

Rother District Council

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 28 June 2021

Title: Corporate Plan Consultation Response and Corporate Programme 2020 - 2027

Report of: Ben Hook – Head of Service, Acquisitions Transformation, and Regeneration

Cabinet Member: Councillor Vine-Hall

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To update Members on the outcome of the consultation for the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2027 and to present the draft Corporate Programme 2020-2027.

Decision Type: Key

Officer

Recommendation(s): **Recommendation to COUNCIL:** That the:

- 1) draft Corporate Plan (at Appendix A) be adopted, subject to any amendments requested by Cabinet as a result of the consultation; and
- 2) draft Corporate Programme (at Appendix C) be adopted.

AND

It be **RESOLVED:** That subject to the approval of full Council, a Corporate Programme Board of Members and senior officers, to be appointed by the Leader of the Council, be established to monitor the delivery of the Corporate Programme 2020-2027.

Corporate Plan Consultation

1. Rother District Council approved a public consultation exercise on its draft Corporate Plan (Appendix A) at the Cabinet meeting on [11 January 2021](#) (Minute CB20/87 refers). The consultation started on 3 February (website went live on 1 February) and closed on 17 March 2021, which is a six-week duration.
2. This consultation was promoted in MyAlerts (w/c 8 February and 1 March) and in multiple social media posts on our Twitter and Facebook accounts and in a media release. Invitations to take part were emailed to a wide selection of 127 business organisations, voluntary organisations, schools, colleges, public bodies, leisure and interest groups and organisations across Rother. This included all the town and parish councils in Rother. In addition, 400 residents in the Rother Citizens Panel received an invitation email to take part.

3. A total of 133 responses were received. We received responses from 113 residents and 3 visitors to Rother. Due to this low response level it makes the margin of error higher or it is a bit less likely to be a true representation of views compared to receiving more responses. Four internal services responded: Neighbourhood Services, Planning Policy, Customer Services and Environment Strategy. We had responses from 13 local and regional organisations, which are listed below:

- Rye Conservation Society
- Bexhill Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
- Sussex NHS Commissioners
- Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum
- Young Person's Housing, East Sussex County Council
- Rother Greenways
- Rother Environmental Group
- Bexhill Heritage
- Battle Town Council
- Brede Parish Council
- Peasmarsh Parish Council
- Sedlescombe Parish Council
- 1066 Cycle Club

Summary of Results from 133 Responses

4. All objectives had majority support. Several suggestions were made for additional objectives and additional actions.
- a. **Climate emergency** – all organisations responding on this objective and 84% of the public agreed this should be an objective. All the proposed actions had majority support.
 - b. **Financial stability** – all responding organisations agreed with this objective and its actions. The public supported the objective by a majority and most actions had majority support. The exception was raising business rates income received and comments suggest this was because it was interpreted as raising the business rates from existing businesses as opposed to increasing income through having more local businesses.
 - c. **Affordable housing supply** – all organisations agreed with this objective and the majority agreed with all the actions. 78% of the public agreed with the objective and there was majority agreement for all of the action plan. Some terms were confusing for the public.
 - d. **Housing list reduction** – all organisations agreed with having this objective and there was majority agreement from organisations for all the actions. From the public, 77% agreed there should be this objective and majority agreement with all of the action plan. Some terms or references were confusing for the public.

- e. **5-year housing supply** – the majority of organisations agreed with having this objective and the majority agreed with the action plan. From the public, 59% agreed this should be an objective. The majority of the public agreed with the action plan. The exception was bringing forward rural exception sites where agreement and disagreement was even and about one in five people didn't know either way. Some of the language for this objective was confusing for the public.
 - f. **An empowered organisation** – the majority of organisations disagreed that this objective should be included but the majority agreed with the proposed actions. For the public, 61% agreed with having this objective and the majority agreed with the action plan.
 - g. **A fairer society** – All responding organisations agreed that the council should adopt this objective. The majority of organisations agreed with proposed actions. For the public, 74% agreed with having this objective and the majority agreed with the action plan.
 - h. **Development of Rother's economy** – The majority of responding organisations agreed with having this objective and with the action plan. This was the second highest supported objective from the public at 91%. The majority of the public agreed, at similar levels, with the proposed actions.
 - i. **An open council** – All the responding organisations agreed that the council should have this objective. The majority of organisations supported all the actions in the action plan. This was the most supported objective by the public with 92% agreeing this objective should be in the Corporate Plan. The majority also agreed with the actions.
 - j. **Bexhill Town Council** – All the responding organisations agreed with the objectives and the majority agreed with each of the actions. However, for the public only 48% agreed, 28% disagreed and 25% didn't know or were not sure, so there is not clear support. Many respondents pointed out that all but one of the actions would be delivered by mid-2021 and questioned its inclusion in a plan that runs up to 2027.
5. A more detailed analysis of all responses is provided in the consultation officer's report at Appendix B

Amendments

6. Based on the responses through the consultation process there are no officer recommended amendments to the Corporate Plan. That being said Cabinet may take a view on certain aspects that need amending or revising, based on the consultation responses, prior to presentation to Full Council.

Corporate Programme

7. The draft Corporate Programme has been developed throughout the Corporate Plan consultation period with Corporate Management Team (CMT) and council officers.
8. The draft Corporate Plan was analysed for actions and milestones that were assessed as being appropriate for delivery as corporate priority projects. 23 projects have been identified and these are attached as a list in appendix C. The remaining actions, milestones and targets set out in the Corporate Plan will be delivered and monitored through service plans and performance reporting.
9. CMT allocated officers across the council to take the lead as managers for the identified projects. Programme Office has been working with the lead officers to develop scopes for each of these.
10. The scopes will be presented to a newly formed Programme Board to review and assess if the projects will meet the vision and priorities of the new Corporate Plan. This Programme Board will initially consist of the Chief Executive, the s.151 Officer and 3 Members as appointed by the Leader of the Council, however this may be subject to change as necessary for the effective monitoring of the programme. The key aspects of the scopes to be considered by Programme Board are as follows:
 - a. Project manager, project executive and project champion
 - b. Objective (aim), outputs (deliverables) and outcomes (measurable difference)
 - c. Key milestones
 - d. Estimated budget
 - e. High risks
11. Once scopes have been approved, the key aspects will be monitored centrally by Programme Office using a bespoke programme management system that has been created by the Digital Transformation Team. Programme Office provides a support service to project managers to ensure effective and efficient progression.
12. Programme Office will prepare a quarterly report to Programme Board presenting progress of projects, including key achievements, budget monitoring, and high and emerging risks and issues. Where key changes are required, this will be managed through a change control process to be agreed by Programme Board. Any new opportunities for projects that will support the achievement of the Corporate Plan vision and priorities will be presented as they arise.
13. An annual report on progress of the Corporate Programme will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

Conclusion

14. The Corporate Plan provides the strategic direction for the Council and will shape the work programmes and service plans of officers throughout this time

period. The Corporate Programme articulates those projects that are critical for the delivery of the aims and objectives set out in the Plan.

15. The Corporate Plan has now been through the public consultation process and is ready for recommendation to Council, subject to any amendments requested by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

16. The Corporate Plan will set the strategic direction of the Council for the immediate future. This will influence spending decisions and budget setting. It should also be noted that additional funds may be required to deliver the projects as set out in the Corporate Programme. These funds will be requested as necessary on a project by project basis.

Alignment to the Environment Strategy

17. Both the Corporate Plan and Corporate Programme positively add to the ambitions in the Environment Strategy. Delivery of those projects and targets stated will critical in meeting the 2030 net carbon zero declaration.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	A: Draft Corporate Plan B:
Relevant Previous Minutes:	cb20/87
Background Papers:	None.
Reference Documents:	