

Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 20 February 2022

Draft Corporate Plan: 2023-27

Accountable member:

Cllr Peter Jeffries, Deputy Leader of the Council

Accountable officers:

Gareth Edmundson, Chief Executive

Paul Jones, Executive Director - Finance, Assets & Regeneration

Darren Knight, Executive Director - Place & Communities

Accountable scrutiny committee:

Overview and Scrutiny

Ward(s) affected:

All

Key/Significant Decision:

Yes

Executive summary:

A corporate plan is a key document that sets out the Council's priorities, objectives and how success will be measured. The plan allows the Council to set resources against agreed priorities and provides the framework to help prioritise future opportunities. During the current corporate plan period there have been a number of successes and significant progress against a number of important initiatives.

The approach taken for this Corporate Plan is to refresh the existing plan, as a number of flagship initiatives are continuing such as the Council's plans to make Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development, Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero, £180m housing investment plan to increase the number of affordable carbon neutral homes as well as responding to the ongoing challenging financial environment local government operates in.

The draft Corporate Plan also focuses on some new areas such as how the Council, in partnership with other organisations, can support residents with the cost of living challenges as well as renewed focus to support wider economic growth and community wellbeing through the sport agenda.

Recommendations:

- **Council review and approve the draft Corporate Plan 2023-2027**
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1. Implications

1.1. Financial implications

None as a direct result of this report. The corporate plan has been developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure that there are sufficient budgets in place to deliver the priorities as proposed. In addition, the corporate plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account our changing budgetary position.

Signed off by: Gemma Bell, Director of Finance & Assets. Gemma.Bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.2. Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. Proposals and actions contained within, and arising from the new Corporate Plan may, where necessary, be the subject of legal advice and support.

Signed off by: One Legal – legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3. HR implications

There are no HR implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Clare Jones, HR Business Partner. clare.jones@publicagroup.uk

1.4. Environmental and climate change implications

One of the key priorities in the draft corporate plan is prioritising initiatives that support the environmental and climate agenda.

Projects and initiatives resulting from this plan (where applicable) will be assessed using the newly developed and approved climate change impact assessment tool.

Signed off by: Laura Tapping, Climate Emergency Programme Officer.
laura.tapping@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.5. Property/asset implications

There are no property implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Simon Hodges, Senior Surveyor. simon.hodges@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.6. Corporate policy framework implications

The draft Corporate Plan will set the overarching priorities, policy and performance framework for the Council.

Signed off by: Ann Wolstencroft, Head of Projects, Performance & Risk.
ann.wolstencroft@cheltenham.gov.uk

2. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination:

Projects and initiatives taken forward from the Corporate Plan will be subject to equality impact assessments (where applicable) to ensure decision makers fully understand the impact of any decisions made.

3. Performance management – monitoring and review:

- Progress of the Council's corporate plan will be monitored through our performance management system Clearview.
 - Progress of the Corporate Plan will be subject to review upon request by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
 - Cabinet will be regularly updated with progress against the agreed objectives
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4. Background:

4.1. The Council's existing Corporate Plan's agreed duration ends at the end of 2022/2023. Despite the impact of the pandemic a range of progress has been with a number of examples set out below:

- Development agreement signed with HBD X Factory to take forward the Golden Valley Development, which will help cement Cheltenham as the Cyber Capital of the UK
- £40m has been invested so far to increase the supply of affordable homes in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Homes
- Creation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero
- Planning permission granted for our first carbon neutral council housing scheme
- Creation and approval of the Climate Change Supplementary Planning document to raise standards for sustainable housing development
- Feed Cheltenham network established with local charities, schools and churches working in partnership with the Cheltenham food support network to feed and provide fuel to households in Cheltenham
- Launched the Cheltenham Lottery - <https://www.cheltenhamlottery.co.uk/>, which has raised over £100,000 for local good causes
- Regeneration of Minster area through the Minster Gardens project
- £1.1m of funding confirmed from the shared prosperity fund to support Carbon busting

initiatives, skills boosting schemes, supporting business growth and a new cycle hub

- In partnership with the Cheltenham Trust, match funded investment to the Wilson to further broaden the cultural offer for local people and visitors
- Retention of the Green Flag award - the international quality mark for parks and green spaces
- Through No Child Left Behind, 70 organisations from across Cheltenham have signed up to the community agreement
- Cheltenham's night-time economy continues to retain its Purple Flag accreditation
- In 2021, set up Cheltenham's Ice Rink, which resulted in additional £3.3m being spent in Cheltenham as a result of the ice rink and the market
- New digital services have made it easier for residents and businesses to contact and transact with the Council. The newly re-opened reception providing a drop in, or appointments for those residents that prefer to see someone in person
- As of October 2022, an independent resident satisfaction survey shows that overall resident satisfaction with Cheltenham as a place to live is 90%, which is an increase of 6% compared to 2019 and well above the Local Government Association Benchmark.
- Resident satisfaction with how the Council runs things has also increased by 4% compared to 2019 and broadly in line with the Local Government Association's national benchmark for local authorities

4.2. During the current Corporate Plan period, Cheltenham Borough Council has received multiple national award recognition, for example:

- 2019: Winning the MJ Award for Best Commercial Council. The Council's commercial strategy helped to ensure continued investment in front-line services
- 2020: Winning Punchline Gloucestershire's Community & Business Champion for being one of the first Council's in the UK to start paying business grants during the pandemic
- 2021: Winning the Royal Town Planning Institute award in the Planning Heroes in a Pandemic category
- 2021: Winning Silver at the iESE Transformation Awards in the Working Together Category in recognition of the Council's community and business partnership working
- 2022: Winning the Federation of Small Business Local Government Award for Best in Covid-19 Support and Recovery for the South West Region

4.3. These achievements have been against a continuing challenging financial background that local government continues to operate in.

4.4. The current duration of the existing Corporate Plan comes to an end in 2022/2023 and now is the time to agree a new plan. The existing plan sets out significant flagship initiatives which are still continuing such as plans to make Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development, Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero and

increasing the number of affordable carbon neutral homes through our £180m housing investment plan. Therefore, our approach this time is to refresh our existing Corporate Plan to ensure the focus remains on these critically important initiatives that will provide huge benefits to the people of Cheltenham as well as ensuring we are able to respond to other opportunities and challenges ahead.

4.5. It's also important to highlight that the financial challenge facing local government continues with further issues needing to navigate such as energy costs and wider inflationary pressures. We also recognise the Council in partnership with others has an important role to play in supporting residents, communities and businesses with the cost of living challenges.

4.6. **Appendix 1** sets out the draft Corporate Plan and **appendix 2** sets out the one page summary.

5. Alternative options considered:

5.1. Without a refreshed Corporate Plan, the Council will be operating without an agreed framework of priorities and objectives.

5.2. A Corporate Plan is a critical document to ensure strategic direction, focuses prioritisation of resources and one of the key components of good corporate governance.

5.3. As set out in the Executive Summary, a number of flagship initiatives are still progressing from the existing Corporate Plan and so it was therefore more appropriate to refresh the existing plan rather than starting from a blank piece of paper.

6. Consultation and feedback:

6.1. The draft Corporate Plan has gone through a period of consultation and engagement including community groups, business organisations, parish councils, public sector partners and the Council's various service delivery organisations e.g. TCT, CBH, UBICO etc.

6.2. Alongside this consultation and engagement, we also considered feedback from the 2022 Independent Resident Satisfaction Survey.

6.3. In December 2022, the draft Corporate Plan was presented to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration and feedback.

7. Reasons for recommendations:

7.1. The draft Corporate Plan has gone through a period of consultation and engagement and this document sets priority areas of focus for the Council between now and 2027.

8. Key risks:

8.1. There are no risks associated with this report.

Report author:

Darren Knight, Executive Director - Place & Communities

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Appendices:

- i. Draft Corporate Plan
- ii. One page summary

Background information:

None.

