

## **BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen, Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Corporate Strategy & Investment

**To:** Council – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019

**Author:** Greg Pearson – Senior Policy Advisor

**Subject:** Corporate Plan 2019-2023

**Purpose:** To present the new proposed Corporate Plan for the period 2019-2023 to Council for formal adoption.

### **Recommendation:**

- 1) That the contents of the report are noted and that Council formally adopts the new Corporate Plan 2019-2023.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

1.2 Corporate planning is a key part of running a successful organisation and ensures:

- a. Everyone in the organisation is working to the same priorities, pulling in the same direction and is clear about what they are trying to achieve
- b. It helps ensure that risks are effectively managed
- c. It provides a tool to measure performance, success and hold people to account
- d. It enables the organisation and its managers to plan resource and the budget more effectively

1.3 The current Corporate Plan 2015-19 was adopted in February 2015 and will come to the end of its life in March of this year. To ensure that the organisation has a clear and transparent direction of travel for the next four years it is important to develop a new Corporate Plan that clearly sets out our objectives for this time period.

1.4 The new Corporate Plan 2019-2023 set out in Appendix A of this report, aims to sets the vision for the organisation under three public focused themes and one internal focused theme which under-pin all the activities the Council undertakes. They are:

- a. Your Place (Public Facing)
- b. Your Health (Public Facing)
- c. Your Opportunity (Public Facing)
- d. Our Council (Internal)

1.5 These priorities are supported by a series of critical activities which detail further what the Council will do to deliver the Corporate Plan. This is set out under each priority in the 'we will' sections. Delivery of these is tracked through the corporate delivery plan and in further detailed in service and team level delivery plans these then feed down into individual staff appraisal objectives ensuring that the delivery of the corporate plan is central to all activities of the Council. Progress against the corporate delivery plan is monitored through the monthly Performance, Risk & Audit Board meetings.

1.6 The Corporate Plan sets out the direction for a four year period but annually it is refreshed to ensure that the organisation is adapting to the changing needs of our communities, and evolving national and local policy requirements.

## 1.7 **Key Achievements of 2018-19**

- 1.8 As part of the development of a new Corporate Plan, it is important to acknowledge some of our key achievements for 2018-2019. As we are not yet at the end of the financial year a full year-end achievements report will be included as part of the Council's Quarter 4 Performance report made to both the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet. However it is worth briefly noting the following key achievements:
- 1.9 **National Awards:** Two Breckland services have been shortlisted for national awards. The Silver Social initiative has been shortlisted for the 'Best Local Authority Arts Initiative' in the National Campaign for the Arts 'Hearts for the Arts 2019' Awards. Breckland Training Services have been shortlisted for the 'Innovation' award as part of the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2019.
- 1.10 **Co-location of Department of Work and Pensions:** Following the successful co-location of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) into our offices at Elizabeth House in Dereham we have moved them into our Breckland House office in Thetford. This has created greater efficiency for our residents who use both services.
- 1.11 **Regeneration team:** We have established a new Regeneration team in the Place directorate with a focus on business engagement and support, skills development and regeneration of the District. They were fundamental in supporting Banham Poultry through their recent challenges.
- 1.12 **Community Reserve:** Members took the decision to establish a reserve fund to support our communities through a social investment model. To date £1.4 million has been committed to projects to help support our residents. These include: -
- a. Funding the continuation of the Market Towns Initiative;
  - b. Funding two fixed term Skills Engagement Officers;
  - c. Sponsoring the Norfolk Skills and Careers Festival;
  - d. Establishing the Breckland Innovation Den to support entrepreneurs;
  - e. Commissioning leisure feasibility work in Swaffham and Attleborough;
  - f. Commissioning digital skills training for residents
  - g. Developing a support service to help young people struggling to maintain their employment and housing
  - h. Developing a scheme to support start-up businesses and entrepreneurs on to the District's high streets
- 1.13 **Market Town Initiative:** Through the continuation of its work the initiative has funded the following: -
- a. ShopAppy
  - b. 12 Elves of Christmas Campaign
  - c. BreckWorld App
  - d. Improvements to Swaffham Buttercross, Button Island in Thetford, and murals in Thetford
  - e. Purchase of a Glutton to improve street cleanliness
  - f. Dereham town centre pre-feasibility study
  - g. On the Green activity day in Thetford Riverside
  - h. New markets stall in Watton and Swaffham
  - i. Helped establish ParkRun in Watton and Swaffham
- 1.14 **Programme of Land Disposal:** Through the disposal of non-strategic pieces of land this work has to date provided approximately £21k in land sales with another £20k expected by the end of the financial year

1.15 **Expansion of Investment Asset Portfolio:** Through utilising the investment fund the Council has expanded its existing property portfolio to secure additional rental income.

1.16 **Thetford SUE phase 1:** Work has begun on the Kingsfleet site in Thetford which will see the delivery of the first 300 houses on the site.

## 2.1 **OPTIONS**

2.2 Do Nothing.

2.3 That the Corporate Plan 2019-2023 be adopted and the content of this report be noted. (recommended)

## 3.1 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.2 To comply with the Policy Framework which requires that we have a Corporate Plan which sets out the Council's strategic vision.

## 4.1 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.2 A clear direction for the Council is set for the upcoming financial year to assist with delivering the four year Corporate Plan.

4.3 Improved transparency and clearer objectives setting available to all employees in line with the Council's direction.

## 5.1 **IMPLICATIONS**

### 5.2 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.2.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction regarding environmental issues until 2023.

### 5.3 **Constitution & Legal**

5.3.1 The Corporate Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework and is therefore a matter reserved to Council for approval.

### 5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 The new Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic priorities for the next four years.

### 5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic direction regarding crime and disorder until 2023.

### 5.6 **Financial**

5.6.1 The Council's budget and medium term plan is fundamentally linked to the corporate plan and the budget supports delivery of that plan. The budget is set for one year at a time with indicative budgets set for future years over the medium term and these are revisited each year and can be adapted to meet the needs of an evolving corporate plan.

5.6.2 2019-20 is the final year of the Government's four year financial settlement. There are unprecedented levels of change planned for 2020-21 onwards and at this stage there is too little information to enable accurate forecasts on what the implications of these changes might be.

5.6.3 The Fairer Funding review will set out a new baseline of funding allocations for all Local Authorities, aims to simplify the existing system and provide an up to date assessment of Authorities relative needs and resources. Early consultations have taken place by MHCLG, but there is insufficient information to make informed estimates to date. The Council's budget assumes no financial changes from this review, but as the budget currently has no reliance on Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus and is placing one off Business Rates pilot income into reserves, the Council is very well placed to respond to funding reductions if they occur.

5.6.4 As these factors will become clearer over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan it will be possible to adapt the delivery of the Council's priorities through the annual refresh process as impacts become known.

## 5.8 Health & Wellbeing

5.8.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic direction regarding health and wellbeing until 2023.

## 5.9 Reputation

5.9.1 Failure to deliver its strategic ambitions could lead to reputational risk for the Council, this is mitigated through a corporate risk that is closely monitored by the Executive Management team and reported to Governance and Audit Committee.

## 5.10 Risk

5.10.1 There are a number of key risks that may impact on the Council's ability to deliver its Corporate Plan over the next four years, they are: -

- a) Uncertainty around the impacts and emerging national policy requirements of the United Kingdom's exist from the European Union. There are likely to be a number of additional requirements placed on our regulatory services for which our current resource level might not be able to support.
- b) Our current resource model has a number of fixed term posts fund by Central Government grants particularly in relation to supporting additional pressures as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This grant funding is programmed to run out during the lifetime of this Corporate Plan, this may result in the need to review resource levels in the Housing service to address any resource pressures.
- c) Future national policy changes such as the proposed Waste Policy would have significant impacts on the way in which the Council delivers this service through its contractors. It may well also have implications for how the Council currently generates income from garden waste collections.
- d) Fairer Funding review as mentioned above may result in resourcing challenges in the future for the Council but currently what the revised funding allocations might look like is uncertain.

5.10.2 The monitoring of all risks relating to Council failing to deliver its corporate priorities are regularly monitored through the Council's internal Performance, Risk and Audit Board. Risk scores and mitigating actions are reported quarterly to Governance and Audit Committee ensure that they are being appropriately managed.

#### 5.11 Safeguarding

5.11.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic direction regarding safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults until 2023.

#### 5.12 Staffing

5.12.1 The Corporate Plan gives all staff a clear understanding of the strategic vision that the Council is working towards. It is linked to every action that officers undertake and delivery of the council's strategic vision and priorities is linked through to individual appraisal objectives.

5.12.2 As part of the development of the delivery plan that underpins the corporate plan a resource planning exercise was undertaken to ensure that the Council has the appropriate resources in the right places to deliver its priorities over the next four years. Where programmes of work are to be developed further or where the Council is required to respond to revised national policy change this may result in requests for additional resources being brought forward to Council once delivery models are fully specified.

#### 6.1 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.2 This will impact all wards and communities in Breckland as the Corporate Plan sets out the strategic priorities for the district until 2023.

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Background papers: - None

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#### Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Greg Pearson – Strategic Policy Advisor  
Telephone Number: 07500-030900  
Email: greg.pearson@breckland-sholland.gov.uk

**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to both Mandatory and Discretionary Services**

#### Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Corporate Plan 2018-2023