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| Committee(s): Policy, Resources and Economic Development | Date: 9 September 2020 |
| Subject: Corporate Strategy update and Recovery Planning 2020-21 | Wards Affected: All |
| Report of: Jonathan Stephenson, Chief Executive | Public |
| Report Author/s: Name: Steve Summers, Chief Operating Officer Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: steve.summers@brentwood.gov.uk | For Decision |

Summary

The Council's Corporate Strategic Plan 2020-25 was adopted in January 2020 and included the council's key objectives for 2020/21.

This report seeks to members approval for the draft 2020/21 Business and Recovery Plan and also to update members on the progress of the Corporate Strategic Plan 2020/21 key objectives to date.

In addition, the report seek the committees endorsement of the framework and blueprint for the council's approach to recovery of both the council and the borough from the initial phase of the Covid-19, (C19), pandemic.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. That the committee agrees the Business and Recovery Plan 2020/21 as attached at Appendix A.

R2. That the committee notes the progress of the Corporate Strategic 2020/21 key objectives as set out within this report.

R3. That the committee agrees the 2020/21 Business and Recovery Plan Performance Management Framework as attached at Appendix B.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

The Corporate Strategic Plan was agreed in January 2020 and contained within the plan was key objectives for 2020/21. Due to the C19 pandemic the Council moved into

an emergency and business continuity process, the results of which are set out in Item 4 on this agenda.

Moving forward in addition to the 2020/21 key objectives, Officers have identified a number of recovery actions which need to be in place to ensure the council's approach and delivery to C19.

In order to monitor progress, the council has developed a Performance Management Framework which is attached at Appendix B.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

For the council, the report sets out some areas of focus for how the organisation intends to operate going forward - as well as how services might be delivered differently - with the opportunity to embed the flexibilities which have developed as the council has adapted to C19.

The report also sets out in the Corporate Strategic Plan themes how we will drive the wider recovery plan for the borough and which will form the basis of how the council approaches recovery. Each theme includes key actions which the council will take to make progress, with the intention that the report is more than just a strategy document and instead takes the form of an initial action plan for recovery.

Some of these actions – such as those being taken forward in partnership with businesses to support the safe reopening of the High Streets – are short-term actions. Others, such as progression of a major generation programmes and plans to build councils houses are longer-term.

Ultimately, the future prosperity of the borough in the aftermath of C19 will depend on the council and its strategic partners continuing to take immediate actions to keep people safe whilst working towards a long-term vision for the future.

Corporate Strategic Plan – 2020/21 Key objectives update

| Growing our economy | | |
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| No | Key objective | Progress to date |
| 1 | Adopt the Brentwood Town Centre Design Guide to encourage a high quality place to enjoy and do business. | Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by PRED Committee in December 2019. This is being used to inform development proposals in the town centre, including Council owned assets being progressed through the Brentwood Development Partnership (see growing our economy objective number 3 below). |

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| 2 | Submit our Local Development Plan for examination-in-public in early 2020 | <p>Submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2020. Planning Inspectors have been appointed and the Examination-in-Public is now underway. Correspondence with the inspectors and updates on progress are published at www.brentwood.gov.uk/examination.</p> <p>The project to deliver Dunton Hills Garden Village in line with emerging Local Development Plan policy has progressed. The draft Framework Masterplan Document and the mandatory spatial principles were presented to both PRED Committee and Planning & Licensing Committee in March 2020. A Detailed Design Supplementary Planning Document is now being prepared, which included co-design with local community groups over the summer and a public consultation soon.</p> |
| 3 | Encourage and facilitate businesses who want to invest in the borough to capitalise on the opportunities that come with the opening of the Elizabeth line to Brentwood and Shenfield | <p>This is an ongoing objective to be incorporated within the forthcoming Economic Development Strategy. Further resource and expertise is needed to focus on inward investment. Discussion has continued with businesses interested in moving to the borough. Progressing the Local Development Plan to adoption will assist bring forward new employment land for businesses to locate to. In addition, and in line with a related recommendation from the Economic Development Study (March 2020) to investigate opportunities for relocating public sector offices to the borough, options are being considered.</p> |
| 4 | Work with the Brentwood Development Partnership to create redevelopment schemes for the sites at William Hunter Way, Maple Close and Westbury Road | <p>Masterplanning work has commenced and pre-application discussion is underway with the Planning Development Management Team. Submission of planning applications for Maple Close and Westbury Road are expected later this year.</p> |
| Protecting our environment | | |
| No | Key objective | Progress to date |

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| 1 | Introduce a new recycling scheme to improve the quality of recycling and reduce the number of polymer sacks we issue by 80% | The new recycling scheme commenced on the 3rd August 2020. |
| 2 | Encourage the creation of a car hub in the borough | Work has commenced on the creation of a car hub but has been on hold due to Covid 19. |
| 3 | Introduce an electric vehicle charging point | Two EV chargers have been installed already with a further 6 chargers to be installed in the coming months. |
| 4 | Develop an anti-littering campaign involving junior schools | This objective is complete. |
| 5 | Conduct a feasibility study on the development of our compost facility to reduce our carbon footprint and offer compost to residents | This project is currently on hold subject to further discussions with Essex County Council. |
| 6 | Agree the introduction of carbon offset schemes | Work for this objective is due to commence in the Autumn 2020. |

Developing our communities

| No | Key objective | Progress to date |
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| 1 | Commence Phase 1 of the King George's Playing Fields refurbishment plan – play area/ | Works were paused due to COVID-19 and Government guidance. The toddler play area has been completed and is open to the public. The play area at River Road has also been completed. Phase 2 – Junior play area at King George's Playing Fields will commence Autumn/Winter 2020. |
| 2 | Submit planning application for proposed Football Hub development at the Brentwood Centre | The Football Hub development is part of the overall master planning for the Brentwood Centre site. The Council is working with Brentwood Development Partnership on the overall master planning with a timeline of outline planning for the whole submitted by December 2020. |
| 3 | Install an outdoor gym in Courage Playing Fields | Installation of the outdoor gym was paused due to COVID-19 and relevant Government advice. |

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| 4 | Produce the Brentwood Community Safety Partnership annual plan | The plan has been produced and agreed on the 26 th June 2020. |
| 5 | Deliver an annual plan of community event | Strawberry Fair and the Family Fun Days have been delivered virtually due to COVID-19 and adhering to the latest Government guidance. It is proposed that both Lighting Up Brentwood and Shenfield Christmas Fayre will adopt similar virtual delivery. |
| 6 | Innovate the Brentwood Community Fund, including providing more investment | Options on investment to the Brentwood Community Fund are being explored. Currently AXiS the Council's repairs and maintenance contract contributes £20k to the fund pot as part of their Social Value policy. |
| Improving housing | | |
| No | Key objective | Progress to date |
| 1 | Establish a clear and deliverable Strategic Housing Development Plan | The Council have commissioned an external company to assist with developing a Strategic Housing Development Plan. It is intended that a report on progress will be made to the Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee in October 2020. |
| 2 | Conduct a review of sheltered housing to ensure the best possible service is created to our sheltered housing residents | Officers are currently considering the best approach for this review. |
| 3 | Create a housing company that provides more opportunity for the council to deliver a diverse range of housing options for our current and future generations | This key objective will be considered and actioned as part of the Strategic Housing Development Plan. |
| Delivering an efficient and effective council | | |
| No | Key objective | Progress to date |
| 1 | Sustain £1m revenue via commercial activities to reduce the revenue budget gap | On target to sustain £1m revenue via commercial activities as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. |

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| 2 | Consult with residents on the council's budget | In progress plans to consult on budget in October/November 2020. |
| 3 | Deliver a revised Customer Strategy | In progress this strategy will underpin a wider Digital Strategy, which is in development and expected to be reported to a PRED meeting later in the year. |
| 4 | Report quarterly, via the website, the council's key performance indicators | Complete. PI's are reported monthly, via DataShare, on the Council's website. |
| 5 | Develop further the online customer portal to include enquiry tracking | Tracking facilities in place for Street Cleansing, Abandoned Vehicles and Fly-tipping reports via the MyBrentwood customer portal. |
| 6 | Work collaboratively with partners in the Town Hall hub | The Town Hall Reception has been closed since 18 March 2020. Relationships with partners (DWP & CAB) has been maintained and regular updates and communications have been shared between organisations. |
| 7. | Review the Council's Constitution | To ensure decision making and process is clear, transparent and democratic. Two CWG meetings have taken place so far. The Constitution was amended to enable remote meetings to be held and for an Emergency Committee to convened. |
| 8. | Review Law and Governance Services | To provide effective support for the Council to fulfil its strategic objectives. To provide value for money. A review of the services has commenced. |
| 9. | Review Information Governance | To ensure that the Council complies with its Statutory and Regulatory duties. A review of the Council's Information Governance processes has commenced. |

Recovery Actions 2020/21

Growing our economy

- Work with Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, Brentwood Business Partnership, businesses, police, Essex County Council and members to review and implement physical measures in the Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone Shopping Centres to support businesses and social distancing
- Ensure that all Discretionary Grants are supplied to businesses in a timely manner
- Adopt a new Economic Development Strategy to focus corporate strategy aims to grow our economy and set delivery targets
- Parking enforcement – Review service and consider expanding service to maximise the efficiency and encourage the right behaviours
- Parking strategy – develop a strategy that includes cashless operations and encourages the use of the town centers, reduces congestion and increases green travel
- Licensing support – seek methods and ways to assist retailers and in turn encourage visitors back to the high streets
- Local Development Plan – Progress and adopt the new plan to manage future growth and meet development needs, including the review of policies according to the Government’s proposals for planning reform
- Dunton Hills Garden Village – Delivery of a new community in line with garden community principles
- Planning Enforcement – Ensure that the additional budget provided is effectively used to resource work to deal with unauthorised development and review the Council’s Enforcement Plan

Protecting our environment

- Develop an Environment Strategy and Action Plan that includes reference to opportunities emerging from the crisis and articulates environmental objectives during the recovery phase
- Fly tipping – seek methods and ways to reduce fly tipping within the borough
- Seek campaigns that will influence people’s behaviour into making the right choices
- Review the Purchase and use of Electric Vehicles
- Continue to identify opportunities to promote sustainable travel in the borough focusing on walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel as appropriate. Including new forms that may be piloted by the government
- Develop opportunities created by the epidemic including areas such as golf, reducing cash handling and improving end to end services through digital interaction

Developing our communities

- Community hubs – looking at reducing support required as we ease out of lockdown, regular review of emergency food support and handover to other support services, ongoing sustainability of volunteer support – through CVS and use of TRIBE app (via ECC)

- Domestic abuse – Review and update of Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health – Further development of Brentwood Community Tree support network of Mental Health services

Improving housing

- Reintroduce council house repairs and maintenance programmes and work with Axis to ensure the backlog is cleared
- Reintroduce services to let council homes and reintroduce housing options policies
- Support people in private sector rented accommodation

Delivering an efficient and effective council

- Monitor and regularly update budget impact to SLT and Group Leaders
- Conduct a review of 2020/21 revenue budgets to identify areas for reducing in-year expenditure
- Review the capital expenditure to ensure that the schemes still reflect the council's current priorities and that these are still affordable in the new financial landscape
- Update the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, to understand the short to medium term implications for saving requirements and use of reserves
- Undertake an organisation wide review of service delivery, to be taken forward as part of the 2021/22 budget and business planning cycle
- Develop a Digital Strategy which looks at how technology can enable organisational and service transformation – providing efficiency savings and a better experience for residents and business users
- Expand Digital Champions across all services
- Review homeworking equipment, implement short term fixes, plan and implement longer term changes
- Implement changes to the internal layout and other safety measures to the Town Hall and the Depot to support social distancing for employees to return when it is appropriate
- Develop longer term physical plan for Office layout linked to homeworking equipment changes
- Review and develop options for the provision of reception services to residents and businesses
- Continue to allow employees to work from home wherever possible, enabling a balance between home and office-based working allowing greater flexibility
- Review the decisions that have been taken as part of the crisis response to stop, start or amend service delivery – and the experience of working in different ways – to consider lessons learned and apply them to services over the longer-term.
- Review the Constitution to ensure transparency and democratic decision making.
- Introduced remote meetings of the Council, implemented the provisions of the Coronavirus Act and the Regulations made subsequently to ensure that the

Council could continue to carry out its functions. Including the introduction of an Emergency Committee.

- Review the Council's information governance to ensure compliance with Statutory and Regulatory duties.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council needs to monitor its performance of its agreed Key objectives.

The Council needs to be ever more efficient, develop a modern thinking and delivering council.

Consultation

No further consultation has been undertaken at this stage.

References to Corporate Plan

The Key Objectives for 2020/21 are set out within the Council's Corporate Strategic Plan approved in January 2020 by Ordinary Council.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources
Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

The Council Corporate objectives are an integral part of managing the resources available to deliver the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy within allocated Corporate Strategy Budgets. The Business and recovery Plan will be monitored alongside the council's robust budget monitoring processes.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Director of Law and Governance
Tel & Email: 01277 312500/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

The Council needs to ensure that it is compliant with its statutory obligations to deliver services to the people of the Borough, in order to do the decisions, need to be transparent and democratic. By reviewing the way decisions are made and updating the Constitution and ensuring the Governance of the Council is robust will mitigate the chances of those decisions being challenged,

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Planning and Economy
Tel/Email: 01277 312500/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

Economic growth features as an important part of the Council's corporate objectives, both in terms of a standalone chapter and throughout other chapters. Progressing the

identified objectives will benefit the local economy. Specific economic benefits of delivering objectives are set out within this report. The economic impact of COVID-19 has been unprecedented and looks likely to continue to affect the economy for years to come. Through uncertain times in the near future, it will be important for the Council to continue to work in partnership with Government, relevant agencies, local businesses, community groups, and residents, among others.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Background Papers

Brentwood Corporate Strategic Plan 2025

Appendices to this report

Appendix A: Business and Recovery Plan 2020/21.

Appendix B: Business and Recovery Performance Management Framework.