

**COUNCIL**  
**26 MARCH 2020 (This meeting is cancelled)**

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**THE COUNCIL PLAN 2020 - 2023**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Heather Scott  
Leader and all Cabinet Members**

**Responsible Director - Chief Officers Executive**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider consultation feedback and recommend Full Council approves the Council Plan 2020-2023.

**Summary**

2. Cabinet agreed the draft Council Plan for consultation on 7 January 2020. All Scrutiny Committees have considered the plan and supported it. Videos about the plan were viewed 18,500 times and displayed on up to 42,000 people's Facebook news feed. 63 detailed surveys were received.
3. There are no changes proposed to the draft plan.
4. Following the consultation, the draft plan was considered by Cabinet on 3 March 2020 and the recommendation to seek Full Council approval of the plan was agreed.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Council :-
  - (a) Note the consultation responses (**Appendix 1**).
  - (b) Approve the Council Plan (**Appendix 2**)

**Reasons**

6. The recommendation is to seek approval of the Council Plan.

**Chief Officers Executive**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Council Plan outlines the council's priorities and objectives in respect of community safety.
Health and Well Being	The Council Plan outlines the council's priorities and objectives in respect of improving the health and wellbeing of residents.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The Council Plan outlines the council's priorities and objectives in respect of improving the local environment, including carbon emissions.
Diversity	The Council Plan outlines the council's priorities and objectives in respect of building stronger communities and reducing inequalities across the borough.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Whole population
Budget and Policy Framework	The Council Plan will form part of the council's policy framework
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 for Cabinet as it will require adoption by full Council.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Council Plan is directly aligned to the One Darlington Perfectly Placed priorities and outcomes.
Efficiency	The Council Plan outlines the council's organisational objectives, including improving efficiency.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The Council Plan outlines the council's commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for Looked After Children, and contains a number of objectives and planned actions relating to this target.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

- Cabinet approved the draft Council Plan for consultation at its meeting on 7 January 2020 and on 3 March 2020 supported the recommendation to seek full council approval for the plan.

8. All Scrutiny Committees have considered the plan at special meetings in January and the Committees are supportive of the plan.
9. Consultation took place with the public and to raise awareness and gather views. This was supported by a communications plan containing numerous and varied actions to reach as many local people as possible:-
  - (a) A one-page article in the January edition of One Darlington magazine which was delivered to the majority of residential properties across the Borough, signposting residents to the consultation and how to take part.
  - (b) A press briefing with senior councillors and officers which led to coverage in the Northern Echo.
  - (c) Individual videos of Cabinet members discussing their portfolio areas and how they fit in with the Council Plan.
  - (d) A dedicated webpage – [www.darlington.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/councilplan) - was set up and has been viewed at least 178 times since it was published.
  - (e) A longer-form video was also created, featuring a cross section of the public encouraging people to engage with the consultation.
10. Collectively, these videos were viewed almost 18,500 times, displayed on the Facebook news feed of up to 42,000 people, shared 60 times and commented on 63 times. The overall reach of the consultation was pleasing but the overall responses disappointing.
11. As a result, 63 survey responses were received, and the full results and analysis are available in Appendix 1.
12. Consultation respondents were asked to provide their views on the Council Plan as a whole using a five-point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. 37 respondents provided their views on this question, of which:
  - (a) 21 (57%) agreed or strongly agreed with the Council Plan
  - (b) 6 (16%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the Council Plan
  - (c) 9 (24%) neither agreed or disagreed with the Council Plan
  - (d) 1 (3%) didn't know
13. Respondents were also asked whether they agreed with each of the four proposed themes. The most popular response for each theme was 'Agree' with the number and proportion of respondents agreeing with each as follows:
  - (a) Growing Darlington's Economy: 41 (65%) respondents agreed
  - (b) Maximising the potential of our young people: 37 (59%) respondents agreed
  - (c) Supporting the most vulnerable in the borough: 35 (56%) respondents agreed

- (d) Working with communities to maximise their potential: 49 (78%) respondents agreed

14. Respondents were also asked to give their views on the draft vision outlined in the Plan:

“Darlington is a place where people want to live and businesses want to locate, where the economy continues to grow, where people are happy and proud of the Borough and where everyone has the opportunity to maximise their potential”.

Of the 63 people who responded to the Council Plan consultation:

- (a) 27 (43%) respondents agreed with the proposed vision,
- (b) 21 (33%) disagreed with the proposed vision,
- (c) 10 (16%) of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the proposed vision,
- (d) 5 (8%) respondents didn't give a view

There were also 19 (30%) free text comments suggesting additions to the proposed vision received in response to this question, which are available in Appendix 1, page 3.

15. Respondents were also asked to state which key actions they felt should not be a priority, and the responses are available in Appendix 1. Respondents were also asked if any other key actions should be made, to which 15 (24%) responded 'Yes'.
16. Given the general support for the plan and low level of responses, despite high visibility with the public, the plan as drafted for consultation at Appendix 2 is recommended for Full Council consideration and approval.