

This Report will be made public on 4 April 2024



Report

Number

C/23/105

To: Leader of the Council
Date: 5th April 2024
Status: Non key
Responsible Officer: Ewan Green, Director of Strategy and Resources
Cabinet Member: Councillor Jim Martin, Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF A CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

SUMMARY: This report suggests the formation of cross-party working groups to consider matters relating to the development of a new Corporate Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To form a working group in accordance with the terms of reference shown below.
2. To report the outcome of the work carried out by the Working Group and the updated Corporate Plan to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council in due course.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendations set out a decision taken by the Leader of the Council in line with the constitution.

1. Background

- 1.1 The current Corporate Plan was developed in 2021 and runs until 2030. The intention, stated in the existing Plan, was to review in 2024 and post pandemic. With a new administration, following elections in 2023, it is now appropriate to develop a new Corporate Plan, with the potential to align priorities and themes to the emerging Committee system, and, also to review the current plan, identifying what has been achieved and what is in progress/development/financially committed to.
- 1.2 A Corporate Plan will allow the council's strategic vision, objectives and priorities to be translated into operational action plans (service plans) and individual performance plans and targets. This will help to identify what needs to happen in all service areas to achieve success, what resources will be required for delivery, the outputs and outcomes that are anticipated and any other contributory factors (e.g. what the council is in control of delivering, actions by partner organisations, risks, resource assumptions etc.).
- 1.3 The Member Working Group/Council will need to consider, as part of the budget setting process, how it will allocate resources towards potential new identified priorities and away from the non-priority areas/pre-agreed priority areas.

2. Developing the new Corporate Plan

- 2.1 In order to develop the Corporate Plan it is proposed a Member Working Group is established to steer/input and oversee the progress and development of the plan, ensuring it is inclusive and meeting key dates.
- 2.2 The Group will meet at key points throughout the process to ensure progress is on target, to identify any challenges or risks to keeping development of the plan on track, and to prepare key documents/paperwork for each of the stages.
- 2.3 Establishing the Member Working Group is within the Leader's gift and was announced to full Council on April 3rd to inform all Members. The Member Working Group will be composed as follows:

No of seats	Cons	Green	Labour	Lib Dem	Ind	TOTAL
7	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	7.00

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 3.1 There are no risk management issues directly arising from this report.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER POLICY MATTERS

4.1 Legal Officer Comments (NM)

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. Proposals and actions contained within, and arising from the new Corporate Plan may, where necessary, be the subject of legal advice and support.

4.2 Finance Officer's Comments (OO)

Apart from internal resource time working on the new corporate plan there are no resource implications arising directly from the report. However, the development of a new FHDC Corporate Plan will require an appropriate level of budgetary provision to deliver the projects and proposals included therein. This may necessitate some prioritisation and redeployment of existing budgets and staff.

In this regard, the crucial task for the Members cross-party working groups is to select from the multitude of possible activities and projects (all of which fit within priorities) and agree a focused programme that is deliverable within available financial and staff resources. Such an approach allows for the development of a realistic and deliverable plan that will be reflected within future draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

4.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (EG)

There are no negative equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. The creation of the corporate plan will involve extensive public consultation with a variety of stakeholders in the district in various communicative formats to provide an opportunity for any equality and diversity implications to be highlighted. An equality impact assessment for the new corporate plan should be undertaken early on in its development to assess any impacts to those with protected characteristics (EG).

4.4 Climate Change (EG)

There are no climate implications arising from this report.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Ewan Green, Director of Strategy and Resources
Telephone: 07783 659864
Email: ewan.green@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendix Terms of Reference

Appendix: Terms of Reference: Members Working Group

Corporate Plan Working Group Terms of Reference and Rules

The Working Group within these terms of reference will consider matters relating to the formulation of the Council's Corporate Plan 2024.

1. Objectives

- To guide and provide strategic direction to the drawing up of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- To advise on how best to engage residents, businesses and stakeholders in the process.
- To consider the views of third parties to the Council's proposals.
- To keep councillors informed about progress on the development of the Plan.

2. Membership

Seven members composed as follows:

No of seats	Cons	Green	Labour	Lib Dem	Ind	TOTAL
7	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	7.00

The chairman of the Working Group will be the Leader of the Council. If the chairman is not present at any particular meeting a chairman shall be elected for that meeting.

The group will be supported by the Corporate Leadership Team and a Corporate Plan Officer Group.

3. Authority

The Working Group is advisory and has no decision making powers. Officers will make the views of the group known to both cabinet and the overview and scrutiny committee through the formal decision-making processes.

4. Accountability

The Working Group shall report to the Cabinet.

5. Methods of working

Members of the Working Group are expected to work co-operatively and come to conclusions that are agreed by the group.

Formal votes should therefore be rare with decision of the Working Group taken by general consent.

6. Meetings

The access to information procedure rules in the constitution do not apply. However, members should receive any papers for the meetings in sufficient time for them to prepare for the meeting. There is a presumption that papers will be distributed electronically.

Proper records of the deliberations of the Working Group will be kept.

Three members of the Working Group must be present for the meeting to proceed.

7. Frequency of Meetings

The frequency of meetings will be informed by the key stages in the development of the Corporate Plan.

8. Confidentially

Those present will keep the discussions of the Working Group confidential unless the Working Group decides otherwise. The relationship between the Working Group and the media should follow the council's communications protocol at all times.

9. Overview and Scrutiny

A Councillor who is on the Working Group shall not sit on the overview and scrutiny committee when it is scrutinising a decision made by the executive after receiving a report of the Working Group on which the Councillor sits.

11. Freedom of information / Environmental Information Regulations

The papers and notes/minutes of a Working Group will be the subject of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and will be documents that the public may have unless an exemption or exception applies.

12. Interests

Councillors should treat the Working Group as a formal meeting of the council for the purpose of the declarations of any interests and withdrawal from the meeting.