

## COUNCIL

25 February 2024

# CORPORATE STRATEGY REFRESH 2024 –2026

### Report of the Leader of the Council

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Councillor G Waller, Leader of the Council	
Contact Officer(s):	Kevin Quinn Head of Corporate Services	01572 758292 kquinn@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	N/A	

## 1 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1.1 Summary

- 1.1.1 This report sets out the revision to the strategic priorities of the Council covering the period 2024-2026. The revision has been undertaken as part of a scheduled refresh of the existing Corporate Strategy which was [approved by Council in July 2022](#).

### 1.2 Recommendations

1. That Council, on the recommendation of Cabinet, approves the Corporate Strategy refresh 2024-2026.

### 1.3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 1.3.1 The Corporate Strategy sets out the Councils strategic direction and ambitions in support of the County.
- 1.3.2 The Corporate Strategy is essential for enabling the Council to forward plan and to manage its services and resources based on the priorities identified.
- 1.3.3 The strategic priorities and objectives outlined within the refresh of the Corporate Strategy reflect the vision for the County which has been informed by the views of residents.

## **2 REPORT**

### **2.1 Purpose**

2.2 To provide Council with a refresh of the Corporate Strategy priorities and objectives covering the period 2024-2026.

### **2.3 Background**

2.3.1 The Corporate Strategy (CS) sets out the strategic ambitions and medium-term direction of the Council and is an essential document for prioritising services, resources and to support decision making.

2.3.2 The current Corporate Strategy covers the period 2022-2027 and was approved by Council in July 2022. It was developed following an extensive engagement with residents which set out a vision for the County.

### **2.4 Refresh**

2.4.1 Revision of the strategic priorities is part of the on-going review cycle built into the Corporate Strategy which sets out a revision every two years. This allows the Council to reflect any changes in landscape including, for example, the priorities of the new Cabinet following the election in May.

2.4.2 Since implementation in July 2022 the Council has also successfully delivered most of the commitments which underpinned the strategic ambitions of the Corporate Strategy. This means the Council is at the stage of refocussing its resources to reflect new responsibilities and emerging areas for development.

2.4.3 To revise the priorities and objectives collaborative sessions have been held with Cabinet and Corporate Leadership team. This work was supported by a review of current and future Council strategies and policy and reflecting on the existing commitments and requirements, including Government reforms and statutory changes.

2.4.4 This has culminated in a new set of priorities and objectives to support the existing vision for the County.

2.4.5 No other changes have been made to the Corporate Strategy. The values for the Council remain the same.

### **2.5 The new priorities**

2.6 *Appendix A - Corporate Strategy Refresh 2024-2026*, sets out the revised priorities and objectives of the Council. The four priorities are:

- Tackling the climate emergency.
- A diverse and sustainable local economy.
- Support the most vulnerable.
- Provide good public services.

2.7 Each priority is underpinned by a set of objectives and areas of action. The actions are an example of the areas of work which will be undertaken.

## **2.8 Delivery**

2.8.1 The objectives outlined within the refresh will be underpinned by a detailed Delivery Plan which will include a set of SMART actions. This is currently being finalised by Directorates.

2.8.2 The performance of the new priorities, including progress against the Delivery Plan, will be monitored through a revised performance framework which will be reported to Cabinet as per the current arrangements i.e. four times per year. This will be finalised by April to account for in year performance and the setting of appropriate targets.

2.8.3 Whilst endorsement of the refresh will mean the Council will work towards achieving the priorities outlined, there may be times when other factors, some outside of the Council's control, may impinge on its ability to do so. This could include financial constraints, Government legislation, policy and guidance and the local political context.

## **2.9 Options Considered**

2.9.1 The alternative option is to not refresh the priorities of Corporate Strategy and operate within the existing Corporate Strategy which runs until 2027, this is not recommended since that would mean the priorities of the Council do not reflect the current landscape and the key deliverables required of the Council under existing strategy and Government legislation.

## **2.10 Consultation**

2.10.1 The vision underpinning the Corporate Strategy was developed through an extensive engagement and formal consultation exercise which received over 2000 responses.

2.10.2 The refreshed priorities for 2024-2026 reflect the Council's continued commitment to achieving the vision for the County.

2.10.3 A short public engagement exercise has been undertaken on the revised priorities as part of the annual budget consultation which ran via an online survey during January. 227 responses were received to the survey, a summary of the key findings are:

- Providing good public services was the priority which residents strongly agreed with the most (82%) followed by supporting the most vulnerable 69%, economy 67% and climate 50%.
- 57% of respondents felt there was nothing missing from the priority areas identified in the Corporate Strategy refresh. From the responses where residents felt things were missing the main themes were – cost and efficiency of public services relating to council tax levels, public highways, leisure and shopping facilities, access to health care (GP) and transport. All these areas are reflected within the objectives underpinning the revised Corporate Strategy.

2.10.4 Further details on the survey can be found in Appendix J of the budget report, Report number 04/2024.

### **3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

#### **3.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1.1 This section has been approved by Kirsty Nutton, Strategic Director for Resources (S.151 officer).

3.1.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, however the Council will be making financial commitments which are guided by the Corporate Strategy priorities. Therefore, delivering the objectives of the Corporate Strategy must be commensurate with the two financial objectives of the [Financial Sustainability Strategy](#) which was approved by Council in November 2022.

3.1.3 To achieve this the Council has taken a range of steps over the last 12 months which has included the implementation of a transformation programme aimed at modernisation and achieving efficiency in the delivery of Council services and embedding this transformation in to the financial planning of services, as detailed in the budget proposals contained in the Integrated Budget Plan 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2027/28.

3.1.4 Corporate Leadership Team and Directorates have been assessing the key deliverables to support the Corporate Strategy over the next two years. This has been done in line with the cash limit approach to service delivery, further details of which are outlined in the Integrated Budget Plan paper, Report No.04/2024.

3.1.5 Whilst the Council has taken action to ensure financial sustainability in the medium term there remains some level of uncertainty in areas which are beyond the direct control of the Council. This includes, for example; the longer-term impact of the cost-of-living pressures and any associated demand on Council services, the uncertain economic climate and the future cost to deliver and commission services and Government regulation or changes to the Councils statutory responsibilities. Consequently, it remains possible that actions to support the Corporate Strategy will need to be adjusted or changed to reflect what we know and can realistically achieve.

#### **3.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.2.1 This section has been approved by Angela Wakefield, Strategic Director for Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer).

3.2.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there will be decisions associated with delivery of the priorities which will be brought to the relevant decision- making forum at the appropriate time. The Corporate Strategy forms part of the Council's policy framework and any alterations to the Strategy must therefore be approved by Full Council.

#### **3.3 Risk Management Implications**

3.3.1 The main risk to the Council achieving the strategic priorities as outlined within the Corporate Strategy is that the Council is not financially sustainable. This risk is

assessed as medium.

3.3.2 The mitigation for this risk is the implementation of the integrated budget and medium-term financial strategy. The implementation of which means the residual risk is determined to be low.

3.3.3 Record of this risk is located within the Corporate Risk Register.

### **3.4 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

3.4.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed because there are no identified risks or issues to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

### **3.5 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

3.5.1 An equality impact assessment screening has identified that a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. The Corporate Strategy provides the Council with a framework for future service delivery and no service, policy or organisational changes are being proposed.

### **3.6 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

3.6.1 The Council has a duty in accordance with S17 Crime and Disorder Act 1988, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the likely effect of that exercise of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social behaviour).

3.6.2 The Corporate Strategy retains a commitment to maintaining Rutland as one of the safest places to live and includes the following objective: Deliver a safe, vibrant and attractive place.

### **3.7 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

3.7.1 The Corporate Strategy retains a commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of the County and includes the following objective: Improve wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.

### **3.8 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

3.8.1 On 11 January 2021 Rutland County Council acknowledged that it was in a climate emergency. The Council understands that it needs to take urgent action to address it.

3.8.2 The Corporate Strategy reflects this with a priority focussed on Tackling the Climate Emergency. This priority means the Council will focus policy and action to support the County to tackle the climate crisis and minimise the impact of climate change on the lives of residents and local businesses.

### **3.9 PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS**

3.9.1 There are no procurement implications.

### **3.10 HR IMPLICATIONS**

3.10.1 There are no HR implications.

**4 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

4.1 None.

**5 APPENDICES**

5.1 Appendix A – Corporate Strategy Refresh 2024-2026

An Accessible Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.