

This Report will be made public on 16 February 2021

Report Number **A/20/10**

To: Council
Date: 24 February 2021
Head of Service: Charlotte Spendley, Director of Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE PLAN – CREATING TOMORROW TOGETHER
2021 - 2030**

SUMMARY: This report sets out the proposed Corporate Plan which provides strategic direction to the Councils activities for the period 2021 – 2030.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Full Council is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:

- It is essential that the Council has determined its strategic plan so that it can inform operational plans, financial plans, strategies and policies.
- The Council has limited resources and therefore requires a plan to direct activities to key areas to ensure the primary needs of the district and residents are met.
- The Council has a key role to play in the recovery of the district from the pandemic and the plan focuses on recovery actions over its initial three year term.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note Report A/20/10.
2. To approve the Corporate Plan – Creating Tomorrow Together 2021 – 2030.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Corporate Priorities Task & Finish Group first met on 23 September 2019 (subsequently renamed the Corporate Plan Working Group in November 2019) to discuss the development of a new Corporate Plan for the Council. The work of the cross party group was necessary as the existing Corporate Plan ran from 2017 – 2020, and a new plan was required to reflect the Council's priorities and aspirations for the District over the coming years.
- 1.2 The 2017 – 2020 Corporate Plan had 6 strategic objectives under a vision of "Investing for the next generation - delivering more of what matters". The strategic objectives were:
 - More Homes – Provide and enable the right amount, type and range of housing
 - More Jobs – Work with businesses to provide jobs in a vibrant local economy
 - Appearance Matters – Provide an attractive and clean environment
 - Health Matters – Keep our communities healthy & safe
 - Achieving Stability – Achieve financial stability through a commercial and collaborative approach
 - Delivering Excellence – Deliver excellent customer service through commitment of staff and members
- 1.3 The Corporate Plan Working Group had a scope of :
 - To contribute to the drawing up of the Council's ten – year Corporate Plan.
 - To advise on how best to engage citizens in the process.
 - To consider the views of third parties to the Council's proposals.
 - To keep councillors informed about progress on the development of the Plan.
- 1.4 The Working Group is advisory and has considered a number of areas during its time including organisational visions; the golden thread; the term of the plan; objectives for the plan; emerging corporate priority ideas & themes; work already underway within the Council that contributes towards the proposed priorities; discussed and agreed the approach for public consultation; considered trends in economic data to inform priority areas and considered the outcomes of the public consultation of the draft plan.
- 1.5 Additionally the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Corporate Plan and Recovery Plan in June 2020.
- 1.6 Cabinet met on 24 February 2021 to consider the draft Corporate Plan and were asked to recommend to Full Council its adoption.

2. Corporate Plan Alignment to the COVID-19 Recovery Plan

- 2.1 During the development of the new Corporate Plan the global pandemic occurred. The impact of COVID-19, the Councils response to and its resulting recovery actions will be a significant focus for the authority for the next 2-3 years. It was therefore agreed that it was essential that the Corporate Plan and Recovery Plan were aligned.
- 2.2 The proposed plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' incorporates both the service ambitions and guiding principles that will span the nine year life of the plan, but also provides a three year focus on recovery through our priorities in each service area. The intention is that our approach to recovery be embedded in our operational activities as well as our strategic framework. It provides an opportunity to ensure alignment between the plans for recovery and to maximise the quality and impact of outcomes for residents and businesses.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation on the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2021 to 2030 took place between 2 November and 30 November 2020. Different methods were used to seek the views of residents and stakeholders.
- 3.2 A resident's survey was undertaken during this time. To ensure we sought views from a representative sample of residents, 5,200 households were written to, inviting them to respond. This equates to 10.8% of all occupied properties in the district.

The sample was identified by calculating what proportion of households across the district as a whole are in each parish or town council area and Acorn category and inviting 10.8% of households from each parish or town and Acorn category. Acorn is a segmentation tool which categorises the UK population into types based on social factors and population behaviour.

Using this methodology allowed us to ensure the households invited to respond were proportionate to the spread of the district's population as a whole.

The residents' survey received 404 replies, equating to a response rate of 7.8%. The results of the residents' survey are statistically valid.

- 3.3 Additionally an open survey was available to all residents & stakeholders. The open version of the survey, containing the same questions as the residents' survey, was available on the council website for all residents and stakeholders to complete.

This version of the survey was also emailed to key stakeholders such as Kent County Council, parish and town councils and local businesses.

The open survey received 143 replies. In addition to these methods written submissions were also welcomed, either by email or in writing, and 14 such submissions were received.

- 3.4 Furthermore a staff consultation exercise was undertaken with a workshop facilitated by the Organisational Development team to ensure staff views were considered.
- 3.5 The consultation responses were reviewed and considered by Working Group Members and a number of amendments were made to the draft plan. These changes included:
- Wider reference to key partnerships and stakeholder groupings;
 - Addition of a 6th cross cutting guiding principle of ‘working in partnership’;
 - Increased emphasis on:
 - o the district already being locally distinctive and seeking to build on this platform;
 - o skills development through recovery;
 - o mental health and wellbeing;
 - o the role and value of arts and creative sector:
 - o digital inclusion, not just connectivity
 - o infrastructure first at Otterpool Park
 - Clearer reference to democratic input through working with ward members;
 - Balance across the geographies of the district;
 - Increased reference to supporting businesses with our investment, in particular on:
 - o Encouraging shopping local; and
 - o Using local supply chains;

4. Creating Tomorrow Together 2021 - 2031

- 4.1 It is proposed that the new Corporate Plan is built on 4 key service ambitions and 6 guiding principles. Each service ambition has a number of priority areas identified within it, these priorities will be the focus of Council activity over the coming three years to 2024.
- 4.2 Our Service Ambitions focus on positive community leadership, our thriving environment, a vibrant economy and quality housing & infrastructure. The plan is available in full in Appendix 1 and it sets out our wide ranging ambitions for the next nine years, the priorities that we will focus on over the next three years, and how these will directly support the district’s medium-term recovery from the pandemic.
- 4.2 The plan has been summarised into an infographic below which outlines the:
- 4 Service Ambitions
 - o Positive Community Leadership
 - o A Thriving Environment
 - o A Vibrant Economy
 - o Quality Homes and Infrastructure
 - 6 Guiding Principles
 - o Sustainable Recovery
 - o Locally Distinctive
 - o Greener Folkestone & Hythe
 - o Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible
 - o Working Effectively with Partners
 - o Continuous Improvement



5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Full Council are asked to adopt the Corporate Plan – Creating Tomorrow Together. Work is already underway within Directorates to develop a detailed action plan with a shorter term focus, led by the three year priorities identified within the plan. The Action Plan will provide focus for departmental service plans, key performance indicators and individuals objectives for the coming year, creating the essential golden thread throughout the organisation.
- 5.2 The plan is proposed to be reviewed fully in 2024. Progress on the priorities will be reported to Cabinet annually and the plan will inform future strategies once adopted.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
The Council fails to set a clear strategic direction for its future	High	Low	The drafting of the new Corporate Plan is concluded having had cross political input throughout its development and awaiting adoption by Council.
The Council has insufficient resources to deliver the proposed plan	High	Low	The service ambitions have been developed and priority areas identified to minimise the risk. The plan will also be aligned to the MTFS in due course.
The Council fails to consider what the District want from its plan	High	Low	The draft proposals were subject to consultation with a wider range of stakeholders and the feedback has been incorporated within the plan.
The Council fails to consider the impact of COVID-19 in its future strategic planning	High	Low	The proposed plan incorporates the identified priority actions to aid the recovery of the district.

7. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

7.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no direct legal implications of this report.

7.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

7.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (CS)

An equalities and diversities impact assessment has been undertaken by officers. It does not identify any negative impacts through its evaluation of the proposed Corporate Plan and indeed notes the positive impact the plan seeks to make with regards to addressing inequalities. The plan was also subject to an extensive consultation exercise as noted within the report.

8. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Charlotte Spendley, Director of Corporate Services

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Email: charlotte.spendley@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Creating Tomorrow Together 2021 - 2030