WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	Executive 15.7.09	Agenda Item No.

Title	Corporate Strategy and Portfolio Holder Statements
For further information about this report please contact	Dave Barber dave.barber@warwickdc.gov.uk Tel 01926 456065
Service Area	Chief Executive's Office
Wards of the District directly affected	All Wards
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	n/a
Background Papers	n/a

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports *must* be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director		Chris Elliott
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal		Peter Oliver
Finance		Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr Caborn
Consultation Undertaken		
Please insert details of any consultation undertaken with regard to this report.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Following the adoption of the new Sustainable Community Strategy, this report sets out proposals for a new framework and role for the Corporate Strategy to enable it to support delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the planned cultural and organisational changes. Alongside this, this report also sets out proposals to revise the Portfolio Holder Statements to ensure these align with the new Portfolios and to ensure they include appropriate actions to deliver the sustainable community strategy and other organisational priorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That (with the exception of the vision, mission and values) the Corporate Strategy 2008-2011 be reviewed and its purpose, role and structure be amended to reflect the new strategic context provided by the Sustainable Community Strategy and the new challenges facing the District and the Council.

2.2 That the Portfolio Holder Statements for 2009/10 be amended for consideration by Executive in September 2009 to support the delivery plans for the Sustainable Community Strategy (along with other organisational priorities) and that these be agreed, alongside the SCS Delivery Plans at Executive in September 2009.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Review of the current Corporate Strategy. The current Corporate Strategy is due to expire in 2011 when the next District Elections take place. However it is proposed to significantly amend it and to change its purpose within the organisation for the following reasons:

3.1.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy and the delivery plans which sit alongside this, provide the long term priorities for the District and the Council as well as the framework for delivering these. A corporate strategy in its current format is unlikely to add anything to this and could potentially cause confusion.

3.1.2 The existing structure of the Corporate Strategy (7 portfolios, each with 3 priorities and 3 targets) has been used since 2003. It has served its purpose well in providing focus on priorities and responding clearly to previous inspection regimes. However, the authority needs to develop a more responsive and adaptive culture and framework to meet future challenges. The current framework means that it has been hard to focus on a balanced set of outcomes by promoting a narrow focus on a limited number of targets – sometimes at the expense of a broader focus on priority outcomes. This narrow focus is, by nature, inflexible. It necessitates wholesale change to accommodate changing circumstances, as the limited number of targets means we have had to focus on a small number of very specific things. Its inflexibility limits our ability to easily respond to quickly changing circumstances. Finally, as the portfolio structure has changed and has been increased to 9 portfolio, it does not align with our organisational structure

3.2 Retention of the existing Vision, Mission and Values. The existing Corporate Strategy Vision ("Warwick District, A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit") is still relevant and aligns directly with the Sustainable Community Strategy. This vision could be seen as our organisational purpose – what we are here to deliver. This is supported by our organisational mission (to be World Class by 2012) which remains a priority and is vital if we are to be effective in delivering the vision through high quality, customer focused

services. Finally the existing Corporate values also remain relevant as they underpin the behaviours that customers can expect from the organisation.

3.3 New Corporate Strategy Purpose and Framework. It is proposed that the purpose of the Corporate Strategy is changed from one where it attempts to set definitive narrow targets on which we should focus to the following :

To provide a dynamic framework which enables the Council to:

- *adapt to changing circumstances*
- *remain focused on doing the right things*
- *drive progress towards the long term vision and outcomes as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy*
- *work across organisational boundaries acting as One Council focused on delivering what our customers want*
- *Something about working with partners?*

3.3.1 This new purpose naturally leads to a different kind of framework and a different way of ensuring we use the Corporate Strategy to develop our business and stay focused on our long term purpose.

3.3.2 This new framework will need to be constantly under review to ensure we are responding to changes arising from national, regional, sub-regional, county, district and locality levels and to ensure we learn from what we do (eg are our actions helping us deliver our long term vision) and adapt our actions in light of this learning.

3.3.3 This means that in addition to the Vision, Mission and Values, the Corporate Strategy will need to include :

- Clear reference to the four strategic aims (and supporting priorities) set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Relevant measures which show how successful we (and our partners) are being in delivering the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Relevant actions for WDC (regularly reviewed) which we expect to impact on the measures

3.3.4 The “relevant actions” will be set out annually in the Portfolio Holder Statements (see 3.4 below) and will be reviewed and reported on at least a quarterly basis through the Portfolio Briefings and the quarterly meetings held between the portfolio holders and CMT. “Relevant measures” will be developed alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy delivery plan and will be submitted to Council for approval in the Autumn.

3.4 Revised Portfolioholder Statements. The Portfolioholder Statements will be revised to:

- reflect the new portfolio structure
- set out the actions planned for the delivery of the Sustainable Community strategy
- focus on monitoring and delivering organisational improvement set out the Budget and Improvement Programme
- Address other portfolio priorities as identified through customer insight

These revised Statements will be prepared over the Summer and will be reported to Executive for approval in September 2009 alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy Delivery Plans. Once approved, these Statements will be regularly reviewed through the portfolio holder briefings and the CMT/Portfolio Holder meetings. The Statements will become the main mechanism for ensuring we focus on delivering our long term vision and for ensuring we are able to adapt to changing circumstances.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Review of the current Corporate Strategy. One alternative would be to retain the existing corporate strategy. However this option has been rejected on the grounds that it doesn't reflect the existing organisational structure and on the grounds that now the sustainable community strategy has been agreed, it could cause confusion by providing a competing set of priorities.

4.2 Another alternative would be to revise the content of the existing corporate strategy whilst retaining its current format. Work commenced on this option, but during this review work, it became increasingly clear that the existing format was restrictive and inflexible and would still mean there is potential for two documents with competing priorities. In a world where things seem to be changing at a faster and faster pace, this option does not appear to have the breadth of view or the flexibility required.

4.3 Retention of the existing Vision, Mission and Values. An alternative option would have been to terminate these or review them as with other aspects of the Corporate Strategy. However, these elements of the Corporate Strategy remain relevant and provide consistency of purpose – even though the Corporate Strategy is being reviewed, continuity of purpose and values remains vital.

4.4 New Corporate Strategy Purpose and Framework. The new framework could take many forms. However before deciding what the best option is, consideration has been given as what the purpose of the Corporate Strategy should be in a modern and flexible local authority. The proposals put forward are consistent with systems thinking and in delivering the purpose of the Corporate Strategy.

4.5 Revised Portfolio Holder Statements. These could have been left unchanged for 2009/10 and then reviewed in 2010/11. However given that we now have new portfolios and that the portfolio holder statement actions have the potential to form a key part of the new corporate strategy framework, it is suggested that leaving them unchanged is not appropriate especially as this approach would reinforce the inflexibility of our current proposals.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

5.1 There are no budgetary implications associated with the report

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

6.1 The recommendations provide a significant change of emphasis in how the Council's strategic policy framework will operate. In particular, the Corporate Strategy will cease to be the main strategic focus and will be replaced in this role by the Sustainable Community Strategy. Instead the Corporate Strategy will provide the framework which drives Warwick District Council's activity to deliver the SCS at the same time as enabling us to monitor how successful we are being and to learn from this to improve.

6.2 In the medium term, the Service Delivery Plan framework will also need to be revised so that the changing roles of the SCS, Corporate Strategy and Portfolio Holder statements are accurately reflected.