

Committee: **Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **14th March 2024**

Report Subject: **Council’s Corporate Plan 2022/27 Review**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Steve Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member Corporate Overview and Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and Democratic
 Damien McCann, Interim Chief Executive**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	22/02/24	04.03.24			14/03/24		21/03/24	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 For Members of the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider the Council’s revised Corporate Plan 2022/27 and Implementation Plan prior to approval and sign off at Council.
 - 1.2 The Council’s revised Corporate Plan 2022/27 is attached at appendix 1.
 - 1.3 The Council’s Implementation Plan 2023/24 is attached at appendix 2.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 Legislative Requirements
 In order to comply with relevant legislation, the Council is required to produce a Corporate Plan, outlining its intentions for the coming years. The Plan has been written to cover the current 5-year political cycle from 2022 to 2027.
 - 2.2 The Corporate Plan is required to fulfil the requirements as outlined within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
 - 2.3 Blaenau Gwent’s Corporate Plan
 The Corporate Plan 2022/27 sets out an ambitious programme of activity for the Council over the next five years and beyond. The priorities, also referred to as Well-being Objectives, have been developed in order to support communities to thrive. The Corporate Plan is the Council’s commitment to the communities of Blaenau Gwent, to provide modern and high quality services which support economic growth and well-being.
 - 2.4 The Plan outlines four high level priorities, each of which will be underpinned by solid and sustainable business plans, which describe the

activity to be undertaken by each service area of the Council, ensuring the Council can be held to account for what it has promised to deliver.

- 2.5 The four high level priorities are:
- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
 - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
 - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
 - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient
- 2.6 The Council has a responsibility to the people of Blaenau Gwent to help improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. By setting a small number of strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan it will allow efforts to be concentrated on delivery in these areas and ultimately, help to improve the quality of the lives of residents.
- 2.7 The priorities have not been developed in isolation and alignment has also been made to the Marmot Principles (further detail is found in appendix 1) and the priorities from the Gwent Public Service Board Plan (PSB) Well-being Plan.
- 2.8 The Corporate Plan also outlines the Council Vision:
‘Blaenau Gwent – a place that is fair, open and welcoming to all by working with and for our communities’.
- 2.9 A core set of Council Values has also been included within the Plan for all staff and Members to follow:
- Respectful
 - Inclusive
 - Collaborative
 - Accountable
 - Supportive
- 2.10 **Revisions to the Corporate Plan since its approval by Council on 26th October 2022**
- 2.10.1 As part of their review of the Council’s Well-being Objectives, Audit Wales recommended that the Council include detail, as part of the Well-being Statement, of how we developed our Well-being Objectives and plan to implement them moving forward. A new section has been added into the Plan, found on page 7 of appendix 1.
- 2.10.2 As reported in October 2022, there is an ongoing process of gathering a wide-range of information to understand the issues that are most important to people in our area. We have also looked at future trends to make sure we consider the things that will affect how we work in the longer term.

- 2.10.3 It is important that we can demonstrate progress against the Council priorities outlined in the Plan and be held to account against them, therefore an annual implementation plan and suite of Key Performance Indicators, which underpin the priority areas, have been developed and can be found at appendix 2.
- 2.10.4 The Corporate Plan was agreed before the Gwent Well-being Plan, therefore the priority links identified in the original Corporate Plan were draft only. These priorities have now been updated following the approval of the Gwent Well-being Plan in 2023.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1**

Agree the revisions made to the Corporate Plan, outlined in paragraphs 2.10, prior to approval at Council.

3.2 **Option 2**

Make amendments to revisions within the Corporate Plan, for consideration by Council prior to approval.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

- 4.1 The document is the Council's Corporate Plan, setting out the most important areas for implementation in the short to medium term.
- 4.2 The Corporate Plan has been written to align to the priorities as identified in the Gwent Public Service Board Well-being Plan.

Legislative Requirements

- 4.3 The Council is currently under two pieces of legislation:–
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; and
 - Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- 4.4 The Council has specific duties are part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which requires the Council to produce Well-being Objectives and a Well-being Statement. The priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan also act as our Well-being Objectives and the Corporate Plan also acts as our Well-being Statement.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

There is a statutory requirement to have an agreed and published Corporate Plan in place.

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no specific financial implications as a result of the development of this Plan, however, the Corporate Plan priorities will be used as the

basis for budget setting and in allocating resources as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There is a risk that without a clear and published set of Council priorities, governance arrangements; budgetary allocations; service planning and decision making could be adversely affected.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Corporate Plan also meets our statutory legislative obligations. If the Plan were not approved or did not meet the legislative requirements this would be a reputational risk to the Council, potentially resulting in corrective action.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There are no specific staffing or workforce implications as a result of the Plan. The Corporate Plan emphasises the need to work with partners as well as with communities (utilising all available resources) in pursuing the achievement of the Council priorities.

Officers have established robust business plans which support the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

An Implementation Plan for 2023/24 and suite of Key Performance Indicators, which underpin the priority areas, has been developed and included within the revised Plan at pages 11, 13, 15 and 17 of appendix 1.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The Corporate Plan identifies the key areas of activity for the Council over the next five years. These will have direct benefits for the people of Blaenau Gwent.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Engagement remains a key priority for the Council and these proposals are intended to continue this work and ensure that all services are focussed on their customers and communities through strong engagement and communication.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Plan addresses the need to balance short and long term needs within the community and to improve the overall resilience and sustainability of the Council.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Plan aims to work in a preventive way, identifying need before it escalates.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Outcome Statements have been written to identify contributions from across different service areas and this will help us to deliver our 'One Council' approach by working together to deliver better outcomes for our communities.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

The Plan references the need to be clear about the Council's role in the delivery of services now and in the future and how it can work with its communities, partners and businesses to improve the overall well-being of the area.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

The Plan includes specific reference to decarbonisation and prioritising activity around this agenda.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)***

Across Gwent, all councils, including Blaenau Gwent, will work towards becoming a region that aims to tackle and reduce inequalities, based on the Marmot principles (further detail in appendix 1). The Council will work across all public services in the area to ensure that our policies, approaches and resources are geared towards creating a fairer, more equal society for today's residents and future generations. This will be at the centre of how we develop and deliver our services across early years, education and skills, transport, housing, places and spaces, and jobs and businesses. As an anti-poverty council, we will do everything within our power to support people trapped in poverty and those who are most vulnerable. By valuing and promoting good health, education and learning we can help people to reach their full potential. This in turn will contribute to creating better informed and connected communities throughout Blaenau Gwent that are fair, open and welcoming to all, where everyone gets to play an active part.

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no negative impact on the protected characteristics have been identified.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The business planning process is aligned to the Corporate Plan and feeds the information within the Joint Finance and Performance report.

7.2 Progress of the Corporate Plan is highlighted within the Joint Finance and Performance report.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1 Corporate Plan 2022/27*
- *Appendix 2 Implementation Plan and Key Performance Indicators 2023/24*