

Somerset West and Taunton

Executive Committee – 18 September 2019

Draft Corporate Strategy 2020-2024

This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Report Author: Paul Harding, Strategy Specialist

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report introduces the draft corporate strategic priorities, outcomes and objectives for the period 2020-2024, which are due to go to Full Council for approval on 8 October 2019.
- 1.2 The strategic priorities, outcomes and objectives form the Corporate Strategy which is the Council's key overarching strategic-planning document and, as such, contains high-level priority outcomes for the council over the next four years based on local needs, regional and national strategies, Government policy and alignment to the political manifesto of the controlling group of the Council
- 1.3 The Corporate Strategy does not describe the specific actions that need to take place nor who will carry them out (these will be contained within directorate plans, service plans, project plans and individual work plans).
- 1.4 The Corporate Strategy is designed to guide future decision making. Once the priorities, outcomes and objectives are agreed they will underpin all subsequent strategies and delivery plans the Council produces. Future decision making reports will set out how they accord with the Strategy.
- 1.5 Once the strategic priorities, outcomes and objectives have been approved work will commence on preparing a Business Plan for the 2020/21 financial year which will set out what the Council intends to do during the year to help achieve its strategic outcomes.
- 1.6 Progress against delivery of the strategic outcomes will be a key area of focus of council's performance management framework and will be the subject of regular public reports.

2 Recommendations

2.1 The Executive are asked to:

- Recommend that Full Council approves the priorities, outcomes and objectives within the attached appendix.
- Authorise the Head of Communications to agree the final design and publication style for the Strategy.

3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

3.1 Without the Council clearly articulating its priorities there is a risk that activity and resources are not targeted to where they are most needed.

4 Background and Full details of the Report

4.1 These draft Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Objectives 2020-2024 will be the basis of the first Corporate Strategy for Somerset West and Taunton Council.

4.2 The purpose of this Strategy is to :-

- articulate the Council's high-level priorities over the next four years that ensure we bring about positive change for our people and place; that will make the district an even better place in which to live, work and visit;
- describe why these priorities are important;
- define the outcomes that will constitute success;
- provide a framework which will underpin all subsequent strategies and delivery plans the Council produces and decisions it makes.

4.3 The Corporate Strategy does not describe specific actions that need to take place nor who will carry them out (these will be contained within the annual Business Plan, team operational plans, project plans and individual work plans).

4.4 In constructing the Corporate Strategy we don't start with a blank sheet of paper. Via our former councils we have committed to a number of evidence-based strategic outcomes within current live strategies including the countywide Improving Lives in Somerset (Health & Wellbeing) - 2019-2028; Somerset Housing Strategy - 2019-2023; Somerset Growth Plan - 2017-2030; Taunton Deane Core Strategy- 2011-2028 and the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032. Additionally, the Strategic priorities, outcomes and objectives are aligned to the pledges within the manifesto of the controlling group of the Council.

4.5 The Strategy comprises of four strategic themes, each with a clearly articulated outcome and objectives that underpin, and give effect to, the strategic themes.

- Priority theme 1. **Our environment and economy.** Outcome; A low-carbon, clean, green and prosperous district that attracts high quality employment opportunities and encourages healthy lifestyles.

- Priority theme 2. **A transparent and customer-focused Council.** Outcome; A Council which informs and engages openly with our stakeholders and which consistently delivers excellent customer service.
- Priority theme 3. **An Enterprising Council.** Outcome; A financially self-sufficient Council which has expanded its commercial activity and generated more income in order to support service provision.
- Priority theme 4. **Homes and Communities.** Outcome; A district which offers a choice of good quality homes for our residents, whatever their age and income, in communities where support is available for those who need it.

4.6 The Corporate Strategy will be supported by an Annual Business Plan that will be structured around the strategic aims in the Corporate Strategy. This will ensure that there is a clear link between the high-level outcomes we are seeking and our day-to-day activities. It will also support us to correlate more clearly, evidence of our shorter-term achievements with their impact on our longer-term outcomes.

4.7 The Annual Business Plan for 2020/21 is scheduled to be considered by the Executive in March 2020.

4.8 The draft Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Objectives 2020-2024 are contained within **Appendix A.**

5 Links to Corporate Strategy

5.1 This report introduces the corporate strategic priorities, outcomes and objectives which form the Corporate Strategy.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

6.1 The Strategy contains an objective to identify and develop commercial investment opportunities for the council and deliver early projects that generate additional income that can be reinvested in service delivery in order to protect or enhance services on which our communities rely.

6.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy will need to align with the Corporate Strategy to ensure that there are sufficient budgets in place to deliver the priorities as proposed. In addition, the Business Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account our changing budgetary position.

7 Legal Implications (if any)

7.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

8 Climate and Sustainability Implications (if any)

- 8.1 The Corporate Strategy includes the council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change as a key objective.
- 8.2 Our guiding principles include ensuring the council's investment decisions are compatible with our social and environmental ethos.

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)

- 9.1 The Corporate Strategy includes an objective to reduce anti-social behaviour.

10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to this report. The assessment has not identified any adverse impacts on groups and individuals with protected characteristics arising from this strategy.
- 10.2 The priorities and objectives within this strategy are built around reducing inequality - providing suitable homes, jobs and environments for all within our district. As detailed delivery plans are developed they will continue to take account of the potential impact on any of the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

11 Social Value Implications (if any)

- 11.1 Our guiding principles, within the Draft Strategy, include the council considering Social Value opportunities when purchasing goods or commissioning services.

12 Partnership Implications (if any)

- 12.1 The objectives, in many cases, will not be achieved by the council alone. We will continue to work with existing partners to achieve our strategic objectives and we will seek additional opportunities to work in partnership where this will deliver a better outcome for our communities.

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)

- 13.1 The Corporate Strategy sets out the council's commitment to increasing access to affordable and suitable homes and jobs as well as creating green open spaces, encouraging walking and cycling and tackling anti-social behaviour; all of which positively impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents.

14 Asset Management Implications (if any)

- 14.1 The Corporate Strategy contains an objective to ensure our land and property assets support the achievement of the council's objectives (including service delivery, regeneration projects and community initiatives).

15 Data Protection Implications (if any)

- 15.1 There is an objective to make greater use of our business intelligence and feedback to improve the delivery of services to our customers. This will clearly be within the parameters of what is permissible under GDPR.

16 Consultation Implications (if any)

- 16.1 Both the Council's Senior Leadership team and the Council's Executive participated in workshops to help shape the Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Objectives. Approval will be sought from Full Council.
- 16.2 The Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Objectives are heavily based upon the manifesto of the Council's ruling group, which formed the basis of their election campaign in May 2019 and have therefore been recently and widely promoted as part of that process. Similarly, the priorities and objectives arising from existing strategic plans (such as the Local Plan and countywide strategies such as the Health & Wellbeing Strategy) have been subject to public consultation prior to their approval.
- 16.3 The draft strategic themes, priorities, outcomes and objectives were shared at an SWT member briefing, open to all SWT members, held on 29 August 2019.

17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)

- 17.1 Not applicable.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – Yes**

Reporting Frequency: **Once only**

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Contact Officers

Name	Paul Harding
Direct Dial	01823 218751
Email	P.harding@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk