

Report to Improvement & Review Commission

REFRESH OF OUR CORPORATE PLAN (2015-2020)

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What is the Commission being asked to do?

A proposal to change the Council's Budget and Policy Framework requires that the report follows the path outlined in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution. These state that whilst Cabinet leads the development of the Corporate Plan, the Commission is required to be consulted initially through the Chairman. It was agreed at the last meeting of the IRC on 8th November 2017 that the Corporate Plan would be referred after being considered by Cabinet in December to the January meeting of IRC. This report is therefore a referral for consideration of the proposed plan on a page which will provide the basis for the refreshed Corporate Plan.

Cabinet Consideration

Cabinet, at its meeting on 18th December 2017 Cabinet agreed that:

- (i) the vision, priorities, ambitions (we want) and objectives (we will) described in the plan on a page which will form the basis of the Corporate Plan refresh (for the period 2017-2020) be approved as set out in **Appendix A**;
- (ii) the summary feedback and views from members to inform the broad ambitions and objectives through the Member Seminar on the 12 October 2017 **Appendix B** be noted;
- (iii) the final version of the Corporate Plan be timetabled to be considered at the 5th February 2018 Cabinet meeting after consideration by the Improvement and Review Commission and if approved be recommended to Council for inclusion as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework as set out within the Constitution.

The reason for this decision is to keep up to date the Council's priorities and work programme for the remainder of the four year administration period and beyond.

To ensure that the Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the overarching policy framework of the Council set in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

Corporate Implications

1. The Corporate Plan, upon approval, will become the key strategic document for the Council driving action and future resource allocation and is the framework against which the Council's progress and performance, as reported in the Annual Report will be judged by stakeholders.

2. Elsewhere in the agenda are items on Digital First: which sets out the Council's vision and objectives in relation to digital transformation which is reflected in the proposed objectives of the Corporate Plan and, the Draft Budget for 2018-19 which will go on to be considered by Cabinet on 5 February 2018 and if approved by Council approval on the 22 February 2018 both of which are linked to the Corporate Plan.

Executive Summary

3. The current Corporate Plan sets out the vision, priorities, and high level ambitions to 2019 to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities facing the council. Our priorities have been focussed on 'three Ps': regeneration and infrastructure (our place priority); cohesive communities (our people priority) and value for money services (our pounds priority) which includes our organisational priority. The Corporate Plan is the key policy framework document for the Council and any changes made need to be approved by Council.
4. The Corporate Plan is primarily an internal working document, but it drives our delivery and informs our outward facing communications. It also provides an important part of the golden thread from a performance management point of view to enable staff to see how their individual actions contribute to the wider Council agenda. The delivery plan element of the plan will be reviewed and refreshed annually. Progress made will be reported each year as part of the Council's Annual Report.
5. This is the first 'refresh' that has been carried out on the Corporate Plan since its publication in January 2016.
6. The output from the refresh will be a more focussed and punchy 'plan on a page' that can be communicated in a simpler and more accessible way than the current 20 page document. The Corporate Plan will have associated strategies (existing and new) and resourced work programmes to drive delivery. It will also be used as a framework to inform our communications with the public going forward.

Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications

7. The priorities set out in the refreshed Corporate Plan 2017-2020 will form the Council's contribution to achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Wycombe District as well as our wider contribution to partnership plans such as the Community Safety Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Background and Issues

8. Our current Corporate Plan (approved by Council in December 2015) has been in place for 18 months. Within the 'delivering our priorities' section it is recognised that as the environment and circumstances that we work in change - and new opportunities (or challenges) arise, there is a need to periodically 'pause' and review the ambitions and activities. This is to ensure that we remain focussed on what is going to make the biggest difference and can be delivered within the resources that we have.
9. Since our Corporate Plan was written the council has seen change. Activities that were seen in 2015 as emerging have come to the fore. For example, in

collaboration with the other district councils in Bucks, we developed and submitted a business case to Government to modernise local government in Bucks. The work carried out as part of the preparation of the submission further informed our understanding of the economic geography as well as the digital agenda and the importance of building resilience in our communities.

10. Our local plan work has progressed and we are more aware now of the scale and scope of development required for Princes Risborough. It has also been recognised that the market is very unlikely to deliver all of the homes that we need in our district – especially those that are affordable and the national emphasis on the need for housing has strengthened this priority. We also recognise the continuing change in our demographics with the increase of older people and the implications for the preventative agenda (including keeping people active and independent) and housing provision.
11. This refresh process offers an opportunity to revisit the focus of our ambitions in light of the journey we have taken since 2015 – to reflect where we are now. It is also an opportunity to identify where we have gaps in delivery to address these so that these can link into this years' budget setting process for resource allocation and have activities programmed as part of our service planning process. It is also an opportunity to review how the plan is expressed and communicated and how delivery is managed.

Vision

The existing Corporate Plan has a vision which is stated as:

Wycombe District: Economically Strong and a place to live, work and visit.

It is important that a vision is memorable and seeks to summarise the essence of the ambition of the Council. After discussion the view was taken that the new vision should be short and memorable and make a positive statement about the District.

There is now a proposal that the vision should be:

Wycombe: A Welcome Home

This is easy for people to remember and reflects the key goals of the Council. In order to flesh out the meaning two sub-statements will accompany the vision statement.

Welcome to Visitors and Businesses: **Home** to All our Residents.

The vision is incorporated into the plan on the page and re-enforced by the layout of the plan on the page in the shape of a home.

12. The existing Corporate Plan has a number of stated ambitions and outcomes. In many cases these are not significantly different to the ambitions and objectives in the proposed refresh. Where the essence of the ambition/objective is the same as before it will have been reworded to be shorter and in some cases has been reassigned to a different priority.

13. The ambitions are expressed by the phrase ‘We want’ and these represent the aspiration of what we desire ultimately for the District. There are then a series of ‘objectives’ which are expressed as tasks which we will aim to achieve which will contribute to moving us towards our stated aspiration. In some cases we recognise that we cannot deliver these changes alone and we have therefore recognised that our delivery will be in partnership with others. Whilst the ambitions and objectives will reflect in many cases those which are set out in the existing plan there are key changes which have resulted from the priorities being driven by members and the workshop sessions with members which provided greater insight to current priorities for the District. The key changes are as follows:

I. **Our Place:** a great place to be

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our district to be a place people visit and enjoy	<p>Develop the district as a destination for leisure and business visitors</p> <p>Ensure that the place works well for people who live and work here</p> <p>Use design and place making to improve our built environment</p> <p>Lessen the impact of traffic and support sustainable transport</p>
<p>We will improve the experience of people who spend time in our District including those enjoying leisure activities and shopping. We will invest in high quality public realm. We will ensure that our district continues to attract visitors and have a vibrant economy. We will build the capacity of the district as an events and conference destination. Our Towns provide much of our employment and access to employment and we will ensure that the District works well for people who live and work here. We will use design and place making to improve our built environment; make our District a better place and enhance the character of the local area. We will work to lessen the impact of traffic including development management, noise mitigation, air quality improvement and will support means by which people can use alternative forms of transport.</p>	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our district to be known for its natural beauty and wildlife	Minimise the impact of land use on our natural environment
<p>We will deliver a local plan which, within the constraints of the legislative framework, supports the identified housing needs of our area whilst protecting the majority of the land in our district as natural landscape. We continue to see our natural assets as key to our visitor economy and tourism now and in the future. Enjoyment of the natural environment will contribute to the experience of residents and visitors to the area, now and in the future.</p>	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our district to be a safe and attractive place	Remove obstacles to enjoyment by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour Support people who look after their local area
As well as promoting the success of the place we will work to remove the obstacles to enjoyment of our District including anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. We will work with our partners and take action to prevent behaviours which threaten people's safety and their enjoyment of the place. We will promote responsible behaviours; and support those who look after their local areas.	
WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our District to offer homes that meet housing needs	Deliver more housing on council land and privately owned sites Speed up the delivery of affordable homes Further improve the quality of housing
We will deliver new housing on council land and support new housing being delivered on suitable privately owned sites. We will work to accelerate the delivery of affordable homes. We will improve the quality of housing to support the health and independence of our residents. We will improve the quality and availability of temporary accommodation.	

Key strategies and plans which support this priority include:

- The emerging Economic Development Strategy
- The Local Plan
- The Homelessness Strategy 2014-19

II. Our People: Strong communities

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our communities to work well together	Support community resilience Engage with and include young people Support work to promote integration and cohesion Tackle extremism

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
We will work with our partners to support community resilience and work to overcome the issues which can arise from diversity. We will work to support integration and promote cohesion. We will support and promote 'neighbourliness' and facilitate residents helping each other through individuals and local groups. We will work with our partners and local communities to help tackle extremism and protect and support our young people.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To ensure that people can get help when they need it	<p>Provide financial support to voluntary organisations working for those in need</p> <p>Help those in need of help to gain the support they need from others.</p> <p>Allocate homes fairly to those in greatest need</p>
We will continue to support the work of a range of community and voluntary organisations through funding and practical support. We will strive to ensure these organisations provide key support services within the community focused on specified outcomes. We will allocate the homes to which we have access fairly to those in greatest need.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
People to be healthy and active	<p>Provide open spaces and support our leisure provision to enable people to live healthy lives</p> <p>Improve homes to support people to live safely and independently</p>
There are specific vulnerable groups or individuals with genuine needs which cannot be met through community groups or local support. We will continue to provide advice and support and signpost to where help can be found if we cannot help directly. The Council is working with other organisations to ensure that people get the help they need	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To support those who work for their communities	Support residents to help each other through individuals and local groups
Through our Leisure partners and more widely we will enable more people to take part in sport and activities which enhance their health and their wellbeing. We will	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
improve homes and support good health.	carry out specific works to ensure that people's homes support good health.

Key strategies and plans which support these outcomes include:

- The Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Prevent Action Plan
- Community Facilities Strategy
- Sports Facilities Strategy
- + Annual Financial Budgets (to ensure affordability and value for money)

III. Our Prosperity: Growth and prosperity

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Everyone who wants to work or train to be able to do so	Work with others to help our residents develop the skills employers need Support young people to find the right work locally Create higher value employment
We will work with our partners to develop the skills and talent that employers will need now and in the future. We will create higher value employment in sectors such as life sciences, information technology, digital media and low carbon technology. We will work closely with our partners to link growth orientated local businesses with resources and expertise within the Higher Education sector.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To support the creation of new and growing businesses	Work with others to increase the birth rate of new businesses Work with others to support the growth and internationalisation of our local businesses Support research based innovation
We will support the growth and internationalisation of our local businesses. We will overcome obstacles faced by businesses. We will boost the birth rate of new businesses and promote entrepreneurship. We will encourage research based innovation to boost business growth.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To make physical and digital	Work with others to improve strategic transport and ICT connectivity

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
connectivity easier	
We will improve strategic transport and ICT connectivity. We will work closely with our highways partners to achieve improved transport connections and deliver our transport priorities. We will work with BT and our partners to deliver improved digital connectivity and unlock the economic growth opportunities presented by improved connectivity.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To support economic growth	Support inward investment Provide business accommodation Engage with and understand our businesses Work with others to provide seamless business support
We will work in partnership with local and national business support organisations to ensure seamless support services are delivered to businesses and inward investors. We will work to provide quality business accommodation to meet the needs of start-ups, growing companies and inward investors. We will engage actively with local businesses and understand how we can support their plans for growth. We will improve the District's inward investment offer and target prospective investors.	

Key Strategies which support this priority include:

This is our new priority and the emerging Economic Development Strategy is the primary delivery strategy – supported by the Local Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

IV. Our Progress: Effective and efficient

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To make it easy for our customers to get what they need	Develop responsive and flexible ICT Work to manage and share our data efficiently and safely Provide better faster customer services Communicate the right things well Improve efficiency in our delivery

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
We will improve our infrastructure to provide responsive and flexible information and communications technology. We will build a digital platform to ensure the safe and easy use and transfer of our data. We will review our services to provide better access and options for connecting us to our customers. We will improve our communications, engagement and marketing.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
Our elected members and staff are our advocates	Continue to develop and value our elected members and staff
We will continue to value our Members and staff. We will strengthen our internal communications to ensure our Members and staff are able to effectively communicate our ambitions and achievements. We will continue to develop our Members and staff to provide services to customers in new ways in response to our changing world.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To make the best use of our resources	Maximise income from investment Generate new income streams
We will make best use of our resources and make wise investments to realise value from our assets. We will eliminate waste and improve processes through our service reviews. We will review our fees and charges to support our service delivery. We will align our budgets to our corporate priority to focus our revenues on our highest priorities.	

WE WANT	(TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS) WE WILL
To do the right things in the right way	Deliver our plans Continuously improve our delivery Practise good governance
We will continue to review our governance to ensure that we provide efficient public services which recognise the rights of citizens. We will identify areas for improvement in the delivery of our services, manage risk effectively and challenge obstacles to meeting customer need.	

Key strategies and plans which support this priority include:

- The Digital First Strategy (in preparation)
- The Workforce Strategy
- The Medium Term Financial Plan
- The Code of Corporate Governance

Delivery

14. Agreeing our refreshed Corporate Plan is only the first part of the process. Alongside the development of key outcomes and priorities the broad framework of a delivery programme has been developed. This envisages four key programmes of work for areas where the Council has identified the need for specific change and improvement. No organisation should stand still and the Council will continue to strive to improve. The four delivery programme areas are as follow (see also **Appendix A**):

Priority	Delivery Programme	Focus
PLACE	Housing Delivery	Delivering new houses on council owned and private land and providing infrastructure for new housing. Exploring the best way for the Council to provide new homes.
PEOPLE	Stronger Communities	Promote neighbourliness; tackle anti-social behaviour; strengthen community resilience and overcome divides.
PROPERITY	Growth and Prosperity	Supporting businesses; growing the local economy and designing better places with better connections.
PROGRESS	Digital First	Offering digital solutions to meet the expectations of customers and drive efficiency.
Note: There are supporting strategies being developed in key areas which help to further define the Council's ambitions in these areas.		

15. The delivery programme will be managed by the Cabinet through portfolio holders and through the organisation by programme leads. Delivery will be monitored regularly and obstacles to delivery will be overcome quickly. There has to be a realism about the number of change programmes the Council has the capacity to manage in this way. The delivery programme is therefore confined to key step change work identified in the lifetime of the current plan.
16. The other aspects of the plan will continue to be delivered by individual services. This will need to be done through cross-cutting plans which drive activity. For example in the current plan the Homelessness outcomes and ambitions are well articulated and supported by the Homelessness strategy. This has allowed the Council to measure performance and escalate and resolve obstacles to success.
17. Despite the national rise in homelessness Wycombe's performance in managing the number of people presenting as homeless has been strong with a clear focus. Wycombe has been relatively successful in managing the number of people in temporary accommodation when compared to other areas. However the national shortage of housing which is most evident in London and South East and particularly in affordable and social housing has meant there is an ongoing problem. The refreshed plan therefore includes a proposed step change programme of housing delivery.
18. The outcomes and priorities which do not form part of one of the four delivery programmes will continue to be delivered by services working together to deliver cross cutting themes for example in relation to efficiency or making the District attractive and safe.
19. The council will ensure that it manages the taxpayer's money to achieve value for money and demonstrate accountability. The annual Budget ensures services are affordable, the Medium Term Financial Plan sets out the financial framework going forward and individual Financial Appraisals will ensure costs and benefits (qualitative, quantitative and financial) are understood.

Measurement

20. A key task between now and the time when the refreshed plan is approved in February will be the development of a performance management framework which is aligned to the broad outcomes and priorities set out in plan. For those which are not articulated within the specific delivery programmes we will ensure that there are supporting strategies which further articulate the priorities and the actions identified. The performance management framework will support delivery and will also help the Council evidence that it has been successful in progressing key aspects of its ambitions.

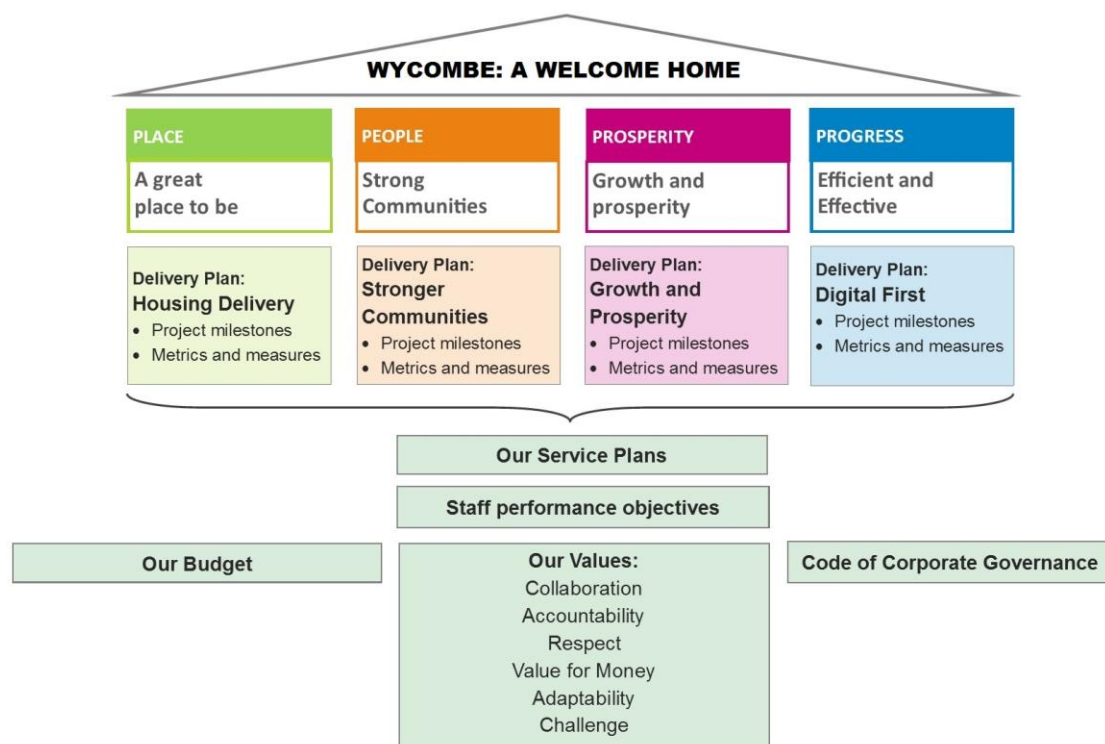
Communication

21. The refreshed Corporate Plan document itself is not an outward facing document. It is the Council's plan it tells all officers and members what we are trying to achieve and what our priorities are. Large private sector businesses who have a Corporate Business Plan which they publish, don't expect their customers to read it before visiting their stores or buying their products. They communicate directly

to the public through advertising and marketing. The Council will need to do the same. Our communication of the Corporate Plan will have its own Communication Plan which will support the communication of the contents through a formal launch but more particularly through the articulation of the plan in a range of articles, documents and digital communications throughout the plan period. It is an ongoing, not one off, task and it will be key to the Council's wider communications.

22. For the organisation the Corporate Plan becomes a plan when everyone understands it and is working to it. To do this it has to be communicated and articulated effectively across the Members and Officers. The development of the plan has involved a debate. However once the plan is set and articulated through the supporting strategies the energy of the Council will be focused on its delivery. The Council's resources will be aligned to the priorities. Setting the delivery programme and the performance management framework will help to ensure that the plan is incorporated into day to day work. This will also be done through service plans and personal reviews.

23. This needs to be supported by Corporate Communication to ensure a consistency in meaning. The communication needs to be easy to understand, accessible and made available in an accessible digital format to engage with members, officers and partners.



Note: The Corporate Plan is the Council's contribution to the Sustainable Community Strategy

Consultation

24. The content of the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 draws on the latest district-wide resident's survey (2014) and data and intelligence drawn together to help inform the development of the joint Modernising Local Government Business Case in January 2017.
25. All Cabinet Members were consulted on these proposals at Leader's Strategic Briefing through June to October. The priorities and outcomes were discussed with the wider Member group at the Member Seminar on the 12 October 2017 and at the Improvement and Review Commission meeting on the 13 September 2017 and 8 November 2017. Key feedback that has informed the refresh can be found at **Appendix B**.

Conclusions

26. This report recommends to Members the broad framework of the Corporate Plan refresh which if approved will allow the completion of the plan, together with the delivery programme, the performance management framework, service plan and the communication plan to support the final document. This will be presented in its final form to Council on 22nd February 2018. A draft of the plan will also be presented to Cabinet 5 February 2018 in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019:

<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/pages/About-the-council/Council-policies/Our-corporate-plan.aspx>

Modernising Local Government Business Case:

<https://www.modernisingbucks.org/our-submission/>

Member Presentation: Corporate Plan Refresh

G:\Corporate Policy\Policy Development and Research\Corporate Plan\2017 Refresh