

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet – Tuesday 23 July 2024

### Corporate plan update and end of year performance report

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Rowena Hay, Leader of the Council

**Accountable officer:**

Gareth Edmundson, Chief Executive

**Ward(s) affected:**

None

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**Key Decision:** No

**Executive summary:**

The corporate plan is a key document that sets out the council's priorities and 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. The current corporate plan runs from 2023 to 2027 and this report presents a review of the first year.

In addition to the corporate plan review, an end of year performance report is also presented, which sets out the key performance indicators reported by service managers in 2023/24 together with an end of year commentary. This is the second full year of reporting.

The integration of Cheltenham Borough Homes into the council to create a much larger organisation means a refresh of the corporate plan is needed to reflect the new arrangement and the broadened range of activities now being undertaken by the organisation. Over the coming months, work will be undertaken to update the plan and develop a new set of performance metrics with a view to launching the refreshed plan at the start of April 2025.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. notes the corporate plan review and end of year performance report**
  - 2. notes the intention to refresh the corporate plan**
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## **1. Implications**

### **1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

No direct financial or property implications of these recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets, [gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.2 Legal implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any projects that arise from the priorities or objectives of the Corporate Plan will be subject to their own specific legal advice and/or support.

**Signed off by:** One Legal – [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

One of the key priorities in the Corporate Plan is to work with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham net zero by 2030. The review document at Appendix 3 sets out the progress made in the first year against this priority. Appendix 4 also covers a number of performance indicators related to the environment and climate change.

An internal Climate Programme Board is currently being developed to monitor execution and delivery of the Cheltenham Climate Emergency Action Plan, provide collective leadership, and ensure climate considerations continue to be incorporated into the plans and strategies developed by and across the service areas. Quarterly updates will ensure progress to deliver actions against this key priority will have the relevant strategic oversight.

**Signed off by:** Maizy McCann, Climate Emergency Officer, [Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities**

This report is connected to all corporate plan priorities.

### **1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications**

This report is a review of progress against an existing strategy together with an end of year performance report and therefore there are no direct implications. However, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the work to refresh the corporate plan.

### **1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review**

The refreshed corporate plan will include a new set of performance metrics which will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

In the meantime, service managers will continue to collect performance data which will be reviewed by the leadership team and reported to Cabinet as required.

## 2 Background

2.1 The corporate plan is a key document that sets out the council's priorities and 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.

2.2 The current corporate plan runs from 2023 to 2027. A review report to the end of March 2024 is attached at appendix 3. Highlights include:

- In September 2023 the council entered into a conditional development funding agreement with partners HBD X Factory, which will provide up to £95m to enable construction of the first phase of the Golden Valley development, including the National Cyber Innovation Centre.
- An £85k grant was secured to fund the detailed feasibility study for two potential heat networks, one in Golden Valley and the other in the town centre. Work commenced on this study in January.
- The Cheltenham Zero initiative now has 170 businesses registered. Using UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) funding, the council commissioned Zellar, an online sustainability platform, which enables businesses to calculate their carbon emissions and provides them with action plans to reduce their emissions. At the end of March, 64 businesses had engaged with the platform, leading to 462 sustainability actions being carried out by businesses.
- Decarbonisation work is being undertaken on the council's social housing stock. Work has already been completed on 89 properties and work is underway on another 40.
- During 2023/24 the housing options service prevented the homelessness of (or assisted out of homelessness) 435 households.
- Between February 2023 and March this year 129 affordable homes were delivered as part of the £180m housing investment plan.
- Over 90 organisations are now signed up to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) community agreement. Amongst other activities, in 2023/24 NCLB delivered a holiday activity and food programme which ran across the spring, summer and winter holidays.
- Cabinet approved a vacant units and town centre land use efficiency action plan in September 2023. The council is working with Cheltenham BID, relationships have been established with town centre agents and enquiries from potential incoming operators are managed and referred accordingly.
- In January 2023, the council received over £1m from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) which has enabled the delivery of a number of projects through 2023/24.

2.3 In addition to the corporate plan review, an end of year performance report is attached at

appendix 4. This document sets out the key performance indicators reported by service managers in 2023/24 together with an end of year commentary. This is the second full year of reporting, figures for 2022/23 having been presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in October 2023.

2.4 Overall, performance has been good, but there are some areas where performance could be improved.

- Marketing Cheltenham have successfully increased engagement with the service and with the Visit Cheltenham website. The service also reports that membership numbers are up, although the income target has not been achieved due to businesses signing up later in the year. Plans are in place to address this for 24-25 and this demonstrates how performance metrics are being used to inform decision-making.
- The percentage of Cheltenham Zero businesses producing carbon reduction plans is well above target. This is an example of where the council is supporting a project enabling community action.
- Tackling homelessness remains challenging, with influencing factors outside of the council's control. However, the team has exceeded the target for homelessness prevention and relief.
- In finance and assets, achieving savings targets remains challenging with ambitious targets, but a number of significant decisions were taken in the second half of the year, in particular the decision to wind up Cheltenham Borough Homes. Financial savings associated with these decisions will be delivered in 2024/25.
- Occupation of investment properties remains buoyant and well above target with recently completed leases for Ellenborough House and Rodney Road significantly reducing the vacant space available.
- In planning, the statutory target for determining major applications is being met. The determination rate for minor and household applications has been challenging due to the team carrying vacancies, but performance is expected to improve once these vacancies have been filled.
- Collection accuracy for waste and recycling has been consistently good and above 99% throughout the year. A considerable amount of work has been done by Ubico to reduce the number of missed bins, supported by the introduction of new IT systems. Recycling rates are below target; however, this target is set at a national level by Government and many authorities are not achieving it.
- Public and environmental health performance has improved through the year and is now above target in all respects.
- Income from parking fees, fines and permits, excluding staff permits has exceeded budget.

- Council tax and business rates collection rates have exceeded targets and are both above 98%.
- Employee turnover and sickness rates are within a reasonable range. Some system improvements are required to improve the accuracy of sickness figures, but the HR team is working on this, so data going forward should be more robust and benchmarking data will be used to develop targets.
- ICT performance remains good and well within performance standards.

### **3 A refresh of the corporate plan and performance management**

- 3.1 The integration of Cheltenham Borough Homes back into the council to create a larger organisation means a refresh of the corporate plan is needed to reflect the new arrangement and the broadened range of activities that will be undertaken by the organisation.
- 3.2 Over the coming months, work will be undertaken to update the plan with a view to launching the revised plan from April 2025. This will include a consultation process with members and with staff from across the wider organisation to ensure the views of current CBC staff and those who have transferred across from CBH can be captured and incorporated.
- 3.3 Sitting alongside the refreshed plan will be a new set of performance metrics to support the plan and measure success.
- 3.4 For this year, to ensure continuity in performance management, service managers will be asked to report on a streamlined set of performance metrics aligned to the priorities in the existing corporate plan.

### **4 Reasons for recommendations**

- 4.1 As outlined above, the integration of housing services means a refresh of the corporate plan is needed.
- 4.2 Regarding performance management, the introduction of key performance indicators in 2021/22 represented a significant shift in culture for the council. Two full years of data demonstrate a more mature, data aware approach is gradually being adopted as service managers select their performance indicators; however, there is still work to do.
- 4.3 The next stage of development is to align strategic performance metrics with the corporate plan. This means performance will no longer be reported by service area but will be matched to the themes and priorities in the corporate plan. Adopting this approach will support the organisation with understanding how the work of different teams contributes to the plan and will ensure the information captured is meaningful. In addition, managers will be encouraged to use operational performance indicators within their individual service areas to inform decision making.

### **5 Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 None.

## **6 Consultation and feedback**

6.1 As outlined in section 3 above, a consultation process will be undertaken with members and staff to refresh the corporate plan.

## **7 Key risks**

7.1 The key risks in relation to the corporate plan are that the plan does not accurately reflect the activities of the organisation and success is not measurable.

7.2 The key risks in respect of performance management are that strategic performance indicators are not aligned to the corporate plan, so teams do not know how or if their activities are contributing to the delivery of the plan. Also, if appropriate operational performance indicators are not put in place, managers may not have the necessary data to inform their decision-making.

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### **Report author:**

Gill Morris, Organisational Performance Lead

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### **Appendices:**

1. Risk Assessment
2. Equality Impact Assessment – Screening
3. CBC Corporate Plan 2023-2027 Year One Review
4. End of year performance report

### **Background information:**

Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027.

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	If the corporate plan is not refreshed, then it will not accurately reflect the activities of the organisation.	Chief Executive	4	3	12	Reduce	Ensure corporate plan is refreshed and kept under review	Leadership team	April 2025
	If strategic performance indicators are not aligned to the corporate plan, then the organisation will not know if it is successful in delivering corporate plan priorities.	Leadership team	4	3	12	Reduce	Develop strategic performance indicators and ensure they are aligned to themes and priorities of the corporate plan	Heads of service and service managers	April 2025
	If managers do not implement operational performance indicators for their service area, then they may not have the necessary data to inform their decision making.	Leadership team	4	3	12	Reduce	Managers develop and implement appropriate performance indicators for their service areas	Heads of service and service managers	Ongoing

## Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (Screening)

### 1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

#### a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: Ann Wolstencroft	Service Area: Corporate Services
Title: Head of corporate services	Date of assessment: 18 June 2024
Signature: A. Wolstencroft	

#### b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Other

If other, please specify: This report is a review of progress in delivering the corporate plan together with an end of year performance report.

#### c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Corporate Plan

Is this new or existing?

Other

#### Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

This report is a review of progress made during 2023/24 to deliver the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 together with an end of year performance report. The report also outlines a refresh of the Corporate Plan will be undertaken during 2024/25. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of this.

#### d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims: N/A

Objectives: N/A



Outcomes:	N/A
Benefits:	N/A

<b>e. What are the expected impacts?</b>	
Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.	<b>No</b>
Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?	<b>No impact expected</b>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
This report is a review of progress made during 2023/24 to deliver the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 together with an end of year performance report. The report also outlines that a refresh of the Corporate Plan will be undertaken in 2024/25 to reflect the integration of Cheltenham Borough Homes to create a much larger organisation. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the refresh of the Plan.	

**If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.**

<b>f. Identify next steps as appropriate</b>	
Stage Two required	<b>No</b>
Owner of Stage Two assessment	
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	

**Please move on to Stage 2 if required ([intranet link](#)).**