

DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN

Council – 14 November 2023

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee – 26 September 2023
- Cabinet – 9 November 2023

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Julia Thornton

Contact Officer: Lee Banks, Ext. 7161

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That, subject to final design and associated amendments, that Council is recommended to adopt the Council Plan

Recommendation to Council:

That, subject to final design and associated amendments, the Council Plan is adopted.

Reason for recommendation: To ensure Members' views on the Council Plan are sought and considered before it is recommended for adoption by Council.

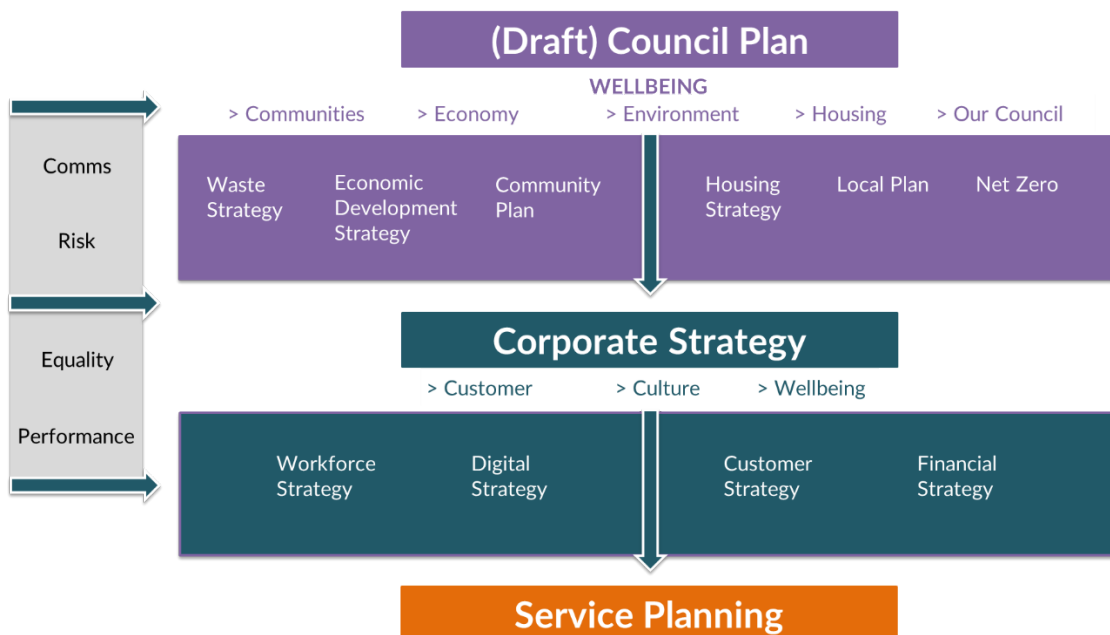
Introduction and Background

- 1 As part of the council's policy framework, the Council Plan aims to provide clarity about the council's priorities and what it will aim to deliver for its residents, businesses and local communities.
- 2 Following the May 2023 elections, the Leader of the Council and her Cabinet have worked to draft the Council Plan setting out their priorities for the coming years. At draft stage, Members consideration of the draft Council Plan and their comments and contributions were welcomed through the Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee.

The Draft Council Plan

- 3 The Council Plan is a key document in directing the work and resources of the Council. Once adopted, it is the commitments in the Council Plan that other strategies, policies and initiatives are aligned with as far as possible, to ensure that the priorities that Members determine for the District are at the forefront of the council's work. This is illustrated in the image below.

Council Planning Framework



- 4 The draft Council Plan is provided as Appendix A in plain text form for Member's consideration.
- 5 Following an introduction from the Leader of the Council, the draft Plan highlights the importance of wellbeing and its influence over the council's approach to its work, before taking a brief look back. The look back explains some of the council's achievements during a challenging period which included the height of the Covid pandemic, national and international political challenges and challenges within the UK economy.

- 6 This is followed by a short section, 'looking ahead', which highlights some of the challenges facing local government and Sevenoaks District Council.
- 7 Through the work of the Leader and her Cabinet, the proposed priorities for the Council are explained. In alphabetical order these priorities are:
 - Communities
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Housing
 - Our Council
- 8 On the pages that follow, each Portfolio Holder sets out the services within their portfolio and the contribution they make to deliver the priorities set out above. Within each of the Portfolio Holder sections promises are made. These are proposed actions that the council should seek to deliver.
- 9 The draft Council Plan concludes by committing to annual progress reports, including a review of the council's priorities and promises to ensure that they remain the right ones as the needs of our residents and businesses change.
- 10 Member's views, comments and contributions on the draft Council Plan are welcomed.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

None. The Council Plan forms a part of the council's Policy Framework and is required in order to set and give clarity about the priorities, actions and initiatives that Members wish to deliver for the District.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations associated with this report. The resources required to deliver the promises and actions arising from the Council Plan are established through the annual budget setting process.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications or risk arising from the recommendations for this report.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this report have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users. Any equalities impacts arising from the promises or actions set out in the Council Plan will be evaluated in full as part of the decision making processes for individual proposals.

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

Any net zero implications arising from the promises or actions set out in the Council Plan will be evaluated in full as part of the decision making processes for individual proposals.

Conclusions

Following the May 2023 elections, the Leader of the Council and her Cabinet have worked to draft the Council Plan setting out their priorities for the coming years.

As the Plan is developed, Members' views have been welcomed on the content to inform both further review of the Plan and the decisions of Cabinet and Council as the Council Plan progresses to adoption.

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Council Plan

Background Papers

Previous Council Plan - www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/548/council_plan

Dr Pav Ramewal

Chief Executive