

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

13 March 2024

Strategic Council Plan

Report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on the refresh of the Strategic Council Plan (SCP), which was approved in March 2023. The refreshed Plan was approved at full Council on 04 March 2024.

2 Action required

- 2.1 To scrutinise the refreshed plan, ensuring that it is deliverable, outlines the Council's priorities, takes into account the Council's current financial challenges, and appropriately reflects the Council's ambitions and services that it is able to offer to citizens.
- 2.2 The Committee is asked to consider further scrutiny of the SCP including how it may be impacted by the appointment of Commissioners and to agree to receive an annual update on the performance of the initiatives contained within the SCP.

3 Background information

- 3.1 The Strategic Council Plan (SCP) was agreed at Full Council in March 2023 alongside the 2023/24 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The content was based on the Divisional Business Plans for 2023-24, which detailed how each division would deliver on their statutory duties and 'business as usual' (BAU) services, and how they would be resourced. It was, however, noted at the time that the SCP would need refreshing post May 2023 in order to take account of the leading Political Party's policy commitments.
- 3.2 The refreshed SCP has been subject to a review of its contents to ensure the statutory and BAU work remains deliverable within the available financial envelope.
- 3.3 The refresh also includes pledges from the Labour Manifesto for 2023's Local Election, which have been assessed for their deliverability within the available finances.
- 3.4 This means that the Strategic Council Plan (SCP) remains fully integrated with the Council's Divisional Business Plans and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). All activities set out in the SCP have been confirmed as deliverable by the responsible officers, within the current

budgetary envelope. This is both good practice and is in line with statutory instructions from the Improvement and Assurance Board (IAB).

3.5 The refreshed SCP includes pledges from the local Labour Manifesto from the May 2023 local elections, at which Labour were confirmed as the majority party for Nottingham City.

3.6 Manifesto pledges were assessed by senior officers for their deliverability alongside the Divisional Business Plans and MTFP for 2024/25 and translated into policy commitments for delivery. This included reinterpretation of some to define deliverable activity, whilst retaining the original intention of the commitment, and ensuring the SCP can be delivered within the finances now available. Other pledges have been put onto a reserve list as they are not currently deliverable/resourced within the constraints of the MTFP, but opportunities to deliver them will continue to be sought and considered. This includes the following commitments:

- Create a community-led manifesto for high quality public art, invest in Nottingham's thriving artistic and cultural life, and support community arts
- Seek funding for further heritage restoration projects in the city centre, including the Council House
- Pay the Real Living Wage and become a Real Living Wage Council
- Make Nottingham a Real Living Wage city through the work of a Living Wage Officer, encouraging local employers to pay the Real Living Wage, so that people of all ages are paid a fair wage
- Help Nottingham people cope with the cost of living crisis, including protecting the benefits and welfare advice service
- Support the switch to electrified transport by creating electric vehicle car clubs and sustainable transport hubs in every neighbourhood
- Restore the fountains in the Old Market Square so that Nottingham people can enjoy them once again
- Tackle inequality by launching an anti-poverty strategy
- Make Nottingham pavements disability friendly, working towards 1.5m space on pavements, removing A boards and street clutter, as well as auditing our drop kerbs and protecting blue badge parking
- Bid for UK City of Culture by 2030
- Introduce a work experience scheme aimed at young people from Nottingham families where parents did not go to university
- Introduce a weekly food waste collection and increase Nottingham's recycling rate to 40% through improved communication, engagement and service redesign

3.7 The refresh takes account of changes which have occurred since March 2023, including the announcement that Commissioners were being appointed to Nottingham City Council.

- 3.8 The refreshed SCP may require further revisions before the end of the SCP period as the financial circumstances of the Council change.

Reporting

- 3.9 As shared at Corporate Scrutiny Committee in November, reporting on the Strategic Council Plan will recommence in Quarter 4 following approval of the refresh. Alongside the refresh, work is continuing to refresh the comprehensive Performance Management Framework (PMF).
- 3.10 Quarterly reporting on the existing Critical Indicators (the 'business as usual' metrics) has continued.
- 3.11 The focus going forward will be on the performance management of the PMF rather than conducting quarterly assessments of the SCP commitments. This shift in emphasis aims to ensure a more concentrated and effective approach to performance management. Thus, future performance reporting of the SCP commitments (i.e. derived from the deliverable elements of the manifesto) will be annual rather than quarterly.
- 3.12 Quarter 4 performance will be shared with senior officers and the Executive, and with Corporate Scrutiny Committee when required after April 2024. This will provide an immediate assessment of plans to deliver the commitments, alongside the comprehensive PMF.
- 3.13 Success criteria have already been considered for the SCP to ensure performance and progress can be monitored alongside other key deliverables in the Performance Management Framework. This will ensure that senior officers and the Executive are able to review deliverability alongside changes to the Council's finances, guaranteeing that the SCP remains aligned with the MTFP and Divisional Business Plans in future years.
- 3.14 Now Commissioners have been appointed, the SCP may need to take account of, or even be superseded by a revised Nottingham City Council Improvement Plan, required of the Council within the first three months of any Commissioner-led intervention.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 Strategic Council Plan 2024 – 27 Refresh.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Full Council report 6th March 2023 - "Strategic Council Plan 2023 - 2027"
– item 75:
[https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=155
&MIId=9571&Ver=4](https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=155&MIId=9571&Ver=4).

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All

8 Contact information

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