

**CABINET
21 JULY 2020**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021 - 2026 AND COUNCIL OBJECTIVES FOR 2021-2026

REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: BE A WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, AND EFFICIENT COUNCIL / BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES / RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT / ENABLE AN ENTERPRISING AND CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY / SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF GOOD QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HOMES

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report proposed a refreshed Council Plan and process for finalising the Plan.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet confirms its intention to recommendation the retention of its five Objectives, other than a slight amendment to the first overarching Council Objective:

- Continue to be a welcoming, inclusive, and efficient **council**,
- Build thriving and resilient **communities**,
- Respond to challenges to the **environment**,
- Enable an enterprising and co-operative **economy**,
- Support the delivery of good quality and affordable **homes**.

2.2 Note the intention to finalise a draft of the complete Council Plan for Cabinet to consider in September, for referral on to Full Council for approval. This will follow consideration with the leadership team and further engagement with all Members.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Council plan is a key element of the corporate business planning process, as a high-level strategic document it sets out the Council's priorities for the next year. As an overarching policy framework document, it guides and influences the use of Council resources; providing a focus for activities, plans and services the Council provide. Confirming the intention to amend the first overarching Council Objective will allow a full draft to be developed that reflects this.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 That the objectives remain as they are, but this does not reflect the importance of the Council continuing to transform to become as efficient as possible.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 No external consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report. The administration has considered and proposed a revision to the overarching objective of ‘*Be a more welcoming and inclusive council*’ to ‘*Continue to be a welcoming, inclusive, and efficient council*’, which will be reviewed by this Cabinet. For the full draft, the Council Plan will also have to be amended to reflect the change from the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive to Managing Director organisational change. Executive Members and Deputies will consider the proposed action against the priority areas with the senior Leadership team (Managing Director and Service Directors). It is proposed that further consultation involving all members will take place. The final draft Council Plan will be considered at a Cabinet Meeting in September and thereafter recommended to Full Council.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 It is the intention to finalise the Council plan alongside the consideration of the of budget position (Medium Term Financial Strategy) of the authority.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 At the time of considering this Council Plan, the Council is working hard to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, with much of our resource dedicated to maintaining Council services and supporting the most vulnerable in our communities. Once the restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic begin to relax, we will also need to work to support the recovery of impacted services, the operation of the Council and the community recovery. This work will take precedence over the activities and projects for the coming civic year, but where we are able to progress items we will endeavour to do so. As the length of the pandemic and the recovery are unknown the timescales for these activities and projects will inevitably be subject to change.

- 8.2 In normal circumstances, budgets must then be allocated to enable their achievement; this is known as ‘policy led’ budgeting and enables the authority to best reflect not only services it must deliver by statute, but those over which it has a degree of discretion.

The Council Plan highlights key issues and aims of the district. The plans set out the context in which the local authority operates, its ambitions, and the links to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The format of the plan has been reviewed to provide an easy summary of key information. The Council plan will inform the subsequent agreement of the service plans as prepared by directorate within the Council; setting out each service, team and individual’s objectives. Having considered the relevant factors, the Council Objectives for 2021-2026 are to be the following:

- Continue to be a welcoming, inclusive, and efficient **council**,
- Build thriving and resilient **communities**,
- Respond to challenges to the **environment**,
- Enable enterprising and co-operative **economy**,
- Support the delivery of good quality and **affordable homes**.

8.3 All projects to be included in the Council Plan should be subject to the provision of sound business cases with specific targets established as they are introduced. The Council's performance against these will be monitored and reported on a regular basis.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Cabinet's terms of reference include at 5.6.35 the power, by recommendation "to advise the Council in the formulation of those policies within the Council's terms of reference".

9.2 Full Council's terms of reference provide "approving or adopting the policy framework which at 4.2.1 (f) include "Priorities/ Objectives for the District." The Council Plan 2021-2026 at Appendix A represents the objectives and priority areas of work

9.3 The Council Plan Objectives outlined for 2021-2026 onward will provide high level reference points that will assist the Council making clear and effective decisions.

10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the change proposed by this report. Indeed, the proposal to add "efficient" to the first objective reflects the forecast financial constraints that the Council will face and the need to respond to these. The full draft Council Plan will be considered alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

11. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Adoption of the Council Plan and within it the Council's objectives for 2021 – 2026 commences the Council's Business Planning processes for the next financial year. A robust Corporate Business Planning process that links the Council Plan with the Medium-Term Financing Plan is key to managing the Council's identified Corporate Risk of "Managing the Council's Finances".

11.2 The risks and opportunities associated with the individual projects proposed will be assessed to ensure informed decisions are made on the overall programme of activity that the Council can deliver and to be in the best position to manage potential threats to success and maximise opportunities.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 In setting its Council Plan Objectives, the Council is seeking to address equality implications in the services it provides and through the remainder of the Corporate Business Planning Process will carry out Equalities Impact Assessments for those Efficiency or Investment options that are taken forward.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. Environmental impacts assessments will be carried out against the relevant proposed actions as they reach fruition in the civic year.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no additional human resource requirements arising from this report other than the capacity issue raised at paragraph 8.2. The resources needed to deliver services are considered and addressed through the Corporate Business Planning process. Once these objectives are agreed for retention, then these will be cascaded to staff with several reminders via Insight, the SCF and the intranet.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 None

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 None.