

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – Tuesday 15 July 2025

Council – Monday 21 July 2025

Corporate Plan Update, End of Year Performance Report and Corporate Plan Refresh

Accountable member:

Leader of the Council, Councillor Rowena Hay

Accountable officer:

Gareth Edmundson – Chief Executive

Ward(s) affected:

All

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 2024/25, the second year of the plan.

An end of year performance report is also presented, which sets out performance against key strategic performance indicators individual service areas have been monitoring in 2024/25. These have been linked to the key priorities in the corporate plan. Note, these do not include housing services, which have been reported on separately in 2024/25.

The second-year review of the Corporate Plan 2023-2027 brings the current version of the corporate plan to a close. With the integration of housing services

back into the council to create a new, larger organisation, the corporate plan has been reviewed and refreshed. This report therefore also presents the refreshed corporate plan, which will run from 2025 to 2028. At the same time, the strategic performance indicators have been reviewed. These have also been updated to better reflect the priorities and activities in the refreshed plan and are now included within the plan.

Recommendations:

Recommendations for Cabinet: That Cabinet:

1. **notes the corporate plan review and end of year performance report.**
2. **approves the refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028.**

Recommendations for Council: That Council:

1. **notes the corporate plan review and end of year performance report.**
 2. **endorses the refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028.**
-

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, property and asset implications

There are no direct implications arising from the report. Any finance, property or asset implications will be assessed as part of the delivery of the individual actions contained in the refreshed Corporate Plan.

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

1.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from the report recommendations. Legal support is provided, where necessary, for the individual actions arising from the plan.

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

1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

A climate change impact assessment has been completed for the refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028 and is attached at Appendix 6. In the main, because the plan is a strategic document, the actual environmental and climate change implications won't be known until the individual actions in the Plan are delivered.

However, a judgement has been made, where possible, about the impacts of delivering the actions set out in the plan.

Signed off by: Maizy McCann, Climate Officer, Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.4 Corporate plan priorities

This report contributes to all the priorities in the current Corporate Plan:

- Making Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK
- Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham #netzero by 2030
- Increasing the number of affordable homes through our £180m housing investment plan
- Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity
- Being a more modern, efficient and financially sustainable council

Once the refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028 has been approved, all future Cabinet reports will refer to the updated priorities. Equality, diversity and inclusion implications

A full equality impact assessment of the refreshed corporate plan has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 5. Whilst the plan is a strategic document and the true impact will depend on delivery of the individual actions, it has been judged that, overall, the plan will deliver benefits to all the age groups identified in the assessment and impact positively on mental health and on socio-economic factors. It is not possible to judge the impact on other specific groups until the individual actions are delivered.

1.5 Performance management – monitoring and review

A formal performance report will be presented to Cabinet on an annual basis and the leadership team and Cabinet will monitor progress as required through the year.

2 Introduction

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 This report sets out:

- (i) A review of progress against the current Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027. This will be the second annual review and will close the current version of the Corporate Plan. The reasons for this are set out in section 5 below.
- (ii) An end of year performance report on the strategic performance indicators service areas have been monitoring in 2024/5, together with an end of year commentary. Note, these do not include housing services, which have been reported on separately in 2024/25.
- (iii) A refreshed corporate plan, which will run from 2025 to 2028.

2.3 Together, these documents provide a review of progress and performance to the end of 2024/25 and set the direction of travel for future years.

3 Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 – year two review

3.1 Appendix 2 presents the full review report of progress made over the second year of the plan.

3.2 Highlights include:

- Progress made on the Golden Valley development, including a fully developed outline application for the innovation centre, pre-application discussions with developers which could bring forward over 2,400 homes and a social strategy which is already being implemented.
- £120,000 awarded to business for decarbonisation grants and cost of decarbonisation audits for a number of Cheltenham Zero members supported.
- Continued improvements to social housing to increase energy efficiency and deliver some low carbon heating and securing further grant funding to continue this work.
- Delivery of the new Changing Places toilet at Montpellier Gardens.
- Completion of a built facilities strategy and playing pitch strategy, which has been used to inform an overarching action plan for sports provision.
- £295,000 of the Household Support Fund allocated to local providers through the Facing Hardship Group.
- New digital applications launched to support customer interaction with the council.

4 End of year performance report for 2024/25

4.1 The end of year performance report at Appendix 3 sets out the key strategic performance indicators service areas have been monitoring for the year 2024/25.

4.2 Overall, performance has been good, but there are some areas where performance could be improved. Some examples of performance are given below:

- Income from the pest control service and from car parking exceeded target, but income at the Cemetery & Crematorium was lower than forecast.
- The number of new affordable homes delivered in the borough was strong. The council did not deliver any new build affordable homes in 2024/25 due to delay in the completion of a development, but it is expected this will begin to deliver new homes in the first quarter of 2025/26.
- The number of homelessness preventions and reliefs was significantly off target due to prevention options dwindling, notably as a result of the private rented sector becoming increasingly unaffordable. But the number of households in CBC owned temporary accommodation continued to remain manageable.
- VisitCheltenham website sessions were down, but this is part of a global trend which has been attributed to the growth of AI in search engines, reducing the need for users to click through to websites.
- The shared building control service has performed well, gaining more of the total market share than target.
- Staff shortages and difficulties with recruitment have caused issues in some areas. Planning enforcement remains a difficult area, but the picture for planning conservation has improved through the year with several successful recruitments.
- ICT systems were robust and reliable and responses to ICT incidents (which were few) by the ICT service were consistently above target. This is vitally important to the smooth running the council's business and ensuring the council is able to deliver good quality services to its customers.

5 Refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028

5.1 The decision in 2023 to bring housing services back into the Council provided

an opportunity to review the current corporate plan and ensure the priorities and activities going forward reflect the council's additional responsibilities not only as a housing provider, but as landlord to the tenants and leaseholders who live in the council's properties. It was also an opportunity to reflect on progress made against the corporate plan over the last two years and the broader changes that have taken place at a national level.

5.2 As a result, the key priorities and activities have been refreshed to set the direction of travel to 2028.

- The council's five key priorities for the next three years are:Key priority 1: Securing our future
- Key priority 2: Quality homes, safe and strong communities
- Key priority 3: Reducing carbon, achieving council net zero, creating biodiversity
- Key priority 4: Reducing inequalities, supporting better outcomes
- Key priority 5: Taking care of your money

5.3 Most council activities contribute in some way to these priorities, but the Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028 has been streamlined to focus on a number of key strategic activities which will be essential to deliver if significant progress is to be made against the priorities over the next three years.

5.4 For each of the five priorities there are aims, specific actions and supporting (strategic) performance indicators. The actions are ones over which the council has significant control. This brings greater accountability and transparency to the Plan, enabling the council to be more clearly held to account on delivery.

5.5 The refreshed corporate plan is presented in full at Appendix 4.

6 Reasons for recommendations

6.1 Cabinet and Council are asked to note the review report and performance report to acknowledge the progress that has been made against the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027.

6.2 Cabinet is asked to approve the refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028 to set the direction of travel for the council for the next three years and Council is asked to endorse this.

7 Alternative options considered

7.1 None. A refresh of the corporate plan was needed to reflect the changes the council has undergone as a result of the integration of housing services.

8 Consultation and feedback

8.1 Early on in the review and refresh of the Plan, consultation was undertaken with Cabinet to refresh the key priorities. The more detailed aims, actions and performance indicators have been developed in consultation with the Leadership Team and the Leader. No further consultation has been undertaken as this is a refresh of an existing plan to cover the next few years.

9 Key risks

9.1 It is vital the corporate plan is refreshed to ensure it reflects the activities of the council in light of the reintegration of housing services. The activities also need to be measurable and ones over which the council has significant control, otherwise it will not know if it has been successful in making progress against the priorities and customers and the wider community will also not be able to hold the council to account.

Report author:

Gill May, Organisational Performance Lead, gill.may@cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendices:

1. Risk Assessment
2. Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 – year two review
3. End of year performance report 2024/25
4. Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028
5. Equality Impact Assessment
6. Climate Change Impact Assessment

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	15/07/25
	If actions and indicators in the refreshed corporate plan are not measurable then the organisation will not know if it has been successful in delivering the corporate plan priorities.	Chief Executive	4	3	12	Reduce	Ensure actions and indicators in the corporate plan are measurable.	Leadership team	27/06/25
	If actions and indicators in the refreshed corporate plan are not measurable then the council cannot be held to account by its citizens over progress against the key priorities.	Chief Executive	4	3	12	Reduce	Ensure actions and indicators in the corporate plan are measurable.	Leadership team	27/06/25

	If the council does not have significant control over the actions in the refreshed corporate plan then it will be more difficult to make progress against the key priorities and for the council to be held accountable for the progress.	Chief Executive	4	3	12	Reduce	Ensure actions in the corporate plan are ones over which the council has significant control	Leadership team	27/06/25
--	---	-----------------	---	---	----	--------	--	-----------------	----------