

**CABINET
5 MARCH 2024**

COUNCIL PLAN

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Stephen Harker, Leader and all Cabinet Members**

**Responsible Director -
Chief Officers Executive**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To approve the Council Plan 2024-2027 for public consultation.

Summary

2. The draft Council Plan sets out a proposed long term vision and ambitions for Darlington, and priorities for delivery over the life of the plan. It discusses three core values that feed into the plan: addressing inequalities, tackling climate change and efficient and effective use of resources.
3. The plan is underpinned by 6 priorities, each of which identify a number of key deliverables. The deliverables will be progressed through supporting plans and strategies. The priorities are;
 - (a) Economy: A strong, sustainable economy and highly skilled workforce with opportunities for all.
 - (b) Homes: Affordable and secure homes that meet current and future resident need.
 - (c) Living well: A healthier and better quality of life for longer supporting those who need it.
 - (d) Children and young people: best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations.
 - (e) Communities: Healthier, safer and more engaged communities.
 - (f) Environment: A well connected, clean and sustainable Borough.
4. Development of the draft plan has involved discussions with numerous key stakeholders. It takes into account the current financial pressures faced by the Council, and it will be reviewed annually to consider new or changing opportunities and challenges.

5. The Council is seeking feedback from key stakeholders, including residents so a final version of the plan can be presented to Full Council in May.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (a) Approve the draft Council Plan for consultation.
 - (b) Receive feedback and a revised plan for consideration at its meeting in May 2024 with the final draft going forward to council for approval in May.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The recommendations are supported in order to approve the plan for consultation.
 - (b) To enable the council to have strategic framework for delivering priorities.

Chief Officers Executive

Background Papers

Key strategies and plans were used to develop the plan including the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan; Economic Strategy; Children and Young People’s Plan; Housing Strategy; Health and Wellbeing Strategy; Annual Reports of the Director of Public Health and the Darlington Profiles.

Lynne Davies Extension 5070

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Council Plan prioritises the safety of our residents and communities. The Communities Priority identifies key actions that we will deliver in partnership. The performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome.
Health and Wellbeing	The Council Plan prioritises the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities. The Health and Wellbeing Priority identifies many actions and good health will be an important outcome across the plan. The performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome improving health and reducing health inequalities.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The Council Plan prioritises addressing carbon impact and climate change. Addressing climate change is a core value and will be considered in everything the council does. The

	performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome.
Diversity	Addressing inequalities is a core value within the plan. A desktop Equality Impact Assessment has not identified any significant negative impacts on protected characteristics. The key deliverables referenced in the plan will be progressed through other strategies and plans and will involve separate equality impact assessments where appropriate.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Whole population
Budget and Policy Framework	The Council plan will be part of the policy framework and will be the primary strategy that strategies and plans demonstrate their contribution to the vision, ambition and priorities of the Council Plan.
Key Decision	This is a key decision because following consultation, agreement to the recommendations will result in the Local Authority adopting a plan which will have an effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the area of the local authority.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision as it will require adoption by full Council after consultation.
Council Plan	This is the draft Council Plan for 2024-2027 for consultation.
Efficiency	The draft Council Plan prioritises efficient and effective resources as a key value and will be considered in all council business.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The Council remains committed to ensuring the best outcomes for Looked After Children, and contains a number of priorities and actions that will have a positive impact on this group.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. It is good practice for a council to have a Council Plan setting out its vision and priorities. This Plan is deliberately strategic setting out the long term vision and ambitions to maintain focus on the challenges and opportunities that will take more than one political term to address; and on the short term actions the Council can take to move towards these outcomes.
9. The administration established in May 2023 has prioritised the financial stability of the council to enable the council to deliver the best services for residents and recently approved the new term Medium Term Financial Plan. Cabinet has also taken the time to understand the evidence base and their portfolios to make considered decisions on long term strategy and short term deliverables.

10. Post consultation and when the final plan is adopted it is proposed that it is reviewed annually with six monthly reports be taken to Cabinet on progress against the key deliverables. There will also be opportunities for scrutiny committees to review progress.
11. The council has been talking to key stakeholders about the draft plan as it was developed including the Public Sector Executive Group, Voluntary and Community Sector Executive Group and Children and Young People's Plan multi-agency steering group.
12. The draft Council Plan is attached as **Appendix A**.

Consultation

13. Subject to Cabinet approval there will be a public consultation on the proposed plan starting 6 March and ending on 25 April. The plan will be an agenda item on all scrutiny committees as part of their core business throughout April.
14. A survey will be published alongside the plan allowing for feedback on the plan and will be on the consultations page of the Darlington Borough Council website. Printed copies will be available upon request alongside paper copies being made available in Darlington Library and Cockerton Library.
15. The March edition of One Darlington which is distributed across the Borough will contain an article on the Council Plan with information on how to complete the survey and share feedback. In addition to this awareness raising will primarily take place through social media, ward surgeries of local councillors and other suitable opportunities that arise.
16. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in May 2024.

Equalities Considerations

17. Addressing inequalities is a core value within the plan. A desktop Equality Impact Assessment has not identified any significant negative impacts on protected characteristics. The key deliverables referenced in the plan will be progressed through other strategies and plans and will involve separate equality impact assessments where appropriate.

Consultation

18. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for the draft Council Plan to be released for public consultation on 6 March 2024.

Outcome of Consultation

19. The consultation closes on 25 April 2024 and a revised Council Plan will be brought to Cabinet for consideration in May with the final version going forward to Council for approval in May. This plan will be the strategic framework for Council priorities between 2024 and 2027.