

**COUNCIL
6 SEPTEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: ITEM REFERRED FROM CABINET: 31 JULY 2018 –
CORPORATE PLAN 2019 TO 2024 AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES
FOR 2019-2024**

The extract from the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 31 July 2018

22. CORPORATE PLAN 2019 TO 2024 AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2019-2024

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Senior Policy Officer and Leader of the Council in respect of the Corporate Plan 2019 to 2024. The following appendix was submitted with the report:

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2019-2024.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the following referral from that Committee, made at its meeting held on 24 July 2018, in respect of the Corporate Plan 2019 to 2024 and Corporate Objectives 2019 to 2024 (Minute 20 refers):

“RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers that the current Corporate Plan Document is a record of past achievements rather than a plan for the future, and that it should be revised to clearly set out plans to achieve Council’s objectives.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee urges Cabinet to revise this Plan at the earliest opportunity.”

The Leader of the Council advised that the Corporate Plan acknowledged the Council’s financial constraints and the need to provide services at their current level and ensure that they remained relevant to the community and drew attention to the following:

- Paragraph 5.2 of the report detailed those who had been consulted regarding the Plan;
- Paragraph 8.2 of the report highlighted that ongoing financial constraints made it increasingly likely that the emphasis for Council spend would be on the day to day service delivery; and
- Paragraph 8.3 of the report detailed that the Plan needed to reflect changes in matters such as legislation, capacity and financial constraints.

The Leader of the Council advised that, whilst statutory requirements had increased, funding would continue to be under pressure.

There was a need to plan for the aging population and to consider the patterns and location of areas of deprivation, which had changed over the last 5 years and it was necessary to ensure that services and how they are delivered, responded accordingly.

The limited resources of the Council and its partner agencies needed to be directed to the areas of greater need.

The objectives remained broadly the same, although objectives 1 and 2 had been slightly amended to now read:

Objective 1 – Attractive and Thriving

To work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents where diversity is welcomed and disadvantaged people are supported.

Objective 2 – Prosper and Protect

To promote sustainable growth both within and where it affects our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage.

Objective 3 – Responsive and Efficient

To ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints.

In respect of the Corporate Plan itself, the Leader of the Council drew attention to some of the additions to the Plan including:

- In light of the impact of neighbouring authorities on this district the existing and future green space provision would be reviewed;
- Representations would be made by the Council regarding neighbouring authorities plans, policies and aspirations;
- Review of the Council's Car Parking Strategy to ensure that it supports the Council's objectives. A workshop regarding this would take place soon;
- Working with relevant stakeholders to find sustainable solutions for the changing town centres.

With regard to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Leader of the Council advised that plans were already in place to start the review of the Corporate plan for the next financial year.

In considering other issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, she advised that:

- Air quality issues were extremely concerning, however there was an Air Quality Policy in place;
- Target workshops had been organised in the past, but these had now been stopped as Members did not attend them;

- An equalities Policy was in place which should address concerns regarding equality and diversity throughout North Herts;
- The Corporate Service Plan, with Service Action Plans attached, that detailed how objectives and targets would be achieved, was in place and this had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- The report included that the Council needed to take account of the impact of neighbouring Authorities, this addressed concerns regarding the comment regarding acknowledgment of changing risks to employment opportunities in surrounding areas such as Stevenage;
- In respect of the budget, there were many unknowns therefore it was difficult to assess how the budget would be affected.

Following debate on the Corporate Plan it was proposed by Councillor Needham and seconded by Councillor Cunningham that Objective 2 be amended to read:

To promote sustainable growth both within and wherever it affects our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage.

Following a vote it was:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- (1) That the Corporate Objectives for 2019 to 2024 as detailed below be agreed;
 1. To work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents, where diversity is welcomed and disadvantaged people are supported;
 2. To promote sustainable growth both within and where it affects our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage;
 3. To ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints.
- (2) That the Corporate Plan 2019 to 2024, as attached at Appendix A, be adopted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To have in place a suitable, high level strategic policy document for the Council, to inform its corporate business planning process.