

Committee: Scrutiny Committee

Date:

Title: Revised Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2020/21

Thursday, 24
September 2020

Report Author: Dawn French, Chief Executive

dfrench@uttlesford.gov.uk

Tel: 01799 510400

Summary

1. Cabinet approved their corporate plan delivery plan (CPDP) in May 2020. It was at the time heavily caveated because of the impacts on the organisation of managing the public health emergency and the uncertainty over the council's finances.
2. Scrutiny considered that plan at a meeting in June, as a consequence of a call-in of that item from Cabinet.
3. Scrutiny are invited to consider the revised delivery plan, which although still subject to some caveats, contains a greater degree of certainty, including in respect of the funding for many of the activities.

Recommendations

4. Members are invited to consider the revised plan and to provide feedback to the Cabinet on this matter.

Financial Implications

5. There are no financial implications associated with the consideration of this plan. The financial implications of the plan are referenced in the plan. An update on the Council's medium term financial position is also on this meetings' agenda and will provide greater context for the funding of the priorities in the delivery plan.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation specific to projects within the delivery plan will be undertaken as necessary.
----------------------------	---

Community Safety	Community safety projects are identified within the delivery plan.
Equalities	Equality impact assessments will be undertaken in relation to specific projects, as necessary.
Health and Safety	Any health and safety implications resulting from actions or projects in the delivery plan will be the subject of appropriate risk assessments, where necessary.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Any human rights or legal implications arising from individual projects within the delivery plan will be assessed and addressed.
Sustainability	Any sustainability implications arising from individual projects within the delivery plan will be assessed and addressed.
Ward-specific impacts	Any ward specific issues arising from individual projects within the delivery plan will be identified.
Workforce/Workplace	The Corporate Plan Delivery Plan will enable staff to be more confident in delivery of services and to be clear about the performance expectations of them. Any workforce implications arising from individual projects within the delivery plan will be assessed and addressed.

Situation

8. The Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 was adopted by Full Council at its meeting on 25 February 2020. This included a new vision for the council: *Making Uttlesford the best place to live, work and play*. There are four priorities:
 - Putting residents first
 - Active place-maker for our towns and villages
 - Progressive custodian of our rural environment
 - Championing our District

9. Cabinet approved the corporate plan delivery plan at its meeting on 27 May 2020. At that time it was acknowledged that the plan had to reflect the situation the council found itself in, in respect of both financial and human resources, which had been severely constrained by the impact of the Covid19 pandemic.

10. Whilst wanting to show the scale of ambition, the plan also contained a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating and commentary to explain the impact of the pandemic and what was thought at that time to be realistically achievable. However, it was still a period of uncertainty and therefore Cabinet was reluctant to make firm commitments to outputs.

11. Scrutiny Committee were critical of that approach both during their discussion following a verbal update on the plan at their meeting on 21 May and when the matter was called in after the adoption of the plan and debated on 16 June 2020.
12. The reason for the call in was: 'because the Corporate Delivery Plan is insufficient insofar that it is, inter alia, not measurable, lacking in both quantified and timed outcomes. It therefore requires further development to meet these good governance standards. The plan should also demonstrate aspirational outcomes achievable in normal times and should not solely be downplayed by current uncertainties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.'
13. The Chair summarised his views at the time saying the (then) CPDP was an unimpressive document that lacked specifics and the Committee had voiced its disapproval following the meeting in May. When Scrutiny reviewed the updated version expected in September, he expected more specific targets and prioritisation to be incorporated in the CPDP. The motion to refer the CPDP to Cabinet for amendment was defeated.
14. The revised CPDP, attached at Enclosure 1, has been further refined but must still be viewed in the light of an overriding caveat that the public health emergency must be the number one priority, that the demand on some services in the council remains extremely high, that this may require further redeployment of staff away from their normal duties and focused on supporting our residents and communities. In addition, with the reported cases of Covid19 increasing significantly, this may result in the absence of staff due to illness or due to the requirement to self-isolate, which in some cases will impact on the delivery of the plan (referred to in the plan as the 'general caveat').
15. A further change that can be seen in the CPDP is reference to some priorities actually being operational tasks that are referred to as business as usual (BAU).
16. The Delivery Plan should set out the more significant actions/projects (outputs). All of the Council's activities should be contributing to one or more of the priorities but it is not desirable or practicable to set out in the delivery plan all operational activities that contribute to the priorities. However, Cabinet did not want to remove reference to these in this plan as they relate to issues raised by their members at workshops held last year when the priorities were developing; their continued inclusion provides clarity of how the matters are to be progressed, rather than 'just disappear'. The BAU items do not have specific targets in this plan but will be subject to performance indicators and/or service standards for the relevant service areas, contained in service plans.
17. The final major change in this revised plan is the allocation of resourcing, where required, to advance the work. The council's financial position, as reported to members at a recent briefing, and the subject of a separate item on the agenda of this meeting, has improved sufficiently to enable the s151 officer to remove the essential spend-only controls on the organisation.

Risk Analysis

1.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The Delivery Plan cannot be delivered	2	4	The plan has been revisited to reflect the current and reasonably anticipated position of the organisation. It will be monitored regularly by Cabinet and progress reports will be considered by GAP
The Delivery Plan actions do not further the Council's priorities as intended	1	4	Actions have been selected that are considered most appropriate to support the Council's priorities; evaluation will be ongoing to reflect on whether the outputs achieve the outcomes expected

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.