

Communities Committee

Item No

Report title:	Communities Committee Plan
Date of meeting:	7 March 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact The Communities Committee's three year forward plan, sets out how its areas of responsibility will be shaped by the ambition of <i>Caring for our County: A vision for Norfolk in 2021</i> , and the principles of <i>Norfolk Futures</i> , the County Council's new strategy. The strategy sets out what will be delivered over the next three years in the resources available. It identifies key metrics against service transformation which will be monitored by Policy and Resources Committee over the period.	

Executive summary

Norfolk County Council agreed a vision and strategy for the medium term in February 2018. *Caring for our County* communicates the Council's ambitions for Norfolk; the strategy *Norfolk Futures* sets out the principles and priorities to turn this vision into plans that deliver sustainable services, working with our partners across the public and private sectors.

Service committees have been commissioned by Policy and Resources Committee to develop Committee Plans which will set out objectives for the year, and specifically demonstrate how each area of the Council's work will change to deliver our Norfolk Futures strategy.

Recommendations

- 1. Agree the Communities Committee Plan, set out in Appendix 1.**
- 2. Note the Committee's contribution to, and responsibilities for, Norfolk Futures, NCC's transformation plan.**
- 3. Agree the performance measures against which this committee will report to Policy and Resources Committee for monitoring purposes, as set out in para 1.1.8 below.**

1. Proposal

1.1. Norfolk Futures and Communities Committee

- 1.1.1. Norfolk Futures sets out the principles and priorities that will change how Council Services are delivered in the future. The overarching principles of the Strategy are:

- Offering our help early to prevent and **reduce demand** for specialist services
- **Joining up** our work so that similar activities and services are more easily accessible, done well **and done once**

- Being **business like** and making best use of **digital technology** to ensure value for money
- Using **evidence** and data **to target** our work where it can make the most difference

1.1.2. The Council has agreed seven corporate priorities to deliver these principles, under the *Norfolk Futures* strategy. The priorities ensure that there is intense focus and tangible delivery in specific areas that can only be delivered through whole Council cross department working. The priorities are:

- Safe children and resilient families
- Promoting independence for vulnerable adults
- Smarter information and advice
- Towards a housing strategy
- Digital Norfolk
- Local service strategy
- Commercialisation

1.1.3. The services reporting to Communities Committee are actively engaged in the Norfolk Futures programme. As well as providing support and input generally for all priorities, specific work and engagement is underway in the following areas:-

- **Smarter information and advice** – this Committee is responsible for this priority. Significant work has been carried out, led by the Assistant Director Community, Information and Learning (Ceri Sumner), including developing a new service directory. This priority is a key enabler in delivering demand reduction for social care. We are looking to develop ways for individuals to access services in a modern, efficient and appropriate way, in particular to make sure that those who can self-serve are encouraged to do so, and additional support is available for those who need it the most. The Committee will receive updates on progress with this priority.
- **Digital Norfolk** – this priority stemmed from some initial work to develop a new customer service strategy, and our Customer Services teams are actively engaged. Whilst owned by the Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee, there will be benefits for Communities Committee services, not least by tackling social isolation through better use of new technology to deliver services of the future in a different way.
- **Local Service Strategy** – the majority of Communities Committee services are delivered in localities, and are the face/front door of the County Council. We are actively involved in developing the scope of this priority, which is likely to include better utilisation of our buildings and front-line resources, and better join up of community provided services (for example Children's Centres and the Healthy Child Programme).
- **Commercialisation** – a number of Communities Committee services rely on generating income and operating under business like principles, for example Museums, NCLS and Registration Services. These services are working to identify and implement those areas where it may be beneficial to take a more commercial approach, which could take a number of different forms.

1.1.4. The Communities Committee Plan attached at Appendix 1 brings together core information and overview of services, current operating context, challenges, risks, innovation and priority actions within the resources available. This is

information which is felt to be helpful background for Members to inform decision making. The plan is intended to be a living document and it is expected that it will be updated during its life to reflect the Committee's and the Council's work and progress.

- 1.1.5. To better enable an understanding of the key areas of priority for services in more detail, a number of 'Plans on a Page' have been prepared. These plans are used by the relevant senior managers and their teams to set out the direction of the service over the coming year, and are actively used as part of service performance management and planning. Copies of these plans are included at Appendix 2.
- 1.1.6. The Committee Plan includes, at page 6 of the plan, some key actions that are expected to be delivered in the coming year. The Committee may wish to consider whether it would be useful to receive a regular update on these key actions, e.g. as part of the regular performance report.
- 1.1.7. Consideration has been given to what performance measures it may be useful for the Committee to regularly monitor. These are set out in the plan at page 17. It is intended that these measures form the basis of any future performance reporting.
- 1.1.8. The Committee needs to identify which, if any, of these measures it would also be useful to regularly report to Policy and Resources Committee, to enable them to carry out their oversight role. The following two measures are suggested:-

- **Number of people killed and seriously injured on Norfolk's roads#**
- **Fire station availability (retained and whole-time)**

#Note that, working with the Member Working Group, a new measure is being developed in this area. It is not intended to carry out any further performance reporting on the existing measure until this work is complete and a way forward has been agreed.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1.1. The County Council continues to spend around £1.4 billion (gross) delivering vital services to Norfolk residents. As in previous years, around £400 million of the total budget is passed directly to schools. At a high level, the proposed revenue budget for 2018-19 is broadly the same year-on-year, and full details of changes in Committee budgets are set out in the January 2018 Policy and Resources Revenue Budget report.
- 2.1.2. The Council faces very significant cost pressures over the next four years. These are the result of:
 - Inflation (which arises both on staff salaries and on the prices we pay for contracts and services);
 - Legislative changes and policy decisions, including the National Living Wage;
 - Increasing demand for services (including demographic changes)
- 2.1.3. The impact of the cost pressures experienced between 2011-12 and 2018-19 total £308 million.

- 2.1.4. In addition between 2011-12 and 2017-18, government funding has reduced by £189 million. Further reductions of £31 million are forecast for the period 2018-19 to 2019-20.
- 2.1.5. The Council agreed to freeze Council Tax (0% increases) for the years 2010-11 to 2015-16. Since 2016-17, annual increases have been agreed. Since 2014-15 Revenue Support Grant has declined significantly (by 67%), while funding from Business Rates has only increased by 8%. In total, between 2014-15 and 2018-19, funding from these three sources has been relatively static, reducing by £27m (4%). However this represents a real terms reduction in funding when inflation is taken into account. It is these cost pressures and reduced funding that require the Council to transform the way it works.

3. **Issues, risks and innovation**

- 3.1.1. These are set out in the Committee Plan included at Appendix 1.

4. **Background**

- 4.1.1. [Our Vision, Strategy and Service Plans \(page 88 of PR agenda and reports for 29 January 2018\)](#)

Report by Managing Director to Policy and Resources, 29th January 2018

[Caring for Your County](#)

Report by Managing Director Policy and Resources, 3rd July 2017

[Strategic and Financial Planning 2018/19-2021/22](#)

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services to Policy and Resources 25th September 2017

[Strategic and Financial Planning 2018/19 - 2021/22](#)

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Strategy Director to Policy and Resources 30th October 2017

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, e.g. equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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