

South Gloucestershire Council

Cabinet

11 July 2022

Council Plan Progress Report (October 2021 – March 2022)

Purpose of the paper

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on progress against the Council Plan.

Recommendation

2. To note and comment on the report's contents.

Policy

3. The responsibility for cross-cutting strategic issues such as progress against the Council Plan is part of the remit of Cabinet.

Background

4. The Council Plan 2020-2024 was approved by Council in October 2020. The Council Plan provides a high-level view of the Council's priorities over the four-year period and sets out the key aims of the Council under four priority headings:
 - Priority 1: Creating the best start in life for our children and young people.
 - Priority 2: Identifying and supporting those most in need and helping people to help themselves.
 - Priority 3: Promoting sustainable inclusive communities, infrastructure, and growth.
 - Priority 4: Realising the full potential of our people and delivering value for money.
5. Each priority is underpinned by a series of commitments set out in detailed action plans. These include a range of key tasks and performance indicators. Detailed progress against each of these action plans is reviewed regularly as part of the Council's overall performance management arrangements.
6. This report is therefore focused at a high level. It is the second report to Cabinet on how delivery of the new Council Plan is progressing. As such, it provides a summary of progress against each of the four priorities with further detail across the 20 action plans included within the Appendix A for information. The report covers the six-month period October 2021 -March 2022
7. As part of our approach to reporting against Council Plan priorities, we are also developing a dashboard that will enable Cabinet to access the latest updates and performance indicators related to the different actions contained in the plan. This is a step towards providing a more interactive approach to performance reporting which will be developed further over the coming months. The nature of reports to Cabinet will therefore evolve over future periods to reflect the dynamic and complex nature of monitoring across such a range of commitments to ensure Cabinet can focus on the strategic direction of travel. Our intention is that this dashboard will be available to residents via the Council website.
8. Progress against the individual performance indicators is shown within the relevant action plan commitment within Appendix A. At this stage there are a number of indicators that are not yet able to be reported. Some of these are being developed while others are dependent on activities, e.g., Ofsted inspections, that have been impacted by the covid pandemic, and for which recent data is not available. For those indicators that are able to

be reported, an overall summary and across each of the four Council Plan priorities is shown in Appendix B. Both Appendix A and Appendix B can be found on our public website which includes details of the Council Plan, the commitments and progress reports. [Council Plan 2020 – 2024 | BETA - South Gloucestershire Council \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://www.southglos.gov.uk)

9. As this report and the detail provided within the appendices provides a comprehensive overview of progress across the council, it will also be used as the basis for reporting to the council's Scrutiny Commission.

Addressing the climate emergency and closing the inequality gap

10. These overarching themes touch on every aspect of the services delivered by the council and the way in which it operates. Details of the many ways in which we are taking action to respond positively to the climate and nature emergencies and to tackle inequalities can be found throughout this report in summaries relating to the four priorities. Highlights over the last reporting period include:
11. The newly adopted Green Infrastructure Strategy, and Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery Action Plan, complement the Climate Emergency Action Plan and reporting arrangements are aligned. The Local Nature Action Plans (LNAPS) work has been well received by 17 Town and Parish Councils and paves the way for Business Nature Action Plans (BNAPS) to be rolled out later in the year.
12. An Outline Business Case has been approved for Charfield Station unlocking funding to work up a planning application and detailed design for a new rail station. Transport infrastructure funding of £540m has been secured through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement in the West of England for the period to 2027. Part of this will fund major transport infrastructure improvements in South Gloucestershire. Through the Active Travel Fund a pipeline of cycling and walking projects are being developed for delivery. In addition, construction has commenced on cycle lanes on the A432, scheduled for completion in July. Work is also continuing on the Cribbs Patchway Metrobus Extension scheme, with the main carriageway construction completing this autumn, to be followed by completion of the bus stop infrastructure.
13. A key ambition in the South Gloucestershire Council Plan is to shift the balance of support to prevention, leading to better health outcomes and reduced inequalities. To help achieve this, a Prevention Fund and supporting Prevention Tool has been created. The £2m Prevention Fund has been established using one-off funding from the Public Health reserve and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) match funding, reflecting the NHS priority on prevention as well as the Council's. A Prevention Board consisting of representatives from the council and health has been established to champion an outcome-focused prevention approach and oversee use of the Prevention Fund. Following advice from the Prevention Board, the Executive Member for Public Health and Equality of Opportunity will take decisions on how the Prevention Fund is spent, in consultation where appropriate with other Cabinet Members. The first meeting of the Prevention Board was in April, at which it was agreed that the fund would be aligned to three priority areas: Start well, Live well and Age well. It is anticipated that use of this fund will facilitate transformational change to the approach taken by the council and partners to prevention, shifting the funding focus more widely to improve outcomes for all, which will also reduce demand on services. Draft outline business cases for each priority area will be developed and presented to the Prevention Board in July.

Priority 1: Creating the best start in life for our children and young people.

14. Overall, the improving trend in terms of Ofsted inspections continues. Schools that have been converted to academy status to improve, overall are showing that this has had a positive impact with strengthened leadership to drive improvement.
15. To help meet our objective to narrow the inequality gap, a new post of Equality Officer has been established to build dedicated leadership capacity for this agenda. The post holder commenced employment with South Gloucestershire Council in May.
16. The Inclusion Toolkit continues to be developed as part of the South Glos Way to capture the new arrangements for banding and this has been supported with an extensive training programme. The toolkit continues to build as a digital “one-stop shop” for relevant Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) materials promoting best practice and the expectations of the local system.
17. Difficulties in supply and escalating cost of materials in the construction industry continue to impact on delivery of school capital projects. It has been necessary to review the approach to the Lyde Green Schools with the Department for Education (DfE). Officers and members of the DfE team are focussed on delivering a scheme at the earliest opportunity. Frenchay Primary School was delayed but is now progressing well. Elm Park Primary is due to commence in June with a target of September 23 occupation. Feasibility studies of all schools in the pipeline are being reviewed to ensure affordable and deliverable within the timeframe to meet sufficiency of places in the local area.

Priority 2: Identifying and supporting those most in need and helping people to help themselves.

18. Since the Council Plan was adopted, a number of actions in this priority area are increasingly being amended in order to take account of developments within the social and service environment. This applies in particular to work with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector where the council’s approach under the Keep It Local banner now involves partners including the CCG, Sirona, and ICP. Across the public sector, we are looking to strengthen the capacity of the VCSE eco-system, not just that of individual organisations. This will allow the VCSE to actively engage in and support delivery of new service models, especially those for health and care.
19. Our approach is attracting national interest not just from Locality, but also from the Local Government Association who are looking to feature it in their upcoming workshops on Local Authorities working with the VCSE.
20. Since the last update, our first co-produced service, for Welfare, Benefits and Debt Advice was launched, going live at the beginning of April. Lessons for this process are being captured for consideration in future work of this kind.
21. A key ambition in the South Gloucestershire Council Plan is to shift the balance of support to prevention, leading to better health outcomes and reduced inequalities. To help achieve this, a Prevention Fund and supporting Prevention Tool has been created. The £2m Prevention Fund has been established using one-off funding from the Public Health reserve and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) match funding, reflecting the NHS priority on prevention as well as the Council’s. A Prevention Board consisting of representatives from the council and health has been established to champion an outcome-focused prevention approach and oversee use of the Prevention Fund. Following advice from the Prevention Board, the Executive Member for Public Health and Equality of Opportunity will take decisions on how the Prevention Fund is spent, in consultation where appropriate with other Cabinet Members. The first meeting of the Prevention Board was in April, at which it was agreed that the fund would be aligned to three priority areas: Start well, Live well and Age well. It is anticipated that use of this fund will facilitate transformational change to the approach taken by the council and partners to

prevention, shifting the funding focus more widely to improve outcomes for all, which will also reduce demand on services. Draft outline business cases for each priority area will be developed and presented to the Prevention Board in July.

22. Training for frontline workers to improve their awareness of prevention and population health is being developed, the rollout of this will include a refresh and relaunch of making every contact count (MECC) training in 2022-23.

Priority 3: Promoting sustainable inclusive communities, infrastructure, and growth.

23. Most of our cleanliness indicators showed improved standards and satisfaction with our services. We will look to keep this improvement going over the next twelve months, getting the message across to our communities in the areas we are doing well and, where necessary, patrolling with enforcement, locations where we still have room for improvement.
24. During the year we cleared a total of 1727 fly tips, which is an increase on pre-Covid levels (1536 in 2019/20). We met the target of clearing 95% of fly tips within 3 working days.
25. The Street Enforcement Officers began patrolling at the start of the last quarter, with a presence in every community within South Gloucestershire. They have engaged with Town/Parish staff, retailers, other South Glos staff and community contacts such as litter pick groups. In doing so they built relationships with key community contacts enabling them to quickly deal with a number of community-based issues that arose.
26. Moving from year 2 to year 3 of the Climate Emergency Action Plan has seen the development and delivery of new projects which start to align more clearly with the strategic nature of the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019.
27. New resources within the Climate Emergency team have enabled increased support to be commissioned from Severn Wye Energy Agency to be added on top of our existing Warm and Well arrangements in order to provide additional dedicated support to our communities (commencing May 2022).

Priority 4: Realising the full potential of our people and delivering value for money.

28. A new approach to prioritising communications focusses on actions to highlight the work of council teams in delivering services on residents' 'front door'.
29. Early feedback from our DfE Advisor is that the council is doing everything expected to support recruitment of children's social workers, which has been one of the most challenging and hard to fill workforce groups. During Q4, work and approval was undertaken to enable international recruitment which will enhance children's social worker recruitment campaigns. We continue to actively support Proud to Care which works regionally to promote care as a career across the South West.
30. The labour market has tightened considerably over this reporting period and so we are continuing with our campaign approach for the majority of council vacancies to support service departments with recruitment challenges faced. We are also continuing to actively promote Apprenticeships across the council as part of our 'grow your own' recruitment and retention strategy.
31. The new Adult Social Care system has gone live, as has the Finance module and the upgrade and integration with the portal handling financial transactions with our social care providers.
32. We have introduced new, technology-led solutions to help residents report potholes and other issues on roads, footpaths and cycle lanes. Reports are sent directly to tablets with the repair crews to assess and prioritise work and, once a job is complete, residents who reported the issue will receive an email confirming that the work has been done.

33. Implementation of our new Strategic Customer Contact Platform is well underway with the first element (IT Service Desk) due to go-live imminently.
34. The social care self-service portal for professionals to use when referring to Integrated Children's Services within the council and send related review documentation is at pilot phase with 10 schools. It was our intention to roll out the portal across all schools by the end of the year. However, during an initial pilot phase, a number of issues were identified which we will aim to address before roll-out commences.

Consultation

35. Officers across all departments have been involved in providing information, from which the basis of this report has been compiled.

Equalities Considerations

36. There are no direct equalities issues arising from this report itself as it is a position statement for the Council. Detailed performance and progress information regarding protected characteristic groups is reported on a regular basis by services and is managed as an integral part of day-to-day service arrangements.

Financial, legal and human resources implications

37. There are no direct financial, legal or human resources implications arising from this report.
(John McCormack, Head of Legal, Governance and Democratic Services 01454 865980)
(Nina Philippidis, Head of Financial Services 01454 865140)
(Claire Kerswill, Head of Human Resources – 01454 866348)

Environmental Implications

38. This report reflects the actions undertaken to begin the process of integrated action on the Climate and Nature Emergency throughout the work of the council over the last reporting period. It identifies the extent to which this is being achieved, and further actions to achieve the council's ambitions in this regard
(Lucy Rees, Senior Environmental Policy & Climate Change Officer – 01454 862224)

Social Implications

39. The report covers the Council Plan which addresses many social implications for our residents and communities, of particular note is the cross-cutting ambition to reduce the inequality gap in our communities. All action plans seek to support this aim and therefore positive progress against them is essential for delivery, with progress across all areas needing to be considered in that context and corrective actions taken where necessary.
(Mark Pullin, Community Services Manager – 01454 868480)

Economic Implications

40. There are no direct economic implications identified through the recommendation within this report.
(Ian Steele, Business Development and Digital Connectivity Manager - 01454 868202)

Privacy Impact Assessment

41. There are no privacy implications arising from this report.

Risks, mitigations and opportunities

42. There are no direct risks arising from this report. However, progress against the Council Plan has a direct bearing on the achievement of the Council's priorities. It is therefore important that we regularly monitor and report progress, taking action where necessary.

Reasons for Decision

43. As Cabinet has overall responsibility for the Council Plan it is important that Cabinet is able to review and comment on progress.

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