

Report



Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation

Part 1

Date: 17 February 2023

Subject Finance Service Plan 2022-24

Purpose To agree the Finance Service Plan 2022-2024 to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2022-27.

Author Head of Finance

Ward All

Summary In November 2022, Newport City Council agreed the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 to deliver an *Ambitious, Fairer, Greener Newport for Everyone*. To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, each service area has developed their service plan of their objectives and key priorities.

The Finance Service Plan 2022-24 has identified four objectives which will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan:

1. Support the medium to long term financial management & planning (Revenue and Capital) across the Council to focus resources on key objectives and help financial sustainability of Council services.
2. Develop a range of customer focused services via re-opening of face-to-face services and development of the 'Newport App' and 'My Council Services' systems.
3. Embed social value, carbon reduction and Welsh TOMs into the Council's procurement processes.
4. Revenues and Benefits team and Income Collection team support households and businesses through the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Additionally, the service plan includes the service area's projects and workforce development which will continuous improvement of services. To monitor the delivery of services, the Plan also includes key performance measures and risks which could prevent the service from achieving its objectives and/or impact delivery.

The Plans will be subject to six monthly reviews by the Council's scrutiny committees and will support the Council's annual Well-being and Self-Assessment Report.

Proposal For the Cabinet Member(s) to approve the Finance Service Plan to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Action by Head of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Cabinet Member(s)
- Executive Board
- Corporate Management Team

Signed

Background

In November 2022, Newport City Council approved the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 to deliver an *Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for Everyone*. The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to support the Well-being of Future Generations Act in Wales and to improve the delivery of services to the citizens of Newport. The Act requires all public bodies to carry out sustainable development to improve Wales' economic, social, environment and cultural well-being. To meet this statutory requirement, Newport Council must set and publish its Well-being Objectives to maximise its contribution to each of Wales' Well-being Goals. There are seven Well-being Goals set out in the Act:

1. A Prosperous Wales
2. A Resilient Wales
3. A Healthier Wales
4. A More Equal Wales
5. A Wales of Cohesive Communities
6. A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
7. A Global Responsible Wales

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Newport Council has four Well-being Objectives that are focused on the following areas to meet its overall mission for Newport working to deliver '*an Ambitious, Fairer, Greener Newport for everyone*':

1. Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.
2. Newport is a city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.
3. Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.
4. Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness, and sustainability at its core.

To deliver each objective, the Council has identified strategic priorities that it will focus on over the next 5 years. Further detail on the Council's strategic priorities are outlined in [Corporate Plan](#). Each of these Well-being Objectives support the Well-being of Future Generations Goals.

Service Area Service Plan 2022-24

To support the Corporate Plan, the Finance Service has developed its Service Plan 2022-24 which provides an overview of its priorities and how it will contribute towards the delivery of the strategic priorities. The service plan has identified four objectives:

- Objective 1** Support the medium to long term financial management & planning (Revenue and Capital) across the Council to focus resources on key objectives and help financial sustainability of Council services.
- Objective 2** Develop a range of customer focused services via re-opening of face-to-face services and development of the 'Newport App' and 'My Council Services' systems.
- Objective 3** Embed social value, carbon reduction and Welsh TOMs into the Council's procurement processes.
- Objective 4** Revenues and Benefits team and Income Collection team support households and businesses through the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Each of these objectives is supported by an action plan of key work that will be contributing towards the achievement of the objective. The service plan also includes the key programmes and projects which the service area will be delivering during the course of the Corporate Plan. Some of these projects will be contributing towards the Council's Transformation Plan as well as improving the delivery of the services within the service area. The service plan also recognises the workforce development of its staff to improve the capacity and capability of staff to achieve the Corporate Plan and deliver continuous improvement.

The service plan includes the key corporate and service area performance measures that it will use to monitor and report progress in the delivery of its key services. Where applicable, targets have been set by the service area in which it will assess and report its performance. The service plan also includes its risk register of Corporate and service area risks which could impact on the delivery of the plan and its services.

Monitoring and Reporting of the Service Plan

The delivery of the Service Plan is monitored every quarter using the Council's Management Information (MI) Hub. Each quarter service areas will be required to provide updates in relation to the progress of its:

- Objectives and Actions
- Projects
- Workforce Development Actions
- Performance Measures
- Risks (Overview)

Heads of Service will meet with Cabinet Members throughout the year and update on progress on specific work, projects and risk, as part of their briefings. Every six months (Mid-Year and End of Year Reviews) the Council's service areas will be subject to Scrutiny review on the progress against their Service Plans with a report also presented to the Council's Cabinet. Risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register are subject to quarterly review by the Council's Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet.

At the end of every financial year, the Council produces its annual Well-being Self-Assessment Report which assesses its progress against the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the governance & performance arrangements to deliver it. Service Plans support the production of this report.

Financial Summary

Service Plans are delivered within the agreed budgets of the service area which was outlined in the Council's budget at the start of the financial year. Monitoring and reporting of the Council's budget is undertaken as part of the Council's financial reporting to Cabinet.

Financial decisions relating to specific projects and service area activity is taken by officers and Cabinet / Cabinet Member(s) as per the Council Constitutions and governance processes.

Appendix 1 – Service Area Service Plan 2022-24

Risks

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?

Corporate Plan Objectives are not achieved as the Council does not have agreed service plans in place.	M	L	Service Plans agreed as per the democratic process and subject to scrutiny review.	Corporate Management Team
--	----------	----------	--	---------------------------

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Service Plan 2022-27

Climate Change Plan

Digital Strategy

Options Available and considered

1. To agree the Service Area Service Plan to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27
2. To request further information and reject the approval of the service plan.

Preferred Option and Why

For the Cabinet Member(s) to approve the Service Area Service Plan which will provide strategic focus for the service area to contribute towards the successful achievement of the Corporate Plan 2022-27.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

All services are required to operate within their approved revenue and capital budgets for that financial year / capital programme respectively. Therefore, it is important that all actions and projects contained within all service plans are delivered within the service revenue and capital resources, both internal and external.

Where new/additional on-going and one-off resources are required to deliver transformational and other projects/actions which meet corporate plan priorities; these will need to be approved for funding in the Council's MTFP and annual budgets through the normal processes. As this will give rise to increased budget pressures and challenges, at a most challenging time for Council budgets, services are strongly encouraged to deliver these, wherever possible, from existing resources. In the context of public sector funding over the medium term, any projects of a transformational nature need to deliver savings and/or additional income wherever possible. Such savings and income need to be clearly identified and realised in support of the overall Council medium term financial plan.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications arising from this Report. The Service Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council's performance management framework and reflects both statutory responsibilities and the strategic objectives and priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan for the relevant service area. Key performance measures and service area risks have been identified for the purposes of quarterly monitoring and reporting throughout the term of the Service Plan.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

This service plan has been developed to support the achievement of the new Corporate Plan and embeds the well-being goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The service plan and our corporate plan objectives are ambitious and focused on working collaboratively with our staff, residents, and partners to improve service delivery across the city whilst supporting other related

plans and strategies, in particular the council's digital strategy and climate change plan. In addition, there is a strong focus on sustainable development, the socio-economic duty and social value.

As the Council works towards its new Corporate Plan and subsequent Service Plans, it will be necessary for each service area to consider the workforce required to achieve the objectives as set out. Any staffing impact will be considered, and consultation will take place as and when necessary.

Local issues

None.

Performance Scrutiny Committee

The Service Plan was presented to the Place & Scrutiny Performance Scrutiny Committee on the 5th December 2022. The Feedback and recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee are outlined below and have been considered prior to the approval of the Cabinet Member(s) in this report.

The Committee wished to give their thanks to Officers for attending.

The Committee were happy with what was presented within the draft Service Plan.

The Committee were pleased to note that the mental health implication of staff has been taken into account with hybrid working and were reassured to hear that staff who wish to work within the Civic Centre everyday are able to.

Performance Measures "Percentage of Council Tax arrears collected" and "Percentage of NDDR arrears collected", The Committee felt that these targets should be higher. However, the Committee were pleased to hear that the service area always try to take maximum collections of all debts.

The targets have not been adjusted upwards as the current cost of living challenges and general economic situation would mean they would be unrealistic. They are at or just higher than current 'actuals' and maintaining/increasing them in the current climate will be challenging and stretching. The Revenues Department always endeavour to maximise collection of Council revenues and the IT and Robotic initiatives within the Service Plan will allow them to focus more on this in the future and also support residents / businesses were needed. Targets will be considered on an annual basis and will be increased if appropriate.

The Committee discussed project "Upgrade to a new financial system", which is Cloud-based. After hearing from Officers that the platform is safe and safeguards are in place, Members would like to know whether it was asked in procurement meetings with suppliers that their platforms are secure and have the required safeguards.

These were part of the evaluation of suppliers

The Committee were pleased to note the update on Objective 1, Reference 8 relating to Climate Change, as the deadline is fast approaching. It was requested that Members can see a copy of the letter sent to the service area from Friends of the Earth.

HoF will send the letter to Scrutiny Officer

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

For this report, a full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken. As part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27, an FEIA was completed to assess the impact of the Corporate Plan which can be found through the link here. In the development of the Service Plan, these have been aligned to the strategic priorities of the Corporate Plan to support its delivery.





Where specific decisions are required by service areas, a separate FEIA will be completed by the service area and included as part of any proposal for Cabinet / Cabinet Member(s).

Welsh Language Standards:

The final Service Plan will be published in Welsh and English on the Council's website. Where objectives, actions and projects are delivered, these will consider the Welsh Language Standards as required.

Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

Under the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and its 5 ways of working principles this report supports:

 <p>Long Term</p>	<p>The Objectives set out in the service plan supports the long term Well-being Objectives and strategic priorities of Newport City Council and the wider regional and national delivery. Service areas have considered the short and long term impacts of their objectives and actions in the development of the Plan. In the decision making of the service area in relation to specific projects and work will consider the long term impacts based upon the principles set out in the Well-being Act and as part of any FEIA. As the Plan is delivered the service area will review and consider any emerging opportunities and risks and update the Plan as necessary.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>In the delivery of the service plan, each service area will collaborate locally, regionally and nationally. The service area will also collaborate internally with other service areas and strategic partners as required.</p> <p>NCC will utilise its existing partnership arrangements such as Gwent Public Services Board (One Newport), Cardiff Capital Region, Gwent Regional Partnership Board and other collaborative arrangements to support the delivery of its objectives.</p> <p>Many of the priorities, programmes and projects in the Plan are building on what the Council has set out in its strategies and plans as well as the priorities set at national and regional levels in Wales.</p> <p>As we progress in the delivery of this Plan we will be working across all sectors whether this is private, public sector, not for profit and voluntary groups to share ideas, find innovative and sustainable solutions to tackle the many issues faced by the Council, communities and businesses.</p>
 <p>Involvement</p>	<p>Newport City Council's Corporate Plan has set out four key principles:</p> <p>Fair and inclusive – We will work to create fairer opportunities, reduce inequalities in our communities, and encourage a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Empowering – We will work with and support communities, groups, and partners to thrive.</p> <p>A listening council – The views of communities, service users and partners will shape the services we deliver and the places you live in.</p> <p>Citizen Focussed – Everyone who works and represents Newport City Council will put the citizen first, focusing on our core organisational values</p> <p>In the delivery of the service plans, service areas will be using existing mechanisms such as the FEIA process, Consultations, focus groups and general compliments, comments and complaints processes to involve stakeholders in the decision making of key projects, objectives and actions.</p> <p>Service Areas will be contributing towards the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and Participation Strategy to enable citizens, and other key stakeholders to contribute towards the delivery and improvement of services.</p>
 <p>Integration</p>	<p>The service plan supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 and its Well-being Objectives. Within each Plan, they have identified where their own objectives contribute towards the delivery of the Plan. As we progress with the delivery of the Corporate Plan and service plans we will be working with our local and regional partners to help support the achievement of ours and their vision and objectives. For example, Newport Council will be working with Cardiff Capital Region, Gwent Public Services Board, Regional Partnership Board and the individual organisations to ensure there is synergy in our aims for Newport and to ensure Newport maximises the opportunities offered through integrated approaches that will benefit Newport's communities.</p> <p>Service plans are also aligned to the Council's Strategies such as Climate Change Plan and Digital Strategy as examples. Where there are specific actions to deliver these, the service plans have integrated these into its objectives.</p> <p>As we deliver against our Well-being Objectives and priorities, the Corporate Plan will evolve, considering the ongoing external and internal changes of the organisation and the city. As an organisation we regularly review and challenge ourselves on our objectives, priorities and Plans to ensure they reflect the priorities of communities and the Council.</p> <p>This will also mean considering and integrating the Well-being Act's sustainable principle and of 5 ways of working, Equality Impact Assessment including Socio-economic duty, and Marmot principles in the decisions we make.</p>



Prevention

Each of the objectives have considered the actions that we will need to take now to prevent problems from taking place or getting worse across our communities and Council services in the long-term. The Corporate Plan provides many opportunities to tackle the increasing demand faced by our services and getting to the root causes of these pressures.

Service Plans have included objectives and actions which aim to prevent the issues being faced now and to find long term solutions to prevent impacts on future generations.

Through involvement and collaboration with our partners, communities and businesses we will be designing and delivering services to improve their outcomes and ensure long term sustainability for communities and the Council.

Consultation

See Scrutiny comments above.

Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Dated: 17 February 2023