

**Meeting date:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022  
**Report to:** Resources & Delivering Value Scrutiny Board



**Subject/report title:** The Council Plan 2020-25 – Progress in Delivering Outcomes and Plan Refresh  
**Report from:** Councillor Ian Courts, Leader of the Council  
**Report author:** Sarah Barnes, Head of Business Intelligence and Improvement, sbarnes@solihull.gov.uk

---

**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 outline progress made in delivering the Solihull Council Plan in 2021/22 and seek the Board's views about the content of the 2022/23 plan update.

**2. Decision(s) recommended**

2.1 To receive a review of progress in delivering the Council Plan in 2021/22.  
2.2 To make recommendations about the content of the updated Council Plan, 2022/23.

**3. Matters for Consideration**

3.1 The Council Plan 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, our priorities and how we are developing our services and ways of working to better meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

3.2 The [2020-2025 Council Plan](#) was approved by Council on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and an [Update](#) approved by Council on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021. 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 'key things to do' – the priorities at the heart of the plan, shown in the 'wheel' on the [Plan on a Page](#) (Appendix A).

- 3.3 The plan has a set of end outcomes that we want to see and a set of things that we aim to deliver in the coming year (our deliverables).
- 3.4 This report reviews progress in delivering the Plan and gives the Board an opportunity to input into the development of the 2022/23 plan update.

#### **4. How is performance assessed?**

- 4.1 Every year, milestones are agreed for each deliverable in the Council Plan. Senior Responsible Officers then report on progress in achieving those milestones using a dashboard that highlights delivery and financial status, successes, issues and risks.
- 4.2 The Wider Corporate Leadership Team undertakes a review of these dashboards every quarter and identifies mitigating action required to address any issues. Where the programmes deliver Medium Term Financial Strategy savings, financial delivery is also closely monitored through the Aligning Resources to Our Priorities Board.
- 4.3 A Red Amber Green rating system is used to assess the delivery and financial status of each programme. Appendix B explains how these are assessed.

#### **5. How is the Council Plan delivery going?**

- 5.1 A detailed summary of delivery status, financial status, successes and key issues for each of the plan deliverables (2021/22) is at Appendix C. Key points are highlighted in the remainder of this section.

##### **Delivery Status**

- 5.2 Two thirds of the plan deliverables (twenty four out of thirty six) have a delivery status of 'green'; indicating that successful delivery of the programme appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that threaten delivery of the programme.
- 5.3 Some notable areas of progress include:
- (a) Achieving a sustainable financial position for 2022/23 to 2024/25 through the budget strategy process (deliverable No. 3 in Appendix C).
  - (b) Work to unlock the development opportunity at Arden Cross and HS2; for example, the Heads of Terms for a West Midlands Combined Authority loan for the multi-storey car park are agreed in principle (deliverable No. 4).
  - (c) On target to have planted 50,000 trees by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (No. 7).
  - (d) Provided enhanced support in communities with higher rates of COVID, aiming to reduce transmission and minimise the inequalities impacts (No. 12).
  - (e) A partnership bid for the establishment of family hubs across the borough has been submitted; the outcome will be known in March 2022 (No. 15).
  - (f) Proposing a significantly more ambitious roll out of rapid Electric Vehicle charging than originally envisaged. Draft procurement documentation is in

preparation, with a view to going to market for delivery of 50+ rapid Electric Vehicle Charging Points in 2022-24 (No. 20).

- (g) New contracts are in place for Mental Health Community Services and plans to mobilise new services by April 2022 are underway (No. 22).
- (h) Implementation of the multi-agency exploitation reduction strategy, including the launch of a major communications programme to raise the profile of support available to those affected (No. 23).
- (i) Solihull Holiday Activities & Food Programme was successfully delivered during 2021 with higher-than-expected engagement and participation by children, young people, families, and delivery providers (No. 27).
- (j) Providing the physical and digital environment to support smarter ways of working (No. 29).
- (k) Developed an enhanced employee wellbeing offer (No. 34).

5.4 Two of the plan deliverables have a delivery status of 'red' meaning that some elements of delivery may need re-baselining and / or overall viability re-assessed:

- a) The target to increase the number and range of in house foster placements by recruiting at least six new mainstream fostering households by March 2022 will not be achieved in full. We are currently on track to recruit 4 new households and are developing a fostering marketing campaign, as well as work on retention and support of existing foster carers. The timing of further foster carer recruitment activity needs to be carefully planned to maximise the chances of success.
- b) Migration to Oracle Cloud of the finance, procurement and human resource systems has been delayed. A replanning process is in operation and the rating will be reset once the revised plan is approved by the Project Board.

5.5 One of the plan deliverables is paused – to implement the Strengthening Families and Protecting Children's work stream with Leeds City Council and the Department for Education to address the high numbers of Children in Care (No.36). The Joint Targeted Area Inspection and the National Child Safeguarding Review meant that we had to reassess priorities and we took the difficult decision to pause the Strengthening Families programme. Work will continue behind the scenes to enable us to pick the project back up in summer 2022.

5.6 Nine of the plan deliverables have an amber delivery rating meaning that successful delivery appears feasible but issues exist that require management attention:

- Some amber ratings reflect the size and complexity of the task e.g. unlocking the development opportunity at Arden Cross and HS2.
- Several amber ratings reflect issues about capacity to deliver given competing demands on limited staff resources, including continuing to respond to the Covid pandemic.

- Covid has also had other impacts on delivery; for example, the fact that Job Centres had to temporarily reduce or remove face to face delivery impacted upon delivery of a successful Kickstart programme and a Youth Hub (No. 13).

## **Financial Status**

- 5.7 The council plan deliverables concern some of the major challenges facing the Council - delivery of Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings, securing external funding to deliver high profile economic growth and environmental projects and managing demand for high cost services. Measures are in place to monitor and manage financial risks associated with these activities.
- 5.8 Seventeen 2021/22 deliverables have a green financial rating, eight have an amber financial rating, one has a red rating (increase the number and range of in house foster placements) while one (Strengthening Families) is paused.
- 5.9 A number of amber financial ratings relate to a reliance on external funding streams to deliver e.g. the redevelopment of Kingshurst (No. 5), planting 250k trees by 2030 (No. 7) or clarity about future funding e.g. for hospital admissions avoidance (No. 14).

## **6. Council Plan Update 2022/23**

- 6.1 We are currently in the process of updating the Council plan for 2022-23.
- 6.2 The structure of our plan, around the themes of economy, environment and people & communities is still sound. Also, our 'key things to do', shown in the 'wheel' on the ['Plan on a Page'](#) (Appendix A), are still fit for purpose with some updates to wording.
- 6.3 The main change is to the plan text, which is being rewritten to reflect the changing context that we operate in, opportunities and key challenges. These will include:
- Delivering, with partners, improvements in services for children, young people and families, in order that children and young people are appropriately safeguarded and supported.
  - National policy and legislative developments e.g. the Environment Act, Adult Social Care, Integration and Levelling Up White Papers.
  - Addressing the health, social, economic and inequalities impacts of Covid-19.
  - The impacts of climate change and the challenges this poses as well as the Council's response through the development of a net zero action plan.
  - Taking the next steps in realising our vision for UK Central, a key driver of future prosperity.
  - Improving public transport and connectivity between places.
  - The impact of cost-of-living pressures on the demand for public services.
  - Structural challenges in commissioning services e.g. difficulties in recruiting skilled staff, difficulty in recruiting to the care workforce and resulting cost pressures.
  - The changing partnership landscape e.g. the further development of place-based working as part of an Integrated Care System.

- Forthcoming changes in the regulatory environment for Adult Care and Support.

- 6.4 The plan seeks to focus on issue, actions and outcomes that we can influence. We will develop a set of clear and measurable things that we will deliver in 2022/23 for each of our 'key things to do',
- 6.5 Soundings about the content of the updated plan are currently taking place with Cabinet Portfolio Holders, Directorate Leadership Teams and the Boards / Groups leading on different aspects of the plan. Wider employee engagement is planned through a series of sessions about key plan themes, beginning with sustainability and climate change. A briefing for the Trade Unions has also been arranged.
- 6.6 Feedback from Scrutiny of Council Plan key programmes during 2021/22 (see Appendix D) is also being used to inform the refresh of the Council Plan. Briefings for political groups and independent members are also being arranged.
- 6.7 The views of the Resources & Delivering Value Scrutiny Board are sought about the content of the updated plan.

## **7. Implications and Considerations**

- 7.1 Delivery of the Council's priorities: How will the options / proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of Council Priorities?
- 7.1.1 Scrutiny of delivery of the Council's priorities and consideration of whether changes are needed to the Council Plan is the purpose of this report.
- 7.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:
- 7.2.1 The involvement of partners and communities is integral to delivery of the Council Plan and is built into each of the key programmes.
- 7.2.2 The work plans for each of the Scrutiny Boards are aligned to the programmes in the Council Plan. Appendix D summarises scrutiny of key programmes during the year.
- 7.3 Financial implications:
- 7.3.1 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.
- 7.4 Legal implications:
- 7.4.1 Production and publication of a Council Plan is not a statutory requirement but there are many advantages to doing so.
- 7.5 Risk implications:
- 7.5.1 The Corporate Risk Management Policy applies to all the programmes in the Council Plan and will be complied with.

## 7.6 Statutory Equality Duty:

- 7.6.1 In delivering the priorities, the Council has a duty to ensure that 'due regard' is taken under our Statutory Equality Duty. Fair Treatment Assessments are undertaken within the programmes of work that deliver the plan, where necessary.

## 8. List of appendices referred to

- 8.1 Appendix A: Council Plan on a Page.
- 8.2 Appendix B: Explanation of delivery and performance rating system used.
- 8.3 Appendix C: Summary of Council Plan Programme Delivery during 2021/22.
- 8.4 Appendix D: Summary of Scrutiny of Council Plan key programmes during 2021/22.

## 9. Background papers used to compile this report

- 9.1 None

## 10. List of other relevant documents

- 10.1 [Solihull Council Plan, 2020-2025](#)
- 10.2 [Council Plan Update 2021/22](#)