

For publication

Council Plan Progress Update

Meeting: Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum

Date: 19 November, 2020

Cabinet portfolio: Deputy Leader

Report by: Assistant Director – Policy and
Communications

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Purpose of reviewing the topic	To report on the progress made towards the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2023.
What are the objectives of the review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To understand the current position of the Council Plan and the performance of the council• To understand the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the position of the Council Plan and performance of the council• To consider whether there are any areas which require the further focus of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum
Progress to date	A previous update was brought to the Overview and Performance and Scrutiny Forum on 21 November 2019.

1.0 **Background**

1.1 The Council Plan 2019 – 2023 was agreed by Council in February 2019. The plan identifies the Council’s key

priorities, objectives and commitments over a four year period. In order to track and challenge progress across the four years, annual delivery plans are developed. This report highlights performance during quarters 1 and 2 (April – September 2020).

2.0 Current position – Covid 19 Impact

- 2.1 The World Health Organisation declared the outbreak of Covid-19 to be a public health emergency of international concern on 30 January 2020 and on 11 March 2020 declared Covid-19 a global pandemic.
- 2.2 The Covid-19 pandemic brought fast moving and unprecedented challenges to communities and organisations. Chesterfield Borough Council had to quickly reprioritise to ensure core services could be delivered, while supporting additional emergency planning, community response and economic measures.
- 2.3 Staff across the Council were re-deployed to support key Covid-19 response activities including ensuring key services such as the crematorium could be maintained but also to support new areas of work including business grant allocations, food and medicine deliveries, supporting testing facilities, town centre ambassadors and supporting the community and voluntary sector volunteering programmes. This re-prioritisation of resources and Covid-19 related safety measures including social distancing have had a significant impact on the Council's ability to deliver on elements of the delivery plan for 2020/21. This impact has now been assessed alongside the performance progress with some recommendations being made regarding re-prioritisation and deferral.

3.0 Current position – Overall performance and Covid-19 impact

- 3.1 Appendix 1 shows the progress made on the 41 milestones being tracked during 2020/21 as well as the Covid-19 impact.
- 3.2 63% of milestones within the delivery plan for 2020/21 have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic to a medium to high extent. Despite this 54% of the milestones remain on target for delivery by the end of March 2021. A further 22% are currently rated as amber for delivery with actions being put into place to improve where possible. 24% of milestones are rated as red and there is certainty that delivery will not be possible during 2020/21.

4.0 Making Chesterfield a thriving borough

- 4.1 58% of the milestones remain on target for delivery in 2020/21. Despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic excellent progress has been achieved on key projects including:
- Construction has started on the Northern Gateway enterprise centre
 - First phase of commercial development at Waterside
 - Seeking to maximise Staveley Town Deal potential - £500k secured so far
 - Successfully bidding for £2.4 million in external funding to help secure maximum benefits from HS2 for Chesterfield communities and businesses
 - Progressing ambitious plans for the Heart of Chesterfield project including securing a further £650k in external funding to support market improvements
 - Refreshing the skills action plan and activities to ensure it responds to the significant employment and skills challenges emerging from the pandemic, in particular for young people
- 4.2 There are instances where the milestone will be delivered in terms of Council activity but will not be as successful in

terms of outcomes due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. A good example of this is continuing to support the delivery of the Elder Way development. While Chesterfield Borough Council and Destination Chesterfield continue to support the developers Jomast to market the development and secure interest, the pandemic has had a negative impact in converting interest into tenancies due to market confidence particularly in the hospitality and leisure sectors. This is a key issue identified within our economic recovery plan which includes a range of activities aimed at providing support and boosting confidence for both customers and businesses with a particular focus on town centre recovery

4.3 There are a number of milestones that due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will not be achievable during 2020/21:

- HS2 and you programme - The HS2 and you programme was paused from March 2020 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on school provision. Conversations with schools have indicated that they will require a significant amount of recovery and catch up time for students and that they may not be able to re-join the programme until 2021
- Visitor economy action plan delivery - Progress on the preparation of the Visitor Economy Action Plan has been delayed as other projects have been prioritised, most notably in relation to the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the visitor economy, with sectors such as leisure, hospitality and retail disproportionately affected by lockdown and the continuation of social distancing measures. The delay in preparing the Action Plan provides an opportunity to better understand the potential longer-term impacts of Covid-19 on the visitor economy and appropriately respond to these within the Action Plan

- Deliver a programme of Borough wide events - The events programme has been critically impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Major events for 2020/21 have been cancelled due to social distancing requirements. Teams across the Council have worked hard to provide alternative digital provision with a range of activities for residents of all ages to try. Social media, print and web campaigns have also been launched to support the key aim of economic recovery of our High streets as part of our economic recovery plan
- Further develop the visitor offer at the Pomegranate and Winding Wheel Theatres - Expanding the visitor offer will not be possible during 2020/21 due to the social distancing guidance and recovery period required for core provision
- Deliver new business units at Calow Lane - Progress in the development of the business units at Calow Lane have been impacted by Covid-19 pandemic reprioritisation. Economic Development resources have been focused on economic recovery planning and ensuring key live projects such as the Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre can continue and operate safely within the new health and safety and social distancing guidelines

5.0 Improving quality of life for local people

- 5.1 73% of the milestones remain on target for delivery in 2020/21. Many of these milestones aligned with key activity required to ensure a resilient and effective community response during the pandemic. Strong progress has been achieved on key milestones including:
- Rough sleepers strategy - The Covid-19 pandemic has placed an absolute focus on rough sleeping. The Getting everyone in and Keeping Everyone In requirements have improved access to support and accommodation

- Assess private sector stock condition survey and develop a costed action plan for improvement – the stock condition survey has been completed. Further work is now being undertaken to determine investment priorities
- Deliver year 2 of the five-year housing environmental schemes programme – improvement works at Grangewood are now complete. Phase 1 at Barrow Hill is complete with phase 2 progressing on time and within budget
- Deliver year 1 of the climate change plan – significant progress against key areas including housing capital programme priorities, energy efficiency, tree planting etc.
- Plan and deliver with the Equality and Diversity Forum four equality and diversity events - Following successful virtual meetings of the Equality and Diversity Forum, virtual events are now being planned for late autumn and winter 2020/21 as well as a significant research project linked to the 2021 Census
- Implement the Derbyshire Care Leaver Offer - Core elements of the Care Leaver Offer are now in place including council tax support, housing policy changes and key worker activity plus enhanced leisure provision
- Armed Forces Covenant action plan – Core elements now in place including revised leave policy for reservists, attained the Bronze Award in the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme, service concessions etc.

5.2 There are two milestones that due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will not be achievable during 2020/21:

- Develop and deliver schemes and trials to increase recycling rates - Maintaining core services has been key during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges waste and recycling services have continued to perform well. We have not had the capacity to develop new schemes and trials during this period

- Plan and deliver the 2020/21 local democracy programme - The local democracy programme was paused from March 2020 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on school provision. Conversations with schools has indicated that they will require a significant amount of recovery and catch up time for students and that they may not be able to re-join the programme until 2021

6.0 Provide value for money services

- 6.1 27% of the milestones remain on target for delivery in 2020/21. One of which, the ICT improvement programme, has been fundamental to enabling services to continue during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have also successfully transitioned Kier from the Arvato/Kier public private partnership contract early and plans are in place to return all services to the Council in early 2021.
- 6.2 48% of the milestones in this priority area are rated as amber. This is mainly due to delays caused by the re-prioritisation required for Covid-19 or the fluid situation emerging around impact and recovery for instance the impact on the Council's medium-term financial plan. These areas are being prioritised for effort in the second half of the year.
- 6.3 There are three milestones that due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will not be achievable during 2020/21:
- Review the Council's commercial approach, services and investment portfolios and deliver actions resulting from the review - Covid-19 has had a major impact on the Council's commercial activity. As the short, medium and longer terms impacts emerge this will inform the review and help to develop our future approach
 - Develop our future ICT Strategy for 2022/2023 onwards - Maintaining the progress on the current ICT

programme has been the priority. This has enabled rapid transformation to enable services to keep running during the pandemic. The medium and long-term impacts of the pandemic will have a major influence on the future ICT programme

- Complete the Investor in People Assessment improving silver scores in key areas - Full Investors in People assessment was due to take place in January 2021, however due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic this has been delayed until 2022. Current Silver IIP status will be extended by a strategic review in January 2021 and also provide focus areas for the full assessment in 2022

7.0 Barriers/obstacles

- 7.1** There continues to be ongoing uncertainty around future Covid-19 restrictions. On 5 November 2020 further Covid-19 restrictions (Lockdown in England) were announced to last until 2 December 2020. The pandemic continues to have a significant impact on community and economic response, core service delivery and Council Plan delivery.

8.0 Future plans

- 8.1** The milestones detailed at 4.3, 5.2 and 6.3 will need to be re-assessed in light of the Covid-19 impact and reprioritisation and considered for inclusion in the 2021/22 delivery plan.
- 8.2** Commitments made in the Council Plan for 2020 – 2023 are also be reviewed in-line with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1** Despite the significant challenges so far in 2020/21 related to the Covid-19 pandemic, Chesterfield Borough

Council has adapted and put our communities first to provide additional community and economic support, maintained core services and continued to make significant progress on the Council Plan Delivery Plan for 2020/21.

10.0 Suggested scrutiny activity

10.1 Several projects and activities within the Council Plan have been identified for scrutiny consideration during 2020/21.

Document information

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Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>None</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Performance report