

| Bath & North East Somerset Council | |
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| MEETING: | Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel |
| MEETING: | 30th September 2019 |
| TITLE: | Corporate Strategy Framework |
| WARD: | All |
| AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM | |
| List of attachments to this report: None | |

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report is an opportunity to engage the Panel prior to further development of the Council's new Corporate Strategy.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Comment on the emerging strategic themes, process and approach for the new Corporate Strategy, particularly in those areas relating to the Climate Emergency theme
- 2.2 Consider the role of this PDS Panel in feeding into the new Corporate Strategy framework and providing policy development, scrutiny and review of its implementation

3 THE REPORT

Background

- 3.1 The Corporate Strategy is the Council's overarching strategic planning document, articulating the organisation's key aims and ambitions and guiding our activities and budget decisions.
- 3.2 The current Corporate Strategy, adopted in 2016, sets out the strategic direction for the Council to March 31st 2020. More recently, the Council published an Organisational Plan for 2019/20 and has adopted new Organisational Values to underpin this and is developing a People Strategy to help with culture development, workforce planning and skills and training for staff.
- 3.3 The election of a new Council in May of this year, and the subsequent appointment of a new Leader of Council and Cabinet, now provides an

opportunity for the creation of a new Corporate Strategy to reflect these changes. This will set out the new Council and Cabinet's priorities and focus for the next 4 years, guiding decision-making, business planning and resource allocation over that period.

Emerging Corporate Strategy

3.4 Four key themes are emerging as the new Corporate Strategy develops:

(1) Addressing the climate emergency

In March 2019, the Council resolved to declare a climate emergency across B&NES. In particular, the Council resolved to

- ✓ Pledge to provide the leadership to enable Bath & North East Somerset to become carbon neutral by 2030;
- ✓ Request that the Cabinet takes steps to identify work streams and budgets with the aim of making B&NES Council carbon neutral by 2030, across all functions, as our contribution to fighting climate change

These council-wide commitments have large and significant impacts on how we operate as an organisation. We need to provide local leadership to enable wide-ranging changes that meet our climate commitments.

In the light of this, a dedicated Cabinet role has been appointed to lead this area of work. In addition, of course, the Council is committed to leading by example to reduce or eliminate our own emissions.

A report is being taken to Council in October outlining work so far, but it is expected that addressing the climate emergency will require significant work with communities, businesses and partners to:

- make low carbon and energy efficient choices
- reduce vehicle pollution and improve public transport
- encourage low carbon developments
- retrofit buildings to improve energy efficiency

This PDS Panel has the key remit for tackling the climate emergency and will wish to consider its role in feeding into this priority area. However, the climate emergency - and the wide-ranging impacts of the issue- require other themes and the work of other panels to be co-ordinated and considered. In the further themes below therefore some key issues for climate emergency are identified for consideration by the panel.

(2) Delivering for local residents

This theme is focused on making sure that we are delivering the services that matter most to local people in the ways that best meet their needs. The strategy will include a number of specific commitments to secure more affordable and social housing, improve the quality of rented housing, tackle

congestion, improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities and deliver cleaner streets.

This theme can act as a key driver for addressing the climate emergency, example through improvements to public transport. However, improvements to the housing stock and building new homes can also contribute significantly. For example, the council's housing company is planning for new homes at Sladebrook Road to be an exemplar for tackling the climate emergency and zero carbon policies. A report entitled Council House Building Programme is presented as a separate item on this agenda.

(3) Focusing on prevention

Given the challenges facing our social care system, the corporate strategy will set out the council's approach to prioritising our preventative services, focusing on timely interventions before a crisis is reached. In reshaping our approach to social care, working closely with the CCG, there are significant opportunities to address the climate emergency whilst also creating warmer homes and tackling fuel poverty, all contributing to the theme of prevention.

(4) Giving people a bigger say

The strategy will set out commitments to engage residents and work with them to shape local services. Given the wide-reaching nature of the climate emergency, a programme of partnership working and local community engagement will be vital, for example, through initiatives such as Citizens Juries.

Timetable

- 3.5 These four themes are currently being refined and will be further developed, linked to the budget being prepared for February 2020. Further engagement will be carried out later in the year as this work progresses, seen in this high level timetable:

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| September | Presentation by Council Leader to Area Forums on administration's approach and emerging priorities Cabinet report setting out Medium Term Financial Strategy and emerging Corporate Strategy |
| September – December | Ongoing work by Council to prepare draft Corporate Strategy and budget options, including presentations to Area Forums on climate emergency |
| December – January | Further engagement on the draft Corporate Strategy and budget proposals, including through the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel process |
| February 2020 | Adoption of Corporate Strategy and budget |

Policy Development and Scrutiny

- 3.6 Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) members have a key role throughout the lifetime of the Corporate Strategy. This includes providing challenge on the priorities to ensure they are reflective of local needs, sharing from successes

and previous experience, and considering the robustness of resource allocation and performance management to ensure delivery on the Strategy's commitments.

- 3.7 As part of this, the Panels may also want to consider the best way to utilise their 'policy development' role and how each Panel can feed into the relevant parts of the Strategy as it develops and is implemented. For instance, this could take the form of specific review work which identifies recommendations for Cabinet on key priority areas. For this Panel, as above, there is a direct remit for the 'Addressing the Climate Emergency' theme. However, also as stated above, the climate emergency theme is a key driver across the entire strategy and the remits of all the Panels.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Corporate Strategy is the Council's overarching strategic plan and forms a key part of the Policy and Budget Framework in the Council's constitution. It is an essential communication tool and will provide a clear framework for officers and members to work within. It will outline the key priorities of the Council and help to guide activity and decision making.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The Corporate Strategy will outline the Council's key priorities over the next 4-5 years. This will form a key consideration in the allocation of Council resources as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 5.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy was presented to Cabinet in September 2019 setting out more detail on the financial context facing the Council and the approach that will be used to inform the annual budget process. Further information on Council budget proposals will be presented later in the year, as set out in the timetable in this report.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations will be undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.1 As stated in the body of the report, addressing the climate emergency and helping to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 has been identified as a key theme for the new administration, in line with Council's declaration of a climate emergency. This is one of the key themes in the strategy and will require a significant cross-organisational and community mobilisation. A report updating on progress is due to be reported to Council in October.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 None

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Cabinet Member for Resources has been consulted on the drafting of this report as well as the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

9.2 As the Corporate Strategy is further developed, a programme of engagement will be undertaken as set out above.

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| Background papers | B&NES Corporate Strategy 2016-20 - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_corporate_strategy_2016-2020.pdf B&NES Organisational Plan 2019-20 - https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s54461/E3106z%20Annex%2010%20Organisational%20Plan%202019-20.pdf |
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