

CABINET

4 August 2014

Title: Vision and Priorities for Barking and Dagenham	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision:
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Accountable Director: Graham Farrant, Chief Executive	
Summary: This report sets out the proposed new vision and priorities for Barking and Dagenham. They are intended to reflect the changing relationship between the Council, partners and the community, and our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership within the context of a significantly reducing budget. They also reflect the ambitions of the new Administration. The proposed vision for the borough is: One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity The three corporate priorities that will support the vision are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encouraging civic pride• Enabling social responsibility• Growing the borough Cabinet are asked to agree the vision and priorities for consultation with partners and the community, and recommend approval to Assembly in September 2014.	
Recommendation(s) Cabinet is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Support the refreshed vision and priorities, as detailed in Appendices 1 to 4 to the report, and recommend the Assembly to adopt the vision and priorities following consultation with partners and the community; and(ii) Approve the priority projects as set out in paragraph 3.2 and the development of a detailed Corporate Delivery Plan to monitor implementation of the vision and priorities, subject to approval by the Assembly.	

Reason(s)

Although there is no longer a statutory requirement to produce a Community Strategy or Corporate Plan, it is good governance to frame the vision for the borough and agree the Council's policy priorities to inform decision making and allocation of resources.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed new vision and priorities for Barking and Dagenham. They have been developed to reflect the changing relationship between the Council, partners and the community, and our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership within the context of a significantly reducing budget.
- 1.2 As a result of reductions in the money received from the Government and other pressures on services from the growing population and national policy changes, the Council will have to make approximately £55-60m of savings over the three years between 2015/16 and 2017/18. This reduction in funding is unprecedented, requiring a fundamental change in the way the Council approaches addressing the budget gap and in considering the future shape of the Council going forward. This means that the development and delivery of the vision and priorities and relationship with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and resources available to achieve them is key.
- 1.3 The proposed vision and priorities also reflect the ambitions of the new Administration. Barking and Dagenham has the most untapped potential for growth in London, and the Council needs to define its role and champion the delivery of that ambition and aspiration for its communities. In doing so it recognises that with an increasingly diverse population, community cohesion and the active engagement and participation of the community are key components to improving the quality of lives of our residents and maximising the opportunities created by growth. It also reflects that wherever possible we enable our residents to help themselves, support their neighbours and live more independently, whilst still offering a safety net for the most vulnerable.
- 1.4 Cabinet are asked to agree the vision and priorities, set out below and in Appendix 1, for consultation with partners and the community, and recommend approval to Assembly in September 2014.

2. Vision and Priorities

- 2.1 The proposed vision and priorities for the borough are:

One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity

- Encouraging civic pride
- Enabling social responsibility
- Growing the borough

- 2.2 Each priority has a set of key objectives sitting beneath them that define the areas of focus for the Council, partners and community. These are set out below and in full at Appendix 1. A more detailed narrative for each priority and its objectives is included

at Appendices 2 to 4. This will inform the overall strategic narrative about the borough for use in our communication and engagement activity with residents, partners, including the voluntary sector and businesses, and in London to demonstrate our ambition and build our reputation and profile locally and nationally.

Encouraging civic pride

- Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough
- Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community
- Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life
- Promote and protect our green and public open spaces
- Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child

Enabling social responsibility

- Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community
- Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe
- Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it
- Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential
- Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families

Growing the borough

- Build high quality homes and a sustainable community
- Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities
- Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment
- Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs
- Enhance the borough's image to attract investment and business growth

2.3 If Cabinet agree the vision and priorities they will be recommended to Assembly on 17 September 2014 for adoption by the Council. Partners and the community will be asked for their views through existing boards and groups, and given the opportunity to adopt them as community priorities for the borough. The wording of the vision and priorities put forward to Assembly will be finalised in consultation with the Leader. The Council is also developing new values that will closely integrate with and run alongside the vision and priorities.

3. Corporate Delivery Plan

- 3.1 In order to ensure that the Council's contribution to achieving the priorities is proactive, co-ordinated, resourced in line with the MTFS and monitored so that Members and residents can see progress, an annual corporate delivery plan will be developed along with key performance indicators and targets. These will be reported to Cabinet in September 2014 for approval. Progress will be reported quarterly to Cabinet and six-monthly to Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee (PAASC).
- 3.2 In consultation with the Leader a number of priority projects have already been identified which are in line with the overall vision for the borough and are intended to be delivered over the next 6-12 months to reduce the financial gap and to improve the way that the borough operates, including:

- **Income generation** – As part of the Council’s Future Business Programme and discussion with Members in Strategy Week, a number of proposals to generate new and additional income are being explored. Those proposals to be actively progressed are being reviewed by officers and will be set out in the corporate delivery plan. This could include opportunities to sell services to other authorities and builds on the successful traded services in Children’s Services and the shared Legal Service which is also now traded with other councils.
- **London’s greenest borough** - The objective is for the London Sustainable Industries Park vision to be delivered so that we can become London’s greenest borough. We want to maximise the borough’s potential to generate significant levels of renewable energy including exploring opportunities to become an energy trading Council and reduce energy consumption. We will do this for the benefit of the community; to help improve the long-term financial sustainability of the Council and to contribute to local economic development. An initial programme of renewable energy opportunities has been identified for detailed technical and financial evaluation and we will work in partnership with others where this achieves a better deal for the Council. We will strengthen our links with existing energy suppliers and contractors where this adds value and collaborate with existing energy service companies especially where this leads to knowledge and skills transfer, further enabling us to take the lead.
- **Creative industries** – Maximising the social and economic regeneration opportunities created through supporting the Ice House Quarter to deliver its full potential as a home for creative industries including investment in houses for rent. Working with Barking and Dagenham College to develop the offer at the Broadway Theatre including opportunities to expand existing partnership opportunities with the Barbican/Guildhall and community engagement through Up! Barking and Creative Barking and Dagenham. This will enable the Council to support a vision of Barking Town Centre becoming the cultural centre for east London, bringing out the best of London’s cultural bodies and developing local talent.
- **Festival 2015** – A community led programme of events is planned to celebrate the borough’s 50th anniversary. This will include activities each month across the borough during 2015 with a focus of events from spring through the summer. Discussions with voluntary and community groups including faith organisations are taking place to facilitate a community led approach to the activities. Sponsorship is being sought from businesses to help enable delivery of the programme.
- **Website** – A new Council website will be launched in the winter which will be contemporary, user friendly, fully mobile responsive and designed for all modern devices. It will be fully integrated with My Account and support the Council’s focus on digital by design services.

3.3 To demonstrate Cabinet’s commitment to ensuring the ambitious vision and priorities are delivered and the Council has the ability and capacity to lead and deliver them, the LGA have been invited to carry out a Corporate Peer Challenge from 29 July to 1 August 2014. This will explore these areas and help to provide challenge and reassurance.

3.4 In addition to the core components of a corporate peer review, we have asked that the LGA and peer team provides an external perspective on:

- The Council's vision for the future, its position in London and how it can best develop external partnerships
- How to cope with the increasing demands being placed upon children's services given the significant financial challenge
- The role of elected members in the authority.

3.5 The outcomes of the review will be reported to Cabinet and inform the development of the corporate delivery plan.

4. Consultation

4.1 The new vision and priorities for the Council were developed with the Leader, Cabinet members and Leadership Group during Strategy Week in June 2014.

4.2 Partners and the community will be asked for their views on the vision and priorities through existing boards and groups, and given the opportunity to adopt them as community priorities for the borough. Feedback from the consultation will inform the final vision and priorities which will be put to Assembly in September 2014.

5. Financial Implications

Prepared by Tamara Beckford, Interim Group Manager - Corporate Finance

5.1 The new vision and priorities reflect the Council's context and priorities. These have been written in line with the funding arrangements identified at a high level within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

5.2 Officers are responsible for ensuring that service plans are aligned to available budgets in order to set and maintain a balanced budget while delivering quality services. Essential actions are being delivered to ensure the sustainability of the Council's new vision and priorities. This will be monitored through the existing financial management process to identify and address potential issues on a timely basis.

6. Legal Implications

Prepared and verified by Eldred Taylor-Camara, Legal Group Manager

6.1 The Assembly is the central political focus of the Council and the co-ordinating body for all elements of the political structure. It sets the overall corporate direction, policy framework and financial limits for the Council within which all operations and policies are carried out.

6.2 Under the Council's Constitution it is the responsibility of the Assembly to approve and adopt the Council's Community Strategy, the Community Priorities and the Council Plan.

6.3 It is the function of Cabinet to determine all major issues affecting the Council, particularly strategic, financial, policy related and corporate management matters, within the overall policy framework set by the Assembly.

6.4 Should Cabinet endorse the new Vision and Priorities (Community Strategy) document and agree to the development of a corporate delivery plan as proposed in this report, the documents will then be submitted to Assembly (as the Council's policy-making body) for final decision and adoption. Once Assembly approves and adopts the plan, the responsibility for implementation will rest with Cabinet.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Risk Management** – There are no specific risks associated with this report. The corporate delivery plan and ongoing monitoring will set out any risks and mitigating action. The Council's business planning process sitting underneath the vision and priorities describes how risks are mitigated by linking with the Corporate Risk Register.
- 7.2 **Contractual Issues** - Any contractual issues relating to delivering activities to meet borough priorities will be identified and dealt with in individual project plans.
- 7.3 **Staffing Issues** - There are no specific staffing implications.
- 7.4 **Customer Impact** – The new vision and priorities give a clear and consistent message to residents and partners in Barking and Dagenham about the Council's role in place shaping and providing community leadership.
- 7.5 **Safeguarding Children** - The priority **Enabling social responsibility** encompasses activities to safeguard children in the borough and is delivered through the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust.
- 7.6 **Health Issues** - The priority **Enabling social responsibility** encompasses activities to support the prevention and resolution of health issues in the borough and is delivered through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 7.7 **Crime and Disorder Issues** - The priority **Encouraging civic pride** encompasses activities to tackle crime and disorder issues and will be delivered through the Community Safety Partnership.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1: Vision and priorities
- Appendix 2: Priority 1: Encouraging civic pride
- Appendix 3: Priority 2: Enabling social responsibility
- Appendix 4: Priority 3: Growing the borough