

Report to: **COUNCIL**
Date: **20 July 2021**
Title: **Development of the draft 'A Plan for West Devon'**
Portfolio Area: **Council – Leader Cllr Neil Jory**

Wards Affected: **All**
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **N**

Date next steps can be taken: Immediately following this meeting.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council be RECOMMENDED to:

- 1) Instruct officers to commence a formal public consultation exercise on the draft 'Plan for West Devon' in line with the adopted Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy; and**
- 2) Instruct the Chief Executive and the Director of Governance and Assurance to develop delivery plans for the Strategy, for consideration by Hub alongside the final Strategy at its meeting on 21 September 2021 before their onward consideration by Full Council on 28 September 2021.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council adopted its corporate strategy on 22 May 2018 prior to the end of the previous administration. As a result of the pandemic the context and landscape within which we now operate has fundamentally changed.
- 1.2 Whilst elements of the strategy clearly remain relevant and vitally important moving forward, the recovery and renewal planning process, which has involved extensive consultation and

engagement with the wider membership, has identified new emerging challenges, priorities and opportunities.

- 1.3 This report sets out the draft Corporate Strategy 'A Plan for West Devon' and timeline for the next steps, with a view to adopting the final strategy in September 2021;
- 1.4 A version of this report was also considered at the Hub Committee meeting that was held on 13 July 2021 and the views arising from that meeting will be verbally reported to this Council meeting.

2. Background

- 2.1 In recognition of the potential wide ranging and long lasting impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in early 2020 Members undertook to develop a Recovery and Renewal Plan.
- 2.2 The development of the plan was thorough and inclusive and included a sequence of full member workshops. In order to ensure that the whole membership was engaged with the process and had an opportunity to input, formal reports were also taken to the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 23 June 2020 (O&S95) and 1 September 2020 (O&S19) and the Hub and ultimately to full Council for adoption on 8 December 2020 (Council Minute CM 22 refers)
- 2.3 The development of the plan, by its very nature, identified issues that were directly and indirectly related to the impacts of the pandemic. With the ideas generated by Members covering the full range of Council activity and influence.
- 2.4 In view of this, and prior to adoption, the actions and ideas put forward by Members were collected and triaged into the most appropriate vehicle for development and/or delivery. In the majority of cases this was either the Recovery and Renewal Plan itself or the emerging Climate Change and Biodiversity or Housing Strategies. The report, and appendices, to Council on 8th December 2020 sets this process out in more detail (Council Minute CM 22).
- 2.5 In terms of the strategic context, the Council adopted the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) on 26 March 2019. The JLP establishes an over-arching strategic framework for sustainable growth and the management of

change. It provides the statutory development plan for the three partner authorities.

- 2.6 The strategic objectives of the JLP which include meeting the need for new homes, jobs and services, will be key inputs to the new corporate strategy.
- 2.7 As well as articulating the Council's vision and ambitions for the longer-term, it is essential not only that the new strategy contains specific, measurable and time bound targets covering the short-term (next 3 years), but we put in place the skills and resources necessary to ensure these actions can be delivered.

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The development and adoption of a new corporate strategy will ensure that Council resources are aligned in order to secure the efficient and effective delivery of the ambition and priorities set by Members.

4. Development of the new Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 The draft Corporate Strategy, to be called 'A Plan for West Devon' sets out a vision for the future with key deliverables that will help the Council to realise that vision.
- 4.2 There has been extensive and inclusive engagement with the full membership through recovery workshops (July 2020) and Strategy Emerging Theme workshops (March/April 2021). The key inputs to the new corporate strategy have enabled Hub Members to develop and refine the priorities and draft themes for the strategy.
- 4.3 The high level theme areas and emerging vision for the Council were set out at an all Member briefing on 22 June 2021. There was overall support for the draft strategy themes and areas of focus which has enabled the development of the draft corporate strategy as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.4 Officers have already commenced engagement with residents, businesses and visitors being asked their views on West Devon as a place to live, work and visit.
- 4.5 Once adopted in draft, we can build on this initial engagement with Officers and Members commencing a formal consultation on

the strategy. The consultation will consist of a series of online polls and questionnaires, briefing notes for Members to enable them to engage with their Town and Parish Councils and discussions with residents, businesses and visitors to understand what their hopes and concerns are for the future.

- 4.6 The formal consultation will run for at least 6 weeks from 21st July and inform the final strategy and detailed delivery plans for adoption by Council in September 2021.
- 4.7 To further support development and delivery of the final strategy, 8 Hub Advisory Groups will be formed. Each Advisory Group will be chaired by the relevant Hub Committee Members and supported by a Senior Responsible Officer.
- 4.8 The primary focus and function of each Advisory Group will be to:
 - i Focus on and monitor the delivery of targets within the adopted 'A Plan for West Devon'
 - ii Look forward and horizon scan to identify future issues and challenges relating to the thematic area; and
 - iii Provide support and guidance to the lead Hub Committee Member
- 4.9 It is anticipated that appointments to the Hub Advisory Groups will be made at this Council meeting alongside consideration of the draft Strategy.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 This report sets out the draft corporate strategy for the Council. It is proposed that the Council consider the draft strategy before officers commence formal consultation.
- 5.2 In addition, it is recommended that Council instruct officers to commence development of delivery plans for 'A Plan for West Devon' which will be considered in September 2021.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address

Legal/Governance	Y	The Corporate Strategy is one of the plans and policies that comprise the Council's Policy Framework. Consequently, decisions to approve, adopt or amend the Corporate Strategy and themes are decisions of the Full Council.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money		There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council will seek to align the Council's corporate strategy (what we plan to do) to the Council's medium-term financial strategy (how we plan to resource it).
Risk		They key risk relates to the need to have an up to date corporate strategy that reflects the Councils future plans and is suitably resourced. These risks are managed through the process detailed in this report.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Supports all existing six corporate themes.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		There are no direct impacts on climate change and biodiversity however tackling these issues are considered to be central to the development of the new plan.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		No direct implications.
Safeguarding		No direct implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No direct implications
Other implications		No direct implications

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Strategy

Background Documents:

None