

Committee: Council

Date:

Title: Corporate Plan 2023-28

Tuesday, 24
February 2026

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Petrina Lees, Leader of the Council

Report Author: Richard Auty, Director of Corporate Services
rauty@uttlesford.gov.uk

Summary

1. This report presents the Corporate Plan 2023-28, which sets out the council's key priorities. This is the version of the plan for the 2026/27 year.
2. The Corporate Plan was considered by Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 3 February 2026 and was unanimously commended by the committee to Cabinet. Cabinet is to consider the Corporate Plan at its meeting on 17 February 2026.

Recommendations

3. That the Corporate Plan 2023-2028 is approved by Council.

Financial Implications

4. There are none directly arising from the Corporate Plan but the council's budget will reflect allocations for the members' priorities.

Background Papers

5. None

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Corporate priorities are shaped in part by consultation activity
Community Safety	None
Equalities	The Corporate Plan emphasises the Council's commitment to diversity and

	equality objectives and services will need to consider the impact of decisions about new ways of working through Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) as projects develop and progress.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Whilst there is no specific statutory duty to produce a corporate plan, it is crucial to the council in establishing its priorities. The CIPFA / Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 guidance underlines that councils should set out their purpose and intended outcomes. The council can then measure itself against the outcomes to ensure that its resources are being managed in accordance with its priorities for its residents. Additionally, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 oblige the council to produce an Annual Governance Statement for each accounting year evidencing how the council has performed: the Corporate Plan is therefore an important part of the overall governance framework of the council. Councils are also under a general best value duty (Local Government Act 1999 s.3 (1)) to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The Corporate plan and meeting of objectives outlined therein will assist in demonstrating continuous improvement.
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The Corporate Plan sets out the priority areas of work for the council's staff

Situation

7. The Corporate Plan sets out the vision for the council over a multi-year period and the priority areas of work to deliver that vision. As is customary, the Corporate Plan underwent a comprehensive rewrite following the election to ensure it reflected the priorities of the new administration. Each following year of the plan it undergoes a refresh to include one-year measurable objectives that contribute towards the overall aspirations of the plan.
8. The Corporate Plan 2023-28 adopts a template that is not dissimilar to that used by many other local authorities. It provides continuation from the previous Plan by identifying four key priority areas, although these do not necessarily have the same names as in the previous Plan. The Plan is consciously more streamlined than the previous Plan, focusing tightly on key priorities and setting out measurable delivery targets.
9. The four priority areas are:
 - Protecting & Enhancing Our Environment
 - Encouraging Economic Growth
 - Building Strong Communities
 - Putting Residents First
10. The priorities reflected in the Corporate Plan demonstrate a considerable degree of continuity with the previous Corporate Plan, though the current plan reflects up to date circumstances, national context, and progress made by the authority over the life of the previous plan.
11. The Corporate Plan is reviewed annually but the expectation is that revisions will be light touch and focus mainly on the third and fourth columns which detail the in-year activity to meet the priorities.
12. Progress against the priorities in this plan is reported periodically to the Scrutiny Committee during the year. Many of the priorities will be met through the successful completion of actions in other plans and strategies which are subject to their own governance and reporting arrangements at officer and member level, such as the Local Plan and the Climate Crisis Strategy.
13. The Corporate Plan has been written in a time of considerable uncertainty, with the Local Government Reorganisation programme gathering pace, albeit at the time of writing the council does not know the future shape of unitary authorities in Essex.
14. Nonetheless the Corporate Plan shows continued ambition to deliver on the priorities of the council, including decarbonisation programmes to tackle climate change, sector-leading biodiversity policies and further expansion of our waste and recycling services including offering recycling to businesses. The Corporate Plan also acknowledges the challenges presented by housing repairs and maintenance and clearly sets out how this service will move forwards.

15. As has been previously highlighted to members, the workload created by Local Government Reorganisation is, and will continue to be, significant and the council would have to take stock of what is achievable within the resources available.
16. Previous iterations of the Corporate Plan have included a specific project around tackling rural priorities including isolation, poverty and crime. Cabinet is aware that this no longer appears in the Plan.
17. This work will continue, with key partners where appropriate, through the existing collaborative work of council teams including Economic Development and Health and Wellbeing, but the overarching programme will no longer be developed and progressed due to the lack of available officer time caused by Local Government Reorganisation.
- 18.

19., Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The council fails to deliver on its priorities	2	3	The Corporate Plan clearly sets out deliverable priorities, although the impact of local government reorganisation may require a mid-year review

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.