Corporate Plan Refresh

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 1st July 2026.

1.2 Councillor Gardener drew attention to page 125 of the report and expressed his anticipation of working with Members regarding Parish Council issues.

1.3 Councillor Martin sought clarification as to whether the 80% Business as usual (BAU) was for statutory services or non-statutory services.

1.4 It was confirmed this was for the statutory services that the Council must provide, such as Revenues, Benefits, waste collections, etc.

1.5 Councillor Ioannides asked if a breakdown of the Capital costs for every new 2026/2027 Corporate Plan Action, split between statutory and non-statutory and any external funding.

1.6 On hearing that this would need to be taken away, Councillor Ioannides advised he could not endorse the Plan without knowing the costs.

1.7 In response the Panel were advised they were being asked to look at the principles of the Plan, not the budget

1.8 Councillor Ascroft advised that, while she was able to support the overall strategic vision, she had reservations regarding the proposed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which she considered to contain significant blind spots. She expressed concern that, if the most appropriate metrics were not in place, organisational focus could become concentrated on achieving the measured KPIs rather than on the wider activities and outcomes necessary to deliver the Strategy effectively. She reiterated that the Working Group being set up for KPI’s should be convened and concluded before December 2026 to ensure the next Plan includes sophisticated outcome based metrics.

1.9 The Panel was advised that such feedback would be welcomed. However, Members were reminded that any revisions or additions would need to be considered in the context of the capacity and resources available within the team. Officers also noted that certain performance measures and reporting requirements are prescribed by Central Government and must therefore be included as part of the Council’s monitoring and reporting arrangements.

1.10 Councillor Ferguson queried whether the introduction of the new food waste collection service was reflected within the proposed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). He noted the importance of monitoring the service's performance, particularly in light of concerns and complaints from residents regarding missed collections, and sought assurance that appropriate measures were in place to track and report on this area.

1.11 The Panel were advised that whilst it is not included in the current target intolerances, it is now part of the commentary until a baseline can be established.

1.12 Councillor Cawley expressed support for the comments made by Councillor Ferguson. He noted that 30 of the 57 actions contained within the report were identified as new and questioned whether the Council's focus should instead be directed towards preparations for and delivery of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He sought clarification on the rationale for introducing a significant number of new actions at this stage and how these aligned with the Council's wider priorities. He wondered if it would have been better to wait until after LGR.

1.13 The Panel heard that the Plan will be kept under review and that it allows for reflection as the Council goes through and that a lot of work has gone into ensuring the Council is properly sourced going into LGR.

1.14 Councillor Ioannides raised concerns regarding a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that had yet to be confirmed, citing homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation as examples. He suggested that the absence of complete performance information limited the Panel's ability to undertake effective scrutiny. Councillor Ioannides also referred to the ongoing affordability challenges facing the Council, particularly in the context of expenditure on One Leisure. He sought greater clarity regarding the resource implications of the proposed actions, including the anticipated cost of each action, ownership and accountability arrangements, and the distinction between statutory and discretionary activities. In addition, he requested information on which actions could potentially be scaled back or discontinued should Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) alter the Council's future responsibilities and priorities.

1.15 In response, the Panel was advised that officers would review the request and consider what information could be provided in relation to opportunity costs. Members were informed that the Executive Councillor wished to confirm the extent of the information that the relevant team would be able to compile and present.

The Panel was also reminded that reports relating to the One Leisure affordability challenge were available for Members to review. In addition, officers confirmed that the development of Housing-related KPIs was ongoing and that these could not be finalised until later in the year.

1.16 Councillor Tomlinson queried why a number of the actions contained within the report did not have defined completion dates and sought clarification on when these actions were expected to be delivered. He also requested further information on the measures that would be used to assess progress and success. In addition, Councillor Tomlinson sought clarification on the specific purpose of the item and what the Panel was being asked to consider or recommend at the meeting.

1.17 Councillor Ioannides made a motion for additional Recommendations to the Cabinet of additional measurable outcomes.

1.18 The Panel was reminded that, whilst the proposed actions and objectives were recognised as worthwhile, expectations regarding delivery would need to be managed realistically. Members were advised that officer capacity remained under significant pressure, with additional demands arising from major programmes of work, including preparations for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). It was therefore noted that the Council would need to balance its ambitions against the resources available to deliver them.

1.19 The motion was seconded by Councillor Tobias.

1.20 The Panel hears the new Recommendation and a vote is called.

3 Members are For, 0 Against and 8 Abstainers.

Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

The recommendation be amended so that the Panel does not simply endorse the refreshed Corporate Plan as presented, but instead recommends endorsement only subject to the following amendments being made before Cabinet and Council:

1) That every Corporate Plan action must include:
   - a named responsible officer or service;
   - a clear delivery date;
   - a measurable output or outcome;
   - the budget or resource implication;
   - and a defined red, amber and green performance threshold.

2) That actions listed as “Influence” or “Enable” must not be reported as delivered unless there is evidence of a measurable outcome, a formal partner commitment, or a clear resident benefit.

3) That the Key Performance Indicators must include baseline data, annual targets, direction of travel, RAG thresholds, and where relevant, cost-per-unit or value-for-money measures, so Members can see not only activity, but whether services are improving for residents.

4) That the Plan must include specific measures on:

   - homelessness prevention and repeat presentations;
   - the impact of Places for People stock disposals;

- commercial investment portfolio performance, including voids and rental income loss;
- Civil Parking Enforcement and car-parking income performance;
- customer satisfaction and avoidable contact;
- staff sickness levels and cost;
- planning enforcement performance;
- fly-tipping, waste and recycling outcomes;
- and Local Government Reorganisation risk, including service continuity, reserves and staffing capacity.

5) That any climate, energy or environmental action must include the estimated cost, expected saving, payback period, statutory basis, and impact on residents and businesses before being treated as a Corporate Plan commitment.

6) That the Panel's comments to Cabinet and Council record that Overview and Scrutiny expects the Corporate Plan to be a measurable delivery document, not a list of aspirations, and that quarterly performance reports must show progress against these amended measures.

The Panel therefore recommends that Cabinet and Council endorse the Corporate Plan only once these amendments have been incorporated.

1.21 Councillor Martin moves that he is in favour of Councillor Ioannides request but would like to add the amendment of this work being covered by the KPI Working Group.

1.23 The motion was seconded by Councillor Gardener.

1.24 The Panel hears the new Recommendation and a vote is called.

11 Members are For.

Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

1) That the information requested by Councillor Ioannides be covered by the KPI Working Group.