

Corporate and Resources Committee

13 July 2021

Year-end Corporate Plan report

Report by: Sarah Ireland, Executive Director, Corporate and Communities

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Caroline Kerr, Leader of the Council

Purpose of Report

To update the Council on progress on delivering the Corporate Plan, and report on the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators. To update the Council on changes to Corporate Plan Priorities and corporate Key Performance Indicators.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:

1. the revised Corporate Plan deliverables and Key Performance Indicators set out in paragraphs 5 to 8 of the report be endorsed;
2. the progress made against delivering the Corporate Plan actions summarised in paragraph 9 of the report be noted;
3. the progress report arising from the LGA Peer Challenge follow-up visit in May 2021 be noted.

Benefits to the Community:

The Corporate Plan sets out the vision for the borough and the Council and reflects the Administration manifesto commitments. The annual review of this plan provides both a retrospective and forward-looking self-assessment of our performance against our priority activities, which enables residents to hold the Council to account for delivery and performance.

Key Points

- A. The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023 'Making Kingston Better, together' sets out the medium-term vision, outcomes and priorities and is fundamental in ensuring that the Council manages its business and resources effectively, with activities aligned to achieving the outcomes in the Plan.
- B. The Council has a new strategic priority, to "support the borough to recover well from the impacts of the pandemic". This priority has 6 component actions.
- C. The Council has changed three KPIs due to the data not being available as a result of the pandemic.

D. The Council has changed one strategic priority, updating the language of our equality, diversity and inclusion priority to reflect the ambition in our renewed strategy.

E. Further detailed information regarding:

1. Progress against existing Corporate Plan outcomes in relation to each priority and component action
2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which have been reported publicly through strategic committees

will be published on the Council's website.

F. Covid-19 has had an impact on the completion rate of actions. A further 20 actions have been completed this year. 21 updates refer to an impact from Covid-19.

	2019/20	2020/21
Total	119	132
In progress	69	69
Complete	34	53
On hold	8	2
Closed	8	8

G. The Corporate Plan is not intended to represent everything the Council does. Rather, it is the framework within which we will operate and within which key decisions around the future of local services and the Council's budget will be taken.

H. In January 2019, the Local Government Association carried out a Peer Challenge, and presented the council with a series of recommendations for improvement. In May 2021, the Peer Challenge team returned to Kingston, and engaged with staff, councillors and our partners. They noted that, since the original review there has been a tangible shift in the way the council feels, with the right 'conditions' to enable the council to progress and succeed having been created. Further detail, including recommendations arising from the return visit, is included at Committee Report point 10. and within **Annex B**.

Context

1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023 'Making Kingston Better, together', was approved by Full Council on 26 February 2019. The Corporate Plan is the Council's most important strategic document, which sets out the vision for the borough and the Council, together with the priority outcomes for the four years of the plan.
2. The Council is also committed to reviewing the Key Performance Indicators through which our performance as an organisation is monitored and reported to strategic committees twice yearly. The outcome of that review is summarised in the report.

Covid-19 Pandemic impact

3. It is clear to see the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on corporate plan deliverables and our key performance indicators. The main corporate KPIs impacted by Covid are as follows:
- i. We have seen an increase in the amount of waste sent for disposal per household and decrease in recycling as restrictions have limited the options for recycling for our residents.
 - ii. In our libraries, lockdown and Tier restrictions severely impacted visitor numbers throughout the year. However, the digital library offer continues to grow and thrive with a steady take up of e-resources and attendance at digital activities.
 - iii. There was a delay in the implementation of Fire risk assessments taking place (normally at the start of the financial year); these were subsequently completed by the end of July. Access to social housing properties for annual Landlord Gas Safety registration inspections were also initially hampered.
 - iv. Food business inspections by Regulatory Services were impeded so that the lack of rating affected the percentage of total premises rated 3 or above; this is now back above target.
 - v. For domestic and sexual violence KPIs, lockdown was a barrier to victims being able to report domestic and sexual violence offences and therefore an escalation of risk to victim survivors. Aside from the KPI there has been a significant increase in referrals to the Kingston MARAC - some of this is due to Covid but also because agencies are becoming better at identifying risk and referring cases and where a multi-agency panel puts a risk management plan in place.
 - vi. Numbers of volunteer registrations in the borough, buoyed by public support for the Kingston Stronger Together effort and the vaccination roll-out, with 1,380 for the year, more than 500 above target.
 - vii. There were restrictions on most face-to-face services in May and June 2020, impacting on Key Performance Indicators in those areas. Adult Social Care and Children's Services have seen an increase in the number and complexity of referrals to their services.
 - viii. Direct Payments take-up has been outpaced by those leaving the scheme - related with Covid, an increase in complex needs and preference for local authority provided care. Actions to improve the take-up include a more targeted approach with reablement that can inform people of the advantages of direct payments as a choice rather than traditional domiciliary care services.
 - ix. Adult safeguarding - Safeguarding activity has increased this year in both the number and complexity of cases. The overall percentage of 88% is positive, showing that safeguarding intervention reduces risk or for those where risk is evident, we manage it with the person, but is slightly below target.
 - x. In Children's services, the percentage of care leavers (19-21 yrs) in contact with the local authority and engaged in education, training and

employment has fallen. Covid and limitations on education as well as furlough have impacted on this.

- xi. Service demand is increasing; Single Point of Access (SPA) referrals are up and proceedings numbers in safeguarding remain high. Cases are becoming increasingly complex requiring a greater level of resource to manage. Lockdowns have made access to homes and face-to-face meetings more difficult.
 - xii. The number of placements in all forms of temporary accommodation have grown, reflecting the absence of exits to meet demand. At the same time, the council, working with partner agencies has achieved a high number of homelessness preventions.
 - xiii. There was a slight delay in the installation of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points across Kingston, but this is now under way.
 - xiv. Both Council Tax, and in particular Business Rates collection rates were affected by the pandemic and subsequent closure/restrictions on businesses and employees.
4. Other key performance indicators demonstrate a maintenance of performance despite additional restrictions. These include:
- i. 2020/21 tree planting programme completed in target.
 - ii. The council continues to fulfil its obligations to repair Category 1 highways defects within 24 hours of notification.
 - iii. Children's Services achieved the 95% target of Children's social care single assessments completed within 45 working days throughout the year.
 - iv. An improvement in performance in timeliness of responses to Freedom of Information requests.
 - v. Maintenance of response times in reviewing planning applications.

Corporate KPI revisions

5. KPIs are reviewed on an annual basis to maintain relevance, to take into account any changes in priority and in reporting regimes. The following three corporate KPIs are proposed for change:
- i. **The proportion of schools judged as good or better by Ofsted** - whilst the indicator is of significant interest it is only produced annually and for 2019/20 and 2020/21 there will be no data published due to the pandemic. To be replaced by **% Children Looked After with 3+ placements (within 12 months)** - Inclusion of this indicator will provide a focus on placement sufficiency and suitability, a priority area for the Council. Placement stability directly impacts young people in care to a significant extent and gives a direct reflection of the challenges currently facing Achieving for Children. Data for this indicator is available quarterly.
 - ii. **% Point gap between attainment of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected level (9-4) in**

English and maths at Key Stage 4 - whilst the indicator is of significant interest it is only produced annually and for 2019/20 and 2020/21 there will be no data published due to the pandemic. To be replaced by **% Children Looked After visited within statutory timescale** - Inclusion of this indicator will provide a focus on the quality of care being provided to children and young people in the care of Kingston, highlight pressures on the service and will rebalance the indicators. Direct contact with children and young people is essential to ensure the well-being of the young person. Data for this indicator is available quarterly so any issues can quickly be identified and action taken.

- iii. Average progress 8 score per pupil at Key Stage 4 - whilst the indicator is of significant interest it is only produced annually and for 2019/20 and 2020/21 there will be no data published due to the pandemic. To be replaced by **% re-referrals to Children's Social Care (within 12 months)** - Inclusion of re-referrals to Children's Social Care rebalances the indicators and directly reflects the vulnerabilities of the borough's residents and can therefore be used to drive service improvement and respond to changing circumstances in Kingston. Data for this indicator is available quarterly.

Corporate Plan revisions

6. Priorities are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure relevance and take into account any changes in priority.
7. A new Corporate Plan priority, with 6 component actions, has been proposed, to **Support the borough to recover well from the impacts of the pandemic**. The component actions for this priority are:
 - i. Deliver essential recovery programmes and activity to stimulate the local economy to the benefit of local businesses and residents, including through the Economic Recovery Taskforce
 - ii. Facilitate collaborative working between the Council, its statutory and voluntary sector partners and local groups to support local communities, including through the Communities Taskforce
 - iii. Deliver a cohesive partnership vision, guided by our residents, to move forward from the Covid-19 pandemic
 - iv. Implement all areas of work to prevent further spread of COVID-19 in Kingston as outlined in the Kingston Local Outbreak Control Plan and address health disparities related to 'enduring transmission'
 - v. Provide, coordinate and communicate support and assistance to those who are most vulnerable during the Covid-19 pandemic, including through the Kingston Stronger Together Hub
 - vi. Develop process to link data on disparities, inequalities and deprivation to support future service planning across the council

8. The Council has changed one strategic priority, updating the language of our equality, diversity and inclusion priority to reflect the ambition in our renewed strategy.

Completed actions

9. The below actions have been completed. Detail is available in **Annex A**:
 - i. Work with existing residents, the local community and development partner to bring forward a comprehensive plan for the Cambridge Road Estate regeneration, with independent advice available to residents.
 - ii. Hold a fair resident ballot at the Cambridge Road Estate that enshrines best practice techniques and guidance in engagement and consultation to apply to other RBK major regeneration opportunity sites.
 - iii. Local Plan: Wide public engagement in the future growth and development of the borough; Phase 1 issues and options consultation
 - iv. Provide 1 public drinking fountain in the Ancient Market and 3 more across the borough, and encourage a culture of refillable bottles, to promote health, reduce litter and cut the use of plastic.
 - v. Deliver a new 'Recycling on the Go' system.
 - vi. Develop, plan and campaign around the council's commitment to reduce plastic waste.
 - vii. Work with Transport for London to encourage the adoption of Eden Street as a 'Clean Bus Zone', with only low emissions buses operating on routes through the street.
 - viii. Work with health partners to assess demand for GPs, dentists and health facilities
 - ix. Work with partners to develop a new 10-15 year strategy that ensures the resilience and vitality of Kingston town centre, to deliver a more diverse and sustainable economy
 - x. Consult on proposals to introduce 20 mph speed limits on all residential roads across the borough.
 - xi. Protect and support survivors of domestic abuse, including enhancing the provision available for survivors with complex needs.
 - xii. Enter into a London Crime Prevention Fund Grant Agreement with the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime for 2019/21 to contribute to funding Safer Kingston priorities.
 - xiii. Review and assess the impact of our multi-agency Knife Crime Plan with partners.

- xiv. Work to strengthen participation in the work of the local Safer Neighbourhood Board.
- xv. Set up an cross-directorate Task & Finish Group to oversee contingency planning for the impacts of Brexit, liaising with central government, other London boroughs and local strategic partners
- xvi. Work with the VCS to put on an annual event to celebrate Kingston's volunteers and showcase the benefits of volunteering.
- xvii. Encourage community schemes such as Kids Play Out.
- xviii. Successfully deliver a programme to support the live music scene in Kingston, using funding from the GLA as part of the London borough of Culture Programme.
- xix. Consider the feasibility of introducing a borough lottery.
- xx. Establish a cross party member working group to support local business.
- xxi. Work with existing council suppliers to ensure they maximise the use of local business in supply chains.
- xxii. As part of the South London Partnership, identify local skills priorities for Kingston via the SLP Skills & Employment Board and feed back to the Mayor of London ahead of the devolution of adult skills budgets to the GLA
- xxiii. Complete the Neighbourhoods Review with proposals to strengthen the role of Neighbourhood Committees, for agreement at Full Council and proposals successfully implemented.
- xxiv. Recruit 2 additional Neighbourhood Managers - bringing the total to 4 (one for each Neighbourhood) to provide greater support to Neighbourhood Committees and key point of contact between the council and our Neighbourhoods.
- xxv. Recruit 4 additional Neighbourhood Rangers - bringing the total to 8 - to respond to local issues raised by residents.
- xxvi. Develop an Open Democracy Programme
- xxvii. Carry out an annual Residents Survey and publish results on the council's website.
- xxviii. Hold Let's Talk... community engagement themed events at locations across the Borough.
- xxix. Update the council website to ensure all public consultations are easily accessible.
- xxx. Consult on proposals to expand Burlington Infant and Burlington Junior Schools from September 2022 and 2025 respectively.

- xxxi. Refresh the Council's School Place Planning Strategy.
- xxxii. Develop and implement a Digital Inclusion Action Plan to provide support for people to access services online whilst continuing to offer an offline alternative to those who need it.
- xxxiii. Work with health partners to produce a Health & Care Plan for Kingston which will also form the basis of the joint response to the NHS Long Term Plan, focusing on opportunities to improve health, wellbeing and independence in Kingston.
- xxxiv. Support 5 councillors to be mental health champions as part of the mental health foundation mental health challenge.
- xxxv. Recruit at least 20 Time to Change champions to use their experience of mental health problems to change the way people think and act about mental health.
- xxxvi. Deliver Mental Health First Aid training courses for those working with Young People, and for those working with Adults, developing a train-the-trainer model.
- xxxvii. Set a balanced budget (originally for 2019/20) and sustainable MTFS to 2022/23
- xxxviii. Carry out a full review of Fees & Charges
- xxxix. Completion of organisational restructure at all tiers
 - xl. Deliver £1.5m savings through our Smarter Commissioning - Better Contracting programme.
 - xli. Achieve London Living wage Accreditation
 - xl.ii. Develop an organisational development strategy that provides staff with the tools and support to do their job and transform services, development programme that nurtures and grows talent and staff engagement process that is inclusive and empowering.
 - xl.iii. Create a register of local community, residential, business and voluntary groups that will be consulted as of right on matters of local interest and service provision.
 - xl.ii. Implement a Residents' Engagement and Consultation Hub (REACH) to serve as a vehicle through which the council will consult with local interest groups.
 - xl.v. Develop a Community Engagement Strategy to articulate the council's vision and approach to community engagement and some of the practical tools it will use to improve.
 - xl.vi. Implement the new Digital Customer platform to improve the ability for people to report faults or issues, book appointments and pay for things online.

- xlvi. Review and refresh the most visited pages on the council's website to improve clarity of information and services available and work with services to improve best practice in web design across teams.
- xlvi. Review all support services to ensure they are focussed on enabling frontline service delivery, maximise digitalisation and transformation.
- xlvii. Engage in the delivery of the Internet of Things pilot as part of the South London Partnership work.
 - i. Undertake Smart Place projects to look at smart use of technology to include Domestic Violence and Air Quality.
 - ii. Introduce a Scrutiny Panel to empower residents to challenge council decisions
 - iii. Ensure that the speed and quality of decisions on planning applications protects the council's right to determine planning applications.

The Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge

- 10. The LGA Peer Challenge review team visited Kingston in January 2019, providing the council with a series of recommendations for improvement.
- 11. In May 2019 the LGA team completed a return visit during which they reviewed progress. They found that:
 - a. There has been a palpable and tangible shift in the way the council feels since the original corporate peer challenge. Central to this has been the creation of the right 'conditions' to enable the council to progress and succeed;
 - b. People are now able to see how a sustainable financial future can be achieved for the council. There is a positive narrative centred upon securing savings through the delivery of better, more targeted services and bringing about transformation and change;
 - c. There was a good delivery of savings by the council last year;
 - d. There are much improved relationships generally between the council and partners;
 - e. The place shaping agenda is exciting and galvanising.
- 12. Recommendations arising from the review are that:
 - a. The priorities for delivery across the council need to be made clear and adhered to, in order to manage the capacity challenge;
 - b. The council ensures that it maintains the discipline necessary to address the key financial challenges that remain and the difficult decisions that this entails;

- c. The council takes forward its planned work to establish greater certainty in relation to the savings that could be derived from transformation beyond 2022/23;
- d. The partnership-based piece of work to define a place-based vision for the whole borough is driven forward;
- e. Two-way engagement in the council is extended;
- f. The entirety of the council's senior leadership ensures they are visible and seen to be working to shift the culture of the organisation;
- g. The council extends further, and translates into something clearer and more meaningful, the evolving picture of how the organisation will operate into the future and the ways of working and culture at the heart of this – with the development and implementation of an organisational development (OD) approach and programme being central.

Financial Context

- 13. The Council is operating in an increasingly challenging financial environment. Kingston faced a number of financial challenges in the medium to longer term - even before the COVID-19 outbreak, which has further added to these challenges. The economic and financial consequences of the pandemic, growing demand for services, and limited government grant funding make it difficult to find adequate funds to meet the Borough's needs. Other sources of revenue - council tax, business rates, and earned income have all been impacted by the pandemic.
- 14. The future of local government finance faces a significant level of uncertainty. The impact of the Fair Funding Review and a future review of business rates is currently unknown, and the lasting effects of COVID-19 on our residents, local businesses and the Council itself remain uncertain.
- 15. Despite these challenges the council has a drive and commitment to ensure it is doing the best for residents and communities

Resource Implications

- 16. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. There are financial implications to deliver the activity and deliverables in the Corporate Plan. However, the Corporate Plan aligns with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Each budget line in the Budget Report is linked to an outcome/priority of the Corporate Plan helping to define and prioritise the resources required to deliver through the business planning processes. Resource requirements to deliver specific items in the Corporate Plan in future years - where funding is not already baselined - will be considered through the annual budget setting process in the usual way.

Legal Implications

- 17. There are no legal implications associated with this report. The Corporate Plan is not a legal requirement but is essential in setting out the Council's overarching strategic framework and priorities.

Risk Assessment

18. The risk of not having a Corporate Plan would mean the Council would lack a clear narrative and vision to bind things together and prevent prioritisation of activity and effective use of resources.

Equalities Analysis

19. An equality impact assessment was carried out during the development of the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan equality assessment is available as a background paper.

Health Implications

20. None. The priorities in the Corporate Plan will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Sustainability Implications

21. None. Priorities in the Corporate Plan will have a positive impact on the environment and air quality.

Background papers: held by author of the report - Kate Leyland, Corporate Strategy and Partnerships Manager kate.leyland@kingston.gov.uk:

- LGA Peer Challenge 2019, final report
- Corporate Plan equality impact assessment

Annexes attached to this report

- Annex A - Corporate Plan year-end report
- Annex B - LGA Peer Review return visit