

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 15 May 2023

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Draft Corporate Strategy 2023-2029</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Leisure and Community
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	All Corporate Objectives Apply

**Purpose:**

The Council's current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2017-2023, so work has been undertaken to prepare a new draft Corporate Strategy. This report summarises how the draft Strategy has been developed and highlights some of the key content revisions.

**Executive summary:**

The Council's Corporate Strategy sets out our Vision and Priorities for the Borough.

It is a key document which influences our medium-term budget planning, day-to-day service delivery and the large-scale projects that we will undertake in the future.

Our current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2017 to 2023, so work has been undertaken to prepare a new draft Corporate Strategy for the next six years, 2023-2029.

The new Strategy has been developed considering: the achievements of the last Strategy; the changing demographics of the Borough; feedback from Council officers and senior managers; and engagement with the Chief Executive's Management Team (CXMT) and Executive Members.

The draft Corporate Strategy is included in Appendix A. If approved, it will undergo a period of public consultation. The draft Strategy and any amendments would then be presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel later this year before being returned to the Executive.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves the draft Corporate Strategy to be circulated for public consultation.

**Reason:**

The Council's current Corporate Strategy expires at the end of 2023, so a new Strategy must be developed.

**Cost of proposals:**

The financial implications of the projects listed under each of the Council's Priorities would need to be reflected in the Council's medium-term financial strategy.

**Appendices:**                   **A: Draft Corporate Strategy 2023-2029**  
   **B: Fareham Demographics**  
   **C: Fareham Achievements**

**Background papers:**   None

**Reference papers:**       None

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## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	15 May 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Corporate Strategy
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Leisure and Community
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This report explains how the draft new Corporate Strategy has been developed, including, a review of the Council's achievements over the last six years, a summary of how the Borough has changed, and how we have engaged with Council officers and members to develop a meaningful new Strategy.

#### WHY THE CORPORATE STRATEGY IS IMPORTANT

2. The Corporate Strategy guides the work of the Council, it influences our medium-term budget planning, our approach to day-to-day service delivery and the large-scale projects we will undertake in the future.
3. The Strategy functions alongside other key documents and strategies, such as our Local Plan, to make up the Council's Strategic Framework. These documents ensure the work of the Council is coordinated, consistent and delivers on our Vision for the Borough.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

4. Over the course of our current Corporate Strategy many notable achievements have been realised. These achievements enable us to look back at the past six years with pride but also encourage us to be ambitious as we prepare our new draft Strategy.
5. It is important to note that, as well as our key projects, consistently delivering high-quality Council services at value for money to our residents is an achievement that should not be overlooked.
6. This was especially evident during the Covid-19 pandemic when essential services continued to be provided throughout multiple national lockdowns. Additional support was also delivered to vulnerable residents, community groups and businesses to help them manage in challenging and unprecedented circumstances.
7. A full compilation of our achievements can be found in Appendix C, however, the

following highlights some of our notable achievements related to key projects.

8. Outline planning permission has been granted for Welborne Garden Village and funding secured for an upgrade to Junction 10 of the M27 motorway. Our Local Plan has been formally adopted following an extensive consultation process and examination by the Government appointed Planning Inspector.
9. Daedalus (Solent Airport and Business Parks) has thrived with exciting developments such as the opening of the £7 million extension to Fareham Innovation Centre and the award-winning Civil Engineering Training Centre (CETC).
10. Two new open spaces, Abbey Meadows and Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park, were opened, accompanied by two destination play areas, unveiling of the striking Daedalus sculpture and a highly popular tree planting scheme.
11. We have taken steps to reduce our impact on the environment and launched our Climate Change Action Plan, working towards our ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.
12. Construction work has begun on the highly anticipated Fareham Live, Arts and Entertainment Venue, which is due to open in 2024; this is a milestone project that will kickstart regeneration and new investment in Fareham town centre.
13. We are proud of all our achievements, especially against the backdrop of reduced government funding. Over the last Strategy period the Council has made £2 million in efficiency savings across the organisation as part of the Opportunities Plan.
14. We should recognise that these achievements have only been realised through a great deal of hard work and commitment from both elected members and officers who have all been determined to do their very best for the local community.

## **CONTEXT OF THE NEW CORPORATE STRATEGY**

15. To create a Strategy that responds to the needs of our residents we first needed to understand who lives in Fareham.
16. When preparing the new draft Corporate Strategy, a review of the statistical data relating to the Borough's population was undertaken.
17. The points below outline the key themes that emerged from the research. A more detailed overview of the research can be found in Appendix B.
  - (a) The Borough's population is increasing but at a slower rate than originally anticipated.
  - (b) The proportion of Fareham residents aged 65 years old and over has increased and remains above the national average.
  - (c) Fareham saw the second largest increase in Hampshire amongst the 85+ year old population since 2011.
  - (d) More people are living alone.
  - (e) Deprivation is low overall, although there are some small areas with relatively high levels.
  - (f) Residents are relatively well educated.

- (g) Housing is expensive when compared to local salaries.
  - (h) Fareham's population is significantly healthier than the national average.
  - (i) The level of diversity within the local community is relatively low but has increased slightly over the last ten years.
18. Being aware of these factors will enable service areas to identify potential areas for improvement when providing day-to-day services. It will also aid the planning and development of key projects. For example, ensuring there is sufficient provision of sheltered housing schemes for elderly residents and identifying communities that may benefit from increased investment.
19. Another factor that must be considered when considering potential Council projects is the consistent reduction in government funding. This has placed increased pressure on Council services. During the development of the new draft Strategy officers have worked closely with senior managers to develop a set of projects that are both ambitious and realistic.

### **DEVELOPING THE DRAFT STRATEGY**

20. The Corporate Strategy guides the work of the Council therefore, it is important that it evolves with the organisation and that the views and values of staff are reflected in the document.
21. CXMT and the Council's Executive have been closely involved with the preparation of the new draft Strategy. This is in addition to an all-staff survey and senior managers' workshop.
22. The feedback received across all staff engagement activities has influenced the new draft Strategy, the key themes of which have been included in the sections below.

### **VISION AND VALUES**

23. While the focus of the Corporate Strategy is often the projects listed under the Council's Priorities, the Strategy also contains the Council's Vision and Values which respectively guide what we do and how we do it.
24. Our Vision sets out the Council's overall goal for the Borough. Staff suggested that our current Vision statement could be shortened to provide a more memorable, concise statement that summarises what we are all working towards.
25. The new proposed Vision is:
- (j) We will provide high quality, customer focused services that deliver value for money. Our work will help ensure Fareham remains a prosperous, attractive and safe place to be.
26. Our Values guide the approach of Council employees and elected members.
27. While the character of our existing Values has been retained, staff suggested that we could use more 'doing words' so that all staff and members can apply them to their day-to-day work.
28. Our new proposed Values are:
- (a) Openness - listening to our customers, while being open and transparent in

our decision making

- (b) Commitment - striving to meet the needs of our customers
- (c) Leadership - embracing our leadership role within the Borough
- (d) Collaboration - working as a team within the Council and using our influence to maintain productive relationships with our partners
- (e) Consistent improvement - striving for continual improvement and value for money

## **PRIORITIES**

- 29. Our Priorities lay out where our resources will be focused over the next six years, including a list of projects that enable our residents to keep track of our progress. This is in addition to providing high quality services to our residents.
- 30. As part of our internal consultation, we asked staff if they agreed with our current Priorities. The vast majority of staff stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with our current approach.
- 31. The Priorities have remained broadly similar to those in the current Corporate Strategy. Feedback from our engagement activities suggested that revisions to our existing Priorities, rather than a complete overhaul, would be most appropriate. Some Priorities have been reworded to reflect a change in emphasis or to provide greater clarity on what we hope to achieve. A summary of each Priority is provided below.
- 32. Our new proposed Priorities are:
  - (a) Provide Housing Choices
  - (b) Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment
  - (c) Strong, Safe and Healthy Communities
  - (d) Promote Economic Development
  - (e) Leisure Opportunities for Wellbeing and Fun
  - (f) Responsive, Inclusive and Innovative Council
- 33. Providing Housing Choices: To provide homes for Fareham's growing population while also ensuring houses being built serve the needs of the Borough. Welborne and our new Local Plan will be key in delivering on this Priority alongside our new Town Centre Vision and Masterplan which will provide increased opportunities for residential development.
- 34. Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment: This priority has been reworded to reflect the increasing awareness of climate change amongst our staff and residents. It was clear from our staff consultation that the Council's ambition to work towards carbon neutral was very important to them. Our Climate Change Action Plan has therefore been featured in the draft Corporate Strategy alongside improvements to our recycling service and a rewilding plan for the Borough.
- 35. Strong, Safe and Healthy Communities: By working with others, we will ensure Fareham is a place where everyone feels safe. This Priority includes exciting projects for Fareham communities old and new, ensuring they have the facilities they need to thrive.

36. Promote Economic Development: Our staff suggested that this Priority could be reworded to provide greater clarity regarding its core meaning. Internal engagement also emphasised the importance of the town centre. We are pleased that the Town Centre Regeneration Vision and Masterplan feature prominently under this Priority alongside an Economic Development Strategy and continued investment at Daedalus business parks and Solent Airport.
37. Leisure Opportunities for Wellbeing and Fun: Under this Priority the word 'health' has been replaced with the word 'wellbeing' to reflect the wide-ranging ways in which Council leisure provision can enhance the lives of our residents. The new Strategy period will see the development of the highly anticipated Fareham Live. We will also deliver new community infrastructure as well as scheduled improvements to our existing provision.
38. A Responsive, Inclusive and Innovative Council: This Priority focuses on the Council's approach to service delivery. Our staff are proud of our customer centred approach and thought this should be reflected in the Priority wording. Our projects centre around updating the way we communicate with our customers to ensure we are transparent and will continue to provide high quality, value for money services.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

39. Officers have prepared a draft Corporate Strategy that reflects feedback from Council officers, many of whom are Fareham residents, senior managers, and elected members.
40. The Council is now eager to engage with the wider Fareham community to ensure that our new Corporate Strategy reflects their Vision and Priorities for the Borough.
41. Upon receiving Executive approval, pending any requested amendments, a public consultation will be launched asking for resident's feedback on the draft Strategy. The consultation will run from 5 June until 3 July.
42. The results of that consultation and the draft Corporate Strategy, with any proposed changes, will then be presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel on 18 September.
43. Following consultation with the Scrutiny Panel the final draft Strategy will be presented to the Executive on 9 October with the recommendation that it is passed to Council for adoption.

## **CONCLUSION**

44. The Corporate Strategy is a key document within the Council's Strategic framework. It influences our medium-term budget planning, our day-to-day service delivery and the large-scale projects that we will undertake in the future.
45. Members are invited to comment on the draft Strategy included in Appendix A.

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Katherine Trott, Policy, Research and Engagement Officer. 01329 82 4580