

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	New Council Plan (2020-2024)
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

The Council Plan is a key strategic document which establishes an overarching vision for the borough and sets out, in broad terms, the priorities, objectives and actions that the Council will focus upon to work towards the vision.

The current plan (2016-20) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016 and is now in its last year. A new plan is therefore required to set the strategic priorities of the Council. A Member workshop was held on 5 November 2019 to discuss and shape what the new priorities and supporting objectives may look like. This confirmed that Members were generally happy, though textual amendments were put forward, to retain the four current priorities plus the addition of two new priority areas. The six priority areas were also subject to a two week public consultation which led to 345 responses. The proposed draft Council Plan (2020-2024) is attached at Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

Subject to any amendments from the Executive Committee, the new Council Plan is RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL for ADOPTION.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The current Council Plan is in its last year so a new plan and set of priorities is required.

Resource Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not have an up to date Council Plan then it cannot demonstrate that priorities are being achieved.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Delivery of the Council Plan actions are monitored through a Performance Tracker which is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. Actions within the plan are also refreshed on an annual basis to ensure they remain relevant.

Environmental Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Council Plan is a key strategic document which establishes an overarching vision for the borough and sets out the priorities, objectives and actions that the Council will focus upon to work towards the vision.

The current plan (2016-20) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016 and is now in its last year. A new plan is therefore required to set the strategic priorities of the Council.

A Member workshop was held on 5 November 2019 to discuss and shape what the new priorities and supporting objectives may look like. This confirmed that Members were generally happy to retain the four current priorities (with the addition of some minor textual amendments) plus the addition of two new priority areas.

The six priority areas were also subject to a two week public consultation, which led to 345 responses. The proposed draft Council Plan (2020-2024) is attached at Appendix 1.

The six new priorities build on the successes of our previous Council Plan, and reflect the challenges we have ahead of us around finance, growth, customer demand, and emerging issues such as garden communities and climate change.

2.0 COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2024

- 2.1** In terms of the plan's overall vision and values, these remain unchanged.

The vision for the borough is *'A place where a good quality of life is open to all'*.

Our values continue to reflect the fact that we are a Council which:

- Puts customers first.
- Is positive about working with others.
- Values its employees.

- 2.2** In terms of the priorities, feedback from the workshop was that Members were generally on the 'same page', and that the four current priority areas should remain, though various re-wordings were put forward. In addition, two new priority areas emerged as part of the discussions.

- 2.3** Within the plan document itself, there is a short introduction explaining why it is a priority area.

The proposed priorities are:

- Finances and resources (*no change*).
- Economic Growth (*formerly promoting and supporting economic growth*).
- Housing and Communities (*formerly growing and supporting communities*).
- Customer First (*formerly customer-focused services*).

Two new priorities were discussed and agreed:

- Garden Communities (*the delivery of the Tewkesbury Garden Town and the Cyber Central Garden Community are significant developments that will have a financial, social and reputational impact upon the Council*).
- Sustainable environment (*nationally, environmental issues have risen in profile. The Council has also recently declared a 'climate emergency' supported by a Member Working Group to look at carbon neutrality of the Council offices and commit to work with partners in Gloucestershire to achieve countywide carbon neutrality aims. This priority also reflects waste and recycling objectives and actions, one of the Council's highest profile service delivery areas.*)

2.4 Each of the six priorities is supported by a series of key objectives and these also formed part of the discussion at the Member workshop. Again, Members were generally in agreement but with alternative options put forward for certain aspects of wording. The proposed objectives therefore summarise and translate the opinions put forward.

The actions within the plan did not form part of the workshop discussion. These are the responsibility of Corporate Management Team and their relevant service leads to put forward the actions to deliver the priorities and objectives.

As with previous Council plans, to ensure it remains a live document, the plan will be refreshed on an annual basis. Historically, priorities and objectives tend to remain fixed across the period of the plan. It is the actions that tend to be updated to reflect if any actions have been delivered within the year (thereby removed from the plan), to identify any emerging actions (thereby added to the plan) or to change the scope of any actions (thereby amended within the plan).

3.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3.1 A two-week consultation was undertaken via social media and through engagement with the Citizens' Panel. To encourage responses, it was kept as simple as possible and centred around two key questions. In relation to the proposed six priorities:

- 1) Do you agree these are priority areas for the Council?
- 2) Do you feel there is a priority area missing?

A total of 345 responses were received.

In terms of question one:

- 37 strongly agreed.
- 141 mostly agreed.
- 98 neither agreed/disagreed.
- 45 mostly disagreed.
- 20 strongly disagreed.
- 4 responded 'don't know'.

With regards to question two:

- 202 answered 'yes'.
- 143 answered 'no'.

For those who answered 'yes', a summary of their comments can be found in Appendix 2. While the opinion of those responding suggests they think a priority is missing, in fact:

- A number of suggestions made, although not priorities in their own right, are already cross cutting through one or more objectives e.g. infrastructure, environment.
- A number of the suggestions are ones we do not have direct influence as the primary provider e.g. education provisions, public transport, support medical services.
- Although important to local communities, a number of the suggestions were location-specific e.g. Bishop's Cleeve infrastructure, Tewkesbury waterside, policing within Bishop's Cleeve.

4.0 MONITORING PROGRESS

- 4.1** As with previous Council plans, an established performance tracker document is in place to monitor delivery of the actions. This is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review on a quarterly basis. Outcomes of this review are then reported to Executive Committee by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. As detailed above, to ensure the plan remains 'live' and relevant, it is refreshed annually.

5.0 PROMOTING THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 5.1** The primary audiences for the Council Plan are the Council's Members, staff and key partners. There will be significant engagement internally, particularly as the Council's ability to deliver the plan forms part of the scope of the Corporate Peer Challenge in early March 2020. For example, the updated plan will be available on our website (including links to key strategies and policies e.g. Economic Development and Tourism Strategy), intranet and in hard copy format on request. Easy print and summary versions will also be available. The plan will be published in the media and through Tewkesbury Borough News. Poster versions will also be available for use internally.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1** None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1** Corporate Management Team.
Member workshop 5 November 2019.
Public consultation via social media and Citizen's Panel.

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 8.1** There are a number of key strategies that support delivery of Council plan priorities. For example; digital strategy, housing and homelessness strategy, economic development and tourism strategy, etc.

9.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 9.1** A wide range of government policies underpin actions within the priority themes.

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

10.1 No direct resource implications.

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

11.1 The Council Plan seeks to ensure economic, social and environmental sustainability.

12.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

12.1 The Council Plan seeks to ensure value for money and equitable service provision.

13.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

13.1 Council plan (2016-2020) approved 19 April 2016.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: 1 – Draft Council Plan (2020-2024).
2 – Summary of Consultation re: ‘missing’ priority areas.