

## Cabinet

11 February 2025

### Part 1 - Public

#### Executive Non-key Decision



Cabinet Member	Cllr Boughton, Leader of the Council
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Jeremy Whittaker, Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager.

#### Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26

### 1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In recent months, cross-departmental work has been undertaken to strengthen the links between the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 and the activities of the Council. One key aspect of this work is the production of an Annual Service Delivery Plan.
- 1.2 An Annual Service Delivery Plan is a performance management tool that sets out our priority actions for the year, along with key milestones and targets that can be used to monitor whether the council is on track with delivery.
- 1.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Annual Service Delivery Plan on 23 January 2025, providing a number of comments which are set out in this report.
- 1.4 A draft Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2025/26, setting out the wide range of activities, milestones and targets is provided in Annex 1.

### 2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 As the Annual Service Delivery Plan is the key action plan for the Corporate Strategy 2023/2027, it has direct relevance to each of the priority areas:
  - Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
  - Sustaining a borough which cares for the environment.
  - Improving housing options for local people whilst protecting our outdoor areas of importance.
  - Investing in our local economy to help support residents and businesses and foster sustainable growth.

2.2 As shown in Annex 1, each of the priority areas has its own actions and performance targets in the Plan.

### **3 Recommendations**

3.1 That the report **BE NOTED**.

3.2 That the draft Annual Service Delivery Plan, as set out in Annex 1 **BE APPROVED**.

3.3 That any remaining drafting changes **BE DELEGATED** to the Chief Executive in discussion with the Leader of the Council.

3.4 That the proposed process for reporting updates on the Annual Service Delivery Plan, as set out in 5.6 to 5.8 **BE APPROVED**.

### **4 Introduction and Background**

4.1 The Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 sets out 68 actions that are key to addressing the 4 priority areas set out in the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027. Each of these actions has milestones that can be monitored in order to demonstrate progress. In addition, for each priority area, there are a suite of performance targets that will provide a clear indication as to whether the Council is achieving in delivering the Plan. There are 62 performance targets in total.

4.2 This Plan will replace the current suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and provide a more robust approach to monitoring the performance of the Council. The Plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and then Cabinet, on a quarterly basis, starting from Q1 of 2025/26.

### **5 Proposal**

5.1 Following the Corporate Peer Challenge Review in 2022, the Council adopted a new Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 along with a suite of 72 KPIs that have been used to monitor progress towards meeting the 4 priority areas as listed under paragraph 2.1.

5.2 Having operated this process for 18 months, an internal review of our current performance management processes was undertaken in 2024. This review concluded that whilst it was clearly a solid starting point in the Council's efforts to improve and monitor delivery, there were areas for improvement:

- The reporting of KPIs was long-winded and (in parts) piecemeal
- There were too many KPIs, with a number of them not being sufficiently meaningful or influenced by the Council.
- There was a need to embed performance management and strengthen the use of KPIs as a tool for decision-making.

- 5.3 These findings, and the associated recommendations, were approved by Cabinet on 12 November 2024.
- 5.3 The introduction of an Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2025/26 is the perfect opportunity to reset our approach to KPIs and performance management more broadly, as is a key part of the ‘golden thread’ that strengthens the link between strategy and delivery. The Plan is structured using the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 priority areas, and links actions with both milestones and KPIs that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound). As such, Members will be able to use this one document to ascertain whether the Council is meeting its key delivery targets.
- 5.4 It should be noted that not everything the Council will do in 2025/26 is contained within the Plan. Indeed, there will be plenty of essential ‘business as usual’ work undertaken (that provides the bedrock for delivering services to our residents) that is not included. This is not because greater importance is given to actions in the Plan, but solely because it is focussed specifically on new strategic actions that will reach specific milestones during 2025/26.

## 6 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 On 23 January 2025, Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussed the draft Annual Service Delivery Plan. The Plan was welcomed by Members of the Committee, who recognised the usefulness of a tool that monitors performance and tracks progress in line with the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.
- 6.2 There were a number of suggested amendments put forward by the Committee, including:
- That under 13.1, the second milestone is expanded to state: “Establish formal programme management arrangements to ensure the Council is fully engaged in managing the preparation and transition process by Winter 2025, *including a report on progress of any governance review relating to the unparished part of the Borough and any other boundary review of parished areas*”.
  - That Key Performance Indicators relating to the Housing Register and Empty Properties are added to the “Improving Housing and Protecting Areas – Performance Targets” section.
  - Amendments to KPIs:
    - a) Planning Enforcement – the target has been amended to 68% to reflect an improvement in service.
    - b) The 2024/25 performance on the 5-year housing land supply has been updated to 2.89 years

- c) The number of residents registering for a MyAccount showed a predicted drop in numbers from 2024/25 (6,000) to 2025/26 (5,000). This was picked up by Members as demonstrating a worsening rate. The reason for this is because the MyAccount has been very successful and with around 42,000 accounts registered by residents in the Borough, there is now going to be a slowing down in registrations. In order to avoid confusion, it is proposed that a total figure for registrations is used instead, with an estimated performance for 2024/25 at 42,500 and a target for 2025/26 of 47,000 (a net growth of 4,500 to account for de-registrations)

- 6.3 The draft Annual Service Delivery Plan, as provided in Annex 1 does therefore include a number of amendments to reflect the discussion at Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 6.4 Despite these changes, there are still a few gaps in information (highlighted in red on the document). These are predominantly caused by external factors, such as awaiting legislation or funding from Central Government. As all of these gaps should be addressed ahead of 2025/26, it is proposed that these remaining drafting changes be delegated to the Chief Executive in discussion with the Leader of the Council.

## **7 Ongoing Monitoring**

- 7.1 It is vital that Members have regular oversight of the Annual Service Delivery Plan, so as stated in paragraph 4.2, progress on the Plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. Each activity set out in the Plan will include a description of progress during that quarter and be given a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating whereby the following definitions will be accorded to each colour:

- Red – serious issues with dates being missed.
- Amber – some issues that are being managed with a need for close monitoring.
- Green – project is on track.

This rating will enable Members to identify, at a glance, where the Council is on track and where additional focus is required.

- 7.2 In order to ensure accessibility, the letters R, A and G will also be used to denote status.
- 7.3 As per the existing reporting of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the performance targets set out in the Plan will also be assessed and presented in terms of trend (better or worse) and overall status (if on track to meet the target or not). Given that the existing presentation of KPIs has been shaped with the

support of Members over the course of a number of months, it is proposed that these performance targets are presented in the same way.

## **8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

8.1 None arising directly from this report. The production and monitoring of the Annual Service Delivery Plan are undertaken internally using existing staff resources.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

9.1 Performance Management is identified in the Strategic Risk Register. The register highlights that without an effective performance management framework in place, the authority will not be able to understand any required improvements or achieve value for money.

## **10 Legal Implications**

10.1 The matters raised in this report are considered to be routine, uncontroversial or not legally complex and a legal opinion has not been sought on these proposals.

## **11 Consultation and Communications**

11.1 The Annual Service Delivery Plan will be used by the Council to communicate, both internally and to our communities, about our achievements as well as any areas of focus that the Council is working to improve.

## **12 Implementation**

12.1 Progress on the Plan will then be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis during 2025/26.

## **13 Cross Cutting Issues**

13.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

13.1.1 Some impact on reducing emissions in support of carbon neutral by 2030 or enhancing the natural environment.

13.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

13.1.3 The reporting on KPIs has some positive impact on climate change and biodiversity in the sense that a few of the KPIs specifically relate to emissions and air quality, and as such contribute towards highlighting the Council's performance in this area.

## 13.2 Equalities and Diversity

13.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – Draft Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26