

Meeting date: 13th April 2021

Report to: Full Council



Subject/report title: The Council Plan Update 2020 - 2025

Report from: Councillor Ian Courts, Leader of the Council

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Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph:

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present updates to the Council Plan, 2020 - 2025 for approval.

2. Decision(s) recommended

2.1 To approve updates to the Council Plan, 2020 - 2025.

3. Matters for Consideration

3.1 The Council Plan sets out the direction we want to go in as a Council (our vision and purpose), how we aim to travel that journey and what we want to see at the end of it. It covers those major steps that we need to take in order to achieve our vision.

3.2 The Council Plan, 2020-2025 was approved by Council on 7th July 2020 and is published on the Council's website at <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-Solihull/Solihull-Council-Plan>. It sets out our headline analysis of our strengths, challenges and opportunities, both as a Council and as a borough. It outlines the strategic context that we work in, and how we are developing our services, and ways of working, to better meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

3.3 At the heart of the plan is the belief that economic development, environmental sustainability and health and well-being must go hand in hand. This is reflected in our

nine 'key things to do' – the priorities at the heart of the plan. The plan has a set of component activities for each of our 'key things to do', a set of end outcomes that we want to see and a set of deliverables (things that we expect to deliver by the end of year one).

- 3.4 Recovery from the impacts of Covid-19, focusing on the needs of people, business and place, capitalising on opportunities and focusing on major projects such as the HS2 interchange and town & local centres is a theme running through the new plan. The plan also seeks to ensure that we are maximising the impact of our role as an employer, procurer, investor and service provider to deliver inclusive growth.
- 3.5 We have carried out a review of what has changed since we developed the Council Plan, grouped into three broad themes (economic, health and inequalities). The Covid-19 pandemic continues to be transformative and there is a clearer picture from national and local data about the likely impact on service demand and on economic and health & wellbeing outcomes for different population groups. Other changes in local, regional and national opportunities have also been considered.
- 3.6 It has been concluded that the fundamentals of the existing Council Plan, described above, are still sound. However, to recognise and address the impact of the Pandemic upon people who live, work and study in the borough, and the Council's workforce, it is proposed to make the following additions to the Plan on a Page (Appendix A):
- Inclusion of an explicit reference to improving health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities in the Plan on the Page, indicating the commitment to addressing health inequalities within the plan.
 - Addition of Employee Wellbeing as a 10th 'key thing to do'. This recognises the impact of the Pandemic upon the Council's workforce and the importance of the workforce to delivering the plan.
 - Addition of smarter ways of working as an enabler of efficiency and value for money. This recognises the opportunity to work in more agile flexible ways, benefitting the Council's workforce and contributing to better services.
 - Introduction of new enablers: connected & engaged communities and a vibrant Voluntary and Community Sector, strong, effective regional and local partnerships. These recognise the crucial role played by our communities and by our partners in the delivery of the ambitions in the Council Plan.
- 3.7 A revised a set of deliverables has also been developed for 2021/22 (Appendix B). These aim to take us a step closer to achieving the end outcomes that we want to achieve by 2025.

4. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 4.1 Through the Corporate and Directorate Leadership Teams we have followed an evidence-led approach to make decisions about which activities to prioritise for inclusion in the updated Plan on a Page and Deliverables for 2021/2. Cabinet Members and the Resources & Delivering Value Scrutiny Board have been engaged in this process. Staff have also been invited to provide feedback via email and Trade Unions have been briefed and their feedback taken on board in the preparation of the plan update.

5. Implications and Considerations

- 5.1 Delivery of the Council's priorities: How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of Council Priorities?
- 5.1.1 Consideration of whether changes are needed to the Council Plan is the purpose of this report.
- 5.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:
- 5.2.1 The involvement of partners and communities is integral to delivery of the Council Plan and is built into all of the activities that deliver the plan.
- 5.2.2 The Resources & Delivering Value Scrutiny Board was consulted on the draft plan at their meeting on 8th March. Comments made by the Board, particularly in relation to workforce wellbeing, have been incorporated into the updated Plan on a Page.
- 5.2.3 The delivery of the key things to do in the Council Plan will be a key focus of the Scrutiny work plan for 2021/2.
- 5.3 Financial implications:
- 5.3.1 The Council Plan sets out our priorities and the Medium Term Financial Strategy allocates and aligns our financial resources to them. They are complementary strategies which are reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- 5.4 Legal implications:
- 5.4.1 Production and publication of a Council Plan is not a statutory requirement but there are many advantages to doing so e.g. providing a clear vision, strategic direction and a high level plan.
- 5.5 Risk implications:
- 5.5.1 The Corporate Risk Management Policy applies to all of the activities in the Council Plan and will be complied with.

5.6 Equality Implications:

- 5.6.1 The Council Plan embraces the Council's published Equal Opportunities Policy Statement and Equality Objectives. These both provide a commitment to the important task of paying due regard to how the Council will work to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

6. List of appendices referred to

- 6.1 Appendix A: Plan on a Page 2021/22
- 6.2 Appendix B: Key Deliverables for 2021/22

7. Background papers used to compile this report

- 7.1 Council Plan 2020-25, approved 7th July 2020.

8. List of other relevant documents

- 8.1 None.