

Cabinet – 12 August 2020

Corporate plan 2021-22

Portfolio: Councillor Bird, Leader of the Council

Related portfolios: All

Service: Policy and Strategy Unit

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1 To seek agreement from Cabinet for a refreshed corporate plan covering the period for 2021-22 and development approach to inform a new Corporate plan for 2022-25.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Local Government Act 2000 gave the Council collective responsibility for approving its policy framework and budget. A corporate plan that articulates the strategic direction for the Council and how it measures its success. The Council's Corporate Plan ends in 2021.
- 2.2 The new Corporate Plan was due to be informed by an updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (the Walsall Plan), Community Safety Needs Assessment and Local Economic Needs Assessment. Substantial development of these assessments has been delayed due to the council's response to Covid-19. In addition the Covid-19 pandemic has made significant impacts in global, national and local communities. Some of these can be predicted, however there will be many consequences that are currently unknown and will have an impact on the needs of the borough of Walsall and the subsequent response from the council.
- 2.3 The proposal is to have a corporate plan running for 2021-22 building on the current corporate plan, agreed areas of focus, outcomes and markers of success. This allows for the council to undertake further research, analysis and to listen to our communities to inform the corporate plan 2022-25.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the proposal to produce a refreshed 2021-22 Corporate plan and the timetable for delivery with refreshed plan presented to February 2021 Cabinet
- 3.2 That Cabinet approves the development approach to inform a new Corporate plan for 2022-25.

4. Report detail - know

Context

- 4.1 Every local authority has a requirement to have a corporate plan that articulates the strategic direction for the Council and how it measures its success.
- 4.2 The Council's current Corporate Plan ends in 2021 with a new 4 year plan to be developed over 2020. The new 4 year plan was to be informed by updated strategic assessments including Joint Strategic Needs (and assets) Assessment, community safety and economic assessments.
- 4.3 Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic and the council needing to revert resources to its response, engagement in development and completion of these assessments have been delayed. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has had, and will continue to have an impact on our communities. Some of this impact are understood, however there are potentially many more impacts to come, which are not fully understood and would require the council to act differently to mitigate them.
- 4.4. The proposal for the 2021-22 plan will be to build on the previous plan with the same vision of *Inequalities are reduced and all potential is maximised*. The plan will set out 5 areas of focus (EPICC), 10 outcomes and 20 markers of success to assess progress in delivery of the plan.
- 4.5 Our values (Professionalism, Leadership, Accountability, Transparency, Ethical) will continue to shape how we as a council will work with our local communities, influence our choices and our behaviours.

Council Corporate Plan priorities

- 4.6 The 2021-22 will reaffirm the five areas of focus for the council (EPICC);
 - 1. Economic Growth for all people, communities and businesses
 - 2. People have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities
 - 3. Internal focus. All council services are efficient and effective
 - 4. Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well
 - 5. Communities are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places.

Risk management

- 4.7 There are no specific risks identified in the agreement of the plan for 2021-22.
- 4.8 Any future large-scale response to Covid-19 may further delay the engagement and development of the strategic needs and asset assessments, community listening events, and research that would inform the plan for 2022-25.

Financial implications

- 4.9 The plan provides the strategic direction of financial investments the council makes and will inform such decisions in the future.
- 4.10 There are no specific financial implications of this report. It is expected that the Plan will be delivered within the Councils Budget 2021-22 as approved at Cabinet. Any budgetary issues arising from delivery of the plan in year will be raised through the appropriate channels as the needs arise.

Legal implications

- 4.11 There are no direct legal implications or risks from this report.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.12 There are no direct procurement implications from this report.

Property implications

- 4.13 There are no direct property implications from this report.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.14 The successful implementation of the corporate plan will have positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents. Not only in the reduction of inequalities, additionally equipping our residents with the foundations to lead good, independent lives.

Staffing implications

- 4.15 There are no direct staffing implications from this report.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.16 The aim of the corporate plan is to reduce inequalities and maximise potential. In the delivery of the plan and the assessment of the markers of success, will monitor progress on this aim. This will have implications for how the council operate and makes it decisions including the assessment of impact and distribution of that impact.
- 4.17 In the development and delivery of this process due regard to the EQIA and other duties placed upon the council will be undertaken and considered.

Consultation

- 4.18 The updated plan will build on the previous corporate plan with refinement of the narrative and markers of success. Community focus groups, as well as analysis of the wider inequalities across the borough will be used to help shape the refresh of the plan.
- 4.19 Throughout 2020-21 work will be undertaken to understand the impacts of Covid-19 on our local communities to inform the 2022-25 corporate. This will include how the pandemic has affected different parts of the borough and communities in the short, medium and longer-term that we fully do not understand yet.
- 4.20 Already planned are an updated Joint Strategic Needs (and assets) Assessment (JSNA), Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, community safety and economic assessments. Additionally other insights are planned, including an ethnographic study on what it is like to be a child in Walsall, participation in the *Beyond Us and Them Research* Project which will explore how societal cohesion is affected by the Covid-19 crisis and feedback gleaned through the work of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board. Other engagement and listening events are to be planned throughout the year.
- 4.21 A recent staff survey and “Reset” objective of the Covid-19 corporate response will be used to help inform action required to support the develop of the internal focus (efficient and effective services) and staff satisfaction are of the plan. The Corporate Equality Group have been asked to review their role to build on their impact which will help inform the 2022-25 plan.

5. Decide

- 5.1 Having a new corporate plan that would run from 2021-25 as originally planned could potentially miss the assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on our local community and therefore how the council could respond to meet the needs of local residents.
- 5.2 By having a refreshed plan covering 2021-22, building on the current 2018-21 plan, will allow time for the assessment, evaluation and consideration of the impact of Covid-19. The Covid-19 pandemic has made significant impacts in global, national and local communities, with some of these already known. However there will be many consequences that are currently unknown, national reviews and subsequent government policy decisions which will have an impact on the needs of the borough of Walsall and the subsequent response from the council. Having 2021-22 to complete the strategic assessments already planned and undertake further listening and engagement activity with local residents to inform the 2022-25 plan to maximise the councils ability to meet its aim.
- 5.3 It is recommended that cabinet approves to have a 2021-22 corporate plan and timetable for delivery and the development of a new corporate plan (2022-25) over the coming year. This would allow for an improved understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on our local community and the actions the council will need to take to mitigate these impacts.

6. Respond

- 6.1 The strategic assessments already have a governance through the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and Town Deal Board and will be report to those boards over the coming year.
- 6.2 The Walsall Insight Group will oversee the operational development of these strategic assessments and involve all directorates across the council, as well as other partners in the borough.
- 6.3 A corporate plan working group consisting of officers from each department of the Council will be formed to oversee the coordination of the development of the plan(s), with the 2021-22 plan to come to cabinet in February 2021.
- 6.4 The development of the 2022-25 plan will be the responsibility of the Policy and impact in quarter 2-3 and final agreement in quarter 4 of 2021-22. This is in line with already agreed strategic assessments i.e. JSNA.
- 6.5 These timelines are indicative and will work in parallel with the development of the medium term financial plan and subsequent service transformation.

7. Review

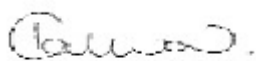
- 7.1 Regular update reports will be given on progress to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet members to ensure oversight and assurance of delivery.

Background papers

Current corporate plan can be found <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/corporate-plan>

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4 August 2020

Councillor Bird
Leader of the Council

4 August 2020