

SUBJECT: Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28

MEETING: County Council

DATE: 20th April 2023

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek approval of a new Community and Corporate Plan that sets the direction for the council and county of Monmouthshire, articulating the authority's purpose and priorities alongside the steps we will take to deliver these, the accountable Cabinet member and the measures that will be used to track progress.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council approve the Community and Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 That Council adopt the six goals in the plan as the Council's Well-being Objectives in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 2.3 That Council note the targets set within the measurement framework, attached as appendix 2, and task Cabinet with ensuring that these are reviewed and updated over the lifetime of the plan.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Following the elections in May 2022, the new Cabinet began to articulate the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the county. Starting with a series of collaborative workshops, and drawing on a wide range of evidence, high-level political ambition has been converted into a whole authority strategic plan that sets the direction for the organisation for the period 2022-28. The plan extends beyond the next election to ensure a degree of strategic continuity following the local elections that will take place in May 2027
- 3.2 The plan has been produced against the backdrop of economic uncertainty with the council facing rising energy prices, inflation and escalating borrowing costs alongside increased demands in areas such as children's services, adult social care, homelessness, additional learning needs and home to school transport. The authority's budget settlement for the current year was better than anticipated but is still below inflation and these challenges we face are

on a scale not seen before. As our budgets become stretched more of our funding will need to be spent on core services. This means we need to be innovative in our approach to keep providing the things our communities value.

- 3.3 The ambition outlined in the document looks to the long-term and is focused on the well-being of current and future generations. The actions cover the first steps of the journey and will continue to shape the development of the council's medium-term financial plan to make sure that our spending follows clear priorities. The Community and Corporate Plan establishes a clear purpose to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. This is supported by six well-being objectives shown in paragraph 3.7 below.
- 3.4 The objectives were initially endorsed by Cabinet in October. They were subsequently incorporated into a draft Community and Corporate Plan which was presented to Council on two occasions. Members did not challenge the direction of travel or objectives set in the plan but there was agreement that councillors wanted to see more details about accountability and how progress would be measured.
- 3.5 The plan has now been re-shaped to ensure a more coherent narrative, a more concise measurement framework aligned to the actions and targets that will allow for greater accountability over this period. The plan is also more explicit about the specific projects that will be delivered under the strategic objectives. Progress can then be tracked through regular reports to Cabinet members which can be examined by Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.6 The document establishes a clear purpose to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life and sets the goals for Monmouthshire to be a:
- **Fair place** to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced;
 - **Green place** to live and work with reduced carbon emissions and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency;
 - **Thriving and ambitious place**, where there are vibrant town centres and where businesses can grow and develop
 - **Safe place** to live where people have a home where they feel secure in;
 - **Connected place** where people feel part of a community and are valued;
 - **Learning place** where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.
- 3.7 These objectives are underpinned by a series of actions that will ensure that the organisation is able to deliver on its ambition and a range of measures to enable progress to be monitored. The Performance and Overview Scrutiny

Committee will receive reports to evaluate how well the strategy is being implemented and ensure decision-makers are accountability for delivery.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The plan contains commitments to action relating to equalities, social justice, corporate parenting and safeguarding.

4.2 An integrated impact assessment has been completed and accompanies this report. The Community and Corporate Plan applies the ways of working outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This includes taking a long-term view and developing preventative approaches. The plan details some activities that require further work and additional reports to decision-makers. Each of these will be subject to individual decisions in accordance with the council's constitution including completing equality and future generations evaluations where appropriate.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 Every choice we make carries an opportunity cost. Some of these commitments – such as the building of new schools – have already been approved by Council as part of an agreed policy position while others are in the early stages of development. Each new proposal brought forward to deliver against these goals will be subject to an individual decision in accordance with the constitution.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 The Community and Corporate Plan sets out clearly the council's purpose. It contains specific objectives which can be measured over time. A full measurement framework is contained as an appendix to the plan. The decision to adjust targets over the lifetime of the plan, in response to changing circumstances, sits with Cabinet and Chief Officers.

6.2 The actions to deliver the plan will be embedded in the service business plans of individual teams. Headline quantitative measures and progress updates will be made available to the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. A full evaluation of progress will be produced annually as part of the authority's self-assessment carried out under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

7. REASONS:

7.1 To ensure that high-level political ambition is converted into a clearly articulated strategic plan that sets the direction for the organisation and gives clarity to council staff and partners.

- 7.2 To ensure that resources can be aligned with the organisations priorities and provide a basis for the organisation's work to be evaluated as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- 7.3 To ensure that the Council has clear Well-being Objectives as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 Rising costs will mean that we will not be able to keep doing everything that we have done in the past in exactly the same way. Each of the activities in the community and corporate plan carries some resource implications and the plan has been developed alongside the budget and in knowledge of the financial pressures experienced by the organisation as referred to in paragraph 3.2

9. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team

This document was developed through a series of workshops involving councillors from all political parties alongside experts and people from different organisations. The current iteration of the plan has also been shaped by comments received when the previous versions debated at Council in November and January and subsequent interactions with councillors from all political groups.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

11. AUTHOR:

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12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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