

Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

Strategic Priorities: All

Corporate Improvement Priorities: All

1.0 Why has this report come to Committee?

1.1 To apprise the Management Scrutiny Committee of progress in respect of the 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Processes (formerly the Strategic Planning Process) and outline initial proposals in respect of the 2012/2013 process.

2.0 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 processes

2.1 In January 2010 the Management Scrutiny Committee received a report on proposals in respect of the monitoring of improvement actions identified in the 2010/2011 Strategic Planning Process. These proposals included the quarterly reporting of improvement action progress to Scrutiny Committees.

2.2 Due to the council's ongoing restructuring as part of the Sunderland Way of Working it was not possible to put in place arrangements to enable the monitoring of improvement actions that in some cases were transferring between services.

2.3 In the absence of these arrangements, improvement actions were monitored via directorate Performance Clinics where appropriate and as part of the 2011/2012 Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process.

2.4 As a further consequence of the restructuring of the council it was not possible to undertake the full service improvement element of the Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process 2011/2012 (undertaken during 2010). This was due to the fact that services that existed at that stage would have been required to plan improvement actions on the basis of new service delivery arrangements that were yet to be implemented and, in some cases, had yet to be fully designed.

2.5 Consequently rather than prepare and publish detailed Improvement Plans that, in some cases, would have quickly become obsolete services completed Service Level Assessments to identify improvement actions that successfully informed the Medium Term Financial Strategy and efficiencies planning processes. The key improvement actions identified as part of this process were also included in the Revenue Budget 2011/2012.

2.6 The above arrangements were able to be implemented as the current adopted Corporate Improvement Plan 2009-2010 includes financial years 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 as it is a three year plan.

3.0 Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process 2012/2013

3.1 As the restructuring of the council is now ongoing and new service delivery arrangements are established or being established it is proposed that a full Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process will be undertaken during 2011 for the financial year 2012/2013.

3.2 Discussions are currently ongoing between officers in the Financial Resources service within Commercial and Corporate Services and the Strategic Shared Service for Strategy, Policy and Performance Management within the Office of the Chief Executive with regard to the detailed proposals in respect of the 2012/2013 process.

3.3 It is envisaged that the 2012/2013 process will comprise elements developed as part of previous processes to ensure that directorate service improvement proposals feed into the Medium Term Financial Strategy and efficiencies planning processes, the outcome of which will then be taken and developed into the contents of Improvement or Business Plans for publication. The whole of the process will be undertaken in the context of an adopted Corporate Outcomes Framework which is currently being developed as part of a separate exercise.

3.4 It is proposed that full details of the arrangements to be put in place for the Combined Service Improvement and Financial Planning Process 2012/2013 will be presented to the Management Scrutiny Committee in due course.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 That the Management Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report.