



**Name of meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

**Date: 20 August 2020**

**Title of report: Our Council Plan**

**Purpose of report:** Our Council Plan will provide a one-year extension to the existing 2018 – 2020 Corporate Plan, setting out our ongoing commitment to our shared outcomes, and providing an update in the context of the coronavirus pandemic and our recovery framework.

This report provides information on the development of Our Council Plan, and how it builds on previous approaches. The final Plan will be considered for sign off by Council in October 2020. The report also provides an update on the Council's approach to communication in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

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| <b>Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?</b> | <b>Yes/ no or Not Applicable</b><br><br>Not applicable   |
| <b>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?</b>   | <b>Key Decision</b> – Yes – Council decision October 2020<br><br><b>Private Report/Private Appendix</b> – No |
| <b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>   | <b>Yes/No or Not Applicable</b><br><br>Not applicable  |
| <b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>  | Rachel Spencer-Henshall 10 August 2020   |
| <b>Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a></b>   | Leader of the Council  |

**Electoral wards affected:** all

**Ward councillors consulted:** None explicitly on this report. The update to the 2018 – 2020 Corporate Plan was agreed by Councillors in 2019. As a precursor to Ward based conversations the Leader and Chief Executive are currently hosting a series of webinars with councillors using the four hub community response footprint. This will be followed by Ward based conversations with Councillors which follows up on the decision at Council on 7 July. That work will feed into both our recovery planning and the final version of Our Council Plan.

Communication with councillors around our response to the coronavirus has remained a priority, with twice weekly updates supporting more detailed communication on specific issues.

**Public or private:** public

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes. This report does not include any personal data that identifies a living individual.

## **1. Summary**

Our Council Plan will provide a one-year extension to the existing 2018 – 2020 Corporate Plan, setting out our ongoing commitment to our shared outcomes, and providing an update in the context of the coronavirus pandemic and our recovery framework.

This report provides information on the development of Our Council Plan, and how it builds on previous approaches. The final Plan will be considered for sign off by Council in October 2020. The report also provides an update on the Council's approach to communication in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

### **Our Council Plan**

Our commitment to our shared outcomes, place-based working and behaviours continues whatever the crisis, and in fact the impact of the coronavirus pandemic has been to heighten their importance. The response to the coronavirus has also cast a strong light on the values we have as an organisation, and our incredible staff teams. Staff have shifted roles, dealt with business continuity pressures, community uncertainty, family and financial worries, and a lot of hard work and long hours.

As part of ongoing communication to staff, and to bring together our long term focus and recovery framework, a one year extension to the existing Corporate Plan (2018 – 2020) is proposed, that serves as a reminder of our purpose, and acts as an opportunity to make any necessary adjustments to our longer term course of travel, given the rapidly changing environment in which we are operating.

The Plan will play back the values that we have seen at work during the response to the pandemic. These values are:

- Inclusive – making sure everyone of all ages and backgrounds feels able to contribute
- Kindness - developing trust and human connection, putting empathy at the heart of the way in which we build relationships
- Pride – being bold, working with pride and celebrating who we are and what we do

These values will be considered and developed further for the Council Plan. This will then act as the basis for further engagement work to build a clear set of values that we can embed within the organisation.

This revised Plan will put tackling inequalities front and centre and be supported by a more detailed action plan that focuses on tackling inequalities. The Tackling Inequalities Action Plan will come to Corporate Scrutiny on the

10 September, at the same time as the Council Plan. They will both then go to Council for final sign off in October.

Although the focus will rightly be on recalibration to reflect our work in these most unprecedented of times, the Plan will also incorporate the actions we agreed following our corporate peer challenge last year.

The Plan will consist of a short document, supported by various materials, including case studies that show the work that we have done, the impact it has made and the values we have displayed. Alongside staff and councillor facing products, we will also consider how we share the content in our communication with the public.

### **Recovery Framework**

Our recovery framework is provided at **Appendix 1 (visual) & Appendix 2**, and has been designed to outline how Kirklees Council will approach our ongoing response and recovery to Covid-19, at both an organisational / employer level and also in terms of our service delivery, working closely with citizens and partners within a more complex system.

It offers a response to the national approach to recovery and takes account of the national stages as set out by government. But it is fundamentally a local response which is focused on our enduring priorities and guided by our commitment to working in ways that reflect the strengths of our diverse communities and build a more inclusive economy and society.

The framework shapes our planning work throughout four phases, which will be fluid in a rapidly moving environment, and occur at times concurrently:

- Response
- Adaptation
- Living with Covid-19
- Forever Kirklees

### **Coronavirus communication**

Our communications during recovery has three overarching objectives:

1. Fulfil the council's public health role to provide accurate, timely and reassuring guidance to residents and businesses.
2. Protect and enhance the reputation of the council in safeguarding the quality of life and civil society in Kirklees.
3. To help the council develop its existing strengths become the council it wants to be.

It is shaped into four discrete workstreams, each with its own communications plan. The purpose of this approach is to provide a framework for proactive communications. It means that the council can tell its own story. It divides resources and responsibilities across priority themes and guides the communications team through the creation of content, audience segmentation and insight/evaluation.

The four streams guiding its proactive communications are:

1. The Guiding Council
2. The Enabling Council
3. The Delivering Council
4. The Employer

### 3. Implications for the Council

#### 3.1 Working with People

Our focus on working with people and partners, and place-based working will remain central to the **Council Plan**, as it is within the previous 2018 – 2020 Plan. Through a focus on values (and restorative practice) we will continue to ensure we put the ways in which we work with people (internally and externally) and the relationships we build at the heart of what we do.

One of the key principles in the **recovery framework** is working collaboratively with people and partners – building relationships and communicating effectively.

Individuals and communities in every part of Kirklees have stepped up to support each other in the initial response to the crisis. It has highlighted the wealth of community spirit and social capital in Kirklees and shows we must continue to strengthen our place-based approach, to work with people and communities and understand how services can be shaped by the people who use them. Members' community leadership role has never been more important in delivering this strengthened relationship between the council and the people it serves. Equally, we must learn from the cooperation that has taken place across sectors over recent weeks to share practices, ideas and resources and build new relationships within Kirklees, regionally and nationally.

#### 3.2 Working with Partners

Partners coming together to tackle the impacts of the coronavirus in Kirklees (via Partnership Gold and Partnership Executive) have agreed that tackling inequalities should be their ongoing unifying mission. Health and Wellbeing Board are supportive of this approach. Alongside the tackling inequalities action plan that will accompany the Council Plan we will work with partners to develop a Partnership Plan that focuses on the things that will make most difference if we do them together.

In terms of communication, a partnership-based comms bronze group has been established, reporting to partnership gold. Bringing together communication leads from partner organisations is permitting the development of clear and consistent messaging and the sharing of resources.

### 3.3 Place Based Working

Place based working is integral to our approach, as captured in the Council Plan. We have also adopted a place-based approach to **recovery** and **communication**, ensuring the place-based approach is considered as services and functions make their plans for short, and longer-term recovery. Plans to have Ward based conversations on recovery are being developed, and these conversations will feed into both our recovery planning, and the final version of Our Council Plan.

### 3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

The **recovery framework** confirms tackling the climate emergency as a critical challenge we must remain focused on. As part of this priority, the Council is making use of additional Government funding to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians in Dewsbury and Huddersfield Town Centres – as part of wider plans to encourage more active forms of travel.

The **Council Plan** will continue to emphasise the importance of taking action to address the climate emergency – building on the Council resolutions and the action plan that was agreed by Council on the 13 November 2019.

### 3.5 Improving outcomes for children

While there is a specific outcome dedicated to outcomes for children (Best Start), within the **Council Plan**, the other seven outcomes all impact on children and young people – good jobs and progression for parents, lifelong learning, a cleaner and safer environment, and a Council that works efficiently will all improve the lives of children in Kirklees.

**Communications** around public health messaging and reaching out to young people has remained important during our response to the crisis. Communications continue to be tailored to specific cohorts of people as needs and messages will inherently be different depending on the groups in question. Examples include the ‘on our doorstep’ campaign happening over the summer holiday period, and a campaign providing support and assurances to parents in the lead up to schools starting in September.

### 3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

The Council Plan will be aligned to the Budget Strategy Update Report for annual financial cycle planning purposes. The Council Plan will help set the strategic context for the Budget Strategy, so it will therefore go to

Cabinet before the Council Plan to help inform this. The Budget Strategy is going to Cabinet on the 20 October (after the Council Plan on the 22 September) and then alongside the Council Plan at Council on the 21 October.

The Council Plan will be aligned to the upcoming refresh of the People Strategy. Both documents will reflect the values that we have seen at work during the response to the pandemic. These values will act as the basis for further engagement work to build a clear, more formal set of values that we can embed within the organisation. An update on the refresh of the People Strategy is going to the Corporate Scrutiny Panel (at the same time as the Council Plan) on the 10 September.

## **5. Next steps and timelines**

10 September: Corporate Scrutiny

22 September: Cabinet

21 October: Council

## **5. Officer recommendations and reasons**

To note progress on the basis that it consolidates a previously agreed direction of travel.

To provide any direction on approach or content, to assist in development and finalisation of the plan in advance of approval at Council.

## **6. Contact officer**

Kate McNicholas, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning

## **7. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

The previous 2018/2020 Council Corporate Plan was approved by Council on the 17 July 2019.

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7854>

## **8. Service Director responsible**

Andy Simcox, Service Director Strategy and Innovation