

REPORT TO: Cabinet

22 March 2021

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Neil Gough (Deputy Leader)

LEAD OFFICER: Anne Ainsworth (Chief Operating Officer)

2020-25 Business Plan

Executive Summary

1. The Council agreed four key priorities as part of developing the 2019-24 Business Plan. Beneath this sits an action plan detailing the activities the Council would carry out under each of the four areas.
2. It was agreed that the Business Plan would be reviewed annually to ensure that priorities are continuing to deliver the outcomes needed for local people. When developing the latest update to the 2020-25 Business Plan, the four priority areas have remained unchanged, but a review has been done on the action plan.
3. The plan has been updated and reflects the activity that has been on-going throughout 2020-21 during the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also been drafted with the recognition that the implications from the virus and multiple national lockdowns, will continue to be far-reaching and will require on-going dedicated resource from the Council throughout 2021.
4. The updated version of the plan for 2021-22 is intended to provide clear priorities and delivery dates. This will make sure the Council can easily track progress and delivery of the agreed actions. This document provides the over-arching framework for priorities and will inform 2021-22 Service Plans.

Key Decision

5. No

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - (a) Consider the proposed 2020-25 Business Plan at **Appendix A** (with the Action Plan primarily focused on delivery 2021-22) and recommend it to Council for approval, with any amendments as required.

- (b) Authorise the Chief Executive to make any minor wording changes required to final drafts, in consultation with the Deputy Leader.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The Business Plan outlines clear and measurable actions that the Council will carry out up until 2025 to achieve the overarching priorities, with a focus on activities in 2021-22. The Business Plan is used to ensure officer and financial resources are allocated appropriately to achieve the actions and objectives detailed within it.

Details

8. Actions from the 2019-24 Business Plan that have already been completed are listed in the 2020-25 Business Plan.
9. Some other actions agreed in the 2019-24 Business Plan are being progressed in partnership with other organisations. Where these actions are now combined into joint action plans, they are not detailed in the Business Plan. For example, a number of actions are linked to the activities of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership.
10. The actions within the Business Plan at **Appendix A** have been split between priorities over the next twelve months of the plan and other longer-term objectives. All priorities proposed for 2021-22 include measures that make sure we can monitor and evaluate progress.

Options

11. Do nothing – Cabinet could decide not to update the Business Plan, making it difficult to provide clarity about priorities for the year 2021-22 and to measure progress.
12. Request a new approach to Business Planning – Cabinet could ask for a completely new process of Business Planning to be undertaken and reject this report. This would however: be contrary to the consultation which was undertaken in 2019-20 which underpinned the 2020-25 Business Planning process; undermine the continuity in the process which allows for progress to be clearly outlined and issues to be identified; create delays to the publication of a Business Plan; and stretch resources currently directed to support those in need during the pandemic.
13. Recommended Option – Approve the Business Plan and the continuity of the process undertaken in 2019-20.

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

- The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic – multiple lockdowns have had wide reaching impacts on our communities, businesses and vulnerable individuals. Resource will be required throughout 2021 to ensure that as the national vaccination programme is rolled out, support continues to be provided to those who need it. This may have implications for some of the timescales within the plan but it is not possible to say at this time what may be affected. The plan has been written based on the information we have at this point in time.
- The potential impacts of Brexit are still to be fully realised and will need to be carefully monitored over the next few months.
- Throughout the pandemic, the positive implications for the environment and new ways of working have been documented. Although the Business Plan as a priority to be 'Green to our Core', it also reflects the work of the Council to embed environmental issues and considerations within all aspects of our activity.
- The implications of multiple lockdowns and national restrictions have disproportionately affected some people in our communities more than others. As part of our equality and diversity commitment, the Council has within the Plan what direct action we can take to support those who may have been most impacted.

Financial

15. The Council's Business Plan is in line with the Council's agreed budget for 2021-22, to ensure that actions can be fully resourced and funded.

Legal

16. None.

Staffing

17. As part of the action plan refresh process, resourcing has been considered to ensure deliverability of Council priorities.
18. There will continue to be demands upon our staffing resources from Covid-19 related activities throughout 2021.

Risks/Opportunities

19. The process of refreshing the Council's action plan will improve Business Plan performance reporting for 2021 onwards and ensure resources are clearly focussed towards delivering priorities.

Equality and Diversity

20. The action plan reaffirms the Council's commitment to be an employer of choice for people with disabilities. Actions within the Business Plan will require the completion of Equality Impact Assessments for individual projects.

Climate Change

21. One of the four key priority areas within the Business Plan is being 'Green to Our Core'. This priority makes sure that the environment and environmental impacts are at the centre of all the work we do.

Health and Wellbeing

22. The Business Plan and day to day work of the Communities team includes a range of actions aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of the residents and businesses in the district.

Consultation responses

23. A detailed public consultation was carried out in 2019 to develop the four key themes as part of the 2019-24 Business Plan. These four areas remain unchanged.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

18. This process does not change any of the overarching themes but establishes clear priorities falling within each of these for the next business planning period (2021-22).

Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft 2020-25 Business Plan Action Grid

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