

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: ***C-015-2024/25***

Date of meeting: ***2 September 2024***



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: **Leader**

Subject: **Corporate Plan**

Responsible Officer: **Paula Maginnis / Service Director – Corporate Services
(pmaginnis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)**

Democratic Services Officer: **V Messenger (democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)**

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) The amended Corporate Plan for the period 2023 – 2027 be agreed; and**
- (2) That the Corporate Plan 2023-2027 be recommended to Council to adopt the amendments reflected in Appendix A**

Executive Summary:

The current Corporate Plan was agreed in October 2022 by Cabinet and adopted by Council at their December 2022 meeting. The Corporate Plan is the Council's key document for setting the strategic direction for the Council over the lifespan of the Plan. As such it informs all other plans produced by the Council.

The Corporate Plan is a live document and over the past 12 to 18 months the Council has embarked on a journey of shared services, shared roles and transformational IT system delivery. To bring together future transformational work and shared services, Cabinet, in early 2024, agreed a Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio. The Portfolio of workstreams/projects provides an opportunity for the Council to survive these very challenging financial times for local government, whilst continuing to meet the needs of our residents.

The Corporate Plan has been amended to reflect the Fit for the Future themes agreed by Cabinet, in addition to specific objectives for Housing, Planning and Finance.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Fit for the Future Portfolio is a focused portfolio of transformation work for the Council over the remaining time of the current Corporate Plan. It would be reasonable to expect the Council's highest level strategic document to reflect this emerging body of work to 2027.

Other Options for Action:

Do nothing. However, the Corporate Plan will not be aligned to our strategic aims following adoption of the Fit for the Future Portfolio.

Report:

1. The Corporate Plan is an important element in the Council's performance management framework and corporate business planning processes. It provides a framework for the development of detailed annual service plans which in turn provide details of service provision and how the work by services directly contributes to the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives. The Corporate Plan also provides the policy foundation for the authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and helps in the prioritisation of resources to provide quality services and value for money.
2. The main amendments to the Corporate Plan reflect the Fit for the Future Portfolio of projects and work. The Portfolio includes the following 6 themes of work as agreed by Cabinet in February 2024:

Stronger Communities

- The Digital Customer

Stronger Place

- Waste Services
- Our Assets
- Economic Growth

Stronger Council

- Shared Services & Partnership Working
- Future Workforce

3. In addition to the above there are 2 additional objectives for Housing to reflect the current pressures due to homeless and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures set by the Housing Regulator. Two Planning objectives have also been included to reflect the importance the new government is placing on the Planning decision making process and infrastructure/house building requirements. The Finance objectives remain the same.
4. Each of the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan will be supported by an Action Plan which officers will develop as part of the service planning process starting in September 2024. It is intended that the performance against the Action Plan will be presented to O&S.
5. The Plan does not cover everything that the Council does, focusing instead on a number of key areas it needs to focus on over the lifetime of the plan
6. It is proposed that we continue to provide access, for residents, to the Plan via the website. Should the Plan be required in other formats assistance will be provided to facilitate access to the Plan

Scrutiny Comments

It is intended that the Fit for the Future transformation portfolio will be presented to Scrutiny following further development. It is intended that the Corporate Plan actions will be scrutinised by Overview and Scrutiny at future meetings.

Resource Implications:

The design and production costs of the Plan have been met within existing budgets. A reserve of up to £3million has been agreed to invest in the Council's Fit for the Future Portfolio, however this is contingent on balancing our budget for 2024/25. Any further financial resources required to

deliver objectives/actions will be identified by the responsible Service Director and managed accordingly.

Legal and Governance Implications:

It is prudent for the Council to review the Corporate Plan, amend it to reflect current priorities and provide a way of scrutinising its performance. Any relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives will be identified by the responsible Service Director

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Individual projects will set out specific objectives.

Consultation / Scrutiny Undertaken:

The main amendments to the Corporate Plan are related to the Fit for the Future Portfolio which have previously been agreed by Cabinet.

Background Papers:

Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 – Cabinet 10 October 2022
Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 – Council 20 December 2022
Fit for the Future, EFDC Transformation Portfolio – Cabinet 5 February 2024
Fit for the Future, EFDC Transformation Portfolio, Governance – Cabinet 18 March 2024

Risk Management:

The respective Service Director will identify any risk management issues arising from proposals for their Corporate Plan objectives and mitigated as necessary.

Equality:

Relevant equality implications arising from actions t will be identified by the responsible Service Director.