

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Future Policy Focus

Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 8th July 2020

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader (RF)

Report by: Interim Corporate Director (Place)

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Council has been reviewing the strategies and plans that are needed to set out the future policy, planned outcomes, and actions over the coming years.

The list covers the overarching set of documents for the medium to long term. Several of the strategies and plans are in place and current, whilst others are to be developed.

Recommendation:

That Overview and Scrutiny determine which of the emerging documents they would like to input into and consider as part of their work programme for 2020/21.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To set out the high-level policy framework of strategies and plans as part of the Council's place shaping and operational arrangements.
- 1.2 To highlight the schedule for when certain plans and strategies will be updated. Noting several of the plans will include a period of internal or external consultation.
- 1.3 There is an opportunity for Overview and Scrutiny to feed into the policy development as part of their work programme for 2020/21. Overview and Scrutiny is asked to determine which documents they would like to see and when.
- 1.4 It should be noted the list of strategies and plans set out in the report cover the high-level outcomes and actions and these will still be supplemented by additional plans at a service level.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/ BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council currently has a range of policy documents that have served the Council well in setting out the planned outcomes for the future.
- 2.2 The corporate planning framework has been refined to show how the short, medium- and longer-term documents are nested together in the policy framework and respond to an evolving external environment.
- 2.3 As a result of this work there are some new documents to be developed and others that need to be updated.
- 2.4 Whilst there is also a significant amount of uncertainty due to the impact of COVID-19 it is important that the Council has a comprehensive set of policies, strategies and plans that are fit for purpose, particularly in terms of future growth, opportunities and challenges as well as the operational objectives.
- 2.5 The suite of strategies and plans will be evidence based, concise and focussed on the issues that are important for Huntingdonshire.
- 2.6 The following table sets out the planned corporate framework. The plans and strategies have been nested from left to right.
- 2.7 Outcome focussed plans are listed covering the physical, social, and economic aspects which will be underpinned by strategic and activity plans.

Overarching Plans	Outcome Plans	Strategic Plans	Activity Plans
Place Strategy to 2050 (Vision for Huntingdonshire) (NM/DE)	Local Plan (CK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Management Strategy (JA) Waste Strategy (AR) Housing Strategy (LB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Plan (DB) Asset Management Plan (JA) Waste Minimisation Plan (AR)
	Community Strategy (FF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy (LB) Consultation and Engagement Strategy (CD) Leisure and Health Strategy (JW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Plan (DB)
	Economic Growth Strategy (CK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Strategy (NM/DE) Climate Change Strategy (NS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration Plan (CK)
Vision for HDC (JL)	Core Service Strategy (JA/JT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Strategy (AW) Medium Term Financial Strategy (CE) Commercial Investment Strategy (JG) Digital Strategy (TE) Leisure and Health Strategy (JW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Management Plan (TE) Service Plan(s) (SMs)

2.8 Several of the documents are current, others are in the process of being updated and there are a few that will be new documents such as the Place Strategy. The following table sets out further details on the status of each document, when they were published or planned timescales for development.

2.9

Strategy	Accountable Owner	Status	Date of Publication
Place Strategy to 2050	Nigel McCurdy/ David Edwards	In progress	Nov 2020
Vision for HDC	Jo Lancaster	In progress	Sep 2020
Local Plan to 2036	Clara Kerr	Published	May 2019
Community Strategy	Finlay Flett	In progress	Dec 2020
Economic Growth Strategy	Clara Kerr	In progress	Oct 2020
Core Service Strategy	Justin Andrews/John Taylor	Not started	Nov 2020
Asset Management Strategy	Jackie Golby/Justin Andrews	Not started	Mar 2021
Waste Strategy	Neil Sloper	Not started	Sep 2021
Housing Strategy to 2025	Liz Bisset	In progress	Sep 2020
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	Michelle Greet	Not started	Dec 2020
Leisure and Health Strategy	Jayne Wisely	Not started	Mar 2021
Transport Strategy	Nigel McCurdy/	Not started	Dec 2020

	David Edwards		
Climate Change Strategy	Neil Sloper	Not started	Sep 2021
Workforce Strategy	Aileen Whatmore	In progress	Oct 2020
Medium Tern Financial Strategy	Claire Edwards	In progress	Feb 2021
Commercial Investment Strategy	Jackie Golby/ Justin Andrews	Current with refresh in 2020	Mar 2021
Digital Strategy	Tony Evans	In progress	Oct 2020
Corporate Plan	Dan Buckridge	In progress	Sep 2020
Asset Management Plan	Jackie Golby/ Justin Andrews	Not started	Mar 2021
Waste Minimisation Plan	Andy Rogan	Not started	Nov 2020
Regeneration Plan	Clara Kerr	Not started	Mar 2021
Information Management Plan	Tony Evans	Not started	Dec 2020

2.10 The aim is to set out clearly the aspirations and policies that the Council wants to see and adopt for the area which will inform our way of working and our work with other agencies and authorities. It is envisaged that the scope of these documents will be proportionate (for example on the Transport Strategy many of the powers will sit with the Combined Authority and County Council, on the Waste Strategy the County Council is the disposal authority) so shorter outcome focussed documents.

3. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

3.1 Overview and Scrutiny is asked to consider which if any of these emerging documents they would like an overview of during development or an opportunity to scrutinise prior to final publication.

3.2 The finer details have not been included in terms of public consultation, however, several documents such as the Housing Strategy will also be consulted on externally, for example with the wider housing sector.

3.3 Some of these documents are due to be completed in September 2020 and therefore it may not be possible to fit them into the immediate Overview and Scrutiny timetable, especially given other programme commitments in the coming months. The aim is to bring these documents forward in a timely manner, especially given potential investment opportunities and not to delay them adversely.

- 3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may decide that they do not wish to be involved in the development of the policy documents and therefore there is a do-nothing option.

4. KEY IMPACTS/ RISKS

- 4.1 The Council needs to have a concise and clear set of policies and plans in place to achieve our objectives. The current response and recovery situation in relation to COVID-19 makes planning challenging, however, planning still needs to take place.
- 4.2 Whilst short term planning is extremely difficult currently there is a significant risk that medium- and long-term planning will also need to change in the next few years and therefore some of these plans and strategies may require further updating. Investment in Huntingdonshire is reliant on having medium and longer-term plans in place. Particularly in relation to investment and prioritisation. Mitigation is an acceptance of this risk.
- 4.3 There is the opportunity through Overview and Scrutiny to have wider member engagement in the development of the strategies and plans which is welcomed and will help to improve the scope, focus and content.
- 4.4 There is a risk that plans are developed just for the sake of having a plan and documents get put to one side. In putting together the framework the aim has been to cover the key themes and improve the alignment. The relevance, content and timescale of the documents are also important considerations. Mitigation is that guidance will be given that these documents will be kept short and focussed, accountable officers will be challenged on the content and documents will be evidence based.
- 4.5 There is a risk that these planned timescales cannot be achieved. Some publication dates may have to change slightly to build in Overview and Scrutiny, which will depend on which documents come to the Committee. Mitigation is that the accountable officers have been asked to identify when they expect the documents will be completed given current commitments and by bringing this report now there is the opportunity to build any discussions into the planned Overview and Scrutiny programme.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan is listed as one of the core documents. The Corporate Plan will also bring together the policies, aspirations and objectives on an annual basis.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There has been no formal consultation on these proposals.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Several of the plans and strategies are contained within the Council Constitution and therefore subject to final agreement by Council.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Developing policy documents will require resources from across the Council. Officers have been asked to factor in resourcing as part of identifying the planned timescales.

8.2 In some circumstances additional support may be required from specialists, especially in building up the evidence base and sector insight. These costs will be met from existing budgets.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

9.1 To provide Overview and Scrutiny with an early sight of the policy framework and plans for strategy and plan development during 2020/21. The Committee may wish to look at some of these documents as part of the Work Programme for 2020/21.

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