

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

12 December 2024

Subject: **Annual Review of Corporate Strategy 2023-2029**

Report of: **Assistant Director (Democracy)**

SUMMARY

The Council's Corporate Strategy 2023 to 2029 sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the Borough. The Council's performance management framework requires an annual review of the strategy, to confirm future priorities and update the wording where necessary. This is the final review of the current Strategy.

The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel considered the review of the Strategy at the 18 November 2024 meeting and supported the proposed changes to the Strategy.

The Executive considered the outcome of the review on 4 December 2024 and agreed the recommended amendments to the Corporate Strategy document.

The updated Corporate Strategy 2023-2029 is now presented for adoption by the Council, subject to amendments approved by the Executive found in Appendix B.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) notes the results of the annual review of the Corporate Strategy; and
- (b) approves the updates to the Corporate Strategy 2017-2023.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council's performance management framework requires the Executive to undertake an annual review of the corporate vision and priorities. The purpose is to confirm future priorities and update the wording where necessary.
2. The 2023-2029 Corporate Strategy was adopted by the Council on 26 October 2023. This is the first review of the new Corporate Strategy, a copy of which is attached as Appendix A.
3. Any proposed changes to the wording will need to be approved by the Council, because the Corporate Strategy falls within the Council's policy framework under the constitution. Details of the proposed updates to the wording in the Corporate Strategy are attached as Appendix B.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE STRATEGY 2023-2029

4. The Corporate Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for 2023-2029 and shows how we have planned to ensure Fareham remains a prosperous, attractive, and safe place to live and work.
5. The Strategy sets out six Corporate Priorities. Top level highlights of the progress of each priority in the year 2023 - 2024 is set out below:

Providing Housing Choices

- The Fareham Local Plan 2037, which plans for the provision of new homes, and employment space across the Borough up to 2037 was formally adopted.
- The Council continued to deliver affordable housing with the completion of two three-bedroom affordable homes located at Queens Road in Fareham Town Centre and a sheltered housing scheme for older residents at Station Road Portchester.
- A Self and Custom Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document, informing and guiding residents who have a desire to build their own home was adopted.
- Fareham Housing completed the purchase of 130-136 West Street Fareham with the opportunity for further affordable housing within the town centre.

Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment

- To move towards a more modern, resilient, and cost-effective commercial fleet a rolling five-year vehicle replacement programme was adopted.
- Two areas of sponsored tree planting within Abbey Meadows, Titchfield officially opened in commemoration of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.
- To reduce the carbon footprint of the new Fareham Live entertainment venue, solar panels and Air Source Heat pumps were installed as part of the construction.

- National Lottery funding was awarded to implement carbon reduction measures at Fareham Leisure Centre.

Strong, Safe and Healthy Communities

- Holly Hill Woodland Park and the Sensory Garden in Fareham Town Centre once again received the prestigious Green Flag Award setting the benchmark for recreational outdoor spaces across the UK.
- The delivery of Welborne Garden Village took another step forward with the Council receiving the first formal planning applications to build houses at the site.

Promote Economic Development

- A revised package of investment at Solent Airport was approved with an additional £800,000 of funding to ensure its continued safe operation and grow its competitive position.
- Proposals to create a new Search and Rescue Training Centre at Faraday Business Park were supported.
- The Council acquired Fareham Shopping Centre and adjoining properties, in support of the wider Town Centre Regeneration approach.

Leisure Opportunities for Wellbeing and Fun

- Construction of Fareham Live progressed well and industry experts, Trafalgar Theatres were appointed as the venue operators.
- A new site name was adopted for the programme to transform the Fareham North West community and leisure facilities. Following public consultation and an overwhelming response, Fareham Park was the chosen name.

A Responsive, Inclusive and Innovative Council

- An updated Opportunities Plan was approved, which incorporated a holistic cross Council approach to generating additional income and finding savings.
- The Council launched a dedicated Facebook consultation group called 'Let's Talk Fareham' providing an additional method to gather feedback. The Facebook group has attracted nearly 900 members.

UPDATED VALUES

6. Earlier this year, nearly 240 of our staff took part in workshops and discussions regarding the values and behaviours wanted to guide the way we work as a Council. This resulted in a new set of shared values:
 - Better Outcomes
 - Responsibility

- Integrity
 - Innovation
 - Collaboration
 - Kindness
7. These values will inform emerging Strategy documents such as the People Strategy and are included in the proposed changes to the Corporate Strategy 2023-29 in Appendix B.

UPDATED CORPORATE PROJECTS

8. As would be expected of any corporate strategy, new projects emerge over time. These proposals can be found in Appendix B; however, the following list highlights the main additions:
- Aided by the purchase of 92 Gordon Road, continue to deliver, and review our approach to emergency and temporary accommodation provision.
 - Deliver affordable housing in the town centre and further support the delivery of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy with the acquisition of 130-136 West Street buildings (Birk's Building)
 - Develop an Environment Strategy to bring our varied environmental objectives, plans, and projects into a coherent whole.
 - Work in partnership with Trafalgar Theatres to ensure we continue to provide a vibrant community, arts, and entertainment venue for everyone in the community.
 - Develop and implement a Digital Strategy to widen customer options and provisions.
9. At the 21 October meeting of the Policy and Resources (P&R) Scrutiny Panel, Members considered a report on the motion presented to the Council on 25 July 2024 by Councillor G Furnivall. The motion sought support for LGBTQ+ people.
10. Deputations from representatives of Y-Services for Young People were presented at the meeting and these helped inform a detailed debate amongst Members. The Panel confirmed that they supported the following points of the motion:
- That all LGBTQ+ people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
 - To show support for LGBTQ+ people by flying the Pride flag, from the flag poles in the town centre, during the Pride month of June from 2025; and
 - To explore the possibility of offering the opportunity for those dealing with the Council to be addressed using pronouns of their choice.
11. Taking this into account it is proposed that the following additional project is added to the Corporate Strategy:

- Ensure Fareham Borough Council services are accessible to all members of our community and staff by recognising and celebrating diversity, promoting inclusion and by providing systems and structures that allow for equity of opportunity and access.
12. It is anticipated that a progress update on the project will be presented at the 17 March 2025 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel.

SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENTS

13. The draft Corporate Strategy Annual Review Executive report was presented to the 18 November Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel. Whilst supportive of the proposed updates to the Strategy Members requested the following additional changes:
- Retention of the population estimate figure for the Borough within the document
 - Naming of the Westbury Manor building to reflect the fact it is no longer a museum
14. These amendments have been included in the draft changes in Appendix B.
15. The proposed changes to the Corporate Strategy were then approved at the 3 December Executive Meeting.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES APPROACH

16. The Council's Strategic Framework had previously included Local Service Agreements (LSAs) as a tool to provide an overview of performance in key service areas. LSAs looking at performance in the previous municipal year, would be presented on an annual basis as part of the Corporate Strategy review.
17. A new approach to corporate performance measures is emerging which will provide more timely, transparent, and relevant service performance information to managers, Members, partners and the wider public. The new approach is replacing the LSA's, and it is anticipated that the initial measures will be presented for approval at the 3 February 2025 Executive.

18. CONCLUSION

19. This report is a key stage in the Council's performance management framework. The Executive is invited to consider the proposed amendments to the Corporate Strategy 2023-2029 and recommend these changes to Council.

Appendices:

A: Current Corporate Strategy

B: Changes approved by the 3 December Executive

Background Papers:

Reference Papers:

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