

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report to Council

18th October 2023

TITLE:	Corporate Plan 2023-27
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Mike Gledhill - Leader
CONTACT OFFICER:	Andrew Stokes - Chief Executive
WARD:	Non-Specific

Appendices Attached:

Appendix A – Summary of Outcomes from Member Priority Setting Workshop (September 2023)

Appendix B – Corporate Plan – Priority Actions (October 2023)

Appendix C – Summary of Aims, Objectives, Priority Outcomes, Influencing Priorities and Priority Outcomes 2023 - 2027

Appendix D - Staffordshire Moorlands District Council - Corporate Plan 2023-27

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 It is essential for the Council to develop and agree a Corporate Plan. The plan will provide clear direction for the delivery of services in achieving the Council's vision, aims and objectives in delivering positive outcomes for residents and businesses

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Council approves:

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 as detailed in Appendix D
- 2.2 The process of internal and external consultation as set out in Section 14 of the report; and
- 2.3 The process for adoption of the Corporate Plan as set out in Section 15 of the report.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The purpose of a Corporate Plan is to establish the Council's vision, corporate objectives and established key priorities for the medium term i.e. in the case of the district council covering a period of up to four years (the life of a political administration). It in effect establishes the Council's commitments in the delivery of services and community leadership to the residents and businesses of the Staffordshire Moorlands.
- 3.2 The plan sets out the Council's vision, aims and objectives for the next for four years. It also identifies the outcomes which will be given the highest priority and the areas in which the Council will be seeking to influence partners to improve the quality of life for residents.
- 3.3 The new Corporate Plan will build on the existing plans and priorities and importantly will be steered by the political administration with the mandate provided in the recent local elections. However the Corporate Plan is a document that needs to be owned by the whole Council. As a consequence the Council held a Members' Priority Workshop on 7th September, the outcomes from which (detailed attached in Appendix B) have been taken into account in the development of the new plan.
- 3.4 The achievement of the Council's objectives will be supported by a number of priority actions to ensure step improvements and maximum impact upon the priority outcomes. The key actions committed in the Corporate Plan are detailed in Appendix B.
- 3.5 A summary of the proposed aims, objectives, priority outcomes, influencing priorities and priority outcomes is attached at Appendix C. The full Corporate Plan is attached at Appendix D. The interactive version is available by following the link below:

[Staffordshire Moorlands Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 \(adobe.com\)](#)

- 3.6 After adoption of the Corporate Plan by the Council there will a number of actions that will be required to ensure its effective implementation. This will include the agreement of a new set of local performance indicators and targets and revisions to the Council's Overview & Scrutiny work programmes.

4 How this Report Links with Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan will establish the Council's priorities

5 Options

- 5.1 There are two options available to members in respect the approval of the Corporate Plan

- Approve the draft Corporate Plan and recommended Council adoption (Recommended) – This will ensure that positive outcomes can be delivered to citizens in line with priorities which are established around their needs and aspirations.
- Reject the draft Corporate Plan (Not Recommended)

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Community Safety is one of the Council's priority outcomes. Supporting the police in the prevention and detection of crime is one of the influencing priorities.

6.2 Workforce

The Corporate Plan will provide the direction for the workforce by setting service objectives and priorities. These will inform the development of individual Service Plans which will form the basis of the employee appraisal scheme

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Diversity and Equality Policies.

An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken on the draft Corporate Plan. The aim of undertaking an EIA at this stage is to determine how the Plan aims to meet the needs of our diverse community, that it will provide an opportunity for the Council to fulfil its Equality Duty and that there are no unintended negative consequences. The Corporate Plan is 'high level' and strategic in nature and it is the detailed targets and subsequent resource allocation that will determine its effective implementation. The key finding or recommendation of this EIA is that we use the proposed internal and external consultation on the Corporate Plan to engage target groups (such as minority communities and people with disabilities) building engagement over time with our community with a view to empowering users, supporting the communities own efforts with the aim of achieving improved outcomes.

6.4 Financial Considerations

The Medium Term Financial Plan will be updated with the contents of the plan to ensure that resources are directed towards priorities

6.5 Legal

None

6.6 Climate Change

Delivering the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans is one of the Council's priority actions.

6.7 Internal and External Consultation

The Plan will be subject to external and internal consultation.

The Council has established mechanisms through which it can engage and consult the public. The use of the website and exhibitions provide further means of communicating the plan, inviting comment and identifying potential partners – including community partners. By giving specific consideration to engaging minority groups and others (identified in equalities legislation as having ‘protected characteristics’), as well as our own staff, the consultation process offers an opportunity to build relations with our communities, allowing those affected by the way we carry out our functions to have a real input, to secure ongoing and active participation leading to improved outcomes, and empowering both service users and employees.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Good risk management will be a key ingredient to the effective delivery of the new Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan contains details of the significant risks its successful implementation. These risks have been extracted from the Council’s Risk Register. The key significant corporate risks are as follows:

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- Risk of insufficient funds to deliver plan
- Risk that the Council does not deliver its committed efficiency plans
- Risk of reducing resources as a consequence of future local government finance settlements
- Demographic changes placing additional pressures on Council service delivery obligations
- Risk that the Council cannot retain an adequate workforce
- Impact of partners’ poor performance on service delivery and risk that partner assurances are not in place or are inadequate.

The Council’s Risk Management Policy requires effective management of all risks. Actions are established to mitigate these key corporate risks along with service specific high risks and project risks. Progress against these actions is monitored as part of the Council’s Performance Management Framework.

ANDREW P STOKES
Chief Executive

Background Papers

Location

Contact

Moorlands House

Andrew Stokes
Chief Executive

7 Background and Introduction

- 7.1 The purpose of a Corporate Plan is to establish the Council's vision, corporate objectives and established key priorities for the medium term i.e. in the case of the District Council covering a period of up to four years (the life of a political administration). It in effect establishes the Council's commitments in the delivery of services and community leadership to the residents and businesses of Staffordshire Moorlands.
- 7.2 The existing Corporate Plan was agreed by the Council in October 2019 and was developed in the period that followed the local elections in May 2019. It is appropriate that following the recent election in May 2023 that there is a fundamental review of the Corporate Plan. The purpose of this report therefore is for the Council to:
- Consider and approve the core of a new Corporate Plan i.e. vision, aims, objectives and priorities;
 - Agree to a process for wider consultation on its contents; and
 - Agree a process for the development of a new local performance framework to facilitate the monitoring of progress with the delivery of the plan.

8 Development of the Corporate Plan

- 8.1 The existing Corporate Plan was developed after taking into account the following framework of understanding:
- **The views and aspirations of Staffordshire Moorlands citizens** - as established by the consultation activity undertaken on a regular basis;
 - **A clear understanding of empirical evidence** - such as demographic information and quality of life indicators that identify the local issues that need to be tackled. This included the locality analysis produced to form the foundations of the Member Priority Setting Workshop held on 7th September;
 - **Recognition of the national and regional policy framework** – taking into account central government requirements and the requirements of regional agencies where appropriate; and
 - **Learning from the progress made by the Council and understanding the improvements that need to be made** – as provided by the ongoing assessments of the Council's performance including the outcomes from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge which took place in January 2022.
- 8.2 The new Corporate Plan will build on the existing plans and priorities and importantly will be steered by the political administration with the mandate provided in the recent local elections. However the Corporate Plan is a document that needs to be owned by the whole Council. As a consequence the Council held the Member Priority Setting Workshop in September to allow all Councillors to feed into the process. The issues raised by the members on the day in the group sessions are summarised at Appendix A.

9 Council’s Vision, Aims and Objectives

9.1 The vision of the Council is restated as:

“Achieving Excellence in the delivery of high quality services that meet the needs and aspirations of our communities”

9.2 This vision is articulated further by four aims, which are unchanged from those included in the existing Corporate Plan:

- **Help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live & work**
- **Effective use of resources and provide value for money**
- **Help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages**
- **Protect and improve the environment**

9.3 The first aim recognises that the Council has a broader role and has to work with partners to deliver more holistic outcomes. The second aim commits to the continuous improvement of services and reinforces the desire to provide value for money.

9.4 The third and fourth aims form the additional ambitions of the Council which are to be focused around supporting the development of the local economy and environment.

9.5 It is necessary to establish objectives to ensure that the aims are developed into clear actions.

9.6 The Corporate Plan proposes 24 objectives split across the 4 aims. The objectives are detailed in the table below:

Aim	Objectives
Help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live & work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased supply of good quality homes • Develop a positive relationship with communities • Effective relationship with strategic partners • Effective support of community safety arrangements including CCTV • Provision of sports facilities and leisure opportunities focused upon improving health • Enhance the distinctive culture, creativity and heritage of the district • Improve residents access to benefits and financial support
Effective use of resources and provide value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective use of financial and other resources to ensure value for money • Ensure our services are easily available to all our residents in the appropriate channels and provided “right first time” • A high performing and well- motivated workforce • Effective procurement with a focus on local business • Effective use of ICT • More effective use of Council assets • Strong and effective democratic processes

Aim	Objectives
<p>Help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage business growth including start-ups and enterprise • Encourage and develop tourism • Flourishing town centres that support the local economy • High quality development and building control with an “open for business” approach • Maintain and deliver an effective Local Plan
<p>Protect and improve the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective recycling and waste management • Meeting the challenges of climate change • Provision of high quality public amenities, clean streets and environmental health • Provision of quality parks and open spaces • Car parking arrangements that meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors

9.7 Four new objectives have been added to those included in the previous Corporate Plan:

- Reflecting the Council’s commitment to enhancing the culture, creativity and heritage and the district;
- Making specific reference to improving residents access to benefits and financial support;
- Recognising the commitment to strong and effective democratic processes; and
- Making specific reference to the Local Plan.

9.8 There have been slight amendments to the following objectives:

- Increased supply of good quality homes
- Encourage business growth including start-ups and enterprise

9.9 The 24 objectives will provide the framework for the delivery of service plans which will be developed by Heads of Service following approval of the Corporate Plan.

10 Influencing Role

10.1 The delivery of public services in the Staffordshire Moorlands is undertaken by a variety of partners including the Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Police, parish and town councils etc.

10.2 The Council is committed to play the lead role in championing the local area. This is the community leadership role. Fulfilling this role effectively will mean influencing partners in a number of key areas in order to ensure that services are shaped and delivered around the needs and aspirations of citizens. The Council’s influencing role will be focused in the following priority areas:

- **Support the police and other partners to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour**
- **Work with commissioners and providers to ensure there is effective health provision across the district**
- **Work with partners (local and regional) to improve the provision of public transport which connect our market towns and villages for services, shopping and leisure.**
- **Work with Staffordshire County Council to improve both access and traffic flows to our town centres**
- **Work with local partners to ensure that there is collective action on climate change**
- **Champion and lobby government for the devolution of powers and funding to local authorities**

11 Priority Outcomes and Actions

11.1 A key contribution to the achievements of the Council in the past was the fact that the Council had well established priorities. It is important therefore that this practice continues. The proposed priority outcomes are detailed in the table below:

Aim	Priority Outcomes
Help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live & work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased supply of quality affordable housing • Improved health • Improved community safety
Meet our financial challenges and provide value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council services provide value for money • High level of resident and customer satisfaction
Help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable towns and rural communities • Increased economic growth • Increased tourism
Protect and improve the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High recycling rates • Reduction in carbon emissions

11.2 These key priority outcomes will be the highest priority in the development of performance targets and key actions. A significant proportion of the Council's resources will be directed towards them.

11.3 The achievement of the Council's objectives will be supported by a number of priority actions to ensure step improvements and maximum impact upon the priority outcomes. These will be implemented over the life of the Corporate Plan and progress will be closely monitored and reported as part of the Council's performance management framework.

- 11.4 The priority actions committed in the Corporate Plan are summarised in Appendix B.

12 Corporate Plan 2023-2027

- 12.1 A summary of the proposed aims, objectives, priority outcomes, influencing priorities and priority outcomes is attached at Appendix C. The full Corporate Plan is attached at Appendix D. The interactive version is available by following the link below:

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13 Measurement of Performance

- 13.1 As with previous versions, the new Corporate Plan will need to identify key performance indicators as part of its Performance Framework. This will in effect form the measurement of the progress the Council is making against each objective and form the basis of performance reporting to Cabinet, the Finance & Performance Committee, and the Alliance Management Team (AMT).
- 13.2 Targets will need to be established in the Corporate Plan for these indicators for the medium term. These targets will need to be set at level where it can be demonstrated that Council is making a contribution towards its priority outcomes.
- 13.3 Once the Council has approved the core of the new Corporate Plan i.e. Vision, Aims, Objectives and Priorities, members will then be in a position to determine a set of local performance indicators and targets. It is suggested that this is done during November and presented to the Finance & Performance Committee for consideration. This committee will recommend the revised Performance Framework to Cabinet for approval.
- 13.4 The exercise of developing key performance indicators is a unique opportunity to ensure that performance is properly focussed around local priorities. It will be important to ensure that the performance measures contribute towards measuring achievements against the Council's priorities.

14 Consultation with the Community

- 14.1 The vision, aims, objectives, and priorities proposed in this Corporate Plan have been developed after taking into account the ongoing dialogue with the communities of Staffordshire Moorlands. It is essential that this dialogue continues.

14.2 After adoption of the Corporate Plan by the Council it is recommended that there is a period of further consultation with the community. This consultation should focus upon the following:

- Informing the public about the Corporate Plan, promoting an understanding of its objectives and the rationale for the priorities
- Providing an opportunity for the public to comment and contribute to the development of service/delivery plans.
- Informing and engaging our staff as a means of developing understanding, commitment and contribution of ideas.
- Informing and engaging our key partners and wider stakeholders.
- Fulfilling our public sector duties and 'equality expectations' to consult people with regard to race, gender and disability and the impact of the Plan.
- Considering wider equality issues – how we address inequalities and how we meet the needs of distinct groups of people in our community (such as older people, young people, gay lesbian bisexual and transgender people)
- Identifying how service delivery and activity can be improved – identifying potential barriers to the achievement of our objectives; and
- Identifying opportunities for communities, voluntary and community groups and other stakeholders to work with us to achieve our objectives.

15 Process for Approval and Adoption of the Corporate Plan

15.1 In order to ensure its successful implementation the vision, aims, objectives and priorities of the Corporate Plan require buy in from all members and officers.

15.2 In order to ensure full implementation of the plan a number of further actions are also required. These are as follows:

- Approval of the Corporate Plan (18th October 2023)
- Update of the Forward Plan and Scrutiny work programmes to reflect the new key projects contained within the Plan (October 2023)
- Development of project plans for new key projects (October 2023)
- External publicity of the contents of the plan to ensure accountability for delivery (October 2023)
- Development of locality plans informed by the completed Locality Analysis (November 2023)
- Update of the Council's Performance Management framework to ensure that there is effective monitoring of progress (November 2023)
- Development of performance scorecards / dashboards for monitoring achievement against the established priority outcomes (November 2023)
- Update of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan to ensure resources are directed into achieving the objectives and priority outcomes (December 2023)

16 Process for Review

- 16.1 The Council has established a practice of refreshing its Corporate Plan on a four-yearly basis i.e. following a local election. This ensures that the plan reflects the political priorities of the Council and the process allows all councillors an opportunity to feed in issues at the start of the new administration.

- 16.2 The performance framework will need to be reconsidered on an annual basis in order to establish targets for each individual financial year. This will provide a regular opportunity for members to keep the overall plan and its direction under review.