

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Managing Director

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Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023

Executive Summary

We invited the Local Government Association to undertake a corporate peer challenge of the Council in December 2017. The final report on the outcome of this review was very positive and was well received by the Executive and Management Team. A number of useful recommendations were also made on suggested improvements, with one key area for us to consider being prioritisation within our Corporate Plan.

Since the peer challenge, we have undertaken consultation with residents, partners and other interested parties to help inform our future priorities. We have also held workshops for councillors and senior officers to help shape the content of a new plan.

Following this consultation and a review of existing activities and future challenges, this report presents a proposed new Corporate Plan for adoption by the Council.

Recommendation to Executive

The Executive is asked to recommend to Council (15 May 2018) that the proposed new Corporate Plan 2018-2023, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be adopted.

Reason for Recommendation:

The proposed new Corporate Plan has been prepared to set out the Council's priorities for the period up to 2023.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents a new Corporate Plan, attached as Appendix 1, for the period 2018-2013 for adoption by the Council.

2. Strategic Priorities

2.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic framework and priorities for the next five years. The priorities and associated projects are fundamental to ensuring that the Council manages its business and resources effectively. They

will also ensure that our activities continue to be aligned to the issues that matter most to local people.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) offers corporate peer challenges as a way for councils to improve. They are not compulsory, but they are encouraged and seen as best practice. The main areas of focus are our understanding of our borough and priority setting, leadership, financial planning and viability, organisational leadership and governance and capacity to deliver.
- 3.2 We invited the LGA to undertake a peer challenge of the Council and this was undertaken in December 2017. The LGA team reviewed key financial information and other relevant documentation and held meetings with political leaders, portfolio holders, councillors, senior managers, partners and other stakeholders.
- 3.3 The final report on the outcome of the corporate peer challenge was received in February 2018. The report was very positive highlighting issues such as our track record of delivering high quality public services, our healthy financial position, good standards of governance, strong leadership and the commitment of councillors and staff.
- 3.4 The report also made a number of useful suggestions on possible improvements for us to consider. We are now preparing an action plan to address the recommendations and its implementation will be overseen by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5 One of the main suggestions in the LGA report was that we should adopt a new Corporate Plan with greater focus and fewer priorities. We have taken this forward and undertaken consultation with residents, partners and other interested parties to help inform our future priorities. The results are set out fully in Appendix 2 to this report. We have also held workshops for councillors and senior officers to help shape the content of the new plan.
- 3.6 Taking the consultation results into account, together with a review of our existing activities, political direction and an assessment of the challenges facing us, we are proposing that the new Corporate Plan should include nine priorities under three fundamental themes (Place-making, Community and Innovation) as follows:

Place-making - Delivering the Guildford Borough Local Plan and providing the range of housing that people need, particularly affordable homes

Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier

Regenerating and improving Guildford town centre and other urban areas

Community - Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community

Protecting our environment

Enhancing sporting, cultural, community and recreational facilities

Innovation - Encouraging sustainable and proportionate economic growth to help provide the prosperity and employment that people need

Creating smart places infrastructure in Guildford

Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services

3.7 The proposed plan also identifies the key projects that will contribute towards delivering our priorities, with more information given on these and other projects in the accompanying action plan.

4. Consultations

4.1 The results of our consultation exercise are set out in Appendix 2 to this report. The outcome of councillor and senior officer workshops, together with liaison with the Leader, Lead Councillors, Corporate Management Team and other senior officers, are also reflected in the proposed new Corporate Plan.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 The Corporate Plan is considered to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) and to support the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement. The themes and many of the projects set out in the plan will advance equality of opportunity.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. There will be financial implications to deliver the projects outlined in the action plan. However, the Corporate Plan will link to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, helping to define and prioritise the resources required to deliver these projects and actions through the business planning processes.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report. The Corporate Plan is not a legal requirement but is essential in setting out the Council's overarching strategic framework and priorities.

8. Human Resource Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Summary of Options

9.1 The existing Corporate Plan adopted by the Council in October 2015 and revised in July 2016 could remain unchanged. However, we have taken the opportunity to produce a newly prioritised plan in line with the recommendations of the LGA corporate peer challenge.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Having reviewed our existing priorities and activities, assessed the challenges facing us and taken into account the views of residents, councillors, staff and other interested parties, this report presents a new Corporate Plan to guide our decisions and provide a focus for our work over the next five years.

11. Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2015-2020
Report to Executive: 19 July 2016

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: New Corporate Plan 2018-2023
Appendix 2: SMSR report on public consultation outcome