

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 JANUARY 2022

CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2021

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.2 FURTHERING THE COMMITMENT TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2020-24 – DEVELOPING HIGHLIGHT PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR 2022/23

(Report prepared by Keith Simmons and Lisa Hastings)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The Council's strategic direction is set out in its Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan was adopted unanimously by Council on 21 January 2020 (Minute 78 refers) and covers the period 2020-24 (and is reproduced at Appendix A to this report). The Corporate Plan shapes the annual highlight priorities of the Cabinet and the 2021/22 priorities are set out at Appendix B to this report. At Appendix C, are initial thoughts for the highlighted priorities for year three (2022/23) of the Corporate Plan term. Finalised proposals for the highlight priorities for 2022/23 and milestones will be considered by Cabinet on 28 January 2022. Prior to that, views on the highlight priorities are invited and will be reported to that meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's Corporate Plan 2020/24 sets out its strategic direction. That strategic direction itself seeks to reflect the issues that matter most to local people, the national requirements from Government and the challenges that face the District over that time period.

The themes of the 2020/24 Corporate Plan are:

- Delivering High Quality Services
- Building Sustainable Communities for the Future
- Strong Finance and Governance
- Community Leadership through Partnerships
- A Growing and Inclusive Economy

The Corporate Plan itself is set out at Appendix A to this report.

Cabinet establishes each year its priority actions to deliver against the Corporate Plan and thereby ensure that the ambition of that Plan is central to its work. The priority actions do not cover every separate element of the ambition of the four year Corporate Plan; nor are they intended to indicate that other projects, schemes or activities are not being pursued. They are though intended to reflect imperatives across the Council and for the District and actions that it is right to focus on in this year.

When the Corporate Plan was adopted we could not have predicted that the world would have experienced the Coronavirus pandemic that has engulfed it. The UK was impacted

as most, if not all, countries globally have been impacted by the pandemic. It is in the face of the pandemic that this Council has responded to the particular challenges that emerged. While that has impacted on the work of the Council, including individual schemes, activities and projects, progress against the Corporate Plan priorities has continued.

The highlight priorities for 2021/22 are set out at Appendix B for reference purposes only.

As we look forward to year three of the Corporate Plan 2020-24, the following highlights of successes across the first year years of the Plan are noteworthy:

It is against this backdrop that the Cabinet intends to make further steps to deliver the intentions of the Corporate Plan.

The initial highlight priorities for 2022/23 has been prepared following consultation with individual Portfolio Holders and the Leader of the Council and this are set out at Appendix C to this report for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (a) That Cabinet approves the initial highlight priorities for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix C to this report, for consultation;**
- (b) that all Councillors, other partners and the public be invited to consider the initial priorities referred to in (a) above; and**
- (c) that the outcome of the consultation referred to in (b) above be reported to Cabinet on 28 January 2022 in order that Cabinet can formally adopt its finalised key priority actions for 2022/23.**

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The initial highlight priorities set out at Appendix A seeks to deliver in the year 2022/23 on the ambitions of the four year Corporate Plan. Other actions in 2022/23 will also be undertaken as the Council applies the strategic direction of the Corporate Plan to its work overall. In addition, Cabinet will establish a further set of key actions for 2023/24 to advance further achievements against the Corporate Plan.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

The initial highlight priorities set out at Appendix A includes the delivery of the financial savings target within the Medium Term Financial Strategy. In considering all matters, it is vital that the balance of resources can be accommodated by this Council and that it does not put further strain on the Council being able to balance its budget each year.

A key risk as Cabinet prepares its highlight priorities for 2022/23 is the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures to address the pandemic. These risks will need to be assessed in a dynamic way as the situation develops over time. There may yet be further work for the Council to achieve, such as new grant schemes, as there has been in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and this too will impact on the capacity of the Council to achieve the Cabinet's adopted highlight priorities.

LEGAL

The legal implications of individual actions will be assessed when they are brought forward for formal decisions to be made.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

In preparing this report, due regard has been given to the likely effect of the exercise of the Council's functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. In addition, due consideration has been given to the District Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

The development of the Cabinet's annual highlight priorities in support of the Corporate Plan ambition, and the reporting on them, follows the rhythm set out below:

1. Initial draft proposals for the Highlight Priorities for the following financial year will be considered at the meeting of Cabinet that also considers the Initial budget for the Council for the same year (in December).
2. The initial proposals will be subject to consultation; including Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
3. The outcome of consultation and finalised proposals for the Annual Highlight Priorities for the following financial year will be considered at the meeting of the Cabinet that also considers the draft budget for the Council for that same year (at the end of January). This will include Quarter 3 report on performance against the Annual Key Priority Actions for the current year.
4. Following the adoption of the Annual Key Priority Actions, the performance triggers will be built into the performance monitoring system of the Council based on the milestones approved as part of those Priority Actions.
5. Officers will report to the relevant Portfolio Holder on delivery of the Priority Actions and Portfolio Holders will determine, by exception, if issues need to be reported to Cabinet throughout the year.
6. Each quarter, a summary report on delivery against all of the Cabinet's Annual Key Priority Areas for the year will be reported to Portfolio Holders and then published as part of the Council's transparency data. Overview and Scrutiny Committee members may then identify specific key actions where there is performance against relevant milestones that should be subject to further enquiry and these may then be referred to the next relevant meeting of the Committee.
7. A half-yearly report on performance against the Annual Key Priority Actions will be submitted to the relevant Cabinet Meeting (in October). This not only enables

the Cabinet to consider the delivery of key actions in that year but also to encourage the start of the process to set key actions for the following financial year.

8. The half-yearly report will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to include in their work programmes so as they can consider the likely achievement of the envisaged outcomes envisaged.

The Outturn position on performance against the Cabinet's Annual Key priority actions for the previous financial year will be timed to be reported to the Cabinet Meeting at which budget Outturn for that year will be reported.

CURRENT POSITION

For the reasons set out here it is opportune to revisit the development of highlight priority actions on an annual basis within the ambition of the Corporate Plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

A – Corporate Plan 2020-24

B – Highlight Priorities for 2021/22

C – Initial thoughts for Highlight Priorities for 2022/23 in support of the Corporate Plan themes