

SUBJECT:	A Framework for a Corporate Plan and Enabling Strategies
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	4 October 2017
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To set out the approach and timescales for the development of a whole-authority strategic plan or 'Corporate Plan' which will contain the Medium Term Financial Plan and the related enabling strategies and plans.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That cabinet approves the suggested framework for the development of a whole authority strategic plan or 'Corporate Plan', which will frame and contain the MTFP and inform and shape a whole set of enabling and delivery plans around People; Digital and Customers, Assets and Commercial; Social Justice and Well-being and Enterprise and Economic Development.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees the timeframe set out in paragraph 3.10 in order to ensure progress is made and that responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and understood.
- 2.3 That Cabinet commission an annual report, to be received by Audit Committee, on the continued effectiveness of the council's strategic planning framework, ensuring the necessary checks and balances are in place around monitoring, evaluation, decision-making and policy-making

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background – the recent past

- 3.1 With the convening of a new administration and a new five year political term – an opportunity is presented to take stock; to review and evaluate and to look ahead and set an agenda that will deliver for the residents and communities of Monmouthshire. The last five years have been characterised by significant change and volatility: demographic shifts, continued financial turbulence, Brexit, social and technological challenges and the emergence of regionalism. Against this backdrop, the continuity of front-line services has been maintained; performance improvements in key areas have been secured and some £17m of sustainable efficiencies have been achieved.

- 3.2** Amidst the instability of the wider country-level landscape, the strategic policy agenda for the past period has been a relatively stable one. Locally, the county-wide Single Integrated Plan was at the forefront of the strategic planning framework – providing a clear purpose around creation of ‘sustainable and resilient communities’. At a council-level, the Partnership Agreement and the annual Improvement Plans set the organisation-wide direction and spawned the development of four priority areas: protecting vulnerable people; education; cultivating enterprise and job creation and maintaining locally accessible services.
- 3.3** The policy landscape in recent times has however, changed substantially, and this is already having significant implications for our work locally. The appended slide-deck sets out the shifts and evolution brought about by ongoing education reform, the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2016), the inception of the Cardiff Capital Region and its first City Deal and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015). Additionally, the focus on Local Government Reform and the White Paper ‘Renewed and Resilient’ proposes significant revisions and evolution to Council’s operating form and footprint. All of this plays out against the continuing backdrop of financial uncertainty, Brexit and demographic and societal change.
- 3.4** All of this, poses significant challenges and opportunities for our county. As a council, ambition for our place and the people who live here, remains high. The issue is, the council does not have the resources – in both financial and human terms - to deliver on all things and at the same time. The task at the beginning of this new term is to convert high-level political ambition into a tight and understandable whole authority strategic ‘Corporate Plan’ – and programme the associated delivery work, over the medium-term. This means re-setting priorities and re-shaping direction so there is a sense of renewed and shared purpose. This Plan must be practicable and tangible and cannot be all things to all people, if it is to be delivered within budget and within the cost envelope provided by our Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3.5** The Corporate Plan should ideally be in place, before any of the enabling or horizontal strategies around People, Digital and Customers, Assets and Commercial and Enterprise, Social Justice and Well-being and Economic Development are revised. This will ensure that our internal work is aligned with the big issues – many of which have been identified through the recent ‘Our Monmouthshire’ well-being assessment process. In line with this, some work has been done on potential contenders for prioritisation over the next term – but more work is needed to explore future scenarios and trends to ensure we are applying an important foresight lens.

Forwards to the Future

- 3.6** Future Monmouthshire is an approved policy position that enables delivery against our purpose - *creating sustainable and resilient communities* – and the four wellbeing objectives agreed by Council in March. The design principles at its core will inform how we prioritise the issues.
- 3.7** Our approach will be to build a framework for a Corporate Plan will include:
- Drawing upon the political priorities articulated in the local conservative manifesto and emerging cabinet member priorities, challenges highlighted in the Well-being Assessment, some of the high-level challenges emanating from Future Monmouthshire, issues identified through data and financial analysis and issues raised ‘on the doorstep’ during the May election. These are illustrated by a diagram shown as appendix 1.
 - Bringing together ambition and direction, alongside a clear assessment of the investment needed to deliver. This will locate the MTFP within the Corporate Plan demonstrating that money follows purpose;
 - Providing a context and direction for the revision of our key enabling strategies and plans – i.e. People and Customer, Digital and Technology, Enterprise and Economic Development and Commercial and Assets.
 - Ensuring that clear criteria are set to allow strategies to be evaluated and ensure public accountability and organisational learning
 - Reviewing all other existing delivery strategies and plans outside of this to ensure there are synergies and alignments with renewed purpose and priorities.
- 3.8** In short, the process surrounding building a Corporate Plan framework that sets out clear direction and the resources required to deliver it; will be a comprehensive and wide-ranging one ensuring that related policies and toolkits are reviewed and brought in line with renewed purpose, priorities and ambitions.
- 3.9** Improving alignment within and across our strategic planning framework important for good governance. This is especially key at this time of considerable change, instability and adjustment. The council has a role to set out direction, ambition and purpose which will provide the basis for future decision-making - the strategic planning framework provides the tools through which to enact this. Good governance means it is important for everyone to be sighted on how these plans will be developed and is clear about the processes and approaches that will be applied and adopted and how they will be measured and evaluated. This clarity will ensure that people can understand their fit with the organisations purpose and the contribution that is required of them.

3.10 It is anticipated that individual cabinet members will work alongside officers during October and November to shape the plan and ensuring that ground-work can get underway on the emerging priorities, enabling the plan to be approved in December. Revised enabling strategies will be presented to Cabinet in January with the updating of toolkits and other plans continuing into 2018.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

4.1 This paper introduces the framework for setting the whole authority plan. Options will emerge later in the process and will be presented to Cabinet at that stage

5. EVALUATION

5.1 Cabinet will receive an annual report on the continued effectiveness of the strategic planning framework, ensuring the necessary checks and balances are in place around monitoring, evaluation, decision-making and policy-making.

5.2 The measures that will be used to determine the effectiveness of the strategy will be dependent on the final shape of the document that Cabinet agree later in the process.

6. REASONS:

6.1 The reasons for the proposals set out in this report are:

- The beginning of a new term presents the opportunity to evaluate and review progress and set an agenda that will further deliver on the issues that matter most to the residents and communities of Monmouthshire;
- There are significant challenges and opportunities that must be responded to and the Council, with its diminishing resources, must prioritise what can be done and the kind of a work that will make the most difference to our county;
- To convert high-level political ambition, data, evidence and 'what matters' into a coherent whole authority strategic 'Corporate Plan'. This will mean re-setting priorities and re-shaping direction to renew the sense of shared purpose;
- The Corporate Plan cannot be developed and delivered in isolation. It must embed the MTFP and set the tone and parameters for the revision of the full set of enabling and horizontal plans and strategies. This will ensure

that there is clarity of direction and that everyone understand their 'fit' and the contribution required of them; and,

- To strengthen governance arrangements around our whole-authority strategic planning frameworks so better alignment, consistency and robust evaluation, is achieved.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this work. In Human Resource terms, this work will sit under the newly created Head of Policy and Governance and the teams that are brought together to deliver the programme.

6. FUTURE GENERATIONS AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The report is in many ways, a direct response to the opportunity to embed foresight and direction-setting into our core work, strategies, practices and mindsets. It details the need to be fit for future in order to deliver the best outcomes for our county and to ensure good governance, accountability and a strong sense of responsibility is at the heart of what we do.
- 6.2 Any specific policy decisions emerging from the strategy will be accompanied by separate impact evaluations.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

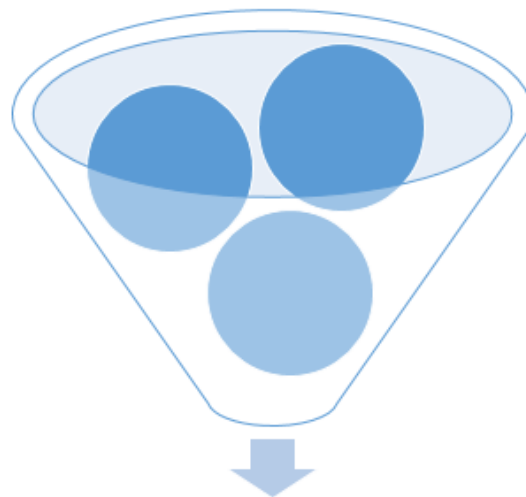
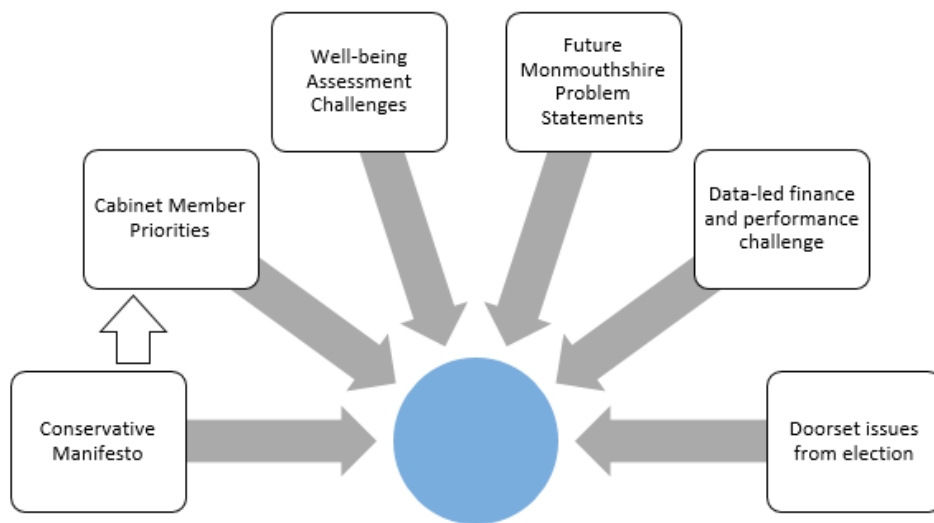
- 7.1 The proposals make a contribution to safeguarding through ensuring a focus on fitness for purpose and have a clear direction about the things that matter.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Slide deck – 'Strategy Refresh'

9. AUTHOR:

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Apply tests to prioritise

- Including:
- Is it affordable?
 - Is it aligned with our purpose?
 - Will benefits exceed costs?
 - Will it compromise future opportunities?
 - Are there unintended consequences?
 - WFG Act 5 ways of working Test – consider: integrated; long-term; collaborative; involve; preventative
 - Can this be enhanced to maximise impact on national well-being goals?

Align with MCCs Purpose and Well-being Objectives
Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

