

Committee: Council

Date of Meeting: **23rd July, 2020**

Report Subject: **Forward Looking Plan - Corporate Plan Refresh 2020/22**

Portfolio Holder: **Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services – Cllr Nigel Daniels**

Report Submitted by: **Michelle Morris, Managing Director**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	28/05/20 (virtual)	8 th July 2020					23/07/20	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with the Corporate Plan 2020/22, reviewed as part of the response and learning to date from COVID 19 and what the Council is aiming to achieve by the end of the Plan in 2022. Planned activity up to 2022 is included within the Forward Looking Corporate Plan, attached at appendix 1.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 Blaenau Gwent's Corporate Plan

In April 2018, Council approved the Corporate Plan which includes the priority areas of the Council covering the four year period 2018/22. All Council planning is aligned to the Corporate Plan.

- 2.2 In order to comply with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the priority areas act as both the Council's Well-being and Improvement Objectives.

2.3 Current Position

As part of the Council's annual Assessment of Performance, written in October 2019, we identified that our ambitious programme of activity was in the early stages of development and implementation.

- 2.4 As part of this we were honest in that we may need to make some changes to the Corporate Plan moving forward.

- 2.5 This has resulted in some amendments being made to the Outcome Statements in order to better demonstrate the contribution different areas across the Council will contribute to achieving them, enhancing our one Council approach. The overall emphasis of each Outcome Statement (Well-being Objective) has not changed.

The global pandemic has also provided the opportunity to consider if everything previously prioritised was still important and if any areas of

- 2.6 importance needed to be highlighted e.g. climate change. At the Executive on 24 June it was agreed that a refresh of our corporate priorities should be undertaken to reflect the impact of the pandemic and ensure the focus of business planning up to 2022 delivers on the outcomes needed to support the community and local economy.
- 2.7 From these considerations, the Corporate Plan 2020/22 Outcome Statements are:
- **Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities**
 - **Support a fairer sustainable economy and community**
 - **To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities**
 - **An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities**
- 2.8 As mentioned above, the supporting activity beneath each outcome statement has not changed and are still aligned to our business planning, monitoring and reporting processes.
- 2.9 There are new areas of activity identified in this refresh including our ambition to become a low carbon Council and Borough; the opportunity to accelerate agile working and the successful deployment of technology to improve how we work and the impact we have, as an organisation, on the environment.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
To include Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CMT/Committees/Other groups)
- 3.1 CLT have undertaken a review of the Corporate Plan 2020/22.
- 3.2.1 **Option 1**
Approval of the Forward Looking Corporate Plan 2020/22 for publication.
- 3.2.2 **Option 2**
Recommend amendments to the Forward Looking Corporate Plan 2020/22 before approval and publication.
4. **Evidence of how does 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 **Legislative Requirements**
- 4.2.1 The Council is currently under two pieces of legislation:–
- Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009; and
 - Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

4.2.2 Both of these legislations have placed separate duties onto Local Authorities:-

- The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. We have a statutory duty to develop Improvement Objectives on an annual basis. Councils are required to set out their planned activity for the coming year and seek approval as soon as practicably possible at the beginning of the financial year.
- The Council's duties have been broadened with the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which requires us to produce Well-being Objectives and a Well-being Statement. The Forward Looking Corporate Plan also acts as our Well-being Statement.

4.2.3 In order to not have two planning documents, the Welsh Government has stated that the Act should not be an additional layer to existing planning activity and therefore we use our Well-being Objectives as our Improvement Objectives.

4.2.4 The Act requires that, each year, the Council must review its Well-being Objectives as part of the arrangements for reporting on them. In doing so, the Council will need to consider whether they are still appropriate or not.

4.2.5 The Forward Looking Plan is subject to review Audit Wales who determines if the Council has met its statutory requirements.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

There is a statutory requirement to have an agreed and published Forward Looking Plan as practically possible after the beginning of the financial year.

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

Work is to be undertaken to align the Medium Term Financial Strategy to the Corporate Plan.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

If the Plan is not approved and published then we will fall foul of our statutory requirements and will be subject to external audit.

5.3 ***Legal***

There are no specific legal implications as a result of the development of this Plan.

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.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

An ongoing process of gathering a wide-range of information to understand the issues that are most important to people in our area has taken place (via programmes of public engagement). We have also looked at future trends to make sure we consider the things that will affect how we work in the longer term.

6.1.2 It is important that we can demonstrate progress against the Council priorities outlined in the Plan and be held to account against them.

6.1.3 The suite of Key Performance Indicators which underpin the priority areas will be reviewed to ensure they show progress of the priority areas moving forward.

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

The Corporate Plan identifies the key areas of activity for the Council over the next two 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 ***EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***
An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no negative impact on the protected characteristics have been identified.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate performance management 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 Forward Looking Corporate Plan 2020/22*