress and demonstrating the BCP was a live working document. This could include regular reports to Community Committees, which provide details of how the Council is tackling poverty and reducing in equalities in localities.
- The Scrutiny Board believed general improvements could be made in terms of communicating progress against the BCP priority areas and specific Breakthrough Projects.
- The Board also recognised the need to maximise continuity between past objectives and objectives going forward in order to help identify and analyse key trends.

### **RESOLVED -**

To ensure that the Scrutiny Board's comments are reflected in the further report and iteration of the Best Council Plan presented to the Executive Board at its February meeting.