



**OPEN REPORT
GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Governance and Resources Committee – 15 February 2024

DERBYSHIRE DALES CORPORATE PLAN: WORKING GROUPS

Report of the Director of Corporate and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer)

Report Author and Contact Details

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Wards Affected

All Wards

Report Summary

The report updates Members on progress made by Corporate Plan Working Group, established by Council on 14 December 2023, which is under the remit of this committee.

Recommendations

1. That the report is considered and the areas of focus for the corporate plan be endorsed.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Corporate Plan Working Group Terms of Reference

Background Papers

- Council 14 December 2023: Derbyshire Dales Plan 2024-28
- Governance and Resources Committee, 14 September 2023: Development of the Derbyshire Dales Plan 2024-28

Consideration of report by Council or other committee

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from Press or Public

No

DERBYSHIRE DALES CORPORATE PLAN: WORKING GROUPS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council, at its meeting on 14 December 2023, approved new Aims, Themes and Principles as the basis of the Derbyshire Dales Plan (corporate plan).
- 1.2 Council also established cross-party working groups. Five groups were established, one for each Theme of the Derbyshire Dales Plan, each tasked to:
 - i. **Review and agree the Priorities and Outcomes** for its Theme.
 - ii. **Agree a Delivery Plan** for its Theme, taking account of staff and financial resources – initially for the 2024/25 financial year, but taking account of future years to enable programming/prioritisation.
- 1.3 It is expected that Delivery Plans will be published alongside the 2024/25 Budget at the Council meeting on 29 February.
- 1.4 The work by Circling Squares had identified that the current corporate plan includes too many targets, projects and actions. The current plan has 25 targets/indicators in total. In order to match ambition to resources, a challenge for working groups is to manage expectations with regard to prioritisation and resourcing.
- 1.5 The groups are task and finish groups, meeting first in January and completing their initial task in February. They each comprise one Member from each of the four political groups. The Chair of each working group was selected by its members at its first meeting. Each working group has officer support. Each working group is responsible to a 'parent' policy committee, as follows:
 - *Community and Environment Committee*
 1. Environment
 2. Housing
 3. Place shaping and Economy
 4. Community services and resources
 - *Governance and Resources Committee*
 5. Financially sound, fair and responsive Council (corporate)
- 1.6 This report provides an update on the financially sound, fair and responsive Council group.

2. Corporate Plan Working Group Update

- 2.1 The membership of the working group is as follows. At each meeting, the Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1 were agreed.

Financially sound, fair and responsible
Cllr S Flitter
Cllr Ripton, Cllr Slack (observer)
Cllr Buttle
Cllr Edwards – Walker
Lead Director: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Wilson, Karen Henriksen, Helen Mitchell, Steve Capes

2.2 The working group’s remit covers an extensive portfolio of services, traditionally but unhelpfully titled ‘back office’, spanning HR, democratic services, communications and marketing, legal, policy, finance and many others.

2.3 Following extensive discussions on current scope, performance and prioritisation, it was suggested to focus additional efforts in the following areas for the 2024/5 municipal year. Actions for future years will be developed in Q3/Q4 in the preceding year.

1. **Thriving Local Democracy** – to strengthen the participation of residents and businesses to greater influence the work of the District Council

Deliverable 1: To review the role and function of Area Forums;

Deliverable 2: To review and implement changes to the Council’s petitions scheme;

Deliverable 3: To complete a series of scrutiny reviews into issues that matter to the public;

Deliverable 4: To deliver the Customer Access Strategy;

Deliverable 5: To strengthen arrangements to engage and involve Parish and Town Councils across the District.

2. **Future Workforce, Future Workplace**– to improve the competitiveness of Derbyshire Dales as a place to work by enhancing the working environment for staff.

Deliverable 1: To review existing terms and conditions to ensure competitiveness and ensure Derbyshire Dales remains a great place to work;

Deliverable 2: To continue engagement with One Public Estate in respect of the reconfiguration of Matlock Town Hall.

3. **Sound Financial Management** - to manage the financial affairs of the District Council responsibly and sustainably.

Deliverable 1 - To identify measures required to enable a balanced budget to be set for the financial year 2025/26.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 It is recommended the two areas of focus ‘thriving local democracy’ and ‘future workforce, future workplace’ be adopted within the Derbyshire Dales Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 There were considerable opportunities available in which to prioritise other areas of Council business but the working group arrived at a consensus on the two items contained within this report.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The working groups meet at the end of an extensive consultation process involving residents, partners, staff and Members. The deliverables within the delivery plan have involved engagement with relevant officers and teams.

5. Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 It is envisaged that the new Derbyshire Dales Corporate Plan will form the basis of budgeting and service planning, with budgets for 2024/25 and an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan being approved at Council on 29 February 2024. The new Derbyshire Dales Plan would come into force from April 2024. It will replace the current Corporate Plan which runs to March 2024.

6. Policy Implications

- 6.1 The new Derbyshire Dales Corporate Plan will set the overall direction for the delivery of Council services and policies. This may result in different service areas adopting new and revised policies, depending upon the extent of changes envisaged in the Plan.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The development of a new Derbyshire Dales Plan will require an appropriate level of budgetary provision to deliver the projects and proposals included therein. This may necessitate some prioritisation and redeployment of existing budgets and staff.
- 7.2 In this regard, the crucial task for Members is to select from the multitude of possible activities and projects (all of which fit within priorities) and agree a focused programme that is deliverable within available financial and staff resources. Such an approach allows for the development of a realistic and deliverable plan.
- 7.3 The working groups are expected to each develop a delivery plan for the 2024/25 financial year initially. This is likely to result in resources being re-aligned with the new Aims. This re-alignment will be reflected in the draft

budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan that are due to be approved by Council on 29 February 2024.

7.4 The financial risk of this report's recommendations is assessed as low.

8. Legal Advice and Implications

8.1 This report refers to the Derbyshire Dales Corporate Plan which as stated is the District Council's primary policy document and a statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2000. The legal risk of challenge associated with taking the decisions as recommended has been assessed as low.

9. Equalities Implications

9.1 As the Derbyshire Dales Plan will impact all Council services, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out of delivery plans prior to the February Council meeting to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties on equalities. The EIA will also highlight and, if needed, suggest mitigation for potential positive and/or negative implications.

10. Climate Change and Biodiversity Implications

10.1 None identified within this report.

11. Risk Management

11.1 Risks associated with this report relate to the probability and impact of non-delivery. Resources will be planned in such a way as to provide for the best possible opportunities to deliver. The probability of non-delivery is classed as low-medium and the impact of non-delivery is low-medium.

Report Authorisation

Approvals obtained from Statutory Officers:

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	01/02/2024
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer	Karen Henriksen	06/02/2024
Legal Services Manager	Kerry France	05-02-2024

APPENDIX 1 CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Role and Function

1. To arrive at a delivery plan for each theme of the corporate plan;
2. To consider the merits and/or disadvantages to continuing the group's work in respect of overseeing delivery.
3. To share the Group's work, formally, with the parent Policy Committee.

The group will have no decision-making powers but will provide progress updates to the parent policy committee for endorsement.

Composition and Membership

Each group will have 4 Members (one from each political group/grouping on the Council). Each group will be supported by at least one Director.

The Chair of the Group will be appointed from amongst the elected Members nominated to sit on the Group by the Group Leaders. The Chair cannot be a substitute Member.

Meetings will be supported by the directorate and any other officer as required.

Group Leaders are invited to attend in an observing capacity only and can contribute on discretion of the Chair.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Members must come to meetings of the group prepared, considering material shared in advance to allow for a productive use of Member and officer time.
- Members must work together to attempt to arrive at a consensus view of how to best plan the delivery of the corporate plan ensuring that key milestones and work to do is legally allowable, financially possible and is in firm alignment with the principles agreed to at Council in December 2023.
- Members of the working groups are responsible for keeping their political groups abreast of the work of the group, feeding in ideas or concerns for discussion and resolution at the meeting.
- Members and Officers jointly own and take responsibility for the outcomes of the Group.
Members consider advice provided by officers which could be at variance with their own views.
- Officers must prepare and issue materials a min. of 3 working days in advance that are digestible and relevant to discussions.
- Officers must ensure that action notes are issued within 3 working days of the meeting to enable Members to share work and feed back to their appointing groups.
- Officers must work with Members to ensure that delivery plans are both achievable, stretching and in alignment with the Corporate Plan.

- Officers consider the ambitions of Members and work to find different solutions to typical issues, problems and policy even if they are a departure from existing delivery arrangements/approaches.