



Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028

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Lead Member/Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Pip Allnatt - Leader of the Council
Corporate Priority:	All
Relevant Ward Member(s):	All
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide an update to Council on the plan to develop the new Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2028 and sets out the main stages and the timeline to deliver this. This will include engagement throughout the process with Members including the setting up of two Cross Party Member Policy Development Working Groups with the remit and terms of reference set out in this report.
- 1.2 It also sets out the proposed process for undertaking a governance review during 2023/24 to consider the most effective decision making and governance framework for the Council moving forward. There are also proposals set out in this report as to how the Council will support and oversee this review through the Constitutional Review Working Group.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Council:

- 2.1 **Notes the process/timeline to produce the new Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028.**
- 2.2 **Notes the terms of reference for the Member Policy Development Working Groups.**
- 2.3 **Notes and endorses the setting up of a governance review to consider the most effective decision-making structure and arrangements for the Council.**
- 2.4 **Approves the commissioning of the Constitutional Review Working Group to oversee and support the governance review and agrees to the amendment to the terms of reference for the Constitution Review Working Group to increase the membership from 5 to 7 members.**

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council produces a Corporate Strategy to set out its priorities for the district and how it intends to deliver against these over a long-term basis.
- 3.2 The Cross-Party Member Policy Development Working Groups will provide the opportunity and framework for discussions and agreement on priorities to feed into the Corporate Strategy process.
- 3.3 The governance review will enable the Council to consider the most effective governance framework and decision-making structures for the Council.
- 3.4 The constitutional review working group will provide further support to Members in terms of overseeing the governance review.

4 Background

- 4.1 The current Council Corporate Strategy was approved in 2020 and runs until 2024. This Strategy sets out the Council aspirations based on our mission of 'Helping People, Shaping Places' Alongside our vision and values, this sets out our key priorities and how we have set about achieving them. The Strategy has six Priority Themes shown below:

Helping People

- 1. Excellent Services positively impacting on our communities.
- 2. Providing high quality council homes and landlord services.

Shaping Places

- 3. Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton.
- 4. Protect our climate and enhance our rural natural environment.

Great Council

- 5. Ensuring the right conditions to support delivery (inward).
 - 6. Connected with and led by our community (outward).
- 4.2 Over the past three years the Council has had a delivery plan of activity/projects/indicators that we have used to measure progress against the Strategy. This has been set out in the Council's Risk and Performance Management Framework and reporting has been taken to

SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. This information has also been shared with the public through these reports and on our website.

- 4.3 We have also collected a large amount of data/information through our Residents Survey both in 2019 and 2022 which provides us with direction of travel information as to how we have improved during this time. We also have Census 2021 information, and the State of Melton reports from 2021 and 2022 which we have published on an annual basis since December 2021. This information along with feedback data from our customers and key stakeholders has enabled us to develop a real understanding of the borough and its current and future needs and challenges.
- 4.4 Following elections in May 2023 the process to develop a new Corporate Strategy to consider what we should focus on over the next four years has begun. This will enable us to develop a new Corporate Strategy that is reflective of the borough and will help us to deliver against local, regional, and national challenges that the Council faces.

5 Main Considerations

5.1 Key Stages of the Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2028 development

There will be six stages to complete, these are:

- 5.1.1 **Kick Off/Pre-Planning** – this commenced in June 2023 and has involved scene setting for members developing understanding of the issues to be addressed. This includes the setting up of a project team to manage the process and a project plan to guide the process to completion. This stage has been completed.
- 5.1.2 **Evidence/Ideas Generation** – this stage commenced in July 2023 and involves collecting and analysing information from a range of sources to inform and develop a set of themes to focus on. This information will be brought together to inform and support the identification of priorities through the work of the Member Policy Development Groups (see 5.3.3). There will also be a number of scrutiny working groups set up to inform the development of priorities (see 5.3.4). This work will be collated to be presented at the State of Melton debate on 20th September 2023. This debate will give Members a chance to discuss and agree the priority themes for the new Corporate Strategy.
- 5.1.3 **Prioritisation of themes/focus areas** – activity in this stage will begin following the State of Melton debate. This will involve taking the agreed themes and developing the activities, projects and measures that will underpin the work we do to deliver on these making a difference for the residents of Melton.
- 5.1.4 **Links to Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy** – where activities and projects that form part of the corporate strategy have financial implications these will be incorporated into the budget proposals for 2023/24 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for later years so the budget is informed by the Corporate Strategy.
- 5.1.5 **Governance/Sign Off** – following the agreement on the Priority Themes and the development of the activities, projects and measures the draft Corporate Strategy will be presented for consideration to Scrutiny and Cabinet in the Autumn review before going forward to Cabinet in January 2024 for sign off and then on to Council alongside the budget on 22nd February 2024 for approval and adoption.

- 5.1.6 **Launch publication and promotion** – the new Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2028 will be launched on the 1st April 2024 with an internal and external communications campaign to promote and raise awareness across the community and media.
- 5.2 **Support to develop the Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2028**
- 5.2.1 This will be supported by further activity which will be ongoing throughout the duration of the process to effectively consult and engage with members, residents, and other key stakeholders.
- 5.2.2 **Consultation and Engagement** – there will be a range of activities to ensure that residents, key stakeholders, members, and employees are effectively engaged and consulted throughout the process. An initial survey on priorities was undertaken with all Members between 30th June and 14th July 2023 (now extended until 4th August) to feed into the evidence gathering stage. This will include surveys, focus groups and online engagement and other methods as required.
- 5.2.3 **Communications** – this will include the promotion both internally and externally of the work we are doing to produce the strategy including design and branding with support to launch in April 2024.
- 5.2.4 **Budget setting** – throughout the process working with Finance will ensure the priorities identified are supported with the appropriate budget to deliver.
- 5.3 **Member involvement**
- 5.3.1 Members will be involved throughout the process and will be engaged at all key stages to facilitate ideas/suggestions to feed into the development of the new Corporate Strategy.
- 5.3.2 To start this process a priorities survey was sent out as part of the Members Bulletin on 30th June 2023 as set out in 5.2.3 and so far, a number of responses have been received contributing ideas and suggestions.
- 5.3.3 Alongside this the Council is setting up two Member Policy Development Working Groups, jointly commissioned by Cabinet and by Scrutiny Committee. The terms of reference for the two working groups can be found at Appendices 1 and 2. The two Cross Party Member Working Groups to be set up are: Asset Development Programme and Town Centre Vitality and Regeneration. The Working Groups will be set up as three-month, time limited task and finish groups to make findings and recommendations which will feed into the Council's planning cycle and inform the development of the Corporate Strategy and key priorities in these two areas.
- 5.3.4 To support members in the development of the Corporate Strategy further scrutiny workshops will be set up to look at specific topic areas to consider the development of the priorities. These will include topics around Housing and Communities.
- 5.4 **Governance**
- 5.4.1 Alongside the development of the new Corporate Strategy, the Council will be undertaking a review of its existing decision-making structures to consider the most effective working arrangements for the Council. It is proposed that the Constitutional Review Working Group will oversee this review, assessing any changes which are needed, identifying additional resources if required and agreeing on design principles for a future governance model to be adopted by the Council.
- 5.4.2 This is a significant piece of work and will involve exploring other options of governance or improvements to the existing arrangements. It is therefore proposed to increase the

membership of the Constitutional Review Working Group from 5 to 7 members to accommodate this additional workload. If Council is minded agreeing the allocation of seats on the CRWG as reflected in the amended terms of reference attached to this report at Appendix 2, it is proposed that the Group Leaders for the Conservative and Independent Groups will allocate an additional member from each of their Groups.

- 5.4.3 The work detailed in this report forms the approach taken to bring together the existing information together with a plan to involve all stakeholders in the development of the new Corporate Strategy.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 Full consultation on the emerging themes of the Corporate Strategy will be undertaken at key stages of the development process with members, residents and key stakeholders as set out in 5.2.2

7 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 7.1 The new Corporate Strategy will come back to Council alongside the budget proposals on 22nd February 2024 for approval ahead of its launch on the 1st April 2024 and will run from 2024-2028.
- 7.2 To enable progress to be effectively monitored, a refreshed basket of corporate performance measures will be established. The purpose of the corporate measures is to ensure that Cabinet and senior managers have effective oversight of key corporate activity, service performance and progress against the Council's aspirations and the delivery of the Corporate Strategy.
- 7.3 It is proposed that the Governance Review would be completed for consideration by Council in late 2024.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 In terms of the production of the new Corporate Strategy there are limited finance implications, and these will be funded within existing budgets. Work will take place with Finance to ensure that all priority themes are funded accordingly to support the delivery of activities against them, and these will be assessed and incorporated into the revenue and capital budget proposals and medium-term financial strategy.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

9 Legal and Governance Implications

- 9.1 Cabinet has responsibility for providing strategic leadership to the Authority. It is therefore a Cabinet function to recommend the strategic direction contained within the Corporate Strategy for approval by the Council.
- 9.2 The Corporate Strategy forms part of the Budget and Policy Framework and therefore must be approved by Council.

Legal Implications reviewed by: **Interim Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy**

10 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 10.1 There will be an Equality Impact Assessment completed as part of the development of the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028. This will be taken to the Check and Challenge Group for approval and will accompany the final version.

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The development of the new Corporate Strategy will address the needs of all communities across Melton.

12 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 12.1 The current Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2024 contains the priority theme ‘Protect our climate and enhance our natural environment’ which sets out our commitments to deliver on climate change.
- 12.2 Work on the new strategy will consider the commitments made and the climate change strategy which is currently in development.

13 Risk & Mitigation

- 13.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report, risk management will be an important part of the review process and the current corporate risk register will be used to inform the development of priority themes. A new performance and risk management framework will be produced and aligned to the new Corporate Strategy 2024-28.

14 Background Papers

- 14.1 None

15 Appendices

- 15.1 Town Centre - Member Policy Development Working Groups Terms of Reference (Appendix 1)
- 15.2 Asset Development Programme - Member Policy Development Working Groups Terms of Reference (Appendix 2)