

Crawley Borough Council

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission 30 January 2023

Report to Cabinet 1 February 2023

Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027

Report of the Leader and the Chief Executive – CEX/60

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2023 to 2027, which is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to set out the strategic direction of the Council for the next four years, which is linked to the administration's Manifesto, the Budget Strategy and Transformation Plan.
- 1.3 The revised Corporate Plan considers external and partnership arrangements and will assist the Council's focus on delivery and meeting the intended outcomes.
- 1.4 The detail in delivering the priorities within the Corporate Plan will filter into individual services work programmes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission considers and comments on the final draft Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027 and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.

- 2.2 To the Cabinet

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 (Appendix A)
- b) *Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make any minor amendments to the Corporate Plan including any changes to legislation and statutory guidance as required. (Generic Delegation 7 will be used to enact this recommendation).*
- c) Request Full Council to adopt the Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction of the Council for the next four years. Where necessary, it will be updated to ensure the Council's activities reflect the national and local challenges it faces.

4. Background

- 4.1 There is a need to set the strategic context for the Council as requested by partners, staff and residents.
- 4.2 An agreed set of corporate priorities will:
- Ensure that the Council manages its resources effectively
 - Ensure that projects and initiatives can be delivered by the Council's services and that enough capacity is available to deliver them
 - Provide a focus for the council's Cabinet, so it can plan its work.
- 4.3 As with the previous plan 2018-22, this updated document is purposely short to inform staff of the vision and objectives of the council that will aid the effective business planning of services.
- 4.4 The document is also important to set out the priorities of the Council to local partners, stakeholders and when securing external funding.
- 4.5 The Corporate Plan consists of six key headline priority objectives which are underpinned by 33 objectives, projects and initiatives.
- 4.6 In addition, the Council will continue to deliver a range of statutory and discretionary functions which it is required or has chosen to deliver.

5. Information & Analysis Supporting Recommendation

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the overarching strategic direction for the Council's activities and processes that support their delivery. It also links to the Budget Strategy, Transformation Plan and services work programmes, which set out in more detail the actions that will be undertaken to deliver the priorities.
- 5.2 Draft versions of the Corporate Plan have been shared with senior management and with Cabinet members.

6. Implications

- 6.1 There are inevitably financial implications related to any service delivery or improvements and the Corporate Plan complements the Transformation Plan and Budget Strategy to enable the Council to deliver its priorities.
- 6.2 The priorities laid out within this document will take precedence when considering limited resources and other pressures will need to be considered on individual merits when budgets are determined. Nonetheless, these are challenging times for the local government sector, with a great deal of uncertainty. There will be difficult decisions to come. This may impact on the deliverability of some of the Council's ambitions as set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 6.3 There are no specific legal implications. Having a document that sets the strategic direction of the Council is a necessary element of good governance. The performance regime established by the Local Government Act 1999 as amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 together with supporting legislation, requires the Council to work to achieve continuous improvement and best value. Furthermore, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 Regulations obliges the Council to produce an Annual Governance Statement for each accounting year evidencing how the Council has performed. The CIPFA / Solace 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016' guidance sets out the required practice and that includes a clear statement of the Councils purpose and intended outcomes. The Council's Corporate Plan thus plays a vital role in the legal duty to ensure sound

governance of the Council. The Corporate Plan is a Policy Framework Document and the process employed for its adoption is in accordance with the Council's constitution.

- 6.4 The council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the high-level risks and mitigating actions to help support delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities.

7. Background Papers

None

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Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027

1. Delivering value for money and modernising the way we work

We will:

- Continue to balance the budget (over a four-year period), by improving our efficiency, increasing income and investing ethically and wisely.
- Work to keep council tax low without compromising local services.
- Continue to deliver the Transformation Plan.
- Continue to develop digital service delivery, enabling customers to engage with council services at their convenience, via websites and self-service portals, whilst investing in technology to support digital working and self-service for CBC staff, including mobile teams.
- Transition to the New Town Hall and embed new working practices.
- Maximise the use of our assets, ensuring they deliver value for money and consider the social value of what these provide to our communities, where appropriate.

2. Delivering affordable homes for Crawley and addressing homelessness

We will:

- Continue to deliver as much affordable housing as possible, particularly Council housing, through our own-build and enabling programmes for people with a local connection to Crawley and to meet our other statutory duties.
- Work collaboratively with other statutory and voluntary sector agencies in supporting those facing homelessness within the borough. Lobby government for the appropriate support with regard to temporary accommodation and those at risk of homelessness.
- Continue working with neighbouring councils in the spirit of partnership to collectively deliver housing to meet Crawley's needs through the 'duty to co-operate arrangements'.
- Deliver improvements to the management of the Council's housing stock in line with legislative reform, ensuring the customer is at the heart of service delivery and feel safe and secure in their tenancies.

3. Enabling a sustainable economic recovery and improving job opportunities

We will:

- Continue to implement Crawley's "One Town" Economic Recovery Plan, which sets out our commitment for Crawley's future socio-economic prosperity, a clear path for recovery from the pandemic and a marker to Crawley's formidable reputation for economic productivity. Enable support measures to diversify the local economy and building economic resilience in the borough.
- Deliver the Crawley Growth Programme and Crawley Towns Fund Programme to provide major improvements to the town's infrastructure, including significant sustainable transport enhancements and better business, skills and community facilities.
- Unlock pathways to better job opportunities for local residents, by working with employers on apprenticeship schemes and refreshing Crawley's Employment and Skills Programme and continuing its delivery. Deliver the outcomes within the Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan.
- Continue to work closely with our Local Economic Partnerships to boost sustainable business growth, attract new jobs investment and empower the local resident workforce.
- Utilise our place making responsibilities and powers to drive sustainable growth, enhance Crawley as a place to do business and support economic growth through technology and hyper digital connectivity.

- Work with partner organisations to support the green transformation of Crawley's economy and invest in the skills required to deliver this.

4. Reconnecting communities

We will:

- Support local groups in delivering a range of events and activities that celebrate Crawley's diversity, encourage tolerance and cohesion, and re-connect people with their wider community.
- Continue to help local voluntary and community sector organisations, through the grants process and other support to provide important services to residents.
- Continue to work proactively with our partners to sustain Crawley as a safe place to live, work and visit.
- Promote and facilitate opportunities for our residents to have their voices heard over how services are delivered, through a range of community engagement channels, including neighbourhood forums.
- Enable early intervention and support to households who are financially or socially vulnerable, through the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan and Access Crawley.
- Create a Covid-19 memorial to remember those we have lost and those whose lives have been permanently impacted by the pandemic.

5. Providing high quality leisure and culture facilities and supporting health and wellbeing services

We will:

- Continue to invest in and enhance the town's leisure, wellbeing and culture facilities and services, such as local parks and open spaces, Nature Centre, sports & playing pitches, play areas, K2 Crawley, the Hawth and outreach play service.
- Build on the success of Tilgate Park and the Nature Centre and continue to invest in the town's parks starting with Goffs Park improvements.
- Work with partners, residents and other key stakeholders to enhance our resident's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities across our town. Encourage services back to Crawley Hospital and address GP shortages in provision across the borough.

6. Protecting the environment

We will:

- Protect and enhance our environment by reducing the Council's and the town's Carbon footprint, through the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- Complete the feasibility of developing the phase 2 expansion of the town centre District Heat Network. Subject to the outcome of the feasibility study, progress the business case and development of the phase 2 expansion of the Heat Network.
- Continue to reduce, reuse and recycle our waste, providing the mechanisms to encourage residents to reduce the amount of residual waste they produce.
- Continue to seek measures to improve the air quality across the Borough.
- Revise the Crawley Local Plan 2022- 2037 to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the key issues and growth challenges facing the town.
- Continue to provide a safe, clean and well-maintained town.
- Strive to deliver commitments to net zero through the Council's housing stock, seeking and maximising opportunities through external funding sources. Encourage the private sector to make changes as well, in consultation with the Council.
- Reduce the consumption of water in the borough and supporting water neutral development through reducing water consumption in the Council's housing stock and buildings.