

Policy Development and Review Committee	
Meeting Date	29 January 2019
Report Title	Corporate plan 2020-2023 – public consultation draft
Cabinet Member	Cllr Roger Truelove – Council Leader
SMT Lead	David Clifford
Head of Service	Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services
Lead Officer	
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	PDRC is asked to provide comments on the consultation draft of the corporate plan 2020-2023.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following PDRC's initial discussion of the corporate plan when it was at an early draft stage back in the autumn, this report seeks the committee's views on the version of the document which is currently open for public consultation.

2 Background

- 2.1 The council's corporate plan establishes the political and managerial priorities on which the organisation will focus over a medium-term period. Without attempting to cover in any detail all of the objectives to be pursued by every department, it sets the tone for future resource allocation, establishing which activities and objectives are priorities and, by implication, which are not.
- 2.2 In an era of constrained and diminishing resources, the plan endeavours to ensure that those resources are marshalled as coherently as possible so that issues which are truly priorities for residents and their representatives on the council are not crowded out by apparently more urgent but ultimately less important pieces of work.
- 2.3 The plan represents the strategic end of the 'golden thread' which runs down through departments' operational service plans to individual officers' annual performance appraisals, so in an ideal world it will square the circle of establishing clear priorities while also providing a 'hook' for all teams to link their work to the overall ambitions of the council.
- 2.4 It is worth emphasising that the corporate plan is primarily an internal document. Clearly its single most significant influence will be the political ambitions of the administration, and to some extent it can be seen as the managerial response to those ambitions, but it does also need to factor in the type of general contextual

analysis that all organisations, including those less overtly political than a local authority, need to conduct from time to time.

- 2.5 An outline of the priorities and objectives in the new plan was considered by PDRC in October, where the committee made a number of helpful suggestions for improvement, all of which have been factored into the draft at appendix I (minute 239 refers).

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The committee is now asked to consider the consultation draft of the corporate plan at appendix I, as well as the draft equality impact assessment at appendix II, and provide comments as appropriate.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Although there is a legal requirement for councils to have a definite policy framework, there is no specific requirement for a corporate plan, and a genuine option would therefore be to dispense with the document altogether.
- 4.2 However, a medium-term strategic plan of some kind is a near-universal feature of English councils, with the development process being used to explore, refine and achieve consensus on the meaning of political ambitions, and the final document acting as a guide to both members and officers as to the key areas on which progress must be made over the lifetime of an administration.
- 4.3 The absence of a plan is likely to result in a lack of clarity among officers about the organisation's priorities and less coherent decision-making by members, and is therefore not recommended.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The draft plan is now available for public consultation, and a Survey Monkey site has been set up to record responses. In addition to press and social media campaigns to raise awareness, all town and parish councils have been written to, and articles have gone out in business and partnership newsletters. The consultation closes on 1 March.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The draft plan at appendix I will replace the existing plan on adoption by council.
Financial, Resource and Property	The corporate plan to some extent represents the narrative complement to the medium-term financial plan (MTFP), in that it sets out in broad terms what the council aims to achieve given the resources established by the MTFP. Conversely, it is anticipated

	that the activities required by the plan will generally be funded within the resourcing framework established in the MTFP.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The legal status of the corporate plan as a component of the statutory policy framework derives from the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations subsequently made under it. No specific procurement implications have been identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	The draft plan at appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to crime and disorder, particularly under priority 3.
Environment and Sustainability	The draft plan at appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to the environment and to the climate and ecological emergencies, particularly under priority 2.
Health and Wellbeing	The draft plan at appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to health and wellbeing, particularly under priority 3.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No specific implications have been identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	The public sector equality duty requires decision-makers to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity right throughout the decision-making process. A preliminary equality impact assessment is attached at appendix II. The corporate plan is in general at too high a level of abstraction for the aims of the equality duty to be relevant in any concrete way, although they are likely to be much more relevant to many of the pieces of work which will flow from it, which will all need to be subject to individual impact assessments. The impact of the plan itself on the aims of the equality duty, without reference to these more detailed pieces of work, is at this stage considered to be low, and nothing requiring the mitigation of adverse impacts has been identified. It is believed at this stage that the plan involves no unlawful discrimination.
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific implications have been identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Draft corporate plan 2020-2023
- Appendix II: Draft equality impact assessment

8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers.