

Council		
Title	Corporate Strategy 2018-2022	
Contributor	Interim Chief Executive	Item
Class	Part 1 (open)	27 February 2019

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of the rationale for the introduction of a Corporate Strategy. This report also provides the Corporate Strategy adopted by Mayor and Cabinet on 13 February 2019 for Council to note.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Council is recommended to:

- Note and endorse the fact that the attached Corporate Strategy replaces the 2008 Community Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1. “Shaping our Future”, Lewisham’s Sustainable Community Strategy is dated 2008-2020. It was adopted by Full Council as a primary document in the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework. It articulated Lewisham’s approach to partnership working at that time, set out the local authority and its partners’ vision for the place, and identified principles and priorities intended to realise the enduring vision – “that together, we will make Lewisham the best place in London to live, work and learn”.
- 3.2. The development and delivery of the Strategy was led by the Lewisham Local Strategic Partnership (“a partnership of partnerships” led by the Mayor), in line with the statutory requirements for partnership arrangements at that time.
- 3.3. The duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy was abolished in 2010. However delivery of the priorities within the Community Strategy have remained priorities for the Council, with the enduring 10 Council priorities setting out the Council’s role in delivering the Community Strategy priorities.
- 3.4. An evaluation of the 2008-2020 Community Strategy was considered by Mayor & Cabinet in June 2017. It concluded that the election of a new Mayor for Lewisham in May 2018 would clarify the changing local policy direction.
- 3.5. Damien Egan was elected Mayor of Lewisham in May 2018 with an overwhelming majority. 54 Labour Councillors were also elected and together with the Mayor they form the Full Council of Lewisham. Following the election, the Council now needs to agree a new set of priorities to be delivered for Lewisham, building on the progress already made over the last 20 years.

4. Policy Context

- 4.1. The Corporate Strategy is designed to guide future decision making: future decision making reports will set out how they accord with it.

5. Renewed Priorities for Lewisham

- 5.1. The overwhelming mandate for the elected Mayor's vision, principles and priorities for Lewisham provides a clear basis for the development of all future priorities and plans for action for both the Council and its partners.
- 5.2. The reliance on a set of corporate priorities focused solely on the delivery of a now slightly outdated Community Strategy is at odds with the renewed priorities for the Council set out by the Mayor at the inaugural AGM of the new Council administration in May 2018. The introduction of a Corporate Strategy for the Council will rectify this and swiftly embed the Mayoral priorities into all work of the Council.
- 5.3. Therefore the new Corporate Strategy replaces the Council's current enduring priorities. Now adopted, the policy commitments enshrined within the Corporate Strategy, will underpin all subsequent strategies and delivery plans the Council produces.
- 5.4. The priorities for the Council have been adopted as follows:

1 **Open Lewisham** - Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.

2 **Tackling the housing crisis** - Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.

3 **Giving children and young people the best start in life** - Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.

4 **Building an inclusive local economy** - Everyone can access high quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.

5 **Delivering & defending: Health, Social Care and Support** - Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.

6 **Making Lewisham greener** - Everyone enjoys our green spaces and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.

7 **Building safer communities** - Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

6. Commitments

- 6.1. As well as introducing new corporate priorities, the Corporate Strategy also clearly outlines the specific commitments the Council is proposing to deliver under each of the priorities over the next 4 years. These will be addressed as part of and alongside the delivery of the full range of Council responsibilities.

7. Partnership

- 7.1. Shaping our service delivery in line with our renewed priorities and delivery commitments as outlined within the Corporate Strategy should become a primary focus for the Council and will in some instances require a continuation of the strong partnership working that has been a hallmark of delivery in Lewisham for so many years.
- 7.2. The absence of the formal overarching partnership mechanism that signed off the creation of the enduring Community Strategy in 2008 does not currently hinder partners in Lewisham working together at every level, with a more up to date and responsive approach to the agreement of collective delivery for the people of Lewisham developed in recent years. There are currently a range of both formal and informal partnership mechanisms within which the Council and partners are working to deliver improved outcomes for people in Lewisham, and these will continue to take account of the priorities of the Council through the representatives of the Council involved.
- 7.3. With the end date of the existing Community Strategy approaching, discussions with partners and communities will soon begin to ascertain how we might like to continue to articulate our shared priorities for the Borough. The Corporate Strategy will form the basis, from the Council's perspective, of all subsequent partnership delivery plans or strategies it may enter into, on which further consultation might also be required.

8. Delivery

- 8.1. The Corporate Strategy was adopted by Mayor and Cabinet on 13 February 2019. We will now work with our members, officers, communities and partners to co – produce detailed plans, where appropriate, for how we are going to work together, and what more we all need to do, to address our commitments.
- 8.2. All Council services have reviewed their plans for service delivery in the coming year to ensure they are aligned to delivery of the Mayor's priorities as outlined at the AGM and all future Council plans and strategies will be required to set out how they are contributing to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy.
- 8.3. The Mayor, Cabinet, Members and officers will continue to seek new opportunities to hear from, and work alongside the communities and residents they represent and serve.

9. Overview and Scrutiny Comments

- 9.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the draft Corporate Strategy on 28 January 2019. In the course of the meeting members of the committee made a number of comments and suggestions which have been incorporated into the strategy as appropriate. The Committee also agreed a formal referral to Mayor and

Cabinet on two specific matters within the Strategy. Both of the points within the referral have been addressed within the strategy.

10. Financial implications

10.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

11. Legal implications

11.1. As set out in the report, there is now no longer a legal requirement for the Council to put in place a Sustainable Community Strategy. However there is clearly a power for the Council to adopt a Corporate Strategy to guide its future decision making.

11.2. Whilst the proposed strategy, once agreed, sets out the direction for the Council over the next four years, there will be a need for the Council to make decisions relating to the particular elements of it on the basis of detailed reports containing all relevant considerations, including the legal, financial, corporate and service implications pertaining to the issue. Those decisions must reflect the prevailing circumstances at the time and be taken in accordance with the general principles of administrative law applying to local government decision making.

11.3. Implementation of the aspirations and commitments set out in the Corporate Strategy must be consistent with, and subject to, the Council's legal and fiduciary duties and budgetary constraints. The nature of these duties and constraints will vary according to the matter under consideration and may change over time.

Equalities legislation

11.4. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty. It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

11.5. In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

11.6. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed in the paragraph above.

11.7. The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for members, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. They must understand

the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.

- 11.8. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled “Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associated Statutory Code of Practice”. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance>

- 11.9. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- [The essential guide to the public sector equality duty](#)
- [Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making](#)
- [Engagement and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#)

- 11.10. The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

Best value

- 11.11. Best Value authorities are under a general duty of best value 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.” Under the duty of best value, therefore, authorities should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision.

11. Equalities Implications

11.1 The strategy will be a key vehicle for the delivery of the Comprehensive Equalities scheme 2016-2020. The priorities and pledges within this strategy are focused on reducing inequality and tackling discrimination. As detailed delivery plans are developed they will continue to take account of the potential impact on any of the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

12. Crime and Disorder

12.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the contents of this report.

13. Environmental Implications

13.1. There are no direct environmental implications arising from the contents of this report.

Appendix A

Corporate Strategy 2018-2022