

Report To:	CABINET	Date:	21 JULY 2020
Heading:	CORPORATE PLAN AND YEAR END POSITION		
Portfolio Holder:	COUNCILLOR JASON ZADRONZY, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL		
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	YES		
Subject to Call-In:	YES		

Purpose of Report

This report presents to Cabinet the year end out-turn position and proposed refresh of the Corporate Plan for approval.

Recommendation(s)

1. For Cabinet to consider and proactively review the successful delivery of the Corporate Plan, and levels of performance achieved against the Corporate Scorecard, as at year-end 2019/20.
2. For Cabinet to approve the Corporate Plan refresh.
3. To authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to review and revise the Corporate Scorecard, aligned to the Corporate Plan.

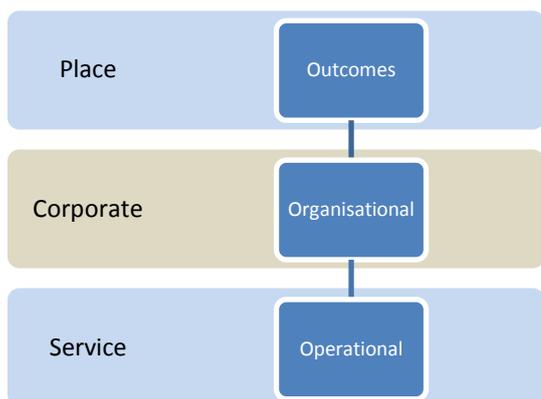
Reasons for Recommendation(s)

The Council's ambitions for the period 2019 – 2023 are clearly identified in a set of revised and updated Corporate Priorities which are presented in our Corporate Plan. These were developed by Cabinet last year and have since been reviewed and updated, with particular consideration of the impact of the pandemic and our intended recovery activity.

Our priorities for the future and the key projects and initiatives we intend to deliver, are then translated and cascaded, through our Performance and Strategic Planning Framework, into specific Service Plans to facilitate focussed delivery.

The Corporate Plan sits above a wider strategic context which includes the Corporate Project Management Framework, Corporate Performance Indicators and a range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services.

Our performance framework incorporates balanced performance scorecards on three separate levels as indicated below.



Our Corporate Scorecard measures organisational performance, and as such typical perspectives of a balanced scorecard have been adopted including Community and Customer, Funding the Future, Organisational Effectiveness and Our People. The Corporate Scorecard is aligned to our Corporate Priorities and key initiatives identified in the refreshed Corporate Plan 2019-2023.

Every four years we also undertake a Peer Challenge Review, engaging peers from across the sector through the Local Government Association sector led improvement offer, with an independent evaluation of the organisation which is mostly focussed on leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience. The outcome of the most recent Peer Challenge Review, on 29th to 31st January, 2020, is reported separately to this Cabinet.

We are a Values based organisation whose purpose is to create a future where everyone has the chance of a better quality of life, as such we are currently developing our approach to measuring and understanding social value which will be incorporated into our Performance Management and Project Management framework. A Social Value Policy has recently been developed and approved by Cabinet.

Alternative Options Considered

None

Detailed Information

The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 was approved by Cabinet and endorsed by Full Council in September 2019. This new Corporate Plan set out our revised priorities for the future and the key projects and initiatives we intend to deliver.

The Corporate Plan sits above a wider strategic context which includes the Corporate Project Management Framework, Corporate Performance Framework and a range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services.

In March 2016, Cabinet agreed the use of a balanced scorecard methodology to enhance the organisation's performance framework and ability to understand how successfully the Corporate Priorities are being delivered, the approach providing a more rounded view on performance with a greater emphasis on customer satisfaction and quality.

The Corporate Plan has been reviewed in light of the first year progress and performance outturn, and also significant factors impacting upon the organisation such as the COVID pandemic. The plan has been refreshed to ensure alignment to the Council's future ambitions and Corporate Priorities for the four year period of the plan (2019-2023).

Corporate Plan progress is monitored through both the successful delivery of key projects and initiatives and performance achieved against the Corporate Scorecard.

This report details progress against delivery of the Corporate Plan in 2019/20 as measured through our Corporate Scorecard.

It should be noted that Ashfield is the only local authority in Nottinghamshire that has delivered all tier 1 and 2 critical services without interruption during the pandemic. The whole organisation has worked effectively together as one council, re-deploying staff into important roles outside of their normal duties to ensure continuance of service, whilst also delivering humanitarian services across the District.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, overall, the corporate scorecard position for April 2019 to March 2020 indicates the following:-

- 74% of measures achieving or exceeding target, or within 10% variance of target.
- 64% of measures indicating an improved position compared to the same period in the previous year, or within 5% of previous year's performance levels.

We are pleased with Corporate Plan key successes delivered within the year:-

Health and Happiness Priority

- Kirkby Leisure Centre - the project is underway to provide a new facility on the Festival Hall site, including a swimming pool, leisure water, sports/ events hall, café and climbing wall. Provisional allocation of £1.5m of funding secured from the LEP and Expression of Interest submitted to Sport England for £1.5m. £10,000 was secured from Sport England to develop a Strategic Outcomes Framework, to enable us to apply for Sport England facilities funding and also to help shape the new operator contract. The new leisure operator contract was developed and a very successful bidder's day was held in January. Five Operators were invited to ITT stage, with a deadline of 10 June 2020 to submit their applications.
- Lammas Health Hub has been launched, and is being accessed by many groups, supporting individuals living with dementia, autism, and long term health conditions. Free usage of the Health Hub is available to groups that support vulnerable residents.
- Hucknall Rotary Community Games event was delivered in partnership with Hucknall Rotary Club: 24 Care leavers have accessed free leisure centre use since July 2019. 3 Carers Roadshows have also been delivered with 122 conversations with carers about their needs and what activities/support they require. There were also 22 referrals.
- Through our Community Engagement Volunteer Policy 182 volunteers have registered, with 29 new inductions during this period.
- Feel Good families was launched in May 2019. To date 532 families have signed up, including 1,037 children. All receive regular communication about free or low cost activity. Themed trails have taken place in local parks, family ice skating and dancing sessions have been fully booked, 63 people took part in cycle ability and a new junior Parkrun started attracting 80 participants in the first week. This project was a finalist for the Active Notts. Project of the Year award.

Homes and Housing Priority

- Non-decent housing stock has remained at 0.18% for the year which is considerably better than the target figure of 0.40%.
- Whilst the target for households prevented from becoming homeless continued to be exceeded throughout the year, there is a small reduction in the number of preventions from the previous quarter. This has continued a trend over the past few quarters. Difficulty in accessing alternative accommodation/enabling applicants to remain in their current accommodation is influenced by Government policies such as Welfare Reform which have had an impact. In addition the small reduction from last quarter could be attributed to a 'lag' in recording following difficulties brought about by the COVID 19 outbreak. This has also impacted on the ability of the service to carry out prevention work for the last 2 weeks in March.
- Covid-19 had an impact on Void relets during the last 2 weeks of March, however performance for the year end was still above target. As reported during Quarter 2, effective management and a lower number of empty homes are key reasons for this.
- We have continued throughout the year to consistently support 100% of our tenants to remain in their tenancy for 6 months or more following completion of their support package. This is through the hard work of the Tenancy Sustainment Officers, both by carrying out pre-tenancy work and by providing comprehensive support during the first few months of their tenancy to vulnerable tenants. This includes proactive partnership working with other external agencies and charities etc.

Economic Growth and Place Priority

- The Kirkby Town Centre Masterplan was completed in February of this year.
- The Kirkby and Sutton Towns Funding consultations have now completed, with over 1,400 responses in total, with results being published in the near future.
- Car parking charges have been suspended during COVID lockdown until a new two hours free parking scheme in town centre car parks comes into force in September 2020.
- Idlewells indoor market employment has risen quarter on quarter throughout 2019/20, pre-covid.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded project for Kings Mill Reservoir progresses, the dredging contract has now been completed and demobilised. Work to decommission protective cages has been added which will be implemented Jan – Feb 2021. The café refurbishment has been completed with some remedial works still to complete.
- Planning applications continue to be processed well above nationally prescribed standard targets, with all major applications being processed within 13 weeks.
- All dilapidated commercial buildings on the Dilapidated and Empty Buildings Priority list have received some form of intervention over the year. The group has dealt with 10 long standing empty properties this year with a range of outcomes, being either demolition, redevelopment or significant improvement. There are currently 11 long standing empty properties being worked on. The Council has undertaken a number of very positive actions which has resulted in 13 premises being taken off the dilapidated buildings list.

Cleaner and Greener Priority

- The number of resident generated reports of dog fouling during the year has seen another 10.7% reduction compared to last year, which is definitely a positive sign of continued progress through collaborations with Keep Britain Tidy and Tickspac, cross departmental working with ASB and continuously developing new and improved means of grounds maintenance and street cleansing schedules through service reviews. This lowering trend of incidents of dog fouling is expected to reduce even further during 2020/21.

- 2019/20 has seen a reduction in fly tipping incidents by 11.5% compared to last year, which is a first following a five year rise of incidents District-wide. It is clear campaigns like 'Not in Notts.' as well as the annual 'Big Ashfield Spring Clean' have educated residents of the impacts of fly tipping and empowering communities towards the conservation effort.
- For litter and fly-tipping requests combined there has been a 2.6% decrease, going against the increasing trend of previous years. We are continuing to collaborate with organisations like Keep Britain Tidy and APSE which provides the Council a variety of campaigns and information from other local authorities on their own struggles with litter. We are also undergoing an Environmental Service review that seeks to optimise its street cleansing and grounds maintenance schedules to assure quicker recovery as well as re-organising the distribution of litter bins across the District to the areas that require it the most.
- In addition to this, the proactive engagement and intervention work undertaken by the Enforcement and ASB teams in investigations and the subsequent issue of fixed penalty notices for offenders has also seen a 41% increase in overall actions. For 2020/21, the enforcement team is also having more resources allocated to it with an extra member of staff being assigned, which is expected to result in more investigations, fixed penalty notices and a reduction in overall incidents long term.
- Whilst 2019/20 has maintained recycling and glass levels between 40-44% for each of its quarters, recycling tonnage has seen an increase of 14% when compared to 2018/19 from 7,264.50 to 8,294.88 tonnes. In regards to residual waste, there has been another 2.6% reduction compared to last year, from 27,796.14 tonnes to 27,057.72 tonnes.
- The end of the 2019/20 garden waste season saw 20,800 subscribers to the garden waste service, 1,300 more than the previous year (6.7%) there has been a 10.5% increase in garden waste tonnage for 2019/20 when compared to last year, from 5,679.24 tonnes to 6,275.76 tonnes.
- Kirkby, Sutton and Hucknall have maintained an average grade of B for street cleanliness during the last 3 quarters of 2019/20. This includes rates of litter for each surveyed street. Graffiti and Fly Posting has been awarded an A grade for each of the three quarters, only Detritus has seen a dip to a B- in Q4 19/20, but maintained an A grade for Q2-3 19/20.

Safer and Stronger Priority

- Anti-social behaviour - Work is taking place with Nottinghamshire Victim Care to make Ashfield District Council a victim case hub. Local Area Tasking Meetings have been taking place to increase identification and active targeting of offenders and hotspot locations.
- CCTV – Police and Crime Commissioner Funding was approved for redeployable CCTV in Ashfield with three new cameras having been purchased and potential for a fourth camera. An infrastructure was being put in place using existing lamp columns and rewiring with commando switch for those in pre-determined hotspot locations with Privacy Impact Assessments produced.
- Complex case and safeguarding - Targeting of cases has been taking place in the last 12 months using a complex case methodology.
- Domestic abuse - All complex case workers are being trained in the MARAC process. Funding arrangements for the management of refuge accommodation have been concluded and government evaluation submitted.

Innovate and Improve Priority

- We have successfully acquired £61.77m of commercial investment property to date, delivering much needed annual (gross) income of circa £4m to support the delivery of key services in our 2020/21 budget and MTFS.
- The continued review and implementation of changes to call handling has seen average call waiting time continue to decrease over the year: 38 seconds reduction since the first quarter of 2019/20, at 39 seconds which is well below our current target of 1 minute 6 seconds

There has been a further reduction in the level of abandoned calls since the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Online payments continue to show a significant increase, 10% compared to last year, the last quarter shows a slight reduction in council tax instalments but an increase in garden waste payments, which has contributed to the increase overall.

Our new online payment 'e-store' was launched in January 2019. The e-store offers customers the choice of online payment for over 160 of the Council's paid for services. We have realised a 9% reduction in paypoint and post office payments over the last year (nearly 11,000 transactions), saving the Council around £5,000 in transaction costs.

Nearly half of businesses across the District are now signed up for e-billing, a 30% increase on last year.

- Sickness absence out-turn for the year has seen a slight reduction compared to the previous year. HR are working with managers and CLT on absence management. This includes reviewing hotspots/high risk areas, common ailments and whether these are area/post specific, reviewing the preventative support offered and looking at alternatives/temporary adjustments that support employees back into work at the earliest opportunity. It also includes monitoring of the impact of Covid on absence levels.

The Administration is keen to see high levels of performance across all Council services and has identified areas for improvement including but not limited to:-

- Attendances at our leisure centres have been slightly lower for the year than originally predicted. Quarter 4 outturn target has been missed in part to the Covid-19 epidemic, causing public concern and a decrease in overall footfall, before the nationwide lockdown in late March.
- There has been a gradual increase in rent collection rates over the year, however the rate is still below the target. Collection of rent for both current and former tenants has become increasingly difficult since the implementation of full service Universal Credit within the District. This has caused some tenants to experience financial hardship and others are choosing not to prioritise the payment of their rent when they receive their housing costs directly. Also, long delays in receiving managed and arrears payments directly from the DWP contribute towards a decline in performance in this area. We continue to work proactively with these tenants to minimise any long term financial losses.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The report relates to the delivery of the Corporate Plan Priorities and proposed refresh for approval by Cabinet. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's proposed priorities for the period 2019 to 2023, and intended deliverables which will be monitored and managed through the Corporate Performance Framework.

It covers performance for the period April 2019 to March 2020. The Corporate Scorecard has also been reviewed and refreshed to align with the refresh of the Corporate Plan and associated Corporate Priorities as a means of identifying their successful delivery.

Legal:

The Council's new Corporate Priorities and strategic plans have been developed in consideration of current and forthcoming legislative requirements.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	<p>The Corporate Plan has been developed in alignment with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the financial sustainability of the organisation. The 'Innovate and Improve' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on identifying and delivering efficiencies and more effective working practices to support financial sustainability, whilst concurrently delivering improved customer focussed services.</p> <p>Financial performance is included within a detailed Corporate Scorecard reported to CLT and Scrutiny. Financial PI's form a key element of the balanced scorecard approach, reviewed to reflect future priorities in alignment with the new Corporate Plan 2019-2023.</p>
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Absence of a Corporate Plan would result in a lack of prioritisation and focus on delivering what matters	Agreed Corporate Plan every four years which is delivered via the organisation's project management framework.
Poor performance would potentially result in inability to deliver the Corporate Priorities as specified in the Corporate Plan	Regular monitoring of performance and robust performance management through the authority's performance management framework.

Human Resources:

The 'Innovate and Improve' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on delivering the People Strategy and developing employees.

High levels of performance can have a positive impact upon employee engagement and retention which in turn can enhance performance further.

Environmental/Sustainability

The 'Cleaner and Greener' Priority proposes key programmes and projects which will be focussed on delivering environmental improvement.

Equalities:

There are no direct implications on equality and diversity as a consequence of the proposals and recommendations outlined in this report.

Other Implications:

(if applicable)

Reason(s) for Urgency

(if applicable)

Reason(s) for Exemption

(if applicable)

Background Papers

(if applicable)

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