

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE BOARD

26 APRIL 2022

CORPORATE PLAN

Summary

1. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on development of the Corporate Plan 2022-27. This is a refresh of the existing Corporate Plan and its four key themes of Open for Business, Children and Families, The Environment and Health and Wellbeing.
2. The Draft Plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council's (the Council) Corporate Plan, 'Shaping Worcestershire's Future 2017-2022', is due to be refreshed. This document has provided a blueprint for the organisation, setting out the core priorities and guiding how the organisation will operate, both internally and with partners across Worcestershire and beyond. It has focused the work on four key priority areas:

- Open for Business
- Children and Families
- The Environment
- Health and Wellbeing

3. The four priority areas have become the bedrock by which the Council does business across the County and has delivered key pieces of work which are important to the people of Worcestershire.

4. Over the last five years, the Council has truly become Open for Business, unlocking key strategic sites at Worcester Six, Malvern Hills Science Park and Redditch Gateway whilst growing the county's economy and providing jobs and opportunities for residents. The delivery of Worcestershire Parkway Station has opened up accessibility regionally and nationally for residents and businesses.

5. Children and Families is at the heart of what the Council does, in recognition of the importance in having a great start in life. The Council has invested in the school estate, providing good-quality educational facilities. Support has been provided to families and investment made in children's social care to protect at risk children where necessary.

6. Delivering growth in a sustainable way has been key to preserving Worcestershire's Environment. The Council has invested in all modes of transport to provide accessibility for businesses, including easing congestion on roads and delivering sustainable and active travel options. The waste to energy plant has also helped to power homes and businesses through waste that could not be recycled.

7. The work to improve the Health and Wellbeing across Worcestershire has seen ever closer working and integration with the NHS and other care providers to ensure people are provided the best, and most cost effective, service. The Council has adopted a preventative model, aimed at empowering people to live longer, healthier lives in their own homes for as long as possible. It is known that this approach has the best outcomes for residents and helps to manage the Council's resources to intervene where critically necessary.

8. Through regular engagement with residents, business and partners, it is known that the four themes set out in the previous plan cover the key areas that people want to see the Council deliver on, and the Council is committed to continuing its strong progress against each area. As such, the Corporate Plan 2022-27 is a refresh of the previous plan, with these areas continuing to be the four pillars by which the Council does business.

9. The refreshed document recognises the significant progress made over the past five years, across all four of the priority areas, and now sets out the plan to deliver for the future. The content of the plan has been updated, setting out the focus to ensure Worcestershire continues to be a thriving County for all.

Open for Business

10. Open for Business will see an expansion to the key strategic sites to deliver more highly skilled jobs and support further business expansion. Alongside this, the Council will continue to invest in unlocking growth at key transport sites including Shrub Hill and Redditch Railway Stations, support partners and deliver further digital connectivity through the provision of gigabit broadband. The Council will also support partners around plans for Future High Street Fund, Towns Fund and Levelling Up proposals.

Children and Families

11. The continued investment into Children and Families will aim to see children's services rated as 'Good', recognising the significant journey of improvement. The Council will continue to invest in the school estate, including the delivery of a new secondary school and extra places to keep pace with development.

Environment

12. The role of the Council is to help preserve and protect the Environment for future generations. The Council has now agreed a Net Zero plan which will focus efforts to reduce the environmental impact even further whilst still enabling the delivery of sustainable growth alongside maintaining a top-quartile quality for roads and pavements. The Council will continue to invest in environmental measures that protect natural environment, enhance our biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.

Health and Wellbeing

13. Ensuring good Health and Wellbeing for Worcestershire residents remains a key priority. The Council will work closely with residents and communities to encourage active lifestyles, enabling people to live longer, healthier and happier lives. The Council's work with the NHS and other care partners through the Integrated Care System will help co-ordinate services and ensure residents receive the right care at the right time to meet their needs.

The Council's Journey

14. To deliver against the Council's priorities, the journey to reshape the Council alongside communities and with partners continues. In response to the pandemic, the Council has become an innovative, forward-thinking and flexible organisation. It is intended that work will continue to harness the benefits and efficiencies of working flexibly, reducing the Council's footprint, connecting employees more closely and with the communities and partners it works with.

15. The Council is committed to working closely with its communities, to build local capacity and allow people to be supported in their area. The Here2Help programme is being expanded to provide a single front door of advice and guidance for people, whilst working with voluntary and community groups to strengthen local support.

16. All of this work sits within the 'One Worcestershire' approach to co-ordinating work, investment and priorities across the county. The Council seeks to adopt new ways of working, including co-location and shared services, to embrace a joined-up approach to service delivery that best meets local needs and removes barriers between organisations. The Council also communicates regularly with partners in all of the things it does, to ensure that services do not simply move demand to another organisation – and instead works together to resolve issues as 'One Worcestershire'.

17. The refreshed Corporate Plan ensures that the Council builds on the successes already delivered across the county and looks to focus its efforts on the key areas that matter to communities, businesses and partners.

Purpose of the Meeting

18. The Board is asked to consider the refreshed Corporate Plan 2022-27 and provide comments to the Leader which can then be considered as part of the Council discussion of the Plan on 19 May 2022. The Board may also wish determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.
