

Item No	Referred from:	Cabinet
8A	Date:	10 September 2024
	Title of item:	Council Plan 2024-2028
To be considered alongside agenda item:		Agenda Item 10

The report considered by Cabinet at the meeting held on 10 September 2024 can be viewed here: [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 10th September, 2024, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- (1) The approval of the Council Plan (Appendix A) with the four new Council Priorities as outlined below:
 - Thriving Communities
 - Accessible Services
 - Responsible Growth
 - Sustainability
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Managing Director and Leader of the Council to approve any minor amendments to wording required as a result of the design process.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: 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 four years. As an overarching policy framework document, it guides and influences the use of Council resources; providing a focus for activities, plans, and services that the Council provide. The introduction to the plan highlights the link between the Council Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and service delivery plans.

Audio recording – 20 minutes 01 seconds

The Chair invited Councillor Matt Barnes, as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to present the referral on this item. Councillor Barnes advised that there had been discussion about:

- This was a good Plan which covered many initiatives and services provided. However, it was felt it could be improved by including some of the challenges faced by the Council and developing more specific and measurable objectives.
- Ongoing monitoring of achievements against the Council Plan would be conducted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout the life of the Plan.

The Leader of the Council presented the report entitled 'The Council Plan 2024-2028' and advised that:

- The Council Plan should not be confused with the Council Delivery Plan which is a separate document which sat under the Council Plan. The Council Plan was an overarching plan and not as measurable as the Council Delivery Plan.
- The Council Plan sets out the vision and strategic priorities for the next four years. It highlighted some of the key projects that support these priorities.
- A workshop was held in June which gave administration members an opportunity to share aspirations for the next four years.
- Two subsequent workshops were held in July to narrow down priorities and select key projects to sit under each priority.
- This draft was a plain text version and once the content is approved the plan would be formatted and signed.
- The priorities of the Council Plan were, 'Thriving Communities', 'Accessible Services', 'Responsible Growth' and 'Sustainability'.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Tamsin Thomas
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to questions, the Policy and Strategy Team Leader advised that following recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations:

- A diagram would be created during the design phase to lay out the relationship between the Council Plan, the Council Delivery Plan, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Service Delivery Plans.
- Further context around 'net zero' within the Sustainability priority will be incorporated during the design phase.
- There would be an annual review of the Council Plan going forward.
- It was agreed that key performance indicators and adding specific time frames were covered in the Council Delivery Plan.
- A key challenge was mentioned in the introduction and more details of risks were covered in the risk register and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The Chair thanked Councillors and the Officers involved for their hard work in producing this Council Plan.

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed and Councillor Tamsin Thomas seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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