

**CABINET
15 SEPTEMBER 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 proposes a refreshed Council Plan and process for finalising the Plan and corresponding appendices.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet reviews and approves the draft completed Council Plan; which provides a summary of objectives and of activity to support the progression of following Council Objectives below (an amended first overarching Council objective whilst the other four remain the same); confirms the intention to amend,

- 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 That Cabinet reviews and recommends to Full Council the adoption of the following:

- Appendix A – Council Plan 2021 -2026
- Appendix B – Proposed Actions
- Appendix C – Achievements

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. The draft Council plan has reflected the amendment to the first overarching Council Objective.

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 more efficient.

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 '*Be a welcoming, inclusive, and efficient council*', which has been approved by this Cabinet. For the full draft, the Council Plan has been amended to reflect the change from the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive to Managing Director organisational change. Executive Members have now considered the proposed actions against the priority areas with the Senior Leadership team. A Member workshop took place in August 2020 to consult and agree the outcomes for each of the objective priority areas. The final draft Council Plan will be considered at the 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 The Corporate Business planning process dictates the Council's high-level objectives are determined alongside consideration of budget position (Medium Term Financial Strategy) of the authority.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 At the time of adopting this Council Plan, the Council is continuing to work hard to respond to the COVID-19 coronavirus 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 continue to support the recovery of impacted services, the operation of the Council and the on-going community recovery. This work will take precedence over the proposed activities and projects set out in the Proposed Actions document, 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 the below activities and projects are subject to change.
- 8.2 The plan identifies the actions the Council will carry out to ensure the Council Plan is being delivered. 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.

8.3 The Council Plan also therefore needs to reflect any recent changes in:

- Legislation, which may require changes to existing services, or delivery of new services.
- Capacity, the Authority has continued to deliver staffing efficiencies which reduces capacity whilst statutory requirements placed on the authority have continued to rise.
- Financial constraints – work on the future funding of Local Authorities through a Fair Funding Formula and 75% retention of Business rates has not progressed in line with the original timetable. Alongside the delay to Central Government carrying out a Spending Review, this means that there is significant uncertainty over funding over the medium term. This is covered in more detail in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) but means that the Council has to prudently plan what it can afford to deliver until there is greater certainty.
- Population – the need to plan for an ageing population which requires health, social care and Council service providers to consider how necessary support can be provided together.
- Patterns and location of deprivation have changed in the past five years (evidenced by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation) so we should ensure that our services, and how they may be delivered, respond accordingly to these; in times of increased financial constraint it is all the more important that limited resources, both those of the Council and its partner agencies working in the local community, are directed to areas of greater need.

8.4 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:

- 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**.

8.5 Subject to Cabinet's consideration, the Council Plan at Appendix A will be referred to Council for adoption. All projects included in the Corporate Plan will 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 corporate objectives agreed 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 specific change to the overall Plan 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 Council Plan is supported by the proposed actions in Appendix B. These actions have been substantially updated from the previous Plan. As the Council goes through the budget-setting process for 2021/22 and beyond, there may be a need to prioritise how and to what extent those actions can be delivered. This report is considered alongside the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, which sets out the forecast financial context. The Council will continue to face difficult spending decisions in view of the current pandemic, economic climate and the expected continuing reduction in government support in future years. The availability of funding will impact on the services that can be delivered. Individual projects will be costed to enable decisions to be made on the overall programme of activity that the Council can deliver.

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 an important component of managing the Council's identified Corporate Risk of "Managing the Council's Finances".

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 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 8.3. 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 Appendix A – Revised Council Plan 2021 - 2026
- 16.2 Appendix B – Proposed Actions 2020
- 16.3 Appendix C – Achievements

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 Previous Cabinet report 21 July 2020: [COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2026 AND COUNCIL OBJECTIVES FOR 2021-2026](#)