

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 6 July 2020

Report author: Donna Nolan – Managing Director
Kathryn Robson – Group Head of Strategy and Communications

Title: Council Plan – 2020-2024 / Delivery Plan – 2020-22

1.0 Summary

1.1 The Council Plan 2020-2024 is presented to Cabinet as part of a framework developed to ensure an integrated approach to addressing the challenges of the post COVID-19 era. The framework includes:

- The Council Plan, which has been developed to reflect ambitions and commitments relevant to our community, businesses, visitors and workforce post COVID-19, ensuring a successful, resilient future.
- The 'Our Road to Renewal' Plan, which has been developed to deliver a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to the revival of the town and the Council.
- An Organisational Development Strategy, which has been developed by our learning over the past few months and shapes a new approach to supporting our staff and the operations of the organisation.
- A recast Budget for 2020/21 which reflects income falls and the alignment of resource to delivery of the commitments contained within the Council Plan, ensuring that our limited resources are directed to areas most important to our community, businesses and our staff.

1.2 This report is specifically to present the Council Plan 2020-2024 to Cabinet for approval, and recommendation to the Full Council on 14 July 2020. The Council Plan sets the future direction for the Council and how we will achieve our ambitions and commitments.

1.3 The report also presents our Delivery Plan 2020-22, which underpins the Council Plan as it sets out our programme of work for the next two years and, therefore, how we will measure our achievements.

1.4 The successful delivery of the commitments in the Council Plan 2020-24 is critical to the Council's success and to ensuring that we are focused on what is important to the town and our residents. The report proposes regular monitoring of the Plan and

Delivery Plan, with quarterly reports to Cabinet and an annual report to our community on our progress and achievements.

- 1.5 The report also provides an update on the realignment of the senior management team to ensure focus on the delivery of the commitments contained within the Council Plan 202-24. Additionally, it presents a proposal regarding the establishment of the new role of Group/Executive Head Assistants, and the establishment of an Executive Programme Management Office.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Failure to agree the Council Plan and Delivery Plan	Potential for the Council to be deflected from what is important to the town and residents. Lack of clear direction for the organisation and staff and failure to set clear expectations for delivery. Lack of clarity for residents, our community and partners on the Council's future direction, ambitions and priority areas of work.	A plan based on intelligence and engagement. Clear timetable and sign off processes	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4
Failure to identify key themes and commitments in the Council Plan and associated	Failure to respond to what is important to the town and residents and to focus on less important areas of work.	A plan based on intelligence and engagement. Clear timetable and sign off processes	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4

Delivery Plan actions / areas of work	<p>Lack of clarity on priorities.</p> <p>Resources not allocated to the right areas that deliver our ambitions and what is important.</p> <p>Potential for the Council to be deflected by non-priority areas</p> <p>The plans fail to drive the Council forward.</p>			
Failure to link the Council Plan and Delivery Plan to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial planning effectively.	Risk of insufficient financial resourcing for areas of work identified.	Early engagement and discussions so the links are established and agreed	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4
Failure to identify the staff resources needed to deliver the plans	Risk of insufficient staff resource or lack of skills / experience in key areas	Early engagement with the development of the OD Strategy so the OD Strategy clearly links and supports delivery		4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4
Failure to identify dependencies	Risk to delivery / slippage	Early understanding across the	Treat	3 (severity) x 2

between areas of work effectively		organisation of where work requires support from a number of teams to allow this to be built into service business plans.		(likelihood) = 6
Slippage on delivery	Failure to deliver our commitments resulting in poorer outcomes for our town and residents. Potential impact on the reputation of the Council.	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet Robust project and programme management	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4

3.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 3.1 Approve the Council Plan 2020-2024, at appendix 1 to this report and recommend it (subject to any amendments) to Council.
- 3.2 Approve the Delivery Plan 2020-2022, at appendix 2 to this report.
- 3.3 Recommend to Council that the Managing Director be authorised to make minor amendments to the Council Plan 2020-2024 in consultation with the Elected Mayor.
- 3.4 That the Managing Director be authorised to make minor amendments to the Delivery Plan 2020-2022 in consultation with the Elected Mayor
- 3.5 Note that progress on delivering the Council Plan 2020-2024 will be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet, with an annual report being published.
- 3.6 Note the actions outlined in this report that will contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2024.
- 3.7 Agree the establishment of the new role of Executive/Group Head Assistant.

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4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan covers the period 2020-21. As with previous plans, it focuses primarily on a one year period, with a significant emphasis on external projects and areas of work. Whilst corporate plans have always been published, they have tended to be more internal working documents rather than providing a strong and compelling narrative for our residents, businesses partners, community and staff. Additionally, the current plan was published as COVID-19 impacted and, therefore, does not tell the story of Watford and the Council's response to the pandemic and how we will steer the town and the organisation through current challenging times to a successful, resilient future.

4.2 The new Council Plan, which covers the period 2020 – 2024, is designed to be strategic, high level and outward-facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. It describes the Council's post COVID-19 era to the workforce, our communities and our partners by resetting our strategic commitments.

4.3 The New Council Plan – Overview

4.4 The Council Plan 2020-24 outlines the Council's strategic themes and commitments. It acts as a key part of the Council's 'golden thread', setting the overarching strategic basis for all of the Council's other strategies and policies, including the budget and Organisational Development (OD) Strategy.

4.5 The new Council Plan enables the Council's leadership to demonstrate, and assert, its aspirations and priorities for both Watford Borough Council and the town it serves. It is designed to be forward-looking, high level and outward-facing with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. The plan has been developed to provide the Council with an opportunity to further demonstrate its role as a leader of place, and show its strategic and operational excellence.

4.6 By resetting our strategic commitments, the new Council Plan reflects the Council's post COVID-19 era to the workforce, our community and our partners. The new Plan will guide us over the next four years through this renewed strategic

focus. It will mean that we can ensure our limited resources are directed on the areas most important to our community, businesses and our staff.

4.7 The Plan is underpinned by a range of information, intelligence and data including: the Elected Mayor's manifesto pledges, the Local Government Peer Review in 2017; outcomes of community and staff surveys; and feedback following engagement with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

4.8 The Plan has been developed around three key objectives:

- What we are trying to achieve - our themes
- What we are going to focus on over the next four years - our commitments
- How we will go about our work - our principles.

4.9 The proposed themes are as follows:

- A Council that serves our residents
- A thriving, diverse and creative town
- A healthy and happy town

4.10 The delivery of these themes will be underpinned by the proposed principles of excellence; promotion; impact; enterprise; leadership and caring.

4.11 As the plan is outward facing and a clear statement of the Council's intentions over the next four years, it has been designed to mirror a bold new approach, with a fresh design that is built on the Council's corporate identity (the bold shield). Elements from the shield have been woven through the design including the hart of Hertfordshire, the shells from the Earl of Clarendon's coat of arms and the colour blue to represent the 'ford' in Watford .

4.12 Delivering the Council Plan – Delivery Plan

4.13 The Delivery Plan at Appendix 2 shows how the Council will focus our work to bring the Council Plan to life, making sure we deliver what we said we would over the next 18 months.

4.14 Under each theme and commitment, we set out our key priority areas of actions, which we are focused on achieving by 2022. The Delivery Plan will be monitored and a report on progress will be reported to Cabinet quarterly, and, annually, we

will prepare a report for residents, businesses and partners.

4.15 In this time of great uncertainty, the approach of focusing on delivery over a period of 18 months, with regular reports to Cabinet means that the Council can be flexible and agile to respond to emerging and future challenges and opportunities. The initial Delivery Plan has a steadfast focus on the work to support our community, businesses and staff as they recover from COVID-19. Therefore the Delivery Plan is intrinsically linked with the Council's 'Our Road to Renewal' Plan which is also presented to Cabinet as part of the agenda for 6 July 2020.

4.16 Delivering the Council Plan – Budget

4.17 This year has presented us with unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council is now unable to proceed with the budget planned for 2020/21 and at item 7 is a reset budget. The reset budget has been developed cognisant of the commitments contained within the new Council Plan and, in particular, those activities that will stimulate our economy and help our town recover from the pandemic. In the current dynamic environment the Council's budget will be kept under review in line with the quarterly reviews of the Delivery Plan.

4.18 Delivering the Council Plan - Realignment of the Senior Management Team

4.19 Due to the exceptional circumstances relating to the challenges of COVID-19, a realignment of some roles in the senior management team has been required in order to provide more clarity on responsibilities, embed the approach of continuous improvement and to meet the commitments of the new Council Plan and the Organisational Development Strategy. As a result Head of HR will have a greater focus on Organisational Development and the role title has changed to reflect this, namely Executive Head of HR & Organisational Development. Whilst the Head of Strategy and Communication, will be retitled the Executive Head of Strategy and Communications, to emphasise the importance of the role in supporting the delivery of the Council's strategic direction.

4.20 The modifications have been made in order for the Managing Director to be able to work even more closely with key managers to develop and deliver the commitments in the Council Plan.

4.21 A revised structure plan is being prepared to reflect this approach. It will show how the Council's senior leaders will operate as one team, ensuring a strategic focus on the Council Plan and the successful delivery of our commitments through the Delivery Plan. The approach will ensure that all senior leaders will be more agile and resilient, in order for the Council to recover quickly from the impact of COVID-19, and to enable the delivery of our commitments to support the economy and

our communities as they recover and look forward.

4.22 Delivering the Council Plan – an Executive Project Management Office

4.23 A key change to ensure the successful delivery of the Council Plan is the establishment of an Executive Project Management Office (EMPO). The EMPO (comprising members of the PMO) is a small team that will centrally co-ordinate and manage all projects and initiatives contributing to the delivery of the Council Plan. The EMPO will operate at a strategic level and provide Council wide support on governance, project portfolio management best practices, mentoring, tools and standardized processes. The EMPO will ensure strategic alignment between the commitments contained within the Council Plan and projects executed. The EMPO will report to the Managing Director.

4.24 Delivering the Council Plan – Group/Executive Head Assistant roles

4.25 In alignment with the objectives of the Organisational Development Plan, and to ensure that the Group and Executive Heads are strategically focused, 5 new roles of Group and Executive Head Assistants (GEHA) are proposed, which will involve current staff undertaking work one day a week to assist the Group Heads and Executive Heads whilst continuing in their existing substantive role

4.26 The GEHA will have a high level of autonomy and will be responsible for supporting the management of a diverse range of services and/or leading initiatives and projects. This opportunity will help develop staff who possess the potential and aspiration to fulfil a future senior management role and will aid the development of leadership competencies within a supportive environment, whilst contributing to succession planning across the council.

4.27 The opportunity is not a substantive position and will not be offered on a secondment or acting-up basis. The opportunity will be rotational and offered for a 12 month period. The initial cohort of GEHAs will be appointed following a competitive process.

4.28 Delivering the Council Plan – Supporting our People

4.29 The work undertaken by Council staff in responding to COVID-19 has been immense. All staff have worked at pace through complex, challenging and difficult decisions, developed new ways of working and delivered great change. Staff are the Council's greatest asset and to support and equip them to be their very best an OD Strategy has been developed.

4.30 This OD Strategy is at item number 6 on this Cabinet agenda and is recommended for approval by Cabinet.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that considerations of the Council's budget position is outlined in paragraph 4.16 of this report, setting out that, as a result of COVID-19 and the financial pressures this has placed on the Council, the Council is proposing recasting its budget. This is for Cabinet's consideration as agenda item 7.

Whilst the Council's budget underpins the whole of the Council Plan and Delivery Plan, the importance is recognised under the theme 'A Council that serves our residents' with the related commitment: 'Focus our budget to deliver on our commitments and secure investment to work for Watford'.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the Council Plan is one of the policy framework documents listed in the constitution that has to be approved by Council. The plan will be presented to Council on 14 July.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

- 5.3.1 The Council Plan is informed by the Watford context, including an understanding of the demographic make-up of the borough's community and feedback from local people on the issues that are important to them. An overall equality impact analysis has been undertaken on the Council Plan (Appendix 3) and impact analyses will be undertaken on specific projects/programmes where relevant.

The equality impact analysis takes into account that under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the Council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

Having had regard to the Council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 The Council Plan sets the Council's strategic direction, and is, therefore, a key document for our staff, enabling them to understand our commitments and priorities and allowing them to contribute fully to our success and achievements. As the overarching plan for the Council, it provides the framework for all our strategies and policies and links, through the Delivery Plan, to service business plans and individual staff objectives and outcomes.

The principles demonstrate how we go about our work and are an important guide for staff on the Council's expectations recognising it is not just what we deliver but how we deliver that is a measure of our organisational culture.

This report, in paragraphs 4.28-4.30, explains how the Council Plan and Delivery Plan will be supported by a new OD Strategy Staff to support and equip them to be their very best.

5.5 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.5.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to give due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on crime and disorder in its area and to do all it reasonably can to prevent these. Our theme: A happy and healthy town, underpins our commitment to 'Work even more closely with the voluntary and community sector, to build a resilient community where people support each other' and the associated action to 'ensure a safer Watford;' by working with partners and using our statutory powers.

5.6 Sustainability

5.6.1 The Council's commitment to sustainability runs through the Council Plan and a range of actions to deliver our climate change commitments are identified within the Delivery Plan. These range from pushing forward with delivering greener ways to travel in Watford to promoting Watford's transition to a low-carbon economy.

Appendices

Appendix 1:	Watford Borough Council:	Council Plan 2020-24
Appendix 2:	Watford Borough Council:	Delivery Plan 2020-22
Appendix 3:	Watford Borough Council:	Council Plan 2020- 24 – equality impact analysis

Background papers

Watford Borough Council: Corporate Plan 2019/20