

REPORT TITLE: COUNCIL PLAN 2020 - 2025

23 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL: CLLR LUCILLE THOMPSON

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The current Council Strategy runs until 31 March 2020 and was adopted by council on 16 January 2019.

The proposed new Council Plan sets out across five key priorities the council's key ambitions and outcomes for the coming five years. This council plan is to be considered by Cabinet and recommended for adoption to council with immediate effect.

A period of consultation on the draft Council Plan 2020 – 2025 was undertaken between 28 October and 29 November 2019. This report sets out the results of this consultation and the proposed amendments to the Council Plan in light of the comments received.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Cabinet recommends adoption of the Council Plan 2020 to 2025 to Full Council and that this plan supersedes the previous plan with immediate effect.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed new Council Plan. The name being changed to plan from strategy reflects the action focussed approach this document takes in setting out the priorities and activities that the council will undertake over the next five years to deliver the five outcomes in the new Council Plan.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The activities in the Council Plan, along with the Medium Term Financial Strategy, will guide how the council's financial resources will be allocated and utilised.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct legal implications which arise directly from the attached plan, though individual projects and actions will be subject to review as required by Legal Services. The delivery and implementation of the Council Plan will need to take account of legally binding duties and responsibilities on the council.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None directly arising from the report. To deliver the aims and objectives in the Council Plan, resources will need to be assigned as required across the council.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None in the plan, though asset management is an element of the council's activities.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Executive Leadership Board and senior managers have been consulted on the content of the draft Council Plan. All Cabinet Members have contributed to the draft Council Plan.
- 6.2 The council's Business and Policy Committee reviewed the draft at their meeting on 7 October 2019 and their comments are detailed in the main report at 14.2 of the report.
- 6.3 A public consultation was open between the 29 October 2019 and 29 November and received 126 responses from individuals and organisations who were asked if they agreed with the priorities and outcomes included in the draft Council Plan.
- 6.4 The table below provides a summary of the responses to the consultation:

Priority	Agreed	Disagreed	Not answered
Tackling the climate emergency and creating a greener district	91.3%	7.9%	0.8%
Homes for all	83.3%	13.5%	3.2%
Vibrant local economy	88.9%	7.1%	1.6%
Living well	86.5%	7.9%	5.6%
Your services. Your voice	87.3%	11.1%	1.6%

6.5 Engagement with Parish Councils covering the outcomes and priorities included in the draft Council Plan was undertaken at a Parish Briefing held on 19 November 2019. The presentation covered the themes and rationale behind the Council Plan and Parish Council representatives were invited to provide feedback and respond to the consultation.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Tackling the climate emergency and reducing the carbon emissions across the district is a key theme within all the priorities of the Council Plan.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In formulating its proposals the council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. EqIA's will be undertaken on the individual projects included in the draft Council Plan if required.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property - none</i>		
<i>Community Support</i>	Provide engagement opportunities especially through key projects.	Further opportunity to engage with our residents and community.
<i>Timescales</i>	Quarterly monitoring of the measures included in the Plan by Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.	

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Project capacity</i>	Project team structure across the council supports the delivery of the programmes and projects included in the plan.	Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to all new projects as part of the business justification case and before they commence.
<i>Financial / VfM</i>	The council's Risk Appetite as set out in the Risk Management Policy 2018 defines the amount of financial risk the council is willing to consider. All major projects have their own risk register which identifies among others financial risks and includes relevant actions to mitigate these risks.	New revenue streams are proposed, as well as enhancing existing schemes to positively contribute to the council's financial position.
<i>Legal</i>	Each significant action or project will be subject to its own legal consideration in appropriate reports.	
<i>Innovation</i>	By exploring new ways of working, this increases the council's exposure to risk and alters its risk profile. This is mitigated by consideration of a robust business justification case before approval is given.	This plan proposes some innovative proposals that will provide the council with the opportunity to introduce new ideas and ways of working. The risk of remaining the same is significant in that funding reductions are such that the council would be unable to fund some of its core services.
<i>Reputation</i>	The risk of delivering the plan is mitigated through the monitoring of the outcome measures contained within the Strategy, and ensuring corrective action is taken. Not delivering on some of these items, especially some of the major projects will have a large financial risk to the council through impacting on future revenue streams.	This plan gives the opportunity for the council to enhance its reputation through establishing a more targeted ambition for the district that is based on clear measures. Success against these key measures will enhance the council's reputation to move key programmes of work forward.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Other – none</i>		

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

11.1 The Council Strategy 2017 - 20 was refreshed a year ago and formally adopted by council on 16 January 2019.

11.2 The proposed plan covering the period 2020 - 2025 (attached as Appendix 1) comprises five priority outcomes that the council wants to achieve and sets out the priorities that will contribute to the delivery of the outcomes which are:

- Tackling the climate emergency and creating a greener district
- Homes for all
- Vibrant local economy
- Living well
- Your services. Your voice.

11.3 The draft Council Plan was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 23 October (Report CAB3195 refers), following which a period of consultation was widely published through press releases, the council's popular social media channels and on the council's consultation portal CitizenSpace. The council's main stakeholders and staff members were also encouraged to take part and share their views.

12. Residents' Survey 2019

12.1 At the beginning of 2019, the council undertook a Residents' Survey to understand the views and opinions of our residents that would be used not only to support an evidence approach to decision making but also inform the priorities in this plan.

12.2 The headline results from the survey were very positive with 95% of Winchester district residents surveyed being happy with their local area as a place to live and 79% satisfied with the way that the council runs things.

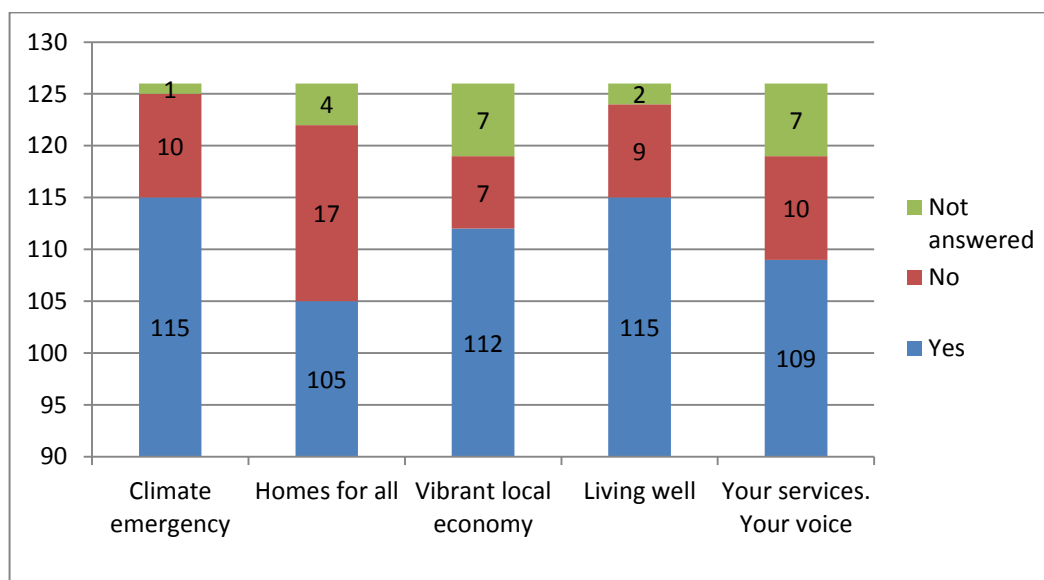
12.3 The survey also provided residents the opportunity to tell the council about the areas or services where they think the council should focus on improving. This valuable evidence has been used to support setting the priorities for the next five years and have been included in the new Council Plan.

13. Public consultation

13.1 The public consultation asked whether the consultee agreed or not with the priorities as set out in the draft Council Plan, and gave an opportunity to comment.

- 13.2 A total of 126 responses were received while the consultation was open between 29 October 2019 and 29 November 2019. In addition 173 individual comments across the objectives were provided with the consultation responses.
- 13.3 The number of responses demonstrates the positive levels of engagement that residents and organisations have had with the council over the draft plan. There is a lot of useful commentary within the responses and this has been reviewed so as to help refine the plan.
- 13.4 The comments also highlight areas of agreement and disagreement with the priorities in the plan with the most common comment themes consolidated in paragraph 13.8 along with a response.
- 13.5 The proposed final draft of the Council Plan is set out in Appendix 1.
- 13.6 The full set of responses to the consultation, including an analysis can be found on CitizenSpace <https://winchester.citizenspace.com/policy/council-plan-2020-2025/>
- 13.7 The chart below shows the number of responses to the consultation and whether the respondent replied yes, no or chose not to answer the question as to whether they agreed with each of the council's priorities.

Chart 1.1: Summary of responses to the public consultation



- 13.8 Overall there has been a majority of support for all of the outcomes with Tackling the climate emergency, Vibrant local economy and Living well receiving the greatest support and Homes for all the lowest.
- 13.9 The table below sets out the top five main themes which stood out from the consultation comments, judged by the frequency of times an issue was referred to within the comments.

Comment area	Response
Reduce air pollution and improve air quality should be an explicit outcome.	The council has committed to achieving a carbon neutral district by 2030 and the annual review of the Air Quality Management Action Plan will be considered by Cabinet in January 2020.
Build more local authority housing.	The council has committed to continue to build new council houses that will be able to deliver a wide range of housing tenures through the new Winchester Housing Company.
Resolve traffic congestion and availability of car parking in the city.	Delivery of the City of Winchester Movement Strategy sets out the long-term priorities for travel and transport improvements in Winchester. The Parking & Access Strategy is elsewhere on this agenda.
Encourage people to cycle by having dedicated cycle routes.	This is an integral part of access along with promotion of other sustainable forms of transport.
Allow for more consultation and engagement with the public that are well publicised and in accessible locations.	<p>The council has committed to being open and transparent and will involve the public, businesses, stakeholders and ward councillors earlier and more deeply in policy design and the decision making process.</p> <p>The consultation timetable for the Council Plan coincided with the pre-election period which necessarily restricted the amount of engagement that the council could undertake with the public.</p>

- 13.10 The full list of consultation responses including comments and suggestions for other outcomes that the council should be focusing on has been published on the council's website and be accessed via the following link:
<https://winchester.citizenspace.com/policy/council-plan-2020-2025/>

14. Business and Housing Policy Committee

14.1 At its meeting on the 7 October 2019, Business and Housing Policy Committee members received a presentation setting out the emerging priorities that are to be included in the new Council Plan.

14.2 During that meeting the following comments were made:

- It was suggested that the strategy should be developed through a method plan to be very clear on how the challenges would be responded to;
- It was suggested that the strategy needed to define the methods that would be undertaken to attract and retain younger people to the district;
- It was suggested that the strategy include reference to key projects such as the Carfax and the Cattle Market sites as part of the council's consideration of the wider use of town centre properties and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management stated that this would be given consideration;
- It was suggested that acknowledgment should be made in the strategy of non operational council resources, such as its offices, landholdings and the Guildhall;
- It was suggested that mention should be included in the strategy of the council's staff and this inclusion was agreed by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Communications and Transformation and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management;
- It was commented that the district should be recognised in the strategy as well as the town area.

15. Cabinet – 23 October 2019

15.1 Cabinet considered and debated the draft Council Plan at its meeting on 23 October 2019 and the comments made are summarised as follows:

- Considered that the consultation period was too short;
- Inconsistencies throughout the plan regarding the use of 'District' or 'district';
- No specific mention of elderly people or the requirements of an ageing population and those "hidden" residents of a predominantly wealthy district and the balance between urban and rural requirements of the district;
- Query regarding the calculation of the target for new home delivery;
- Request for clarity regarding statements on energy efficiency in new builds;
- Offer to discuss further with the Cabinet Member and officers the detailed proposals to tackle the climate change emergency.

- Requirement for partnership working to achieve many of the outcomes and practical difficulties that this raised;
- Support for the proposals for more homes;
- Should be more explicit regarding proposals for key projects;
- Consider re-wording of statement regarding reducing levels of waste and increasing recycling to take account of the aim to also reduce overall consumption (which might in turn impact on recycling levels).
- Unsure that the plan provided a proper balance between offering affordable housing but also ensuring adequate decent employment opportunities in the district;
- Unclear why there was particular reference to young people, as opposed to other groups;
- Welcomed the brevity of the plan but considered it should contain more detailed targets.

16 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 16.1 The council could choose not to have a Council Plan, however it this plan that sets out the key priorities and delivery programme for the council and enables effective business planning and programme management for teams. Not to have a plan is not recommended.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3195 Draft Council Plan 2020 - 2025

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Council Plan 2020 – 2025

COUNCIL PLAN 2020 – 2025

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

The Winchester district faces many challenges. This plan sets out the core principles which underpin our work and respond to these challenges.

The main challenges:

- The climate emergency and the need to reduce the Winchester district's very high carbon footprint;
- Poor air quality in parts of the district;
- Inequality and its effects on mental health and physical wellbeing;
- Expensive housing;
- A population which is ageing while younger people leave the district;
- Brexit and its impact on the economy;
- Shifting employment patterns and technological change;
- Poor provision of services such as public transport in rural parts of the district;
- Maintaining high quality services while balancing the council budget.

Your Council Plan

This Council Plan is a high level document covering the period 2020 to 2025. It sets out what the council wants to achieve and informs other strategies and plans including the Local Plan and individual team plans.

The climate emergency is the overarching priority for the council and will be at the heart of everything we do.

Our priorities are:

- Tackling the climate emergency and creating a greener district
- Homes for all
- Vibrant local economy
- Living well
- Your services. Your voice

TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND CREATING A GREENER DISTRICT

The climate crisis is the biggest challenge all of us face in the coming years and decades. Winchester must play its part in tackling the crisis and hand our district to our children and grandchildren in a better state than it is now.

What we want to achieve

- Winchester City Council to be carbon neutral by 2024
- The Winchester district to be carbon neutral by 2030
- Reduced levels of waste and increased recycling, exceeding national targets
- An increase in the proportion of journeys taken by walking, cycling and public transport

How will we achieve this?

- Carbon neutrality to be made central to everything we do
- Have an adopted and up to date Local Plan with positive policies which promote low carbon development and transport while protecting our heritage and natural environment
- Take a lead with partners and residents to deliver the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan throughout the district
- Deliver the City of Winchester Movement Strategy, refresh the air quality management action plan and prioritise walking, cycling and public transport throughout the district
- Work with other public authorities to expand the range of materials we recycle
- Safeguard our district's extensive natural habitats and precious ecosystems by delivering the actions in our Biodiversity Action Plan

LIVING WELL

We want all our residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives. We recognise that our residents are living longer and want to ensure the district offers the right mix of facilities for all ages and abilities.

What we want to achieve

- Reduced health inequalities
- Increased participation in physical and cultural activities
- An increase in active travel
- Services that work for all, but especially for residents who need more help to live well
- Attractive and well used green spaces with space for relaxation and play

How will we achieve this?

- Focus our activities on the most disadvantaged areas, communities and groups
- Opening of the new Winchester Sport & Leisure Park to offer sustainable, accessible facilities for all to enjoy a wide range of activities
- Supporting communities to extend the range of sports, leisure and cultural facilities across the district
- Create safe cycleways and pathways to make it safer and more appealing for our residents to cycle and walk to their destination
- Maintain and enhance the open spaces and parks that support good mental and physical health for residents of all ages

HOMES FOR ALL

Housing in our district is expensive and young people and families are moving out because they can't find suitable accommodation they can afford.

Winchester district needs homes for all – homes that are affordable and built in the right areas for our changing communities.

What we want to achieve

- More young people and families working and living in the district.
- All homes are energy efficient and affordable to run
- Creating communities not just homes
- No-one sleeping rough except by choice

How will we achieve this?

- The council building significantly more homes, both traditional council homes and through the council housing company
- Strengthen our Local Plan to ensure the right mix homes are built for all sectors of our society including young people
- Use the new Winchester Housing Company to deliver a wide range of housing tenures to meet local needs
- Directly and in partnership with the voluntary sector, provide support for our homeless and most vulnerable people
- Be innovative in moving the energy efficiency of new and existing homes towards zero carbon
- Work with developers to ensure that they provide affordable housing and homes at fair market value as part of new developments

VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY

Winchester district is home to a host of successful businesses and enterprises with high levels of employment in our urban and rural areas. In the face of tough competition, our high streets, towns, business centres and rural areas must attract new investment particularly in low carbon offices, workspace and transport links.

What we want to achieve

- Grow opportunities for high-quality, well-paid employment across the district
- New offices and workspace are located in areas with sustainable transport links or where they reduce the need to travel to work
- More younger people choose to live and work here
- Businesses grasp opportunities for green growth
- The city, market towns and rural communities across our district have a compelling and competitive visitor offer

How will we achieve this?

- Working with business, universities and colleges to position Winchester district as a centre for digital, creative, knowledge-intensive networks
- Redevelopment of central Winchester prioritises the needs of younger people.
- Strengthening the Winchester brand and working in partnership to promote and develop our district's unique cultural, heritage and natural environment assets
- Supporting business in meeting the challenge of carbon neutrality
- Securing support to replace LEADER funding and sustain business development in rural areas

YOUR SERVICES, YOUR VOICE

We want to have high quality, good value services that are continuously improving to address the changing needs and expectations of residents, tenants, visitors, businesses and non-profit organisations across our district – and are accessible to all, whatever their circumstances.

We want our residents to have the opportunity to make their voice heard and be able to see and understand how the council makes its decisions.

What we want to achieve

- An open and transparent council
- Improving satisfaction for our services
- Good value compared to other similar authorities
- Continuous improvement in cost-effectiveness
- High accessibility and usage of our services

- Constructive and effective partnerships across the district
- A balanced budget and stable council finances

How will we achieve this?

- New processes that:
 - involve the public, voluntary and community organisations, businesses, ward councillors and other stakeholders earlier and more deeply in the design and decision-making process
 - effectively respond to and use complaints and feedback to drive service improvement.
- New wider set of published measures designed to drive improved satisfaction and performance
- More effective use of technology to make it simpler and easier to deal with the council and its delivery partners while reducing cost
- Strong focus on accessibility standards to ensure our services are usable by all
- Investing in our staff and making the most of their skills and talents

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The core principles will be fundamental to our operating model in the future. They underpin a number of our supporting strategies such as the workforce strategy.

Insight

We will engage with our residents and other local stakeholders to really understand their needs and how together we can drive change across the district.

Innovation

We want to use the best that the public, voluntary and private sector can offer to explore new ways of providing services across the district.

Improvement

We will focus our services on improving standards so that they meet the expectations of our customers and reflect changes over the coming years.

Investment

We will use our resources to invest in our services to improve them, but also to take advantage of commercial opportunities where they arise to help secure our financial future.

Inspiration

We want our staff to be inspired and motivated to work for the council and deliver for our residents. Acting in a manner which is consultative, considerate and courageous to deliver the plan.