

Committee/Meeting: Cabinet	Date: 8 th May 2013	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 111/123
Report of: Isabella Freeman, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal) Originating officer: Kevin Kewin, Strategy and Performance Service Manager		Title: Strategic Plan 2013/14 Wards Affected: All	

Lead Members	Deputy Mayor, Cllr Ohid Ahmed and Cllr Alibor Choudhury
Community Plan Theme	All
Strategic Priority	All

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents the draft Strategic Plan 2013/14 (appendix 1). The Strategic Plan incorporates the Single Equality Framework (SEF) which sets out the council's equality priorities.

2. **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Approve the Strategic Plan (appendix 1)
- 2.2 Authorise the Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality to make any appropriate and necessary amendments prior to publication.

3. **REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 3.1 The Strategic Plan outlines the council's key priorities for the year alongside the more detailed actions that will support their delivery. The plan also sets out the strategic performance measures with which we track our progress.
- 3.2 The Strategic Plan incorporates the council's Single Equality Framework (SEF). The SEF sets out the Council's framework for tackling inequality and promoting cohesion. We have integrated the equality objectives of the Framework into the Strategic Plan, ensuring that a focus on tackling inequality informs the strategic direction of the council. It also enables us to demonstrate that we are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty to prepare and publish objectives which demonstrate how the organisation will meet the aims of the Duty.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Mayor in Cabinet may choose not to agree a Strategic Plan. This course of action is not recommended as there would be a significant planning gap: the Strategic Plan is a key element of the council's business planning arrangements. In addition, the council's priorities for the year would not be articulated and the key supporting activities and performance measures would not be agreed for monitoring. If the Strategic Plan was not agreed a Single Equality Framework would still need to be adopted to meet legal requirements.
- 4.2 The Mayor in Cabinet may choose to amend the Strategic Plan prior to approval. If he wishes to amend the Plan, regard would need to be given to the Council's medium term financial plan, with which the current Strategic Plan is aligned, as well as any impact arising from the changes.

5. BODY OF REPORT

- 5.1 The Strategic Plan sets out the council's priorities, key actions for 2013/14 and strategic measures with which we will track our progress. The Plan has been informed by the Mayor's Pledges and is aligned with the budget.
- 5.2 Whilst the overarching vision and priorities of the council remain largely unchanged, the Strategic Plan 2013/14 reflects the current challenges facing the council and how we address them. For example, supporting residents through the major changes to the welfare system will be an area of focus. In addition, there is a new priority relating to developing stronger communities which captures planned work on local community ward forums (LCWFs), participatory budgeting and community champions. This year's Strategic Plan also reflects the transfer of public health functions to the council.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 6.1 The Strategic Plan is the council's core planning document and this report sets out the actions planned for the period 2013-14 and reflects the Mayor's Pledges. The plan sets out a framework for allocating and directing financial resources for 2013-14 to ensure that resources are aligned with those priorities.
- 6.2 The council considered and agreed the Budget and Council Tax for 2013-14 at its meeting on 7th March 2013. The work programme set out in the Strategic Plan 2013-14 is reflected in that budget both for the council as a whole and for each directorate. This report has no other financial implications.
- 6.3 In the event that during the implementation of individual projects and schemes throughout the year further financial implications arise outside the current budget provision, officers are obliged to seek the appropriate financial approval before further financial commitments are made.

7. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 7.1 The Strategic Plan is closely aligned with the Community Plan, which sets out the council's sustainable community strategy within the meaning of section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000. The Strategic Plan specifies how the council will prioritise delivery of its functions and thus ranges across the council's statutory powers and duties. The proposed actions are capable of being carried out lawfully and it will be for officers to ensure that this is the case.
- 7.2 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires best value authorities, including the council, to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The development of the actions in the Strategic Plan, together with their delivery and subsequent monitoring will contribute to the way in which the best value duty can be fulfilled. Monitoring reports to members and actions arising from those reports will help to demonstrate that the council has undertaken activity to satisfy the statutory duty.
- 7.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the council in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to avoid discrimination and other unlawful conduct under the Act, the need to promote equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The report proposes that the council's Single Equality Framework be incorporated into the Strategic Plan and this is a relevant consideration. It is also relevant to consider that the Community Plan was the subject of equality analysis during its preparation. Further equality analysis will likely be required in the delivery of actions in the Strategic Plan to ensure the council complies with its equality duty.

8. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Strategic Plan 2013/14 incorporates the council's Single Equality Framework equality objectives ensuring that a focus on tackling inequality informs the strategic direction of the council and enables us to better meet the financial, policy and social challenges that we face today. These objectives have been developed through an assessment of the areas of persistent and enduring inequality experienced by people living and working in the borough as well as emerging issues which threaten to increase inequality for some sections of our community and threaten community relations. This approach enables us to demonstrate how we are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty to prepare and publish objectives which demonstrate how the organisation will meet the aims of the Duty: to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people. An equality analysis, documenting the processes we have used to ensure that due regard is given to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, has also been produced (appendix 2).

8.2 In many ways our cross-cutting principle of One Tower Hamlets prefigures the aspiration of the Duty. Since residents first articulated their desire for the principle in 2008 the council and partners have worked to create a cycle of action underpinning all that we do by tackling inequality, strengthening cohesion and building community leadership and personal responsibility. It is therefore both the principle and how it is brought to life in the Strategic Plan which demonstrates how we embrace and meet the Duty.

8.3 To ensure that we are able to track performance against our equality objectives for 2013/14 we have identified a set of equality performance measures. These include existing performance measures that relate to equality as well as outcome measures which will be disaggregated by specific equality strands where we would like to narrow the gap in terms of outcomes for specific groups (e.g.: the local employment rate where we will monitor outcomes for men and women, people from different ethnic backgrounds and for people with disabilities).

9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

9.1 The Strategic Plan includes a focus on action for a greener environment. This includes specific actions to protect our environment, improve parks and open spaces and support local sustainable transport.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Strategic Plan provides the strategic framework for other strategies and plans. Risks relating to the achievement of its objectives are therefore monitored through the council's corporate risk register and directorate risk registers. Risks are assessed for likelihood and impact, and have responsible owners and programmes of mitigating actions.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Strategic Plan has a strong focus on community safety. The key priorities, activities, milestones and measures are set out within the Safe and Cohesive theme.

12. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

12.1 The Strategic Plan highlights the current financial context which includes significantly reduced funding for the council. The plan sets out a range of activities to support efficiency and value for money. Progress against the performance measures in the Strategic Plan is reported to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet, alongside the Council's budget monitoring, on a quarterly basis.

13. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Strategic Plan

Appendix 2: Equality Analysis

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
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None	N/A
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