

# Corporate Plan 2024-25 Delivery Plan and Communications Framework



<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	21 March 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder(s):</b>	Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council
<b>Lead Officer(s):</b>	Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive, (01279) 446002
<b>Contributing Officer(s):</b>	Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance (01279) 446228  Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Support (01279) 446099  Rebecca Farrant, Assistant Director Corporate Services (01279 446811)
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Forward Plan number I016752
<b>Call In:</b>	This item is subject to call in procedures
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	Improve council services.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	This decision will affect no ward specifically.

## **Recommended that Cabinet agrees:**

- A** That the Corporate Plan delivery plan for 2024 - 2025, attached as Appendix A to the report, is approved.
- B** That the supporting Communications Framework, attached as Appendix B to the report, is approved.

## Reason for decision

- A** A robust Corporate Plan is a central component of the council's business planning and is underpinned by the council's financial planning set out in the new Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024-28. The Plan provides the council with a framework for decision making and allocation of resources and was approved by Full Council on 14 December 2023. Delivery of the plan, and supporting communications, will fulfil the six missions contained within it and keep residents informed and engaged.
- B** A Communications Peer review was carried out in 2022 to look at the effectiveness of the council's internal and external communication activities and helped to identify areas where we can make improvements and develop our communications activities. The recommendations for the review included the short-term development of immediate priorities up until March 2023 and development of an overarching strategic communications framework to support the new corporate plan from 2024 onwards.

## Other Options

- A** Consideration of other options do not apply; the agreement of policy framework for the council is laid out in the Council's constitution and the Corporate Plan has been determined by Full Council. Delivery of the plan follows this determination.

## Background

1. The council's Corporate Plan was adopted by Full Council on 14 December 2023 and covers the period 2024-2028. The plan has a focus on issues that have arisen from the 2023 residents' survey, the council's own priorities and work with the LGA to develop a corporate narrative for the council.
2. A thematic approach to the new corporate plan provides a strategic level approach to service delivery by the council. The narrative focuses on six Corporate Plan missions to:
  - Transform Harlow's Housing
  - Renew our Neighbourhoods
  - Rebuild our Town
  - Secure Investment for Harlow's Future
  - Protect our Communities
  - Deliver High-Performing Council Services

## Delivery Plan

3. Each Corporate Plan mission has a number of key outcome areas. Milestones and performance measures have been set against outcomes for completion in 2024-25. Milestones demonstrate when an action will be commenced or completed and show progress against this for actions and activities that span more than one year.

Performance indicators will use data to show where the council has improved upon previous service delivery, or to show the impact outcomes have had on Harlow's communities and businesses.

4. The delivery plan document, found at appendix A, shows the actions and measurements through milestones and/or performance indicators for each outcome, with timescales for completion. Measuring and monitoring the success of the plan through milestones and performance indicators will demonstrate the council has delivered what it has said it will do in the Corporate Plan.
5. Annual reporting on the achievement of milestones and performance against indicators across the preceding year will be brought to Cabinet in Q1 of each year. Relevant data sets will be benchmarked against other local authorities and national averages where appropriate.

### **Communications strategic oversight**

6. A Communications Framework will support the Corporate Plan delivery and sets out how the council will communicate and engage with people through promoting priorities over the lifetime of the plan. The document, found at Appendix B, sets out the objectives of the council's communications team to lead on the use of the council's narrative, protect and enhance the councils' reputation, develop engaging internal communication and ensure the right messages are delivered at the right time to the right people in the right way.
7. The strategic framework sets out who the council's audiences are and the different ways in which the council will communicate with them using a campaign led approach. This approach will consider what relevant data is telling the council about its audiences, including hard to reach communities, and what the aims of each campaign are so that communications activities can be attractive, appropriate and timely.
8. The strategic framework sets out the approach to prioritising communications to enable most effective use of available resources, and how the effectiveness of communications campaigns will be evaluated.

### **Proposals**

9. The Corporate Plan delivery plan demonstrates how everyone in the council will work towards the six Corporate Plan missions. It is coupled with the MTFP covering the same period and will be the basis for service and team planning, as well as individual staff performance plans.
10. Measuring and monitoring the success of the plan through milestones and performance indicators will demonstrate the council has delivered what it set out to do during 2024/25.

11. Supporting communications will inform resident communities and businesses of the work the council is doing, and part they can play in it, and will enable and enhance plan delivery.

## **Implications**

### **Equalities and Diversity**

A full equality impact assessment has been undertaken on the Corporate Plan. Carrying out the equalities impact assessment ensures the priorities set by the council support the Council's equality objectives while maintaining compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Individual actions in the delivery plan will be subject to their own equalities impact assessment.

### **Climate Change**

The delivery plan includes further work to be undertaken by the council in the next year to consult on its Climate Change Strategy subject to Cabinet approval.

### **Communities and Environment**

Priorities have been set in conjunction with outcomes set in existing strategies relating to health and wellbeing, community safety, economic development and community engagement.

### **Finance**

The Corporate Plan has been set in conjunction with the council's new MTFP, and the delivery plan has been set in line with this.

### **Governance and Corporate Services**

The Corporate Plan was adopted by the council on 14 December 2023. This annual delivery plan delivers on decisions made by Cabinet and Full Council to set out actions in each year of the plan to meet the six missions contained within the plan.

Public and stakeholder consultation as well as a data led approach has aided in the shaping of the Corporate Plan.

### **Housing**

Milestones and performance indicators have been set in conjunction with existing housing strategy and policy documents.

### **Strategic Growth and Regeneration**

Milestones and performance indicators have been set in conjunction with existing regeneration and commercial and residential development programme and project planning.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Corporate Plan Delivery Plan

Appendix B – Communications framework

## **Background Papers**

Report to Scrutiny Committee – Corporate Plan (31 October 2023)

<https://moderngov.harlow.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MId=2643&Ver=4>

Report to Cabinet – Corporate Plan 2024-28 (30 November 2023)

<https://moderngov.harlow.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&MId=2585&Ver=4>

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

LGA – Local Government Association

MTFP – Medium Term Financial Plan