

Report to: **Executive**

Date: **21 September 2023**

Title: **Draft Corporate Strategy**

Portfolio Area: **Councillor Julian Brazil**
Leader South Hams District Council

Wards Affected: **All**

Author: **Andy Bates** Role: **Chief Executive**
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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive:

- 1. ENDORSE the draft Corporate Strategy (Appendix A refers);**
- 2. DELEGATE authority to the Assistant Director Strategy, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Opposition Group to apply any final amendments to the draft Corporate Strategy prior to commencement of the public consultation exercise;**
- 3. AGREE to commence the formal consultation on the draft Strategy;**
- 4. INSTRUCT the Senior Leadership Team and Assistant Director Strategy to support Executive Lead Members in the development of detailed delivery and resourcing plans for the Strategy; and**
- 5. AGREE to establish an Advisory Group for Economy and Jobs.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report sets out progress since the previous meeting in the preparation of a draft corporate strategy for the period 2024 – 28. Once adopted, the strategy will be the Council’s overarching strategic document setting out our ambitions and priorities for the district.
- 1.2 The report also sets out how we will continue with consultation on the strategy in order to shape delivery plans for consideration by Council in December 2023.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 28 June, the Executive considered a report on 'setting priorities for the new Council' and agreed the approach and timeline for the development of a new 4-year corporate strategy aligned to the manifesto commitments of the new political administration in order to respond to the needs of our residents and communities in the South Hams;
- 2.2 The timeline for developing the strategy, including progress to date, is set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 2.3 In parallel with the development of the outline strategy, it was agreed to undertake a fundamental review of the Council's capital programme, earmarked reserves and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, to ensure these are aligned to the delivery of the new administration's plans (which is the subject of a separate report on this agenda).
- 2.4 Since the last meeting, Executive Lead Members, supported by Advisory Groups open to councillors from all political parties, have been refining the aims and ambitions for the district based on known challenges (such as lack of truly affordable housing and the climate and biodiversity crisis) and feedback from residents during the May 2023 election campaigns. This has provided an initial opportunity for views from the full membership to be reflected in the draft strategy.
- 2.5 As part of the consultation process, initial discussions have also been held with town and parish councils to understand local hopes, concern and priorities to further inform the wider aims and ambitions.
- 2.6 The draft strategy (Appendix B) is intended to act as a catalyst for further conversations with key partners and our communities over the coming months and to assist us with developing detailed delivery plans for the strategy, against which our progress and performance can be assessed.

3. Proposal and Next Steps

- 3.1 The draft corporate strategy is set out at Appendix B to this report and will form the basis for ongoing consultation and engagement. It is intended that it will be updated annually with appropriate amendments, probably relatively minor in most cases made, to the actions to ensure it remains relevant.
- 3.2 The draft strategy has been developed based on a number of discussions with Executive Lead Members (both individually and as the whole Executive) and through meetings of Advisory Groups for Housing, Climate & Biodiversity, and Community Services and Community Development. The advisory groups have been beneficial

in developing the work to date and it is recommended that a further advisory group is established in relation to economy and jobs.

3.3 It is recommended that a period of formal consultation will commence from 25th September and run through until 20th October (4 weeks). During this period, we will seek views on the draft aims and ambitions through:

- An online survey on the full strategy;
- A series of 'quick polls' on social media channels to gain feedback on specific aims and ambitions.
- Conversations with key partners including town and parish councils.
- Face to face attendance at a number of locations across the district to gain views from residents on our priorities.
- Make available (on request) a paper survey for anyone not able to provide their thoughts online.
- Provide all District Councillors with FAQ's and a briefing note to enable them to have discussions on priorities within their own communities.

3.4 When the consultation closes, the responses will be analysed, and Executive Lead Members will consider the feedback in order to make any refinements to the strategy alongside delivery of the detailed delivery & resourcing plans for each ambition.

3.5 The final strategy and delivery plans (including resourcing plans) will be considered by the Executive on 30th November 2023 and, subject to agreement, recommended for adoption to Full Council in December.

4. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Corporate Strategy is one of the plans and policies that comprise the Council's Policy Framework. Consequently, decisions to approve, adopt or amend the final Corporate Strategy and themes will be decisions of the Full Council.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council will seek and align the Council's corporate strategy (what we plan to do) to the Council's medium-term financial strategy (how we plan to resource it). Separate finance reports are included on the same agenda of the Executive.

Risk	Y	<p>Having an agreed Corporate Strategy ensures that Council resources are aligned to delivering on agreed priorities and plans.</p> <p>There is a risk that the Corporate Strategy is not agreed when finally considered by Council however this is mitigated through our consultation and engagement activity and by forming cross-political party Advisory Groups to shape the strategy and delivery plans.</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	This report sets out proposals for consultation on a draft corporate strategy for the Council.
Consultation & Engagement Strategy	Y	<p>Informal consultation has already commenced via conversations with Town and Parish Councils and other key partners to help shape the draft priorities.</p> <p>It is recommended that a period of formal consultation will commence from 25th September and run through until 20th October (4 weeks). During this period, we will seek views on the draft aims and ambitions through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online survey on the full strategy; • A series of 'quick polls' on social media channels to gain feedback on specific aims and ambitions. • Conversations with key partners including town and parish councils. • Face to face attendance at a number of locations across the district to gain views from residents on our priorities. • Make available (on request) a paper survey for anyone not able to provide their thoughts online. • Provide all District Councillors with FAQ's and a briefing note to enable them to have discussions on priorities within their own communities.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	The strategy will set out our commitment to climate and biodiversity.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	None – E&D implications will be assessed when we develop detailed delivery plans

Safeguarding	N	None – Safeguarding implications will be assessed when we develop detailed delivery plans
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	None – Community Safety implications will be assessed when we develop detailed delivery plans
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	None – Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications will be assessed when we develop detailed delivery plans
Other implications	N	None at this stage.

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Timeline and Progress to date

Appendix B – Draft Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028

Background Papers:

Executive – Setting Priorities for the New Council (E.6/23)

<https://mg.swdevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=149&MIId=1903&Ver=4>