

**Overview and Scrutiny
6th September 2022**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: Council Plan and Priorities 2022-2027

REPORT OF: Policy and Communities Manager

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST / SUSTAINABILITY / A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report details the Council Plan as agreed at Council in September 2021. There are no proposed changes to the objectives or themes of the Plan in this report and it has been provided at the request of Overview & Scrutiny Members for consideration.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee notes that the Council Plan and Priorities remain as stated in the 2022-27 Plan, except the details of projects on pages 8-10 which will now be covered within the Council Delivery Plan.

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. 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. There is a need to monitor progress against the priorities laid out in the Plan and the Committee has requested that this is presented to this Committee meeting.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 No alternative options considered, in the light of the request from the Committee.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. No external consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report. In its drafting stage, the administration considered and proposed Priorities which were then considered by a small working group. The working group comprised of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Executive Member for Finance and IT, Executive Member for Community

Engagement, Managing Director, Section 151 officer, Communications Manager, and the Policy Team.

- 5.2. The Political Liaison Board considered the new Priorities and revised outline Plan, while Service Directors also had the opportunity to contribute to its formation.
- 5.3. A draft of the Plan was taken to Cabinet on 21st September 2021, where it was referred and recommended for approval to Council. The Plan was taken to Council on 23rd September 2021, where it was approved with the three new Council Priorities of *People First, Sustainability, and A Brighter Future Together*.
- 5.4. It was confirmed by the Leader on 12th July 2022 that the Council Plan would not be reviewed or renewed for 2022-23 in response to the query being raised by the Policy and Communities Manager. The Leader remains satisfied that the Plan provides an overarching framework.

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 Council Plan is considered alongside the budget position (Medium-Term Financial Strategy) of the authority.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Council Plan highlights key issues and aims for the district. The Plan sets out the context in which the Council operates, our ambitions, and the close 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 informs the subsequent agreement of the service plans as prepared by each directorate within the Council, setting out each service, team and individual's objectives. With the relevant factors considered, the Council Priorities for 2022-2027 are:

- o People First
- o Sustainability
- o A Brighter Future Together

- 8.2 The Council Plan as set in 2022 did include some examples of our key Council projects, but as we now monitor these projects through a regularly updated Council Delivery Plan, this section of the Council Plan can now be deleted. The Council Delivery Plan for 2022/23 was agreed by Cabinet in March 2022, and a Quarter 1 update will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet in September 2022. All projects included are subject to the provision of sound business cases with specific targets established as they are introduced.
- 8.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested to review the Council Plan at their meeting on 6th September 2022.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Overview and Scrutiny terms of reference include at 6.2.7 (c) “To make reports or recommendations to the authority or the Executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive”; and (e) “To make reports or recommendations to the authority or the Executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive”. The Priority setting rests with the Cabinet and the final Plan is approved by Council.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Council Plan recognises the importance of aligning with the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This ensures that Council adopts policy-led budgeting, and also does not commit to policies or projects that it cannot afford to deliver. The Council Plan generally provides high level policy commitments, which can be delivered in several different ways and therefore the resources required cannot be fully determined. Specific projects are monitored via the Council Delivery Plan and generally already included in budget estimates. For the larger projects (particularly capital projects) there is a risk that the costs may increase as more information becomes available. This would affect the value for money of the project and may lead to a different decision on whether or how it should be progressed.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Having an adopted Council Plan and within it the Council's Priorities is part of the Council's Business Planning processes for the next financial year. Where the Council Plan is kept in place over a number of years it enables better medium-term planning. 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 need to deliver financial sustainability, and address the associated risks.
- 11.2 The Council Delivery Plan ensures that the risks and opportunities associated with the projects (to support the delivery of the Council Plan) are fully assessed and monitored. This helps ensure that the Council is 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 Priorities, the Council has sought to address equality implications in the services it provides. Through the remainder of the Corporate Business Planning Process it will carry out Equalities Impact Assessments for those Efficiency or Investment options that are taken forward where required.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report, as this is not a procurement exercise or contract.

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 those which have emerged as a result of the pandemic around the operation and recovery of services, as raised at paragraph 8.2. The resources needed to deliver services are considered and addressed through the Corporate Business Planning process. Once these Priorities are agreed for retention, then these will be cascaded to staff via staff briefings with several reminders via Insight, the SCF and the intranet.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A Council Plan 2022-2027

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 None, other than those referred to above.