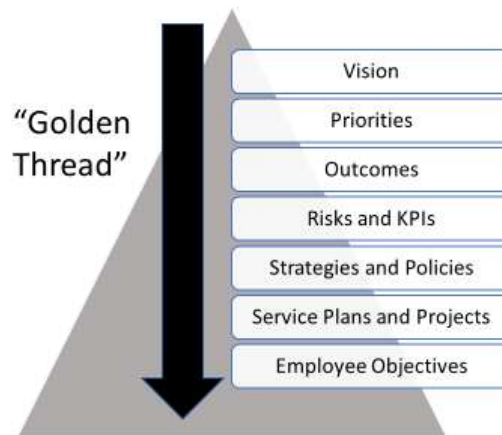

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2023

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the 2020-23 Business Plan for approval.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Business Plan vision and priorities are key to articulating the strategic direction for the Council and the services it delivers for the District. The Council has retained a consistent vision and set of corporate priorities since 2016.
- 2.2 To ensure continuing alignment with the Council's financial planning process and developing core project work, the Business Plan has now been refreshed to present a stronger, clearer narrative around where the Council is now, its direction of travel and its ambitions for the future. This work has been undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the Medium Term Financial Strategy so that the two align.
- 2.3 The corporate priorities underpinning the Business Plan have fundamentally remained the same:
- Being financially sustainable – this has changed from the previous version which stated “being financially self-sufficient.” The change was made to reflect the current uncertainty about Government's plans about the future funding of local authorities and the fact that we currently only have a one year financial settlement;
 - Early intervention – this has not changed;
 - Maximise our assets – this has not changed; and
 - Enable communities – this has not changed.
- 2.4 We have, however, re-written the explanations beneath each of these priorities to make it clear what we mean by them and to set the ambition we aim to achieve. Furthermore, each of the priorities is now underpinned by specific outcomes which detail what the Council will achieve over the plan period.
- 2.5 Together the vision, priorities and outcomes create a “golden thread” which will be progressed and delivered through the Council's risk and performance management, key strategy action plans and projects, service plans and employee objective setting.



3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Business Plan sets out the overarching priorities for the Council and details the actions that are currently planned to be carried out up until 2023. It is used to ensure officer and financial resources are allocated appropriately to achieve the actions and objectives detailed within it.
- 3.2 The Business Plan informs the subsequent agreement of annual service plans, prepared by the Council's directorates, setting out service, team and individual objectives, aligned to the vision and aims that have been set. Once agreed, it will be supported by the ongoing engagement and communications campaign internally and externally.
- 3.3 The Business Plan supports delivery of the Council's operating framework and sets out key deliverables for skills, business support and infrastructure, as well as the enabling corporate activities.
- 3.4 Regular reporting on progress in delivering against the Business Plan is a key element of the Council's overall performance management and reporting framework, which is reviewed quarterly by the Audit Committee.

The Vision

- 3.5 Despite the challenging financial climate, we continue to have high ambitions for our District and its opportunities and potential. To focus on this aspiration, we have a simple vision for the District: *Working to help shape your future.*

The Council's Priorities

- 3.6 With the increasing pressures on budgets, it is more important than ever that we focus on the things that matter most in the District. We have retained our four corporate priorities to ensure we gain the most use of our limited resources.
- 3.7 These are:
1. **Being financially sustainable** – prosperity; working internally and externally to support sustainable economic growth and strong communities, ensuring the District is a great place in which to invest, live, work and visit;
 2. **Early intervention** – people; supporting our communities and especially the most vulnerable in times of need, protecting from harm and improving their quality of life;
 3. **Enabling communities** – people; promoting healthy lifestyles; working with residents, businesses and other organisations to promote and celebrate our District for all to enjoy;
 4. **Maximise our Assets** – place; valuing the environment, responding to climate change, sustainably developing our infrastructure and safeguarding our heritage.

Consultation

- 3.8 A draft version of the Business Plan was shared with all staff, Members, partners and included in the budget survey process for residents to comment on. 142 residents gave an initial response and there were a further 108 comments over the 3 'Business Plan' questions, i.e.
1. Our Business Plan is currently being refreshed so it more accurately reflects the big issues that affect us all. Do you agree that the priorities we have are the right ones?
 2. If No, tell us what you feel it is important for the Council to focus its resources on.
 3. Please let us know any ideas for how the Business Plan could be an opportunity for more joint working with the community.
- 3.9 There was strong feedback that the draft was unclear and the words were not easy to understand. Some respondents commented that they wanted to understand the detail better. Respondents had opinions on development, climate change, the Council's assets, its housing partners and a desire to regenerate town centre/high street businesses and they wanted to know what the Council was doing about those issues.

- 3.10 Taking that feedback into account, we revisited the draft Business Plan and although the core of the Plan remains unchanged, amendments have been made, to make it clearer, simpler and more directional about what the Council will do. The new, improved draft is attached at Appendix 1.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The key risks to delivery of the Business Plan are already captured in the Corporate Risk Register and are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Leadership Team and Audit Committee.
- 4.2 The Business Plan will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to be relevant and reflective of residents' views.
- 4.3 The Council's corporate performance indicators will be refreshed and aligned to the vision, priorities and outcomes to ensure that the Council's achievement of its Business Plan is monitored, managed and challenged as to progress and performance. The Council will publish its performance and ask residents to tell us how we are performing.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The refresh of the Business Plan has been developed with the Medium Term Financial Strategy at the forefront of considerations. However, the delivery of priorities may include individual projects which may have a financial implication. These will be considered on an as and when basis once those projects have been developed.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report; however, individual projects to deliver elements of the priorities may have legal implications and as such will need to be addressed separately as decisions relating to those specific activities are considered.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and found there to be no current impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.
- 7.2 Whilst there are no identifiable direct implications in relation to diversity and equality from the proposals at this stage, individual priority projects may have such implications and as such will need to be addressed separately as decisions relating to those specific activities are considered

8 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

That the Council's Business Plan 2020-2023 be approved.



Shaun Scrutton
Managing Director

Background Papers: -

None.

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.



OUR VALUES

Customer focused: Maximising potential: Proactive: Innovative

OUR VISION

“Working to help shape your future”

OUR PRIORITIES

BEING FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE

Despite continued budget constraints, we will manage our resources effectively to ensure we can continue to fund high quality services.

We will invest in the future of the district to stimulate growth and prosperity as well as attracting investors and visitors.

Wherever possible, we will support local businesses and organisations.

We will improve our efficiency through modernising services and changing the way we work to meet residents' needs.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Strong, vibrant communities are the foundation of strong vibrant economies.

We will focus on early intervention and protection for the most vulnerable.

We will support and invest in community level work which enables everyone to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

We will work with partner organisations to tackle inequalities and enable more improvements in well-being to be delivered by communities.

MAXIMISE OUR ASSETS

We will maintain, protect and enhance our many green parks, playgrounds and open spaces; creating greater opportunities for leisure and cultural enjoyment.

We will be more environmentally conscious and strive to eliminate our carbon footprint.

We will work with other councils across South Essex and Central Government to promote the district and create inward investment which will shape our landscape for the future.

ENABLE COMMUNITIES

We will support residents, local businesses and organisations to create a district full of great life opportunities and choices, business growth and economic security.

We will work with partners to build community resilience and public safety.

We will engage with communities to meet our priorities and shape the future of the district.

We will inspire our communities to make a difference.

OUTCOMES



OUR PRIORITIES

BEING FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE	EARLY INTERVENTION	MAXIMISE OUR ASSETS	ENABLE COMMUNITIES
BY 2023 WE WILL HAVE:			
Provided best value for money for residents by delivering the services that matter most and making decisions to prioritise our limited resources	Continued to work with partners and communities to ensure our most vulnerable residents feel supported to live well	Adopted a South Essex joint strategic plan and worked with neighbouring councils and Government to protect the district's built and natural environment, upporting both the local and regional economy	Worked with the voluntary, community and faith sectors to build capacity for meeting the needs of residents. Working together to make a difference to live better, safer, healthier lives
Regenerated and invested in more efficient sites for the delivery of council, community and leisure services	Worked together with communities and partners to prevent homelessness	Increased opporunities for reisdents to enjoy culture and leisue and created a strengthened visitor and business economy across the district	Worked closely with residents, communities and the police to maintain low crime levels and to improve residents' perception of safety
Made use of changing technology to become more efficient and ensure residents can contact us more easily and access more services on-line	Increased the standard and availability of affordable housing within the district	Protected the district for future generations by recycling and green policies aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2030	Worked with businesses and communiites to develop plans to achieve and invest in strong, sustainable town centres and high streets
Taken a more commercial approach to generating income through investment of our resources, assets and use of existing council owned companies	Increased the number of residents actively participating in healthier lifestyles	Invested in our green spaces and community facilities to support our growing population's health and well-being	Reduced social isolation through strengthening connections within communities