

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 30 APRIL 2008

SUBJECT: CORPORATE STRATEGY FORMAT GUIDANCE

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to approve guidance for all Council strategies in order to ensure that national, Council, Community Planning and statutory requirements are met and to promote a consistent approach across the organisation.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A (42) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to "ensuring that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives; to keep these procedures under review in the light of changing circumstances and to make such recommendations to the Council as are necessary for changes in the Committee or departmental structure or the distribution of functions and responsibilities."

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee approves the Corporate Strategy Format Guidance (Attached as Appendix 1).**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Chief Executive's Office recently carried out a brief review of strategies and policies within the Council. The purpose of the review was to map existing documents, establish areas of duplication and identify documents that appear to be out of date or obsolete. The review also sought to ascertain whether Council strategies and policies meet national, Council, Community Planning and statutory requirements.
- 3.2 There are 35 strategies and 128 policies currently listed by Departments. It is estimated that 10 strategies and 42 policies are out of date or possibly obsolete. The review has demonstrated that there is a lack of consistency in format and content of existing strategies. Although strategies will have particular requirements in terms of what they need to cover, there are core elements that should be included irrespective of the subject matter, for example equalities, sustainability and relevance to Council priorities.
- 3.3 The Council with its partners will be implementing the Single Outcome Agreement based on an agreed set of national outcomes, underpinned by agreed national indicators. Council strategies will therefore need to acknowledge these national targets and indicators specifically. This is reflected in the guidance attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

- 3.4 The adoption of a corporate approach to strategies will enable documents to be mapped more easily, ensure that requisite matters are covered, eradicate overlaps and highlight gaps. It would also provide a clearer framework into which strategies can be fitted and linked to each other.
- 3.5 If approved the guidance will be disseminated throughout the Council. The guidance will be made available on the Council's Intranet and links will be provided to relevant external sites or documents for reference purposes. New or reviewed strategies will be required to be in the new format, and it is anticipated that all corporate strategies will eventually take this form. Directors will be asked to confirm which of the existing strategic documents are no longer required or do not reflect the Council's priorities and to take appropriate action.
- 3.6 It should be noted from the guidance that authors would be required to insert dates during which the document is expected to be 'active'. Once the expiry date has been passed the document will automatically be removed from the Council's website, and departments are expected to take appropriate steps to revise the Strategy if necessary.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

A corporate approach to strategy development will ensure that Corporate and Community Plan requirements are reflected in all strategic documents produced across the Council.

(b) Policy and Legal

Council strategies are required to incorporate statutory requirements as necessary. These include various statutory responsibilities under Diversity legislation. The Council has agreed that as part of our duty in discharging these responsibilities we will implement Equality Impact Assessments. Additionally there is a statutory requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that Strategic Environmental Assessment may need to be conducted for a Moray or area-wide strategy.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

There are no financial or property implications arising from this report, however ensuring that all Council strategies take account of the legislative requirements will assist in minimising Council exposure to risk.

(d) Consultations

The Corporate Management Team of the Council has been consulted and has agreed to support the use of the guidance.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Policy Committee approves the Corporate Strategy Format Guidance (Appendix 1 to this report).

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Background Papers:

Ref: