

Draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028

Cabinet	25 January 2024
Report Author	Hannah Thorpe (Head of Strategy and Transformation)
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Rick Everitt, Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Transformation
Status	For decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Policy Framework
Reasons for Key	N/A
Previously Considered by	Cabinet 19 October 2023, OSP 16 January 2024
Ward:	All

Executive Summary:

The council is updating its Corporate Plan. This is a key document which sets out the high-level priorities for the organisation over the next four years from 2024 to 2028.

The council's current Corporate Statement was adopted in 2019 and has now reached the end of its four year lifespan, in line with the electoral cycle.

This report sets out a proposed new vision statement and five proposed corporate priorities which are:

- To keep our district safe and clean
- To deliver the housing we need
- To protect our environment
- To create a thriving place
- To work efficiently for you

Following Cabinet consideration in October, a seven week consultation was held to allow an opportunity for residents and key stakeholders to comment on the proposals.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel were also invited to review the draft Corporate Plan prior to this meeting when they met on Tuesday 16 January 2024. There were no further suggestions or recommendations arising from the meeting.

Following the Cabinet discussion, the draft Corporate Plan will then be considered at a meeting of full Council in February 2024.

Recommendation(s):

1. That the Cabinet recommends the draft Corporate Plan for final approval at full Council on Thursday 8 February 2024.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

Once implemented, the Corporate Plan will provide the direction of travel for the council over the next four years. The proposed dates for the public consultation, committee review and subsequent implementation align with the council's budget setting process. This is to ensure that the council's budget decisions reflect the council's priorities and in turn the priorities of the local community.

Legal

There is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Corporate Plan. The adoption of a Corporate Plan is however considered to be good practice and it provides a strategic framework for action during the lifetime of the Council. Article 4 of the Council's constitution includes the corporate plan as a policy which should be approved by Full Council.

Since the Corporate Plan is a strategic document there are no particular legal implications arising however policies and plans developed in accordance with the priorities set out in the plan are very likely to require legal input.

The Corporate Plan has been drafted following extensive local engagement and consultation satisfying any public law duty to consult and take into account the results of consultation.

Risk Management

A risk register will be developed and formed as part of the Corporate Plan implementation once approved. This will be a live document which will be monitored and updated throughout the life of the new Corporate Plan.

Corporate

This report proposes the council's new corporate priorities for the period 2024-2028.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- *To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.*
- *To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it*
- *To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.*

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out to support the implementation of the council's new Corporate Plan. It will be included in the report going to Full Council, so that any implications for people with protected characteristics, and the necessary regard to all necessary regard can be given to all equalities considerations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, can be considered by the Council alongside The draft Corporate Plan.

Corporate Priorities

This report proposes new Corporate Priorities for the council, they are:

- To keep our district safe and clean
- To deliver the housing we need
- To protect our environment
- To create a thriving place
- To work efficiently for you

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The council's previous Corporate Statement 2019-2023, was approved by Full Council on 10 October 2019. The plan has now come to the end of its four year cycle and is due for renewal.
- 1.2 The previous plan and core business objectives of growth, environment and communities can be viewed on the [council's website](#).
- 1.3 A Corporate Plan is intended to set out the direction of travel for the council over the next four years by identifying the overarching priorities for the future of Thanet. The plan is essential to help the council work towards achieving its longer-term vision for the district, ensuring resources across the council are focused on what matters most.
- 1.4 Having a clearly defined Corporate Plan provides a focus for the council to plan its work. As well as setting out the higher level aspirations for the district, it should also outline specific activity and projects that the council aims to achieve over the next four years.
- 1.5 The new Corporate Plan will be used as the basis for the creation of new Service Plans. These are the operational plans which will set out how the four year Corporate Plan will be delivered by each council service area. Annual staff appraisals will then be set based on the Service Plans and wider Corporate Plan to ensure that all

members of staff are clear of the important role they provide in helping the council to achieve its aims.

- 1.6 The Corporate Plan is also a way of ensuring that our stakeholders and the wider public are aware of the key work the council is delivering and through regular reporting of our performance, can have an oversight of the progress that we're making. The council's corporate performance indicators will therefore need to be reviewed and refreshed to reflect the new priorities. Progress against these priorities will be available to view at any time on the council's website and will also be monitored by the council's Overview and Scrutiny Panel on a six monthly basis.

2.0 The Current Situation - proposed Corporate Plan

- 2.1 As the previous Corporate Statement has come to an end, the council is now considering a new Corporate Plan which would be in place from 2024 until 2028.
- 2.2 A new Corporate Plan should consider the views of the local community. Our residents provide consistent feedback when it comes to their priorities for the council.

Each year as part of the annual residents' survey, **clean streets, feeling safe and thriving towns** are the areas residents prioritise.

Being **efficient** is consistently the top thing expected from us as a council and **listening** to the concerns of residents is consistently the area where there is least confidence.

Proposed Corporate Plan

- 2.3 On the basis of residents' feedback and the council's own aspirations for Thanet, a draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 has been proposed - this can be viewed in Appendix 1.

The draft Corporate Plan includes a Foreword from the Council Leader, a vision statement, five new priorities and outlines the things the council will deliver to meet each of these priorities. It also states how success will be measured.

- 2.4 The proposed ten year vision statement is as follows:

Thanet: A vibrant coastal resort where communities, businesses and residents thrive, supported by a listening and efficient council. Prosperity is increasing for all, protecting the environment is a common goal and there is pride in our beautiful place.

This is an aspirational statement which sets the longer-term direction for the council. This is not a detailed place-based vision as there is already a detailed vision for the district up to 2031 within the council's Local Plan.

- 2.5 The draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 proposes the following Corporate Priorities for the council over the next four years:

- To keep our district safe and clean
- To deliver the housing we need
- To protect our environment

- To create a thriving place
- To work efficiently for you

2.6 For each of the proposed priorities detailed in paragraph 2.5, a summary explaining what this means has been provided as well as an overview of the key activities, actions and projects that will be delivered within the Corporate Plan period to achieve this.

2.7 For context within the proposed plan there is also key statistical and demographic information provided to set out where we are today. Understanding the current status of the district is also important to consider.

3.0 Consultation approach

3.1 It is good practice to carry out a public consultation before implementing a new Corporate Plan. Ahead of the formal committee discussions, there was an opportunity for the community to comment on the proposed corporate priorities.

3.2 The consultation approach:

- A seven week consultation was held, which was open from Tuesday 14 November 2023 until Tuesday 2 January 2024.
- This consultation exercise linked directly with the annual residents' survey which included questions about residents' priorities and satisfaction with key council services. It also included questions on the proposed budget for 2024-25.
- An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 6,000 randomly selected residents for feedback.
- A wider opportunity for comment was also available via an online survey on our engagement platform: Your Voice Thanet.
- There was an opportunity for residents to request a hard copy of the survey if they preferred. A total of four hard copy surveys were submitted.
- A link to the draft Corporate Plan was shared with key stakeholders, inviting them to comment on the proposed plan and community groups were also encouraged to support the promotion of the survey to people within their networks.
- A staff survey was conducted during this consultation period which included some questions on the Corporate Plan proposals.

4.0 Consultation feedback

4.1 There were 259 responses to the targeted, Annual Residents' Survey.

4.2 Within the survey, respondents were asked about the proposed Corporate Plan. They were asked in general, to what extent they either agreed or disagreed with the proposed ten year vision statement for Thanet, and then with each of the five proposed corporate priorities.

- 4.3 67.5% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with the proposed vision statement. 13.5% stated they neither agree nor disagree and 18.9% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.4 81.1% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with priority one: To keep our district safe and clean. 8.9% stated they neither agree nor disagree and 10% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.5 64.5% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with priority two: To deliver the housing we need. 15.1% neither agree nor disagree and 20.5% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.6 70.7% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with priority three: To protect our environment. 11.6% neither agree nor disagree and 17.7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.7 84.9% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with priority four: To create a thriving place. 7.3% neither agree nor disagree and 7.7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.8 80.3% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with priority five: To work efficiently for you. 12.7% neither agree nor disagree and 7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.
- 4.9 In addition to the targeted survey, there were 299 responses to the open, Your Voice Thanet survey. The trend of responses broadly echoed those of the targeted sample survey.

60.9% agreed with the vision statement
80% agreed with priority one
67.2% agreed with priority two
69.6% agreed with priority three
80.6% agreed with priority four
80.2% agreed with priority five

5.0 Overview and Scrutiny recommendations

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel was invited to review the proposed draft Corporate Plan and to make any recommendations that it would like the Cabinet to take into account when it considers the report.
- 5.2 The panel was supportive of the draft Corporate Plan and had no further observations or recommendations to make.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 To take the draft Corporate Plan to the Full Council meeting on Thursday 8 February 2024 for approval and implementation.
- 6.2 For officers to start the development of revised service plans and to review the Corporate Performance Indicators to ensure they reflect the new Corporate Priorities.

6.3 To launch the new Corporate Plan, supported by a communications plan.

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Reporting to: Colin Carmichael, Chief Executive

Annex List

Annex 1: Draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028

Background Papers

The former Corporate Statement 2019-23 can be viewed on the [council's website](#).

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Chris Blundell, Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer

Legal: Ingrid Brown, Head of Legal and Democracy & Monitoring Officer