

CABINET – 11TH JANUARY 2024**Report of the Chief Executive****Part A**CORPORATE STRATEGY 2024 - 2028Purpose of Report

This report is to present the Corporate Strategy for 2024 – 2028.

Recommendations

1. That the new Corporate Strategy 2024-2028, attached at the annex to this report, be approved and **recommended to Council**.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make minor amendments to the Strategy.
3. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to design the final document for publication.

Reasons

1. To enable the draft Corporate Strategy to set out the direction for the council for the period 2024-2028.
2. To allow minor corrections and amendments to be made in a timely manner prior to publication.
3. To ensure that the designed version of the Corporate Strategy can be developed for public circulation.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

In February 2020 Cabinet agreed its Corporate Strategy for 2020-2024, setting out the direction of the Council for that 4 year period. This strategy has been tracked and reported through the Council's performance management framework and Committee structure.

As the Strategy reaches its natural end a new Corporate Strategy has been developed for the period 2024-2028.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The Corporate Strategy will be submitted to Council on 26th February 2024. If approved it will be published and made available to the public and staff from the commencement of the new financial year. A communications plan will be developed to ensure that all staff are aware of the new strategy and their role in ensuring its successful delivery.

To support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy an annual Corporate Delivery Plan will be compiled which will set out both the activities that services will undertake to deliver the objectives and the key corporate indicators that will be used to monitor progress. It is anticipated that the Corporate Delivery Plan will be submitted to Cabinet for approval on 7th March 2024.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Any costs involved in meeting the Corporate Strategy objectives will be met from within the overall approved Revenue Budget and financial strategy.

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
Failure to deliver activities within the Corporate Strategy	Likely (3)	Serious (3)	Moderate (9)	The Corporate Strategy will be part of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and will be monitored through the annual business planning and quarterly performance management processes
Actual funding levels from Central Government are lower than estimated in the financial strategy over the life of the Corporate Plan	Likely (3)	Serious (3)	Moderate (9)	Regular monitoring of budgets and movement of resources to ensure priority activities are fully funded.

Equality and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to consider the overall impact on our communities. As the Corporate Strategy is focussing on both those areas that residents have identified as priorities and those areas that the Council recognises as

requiring additional support, the plan should be beneficial for many of those within the community who need assistance from the Council.

The Corporate Strategy sets out at a high level what the Council intends to do over the next 4 years (2024 - 2028) and at this level the overall impact can be considered to be positive. However, it is important that as specific initiatives are undertaken to deliver the strategy that where appropriate they are assessed individually to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory duty to give due regard to the need to;

- Eliminate 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
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life and take account of disabled people's disabilities, even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably

In addition a version of the Corporate Strategy will be available which is easier to read for those residents who may have visual impairments and translated into other languages if required.

Crime and Disorder

The Corporate Strategy specifically references crime and disorder within the Homes and Communities theme.

Sustainability

The Corporate Strategy has a strong commitment to sustainability, specifically within the Environment and Climate Change theme.

Key Decision: Yes

Background Papers: Equality Impact Assessment

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Part B

Background

1. The current Corporate Strategy for 2020-2024 was approved in February 2020 and has set out the Council's aims and priorities for the past 4 years.
2. As the strategy reaches its natural end in 2024 a new Corporate Strategy has been developed for the period 2024-2028.

Proposals

3. A new Corporate Strategy has been developed over the past few months which outlines the direction for the Council for the period 2024-2028.
4. In compiling the document the Senior Leadership Team have ensured that the views of Cabinet, residents and staff have been considered.

Development of the Corporate Strategy

5. A residents' survey commenced on the 5th July 2023 and was conducted throughout July and August 2023.
6. The survey asked residents for their feedback on which services they valued, where they had concerns and their satisfaction with services.
7. The areas which residents outlined as valuing the most have been fed into the Corporate Strategy and these links are outlined in more detail in the table below.

Residents Feedback	How this is addressed in the draft Corporate Plan
Top priority – feeling safe in my home and the local area	Within the Homes and Communities theme
Second priority – the cleanliness and tidiness of my local area	Within the Environment and Climate Change theme
Third priority – my rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis	Within the Environment and Climate Change theme

8. The priorities of Cabinet have been identified through reviewing their manifesto and informal consultation with Cabinet members.
9. In addition, workshops were held with the Senior Leadership Team, the Corporate Leadership Team and other managers from across the organisation. The output from these workshops was collated and fed into the plan and a set of themes that reflected common areas have been developed.

10. In addition, open sessions were held where any staff could attend, in total 20 staff inputted into the Strategy in this way. An online feedback mechanism was also established which was promoted to all staff.
11. The content of the Corporate Strategy was further refined to produce the objectives and initiatives described for each theme.
12. The draft Strategy was presented to Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 8th January 2024.
13. An annual Corporate Delivery Plan will be developed which will support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy. The Corporate Delivery Plan will be submitted to Cabinet for approval on 7th March 2024.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Draft Corporate Strategy 2024-2028

Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE STRATEGY 2024-2028

LEADER'S INTRODUCTION

I am proud to present this Corporate Strategy for Charnwood Borough Council which sets out our aims and ambitions for the next four years.

We will help keep our borough clean and green while leading the local charge to a net-zero future.

We will help deliver homes the borough needs while investing in our own properties.

The Council will also create a prosperous local economy that benefits everyone, and we will support communities.

All this will be built on a foundation of high-performing, efficient and effective services.

In this difficult and challenging local government financial landscape, we will manage our budgets carefully and we will not become another Council to spend beyond its means.

The Council will continue to be at the heart of our communities in Charnwood and we will work with residents, communities, local businesses, the voluntary and charity sector, and partners to achieve our ambitions.

Elected members and employees of the Council will work tremendously hard to deliver excellent services for our communities.

We will continue to support and develop the Council workforce and attract the best talent to maintain our high performance. We will utilise technology and digital services so people can access our services when it suits them.

However, residents will always be able to talk to us directly, either by phone or in person.

Through the life of this Corporate Strategy, the Council will ensure Charnwood is a place where people, communities, and businesses can thrive.

Cllr Jewel Miah

Leader of Charnwood Borough Council

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

We recognise the Council is here to serve our local communities and we are proud to do so. We will deliver efficient and effective services and our aim is to get it right first time.

We will:

- deliver excellent services and achieve value for money through regularly reviewing how we work.
- embrace technology to make our services more efficient, saving time, money, and improving customer service.
- maintain the personal touch and people will always be able to talk to us face to face or on the phone.
- closely manage our budgets and performance and ensure governance arrangements remain strong
- continue to develop a culture of high challenge and high support.
- communicate and engage with residents, businesses and stakeholders
- explore all options for service delivery to achieve the best results for our communities.
- reduce our carbon footprint, increase efficiency and explore income generating opportunities aligned with our core values.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The breathtaking landscapes of Charnwood are among the borough's greatest strengths and why so many people enjoy living, visiting, and working here.

We will:

- work with others and lead local communities to tackle climate change including reducing our own impact on emissions
- continue to care for over 600 acres of open spaces under Council control, including the award-winning Queen's Park in Loughborough and historic Outwoods
- preserve open spaces for future enjoyment
- support the creation of more electric vehicle charging points
- encourage and help homes become more sustainable
- maintain high-quality waste and recycling service for a cleaner borough
- keep the streets clean and tidy
- collaborate on effective flood schemes for community and environmental resilience

HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

We recognise there is a need for more homes in Charnwood and the Council has a key role to help deliver them.

Others also play a significant part. Government set the planning rules and developers build the homes, however, we will influence through our Local Plan and other policies.

We will:

- invest in Council homes to raise standards and improve energy efficiency
- make applying for Council homes a faster and simpler process.
- look for opportunities to build or acquire new homes and help tackle homelessness.
- improve our portfolio of sheltered accommodation
- help disabled people adapt their homes, to improve their quality of life.
- play a role in managing the local private rental sector
- support local community projects through our outreach officers and community grants.
- work in partnership with other agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour and make communities safer
- ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough
- manage our leisure services, open spaces and sports facilities to support residents' health and wellbeing.

ECONOMY & GROWTH

We are focussed on maximising economic opportunities that benefit everyone and continue to foster economic growth across Charnwood.

We will:

- deliver over £40 million of investment by working with partners on Loughborough Town Deal
- deliver over £4 million of investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will improve communities, support local businesses and improve skills.
- adopt a robust Local Plan which will deliver homes, economic growth and protection of open spaces
- support town centre regeneration and attract inward investment for jobs
- focus on initiatives for business growth
- support tourism, heritage preservation, and strengthen district identity
- increase visitor numbers through events at the Town Hall, Museum, and Fairs
- support local companies through advice, regulation, and national funding opportunities

Equality Impact Assessment

Corporate Strategy 2024-28

- **Background**

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

- **Legislation- Equality Duty**

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation.
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Gender reassignment
- ✓ Marriage and civil partnership
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity
- ✓ Race
- ✓ Religion and belief
- ✓ Sex (Gender)
- ✓ Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

- ✓ Direct Discrimination
- ✓ Indirect Discrimination
- ✓ Harassment
- ✓ Victimisation
- ✓ Discrimination by association
- ✓ Discrimination by perception
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
- ✓ Discrimination arising from disability
- ✓ Failing to make reasonable adjustments

Complete this action plan as you go through the questions

- **Step 1 – Introductory information**

Title of the policy	Corporate Strategy 2024-28
Lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	Helen Gretton Vicky Brackenbury Mike Roberts
Date EIA started	23.08.2023
Date EIA completed	14.12.2023

- **Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed**

Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives)

The Corporate Strategy is a strategic plan which outlines what Charnwood Borough Council plans to deliver over the next four years, 2024-2028. It sets out the activity to be undertaken by the authority, and with partners, and identifies real and achievable targets, which in turn will create positive outcomes for individuals and communities in service design, delivery, and employment.

What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?

The whole population of Charnwood will be affected. The Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 is an overarching document which is designed to create positive impacts for people who live, work, and visit in the Borough. It should not have an adverse impact on any groups or individuals as its purpose is to make the Council's practices and services more effective, fair, and accessible for all.

Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?

A resident's survey was undertaken for 8 weeks, from 01.07.23 – 31.08.2023. This was an opportunity to consult with a range of residents, across each of the protected characteristics throughout the Borough. The survey was conducted by Marketing Means, on behalf of Charnwood Borough Council, who used a quota sampling approach to ensure that the sample represented the population of Charnwood Borough. Independent quotas were set by ward, gender, age, and ethnicity based on the 2021 census data, a target of 600 responses was set in order to achieve a margin of error of $\pm 3.9\%$ at the 95% confidence level (based on a population of 183,900).

In addition to the resident's survey a number of consultation sessions took place which are listed below:

- Staff consultation sessions
- Senior and Corporate Leadership Team consultation
- Cabinet

Results from other appropriate service specific consultations were also used to influence the content of the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028.

- **Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps**

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.

Data/information such as:

- Consultation
 - Previous Equality Impact Assessments
 - Demographic information
 - Anecdotal and other evidence
- Demographic information (based on Census 2021) which provides information on a range of the protected characteristics, in particular age, disability, race, religion or belief and sex.

- Residents Survey (2023) which surveyed a cross range of residents across the borough of Charnwood.
- Various information based on service specific consultations and monitoring of services.

What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

Consultation informs the council of the specific needs and priorities of residents and service users across the Borough. The development of the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028, ensures that the actions and objectives embedded within the Strategy provide positive outcomes for everyone living, working, and visiting the Borough.

• **Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?**

Considering the answers given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not explain why.

Not in this circumstance. The Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 is an overarching strategic plan which includes a range of initiatives and different projects which are designed to provide positive outcomes for the wider community.

Further consultation, with individuals of protected characteristics, will take place as part of the ongoing development and implementation of these specific projects and initiatives which make up the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028.

• **Step 5 – Assessing the impact**

Considering any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge, identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups who identify with any ‘protected characteristics’ and provide an explanation for your decision. Please refer to the general duties on the front page.

<p>Age</p>	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of age.</p> <p>Specific initiatives have been included in the Corporate Strategy to support vulnerable members of our community, including younger people and older people. This should create a greater positive impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will “<i>ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough</i>”.</p>
<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical • Visual • Hearing • learning disabilities • mental health 	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of disability.</p>

	<p>Under the theme 'homes and communities' the Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will <i>"help disabled people adapt their homes, to improve their quality of life"</i>.</p> <p>The Strategy looks to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes for all residents.</p> <p>The Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 aims to create inclusive communities and foster good community relations. Key initiatives are focussed on involving communities, giving them a voice, and supporting them to be involved in decision making within their own communities. Therefore, there is likely to be a further positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to community involvement and cohesion.</p>
Gender Reassignment (Transgender)	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.</p> <p>A potential barrier may be access to and availability of relevant information as there is little national and local information on gender re-assignment both within the Council and other organisations. Therefore, additional, and ongoing monitoring of this protected characteristic may be required.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will <i>"ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough"</i>.</p>
Race	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of race.</p> <p>The published Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 will be available in alternative languages if required and requested by specific individuals/ community groups.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will <i>"ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough"</i>.</p>
Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of religion or belief.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will <i>"ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough"</i>.</p>
Sex (Gender)	<p>Neutral impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a neutral impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of sex.</p> <p>The Strategy does not prioritise services by sex therefore, there is no positive or negative impact on any sex.</p>

	The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will “ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough”.
Sexual Orientation	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of sexual orientation.</p> <p>A potential barrier may be access to and availability of relevant information as there is little national and local information on sexual orientation both within the Council and other organisations. Therefore, additional monitoring of this protected characteristic may be required.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will “ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough”.</p>
<p>Other protected groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy & maternity • Marriage & civil partnership 	<p>Positive impact - The Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 will provide positive impacts for all members of the community, and this fully includes individuals within the protected characteristics of pregnancy & maternity and marriage & civil partnership.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will “ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough”.</p>
<p>Other socially excluded groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers • Low literacy • Priority neighbourhoods • Health inequalities • Rural isolation • Asylum seeker and refugee communities • Current and ex-armed HM forces personnel (Veterans) 	<p>Positive impact - The actions and objectives within the Corporate Strategy 2024- 2028 also cover a variety of other groups such as rural isolation, deprived or disadvantaged communities (priority neighbourhoods), health inequality, asylum seeker and refugee communities. The specific actions in the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 are likely to have a positive impact on all individuals and communities.</p> <p>The Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 aims to create inclusive communities and foster good community relations. Key initiatives are focussed on involving communities, giving them a voice, and supporting them to be involved in decision making within their own communities. Therefore, there is likely to be a further positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to community involvement and cohesion.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly states that Charnwood will “ensure diversity and inclusivity are celebrated in the borough”.</p>

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

- If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

Further consultation for individual protected characteristics will take place as part of the ongoing development and implementation of these specific projects and initiatives which make up the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 and associated Corporate Delivery Plan.

Equality Impact Assessments will also be undertaken, where appropriate, on the individual elements of the projects and initiatives which make up the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 and associated Corporate Delivery Plan.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

The Corporate Strategy 2024-28 aims to provide a positive impact for all individuals living, working, and visiting the Borough and therefore meets the Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

● **Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation, review**

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? How will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

If any negative impacts occur/ potential barriers arise, then these will be monitored and evaluated via our Corporate Customer Complaints Procedure.

Where appropriate, individual Equality Impact Assessments will be conducted as part of the ongoing development and implementation of specific projects and initiatives which make up the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028. This will seek to mitigate any barriers or adverse impact to any of the protected groups.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g., policy reviews, annual plans, and use of performance management systems.

All actions within the Corporate Strategy are monitored through the annual Corporate Delivery Plan via the Council's Performance Management System. This is monitored via the Council's Corporate Management Team, Senior Management Team and Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee and any negative impacts will be picked up through this scrutiny process.

● **Step 7- Action Plan**

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan. The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan

Reference Number	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
001	Further consider the protected characteristics of gender reassignment and sexual orientation when developing and implementing specific projects and initiatives within the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028.	Heads of Service in all service areas across Charnwood Borough Council	Ongoing
002	Further consider consultation for individual protected characteristics as part of the ongoing development and implementation of specific	Heads of Service in all service areas across Charnwood Borough Council	Ongoing

	projects and initiatives which make up the Corporate Strategy 2024-2028.		
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- **Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?**

	Who needs to know?	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This EIA will be published on Charnwood Borough Council's webpage and intranet. Service users, partners and stakeholders can also request this EIA in alternative formats if required.
Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Partners and stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Others	N/A	
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?	N/A	

- **Step 9- Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the **Service Head**)**

Delete as appropriate
I agree with this assessment
Signed (Service Head): Helen Gretton
Date: 14 th December 2023