

To: Cabinet
Date: 09 September 2020
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive.
Title of Report: Oxford City Council Business Plan 2020-21

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Approval of Oxford City Council Business Plan 2020-21
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Partnerships
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-2024
Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree a revised draft Oxford City Council Business Plan 2020-21, updated due to the impact of the on-going COVID 19 crisis, setting out the Council's priority work programmes for the remainder of the financial year; and 2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Council Leader to make minor amendments to the draft Oxford City Council Business Plan 2020-21 before implementation. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Copy of the draft Oxford City Council Business Plan 2020-21.

Introduction and background

1. Oxford City Council's draft Business Plan 2020-21 is a new annual document that sets out publicly the Council's priority work programme activities for the year ahead and reports on progress against agreed milestones.
2. This year's Business Plan was scheduled for submission to the Cabinet in April 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was delayed until a time when the impacts of the crisis on the Council's planned activity were clearer.. Changes to the April version of the Business Plan have now been made with some activities delayed while other new activities have been included, in response to the COVID-19 situation.
3. The Business Plan activities for 2020-21 represent the initial steps towards achieving the outcomes set out in the new Council Strategy 2020-24, adopted by the Council in February 2020. Successive Business Plans in future years should progressively enable the Council to achieve those outcomes.
4. The draft Business Plan 2020-21 and Council Strategy 2020-24 succeed the previous Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2016-20 and Corporate Plan Annual Statements as key strategic tools to drive sustainable systematic change for Oxford.
5. An initial review of the Council Strategy 2020-24 ("the Strategy") by officers and the Council Leader did not identify a need to revise the Strategy at this stage in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it was considered the outcomes set for 2024 remain relevant and achievable. Clearly this position could change as the future impacts of COVID-19 are unknown.
6. This first annual draft Business Plan does not include an update on what was achieved by the Council during 2019-20. Instead, a separate Annual Statement 2019-20 report was presented to the Cabinet in June 2020 and approved. From 2021-22 onwards, the annual Business Plan will include a report on the delivery of the prior year's priority work programme.
7. The Business Plan work programme will also form the basis of key activities set out in individual Service Plans, for each service area within the Oxford City Council.
8. It had originally been intended that new corporate key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets for Oxford City Council, linked to delivery of the Council Strategy 2020-24, would be developed at the same time as the Business Plan 2020-21. However, as a result of the COVID-19 situation which has had significant impact on a number of areas of service delivery and the Council's financial position, it is proposed that the corporate KPIs and targets are developed following the revised Council annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and cover the period 2021-24.
9. These will be tracked and reported on over the remaining three year period of the Council Strategy. Considered alongside the milestones set for individual activities within the annual Business Plan, the KPIs will enable monitoring of progress towards delivering the outcomes set out in the Strategy.
10. A paper setting out the proposed corporate KPIs and associated targets will be presented to the Cabinet in March 2021 for consideration, alongside the draft Business Plan 2021-22.

Development of the Business Plan 2020-21

11. The whole of the Council's senior management team has been involved in developing the draft Business Plan 2020-21. The Council's Operational Delivery Group (ODG), which includes all Heads of Service, held a workshop in November 2019 to consider business priorities for the next financial year, reviewed these against the emerging Council Strategy, and considered the outcomes/milestones that might be identified to measure delivery. The focus was on workstreams that will deliver change or represent development over the 12 month period, rather than business as usual (BAU) activities.
12. This was followed by three further workshops involving officers in the ODG, Corporate Management Team (CMT), which includes the Chief Executive and Directors, together with other officers, as well as one to one meetings with each Head of Service and Director. The work resulted in the creation of a longlist of activities to be undertaken within 2020-21 to support each of the new Council Priorities: enable an inclusive economy, deliver more affordable housing, support thriving communities and pursue a zero carbon Oxford. A shortlist was developed from the longlist, which in turn was developed into the draft Business Plan, which captures key activities, milestones and measures.
13. As part of the revision process, changes were made to the existing draft document, and reviewed again by the ODG and the CMT across July to agree suggested changes.

Document Structure

14. The Business Plan activities sit below the four Council Strategy 20-24 strategic priorities. Although many of the activities are cross cutting in their nature, for ease of presentation each activity is allocated to one of the overarching priorities.
15. In line with many other local authorities the Business Plan 2020-21 will be published in the form of a colour, fully accessible PDF.

Financial implications

16. The draft Business Plan 2020-21 sets out high level activities and milestones that are reflected in the Council Budget 2020-21. It does not contain specific expenditure commitments.

Legal issues

17. There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Equalities impact

18. The Business Plan 2020-21 is concerned with high level activities and milestones. It contains specific actions designed to support strategic objectives of reducing financial and social inequality and increasing inclusivity. These include:
 - a. creation of an Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Commission to develop plans to ensure the benefits of growth are shared more widely across Oxford's communities;
 - b. implementation of the City Council Workforce Equalities Action Plan and People Strategy to boost employee diversity;

- c. creation and implementation of an Equalities Strategy to ensure all City Council services are accessible and effectively meet the needs of all of Oxford's citizens, including those with protected characteristics;
- d. development of a Thriving Communities Strategy using data-driven insights to target programmes to reduce isolation, increase cultural and community involvement and improve health and well-being;
- e. work to increase participation, inclusivity and accessibility of leisure and community centres, arts venues and parks, ensuring they work for everyone;
- f. Creation of a gender-balanced race advisory group that can support the Council and partners to shape policy and make decisions from a grass roots up perspective, as well as identify talent for recruitment;
- g. development of a 'One Council' approach to preventing homelessness and tackling rough sleeping in Oxford;
- h. delivery of a countywide strategy involving other councils to transform the Adult Homeless Pathway in Oxfordshire;
- i. hosting a 'summit' bringing together education system leaders in Oxford to develop stronger partnership working to improve educational attainment;
- j. promotion of Oxford Brookes University's local scholarship programme and help build stronger partnerships with them and local employers to support Oxford residents into higher education opportunities that could ultimately lead to local high skilled jobs.
- k. Promotion of arts and culture to Early Years, NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) and Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) children and young people.

19. However, the Business Plan summarises priority areas of work rather than providing detail on how the work will be undertaken. Therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not possible at this point.

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Background Papers: None