

Public Document Pack

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Monday, 4th March, 2024
at 5.30 pm

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Conference Room 3 and 4 - Civic Centre

This meeting is open to the public

Members

Councillor Blackman (Chair)
Councillor Moulton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Every
Councillor Y Frampton
Councillor Galton
Councillor Lambert
Councillor Dr Paffey
Councillor Leggett
Councillor Quadir

Appointed Members

Catherine Hobbs, Roman Catholic Church
Rob Sanders, Church of England
Vacant, Primary Parent Governor

Contacts

Judy Cordell
Democratic Support Officer
Tel. 023 8083 2766
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Scrutiny Manager
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PUBLIC INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee holds the Executive to account, exercises the call-in process, and sets and monitors standards for scrutiny. It formulates a programme of scrutiny inquiries and appoints Scrutiny Panels to undertake them. Members of the Executive cannot serve on this Committee.

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny includes the following three functions:

- Holding the Executive to account by questioning and evaluating the Executive's actions, both before and after decisions taken.
- Developing and reviewing Council policies, including the Policy Framework and Budget Strategy.
- Making reports and recommendations on any aspect of Council business and other matters that affect the City and its citizens.

Overview and Scrutiny can ask the Executive to reconsider a decision, but they do not have the power to change the decision themselves.

Southampton: Corporate Plan 2022-2030 sets out the four key outcomes:

- **Strong Foundations for Life**.- For people to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life.
- **A proud and resilient city** - Southampton's greatest assets are our people. Enriched lives lead to thriving communities, which in turn create places where people want to live, work and study.
- **A prosperous city** - Southampton will focus on growing our local economy and bringing investment into our city.
- **A successful, sustainable organisation** - The successful delivery of the outcomes in this plan will be rooted in the culture of our organisation and becoming an effective and efficient council.

Procedure / Public Representations

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda.

Access is available for disabled people.

Please contact the Democratic Support Officer who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

Fire Procedure: -

In the event of a fire or other emergency a continuous alarm will sound, and you will be advised by Council officers what action to take.

Mobile Telephones: - Please switch your mobile telephones to silent whilst in the meeting

Use of Social Media: - The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair's opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council's Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting. By entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public. Any person or organisation filming, recording, or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so. Details of the Council's Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council's website.

Smoking Policy: - The Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Dates of Meetings for the Municipal Year:

| 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------|-------------|
| 10 August | 11 January |
| 14 September | 01 February |
| 12 October | 07 March |
| 9 November | 11 April |
| 14 December | |

CONDUCT OF MEETING

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The general role and terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, together with those for all Scrutiny Panels, are set out in Part 2 (Article 6) of the Council’s Constitution, and their particular roles are set out in Part 4 (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules – paragraph 5) of the Constitution.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

QUORUM

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 4.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any “Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” or “Other Interest” they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

- (i) Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

- (iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which the you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

- (iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.
- (v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.
- (vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.
- (vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:
- a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or
 - b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an, 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

- Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature
- Any body directed to charitable purposes
- Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)

To note any changes in membership of the Panel made in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

2 DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

NOTE: Members are reminded that, where applicable, they must complete the appropriate form recording details of any such interests and hand it to the Democratic Support Officer.

3 DECLARATIONS OF SCRUTINY INTEREST

Members are invited to declare any prior participation in any decision taken by a Committee, Sub-Committee, or Panel of the Council on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

4 DECLARATION OF PARTY POLITICAL WHIP

Members are invited to declare the application of any party political whip on any matter on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

5 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

6 BUDGET PROPOSALS - 2024/25

(Pages 1 - 16)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Committee review the information contained within the Cabinet papers to be published on 26 February 2024 and provide feedback for Cabinet to consider at their 5 March 2024 meeting.

Friday, 23 February 2024

Director – Legal and Governance

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Agenda Item 6

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|
| DECISION-MAKER: | OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE | | |
| SUBJECT: | BUDGET PROPOSALS – 2024/25 | | |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 4 MARCH 2024 | | |
| REPORT OF: | SCRUTINY MANAGER | | |
| <u>CONTACT DETAILS</u> | | | |
| Executive Director | Title | Executive Director – Corporate Services and S151 Officer | |
| | Name: | Mel Creighton | Tel: 023 8083 3528 |
| | E-mail | Mel.creighton@southampton.gov.uk | |
| Author: | Title | Scrutiny Manager | |
| | Name: | Mark Pirnie | Tel: 023 8083 3886 |
| | E-mail | Mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk | |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY | | |
| None | | |
| BRIEF SUMMARY | | |
| <p>At its meeting on 5 March 2024 Cabinet will recommend the 2024/25 revenue budget, medium term financial strategy and capital programme to Council for approval on 6 March 2024.</p> <p>The Chair of the Committee has requested that the 2024/25 draft budget and savings proposals are scrutinised at the 4 March meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to enable feedback from the Committee to be considered by Cabinet and reflected in the 5 March and 6 March decision making meetings.</p> <p>The Cabinet reports and appendices for the 5 March 2024 meeting will be published on 26 February 2024.</p> | | |
| RECOMMENDATION: | | |
| | (i) | That the Committee review the information contained within the Cabinet papers to be published on 26 February 2024 and, following the discussion with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change and the Council’s Executive Directors, provide feedback for Cabinet to consider at their 5 March 2024 meeting. |
| REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS | | |
| 1. | To enable the Committee to scrutinise the Council’s budget proposals for 2024/25. | |
| ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED | | |
| 2. | For the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to not consider the Council’s budget proposals for 2024/25. This was rejected because Paragraph 2.2, within the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework Procedure | |

| | |
|---|--|
| | Rules, requires papers on the budget strategy and detailed proposals to be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for consideration and comment. |
| DETAIL (Including consultation carried out) | |
| 3. | At meetings on 5 th and 6 th March 2024, Cabinet and Council will consider the following reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy • The General Fund Capital Programme • The General Fund Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting 2024/25 The Cabinet agenda will be published on 26 th February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . |
| 4. | The Committee are requested to review the information contained within the Cabinet reports that are scheduled to be published on 26 February 2024 and, following the discussion with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change and the Council's Executive Directors, provide feedback for Cabinet to consider at their 5 March 2024 meeting. |
| 5. | The Council's constitution requires the Executive to consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the budget strategy, and to report to Council on how it has taken into account any comments or recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. |
| 6. | To provide context to the discussion, attached as Appendix 1 is a draft of the updated Corporate Plan for the Council that is scheduled to be considered at the 19 March 2024 meeting of Cabinet. |
| RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS | |
| <u>Capital/Revenue</u> | |
| 7. | Details will be set out in the Executive decision making report published on 26 February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . |
| <u>Property/Other</u> | |
| 8. | Details will be set out in the Executive decision making report published on 26 February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . |
| LEGAL IMPLICATIONS | |
| <u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u> | |
| 9. | The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000. |
| <u>Other Legal Implications:</u> | |
| 10. | Details will be set out in the Executive decision making report published on 26 February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . |
| RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS | |
| 11. | Details will be set out in the Executive decision making report published on 26 February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS | | |
| 12. | Details will be set out in the Executive decision making report published on 26 February 2024 - Browse meetings - Cabinet Southampton City Council . | |
| KEY DECISION | | No |
| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | | None directly as a result of this report |
| <u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u> | | |
| Appendices | | |
| 1. | Briefing paper - Draft Southampton City Council Corporate Plan | |
| Documents In Members' Rooms | | |
| 1. | None | |
| Equality Impact Assessment | | |
| Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIA) to be carried out? | | Identified in Executive report |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment | | |
| Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out? | | Identified in Executive report |
| Other Background Documents Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: | | |
| Title of Background Paper(s) | | Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable) |
| 1. | None | |

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BRIEFING PAPER

SUBJECT: DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2024
DATE: 4 MARCH 2024
RECIPIENT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

SUMMARY:

1. The Southampton City Council Corporate Plan has been updated to reflect the financial pressures facing the Council and the strategy to achieve financial stability through transformation and economic growth. The Corporate Plan provides the overall strategic vision, goals, and outcome ambitions. It aligns with other key strategies across the Council, such as Health and Wellbeing, Safe City Partnership, Economic and Green Growth and Children and Young People and both shape and support key internal strategies.

BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

2. The current Corporate Plan was approved in November 2022 to be renewed in 2030. Focused initially on the 2024/25 year, the updated Corporate Plan reflects the significant financial pressures that have been identified since that time, it acknowledges the £40m financial gap that the council is facing, the level of transformation and the platform for delivery that is required to achieve a sustainable organisation.
3. The updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is scheduled for Cabinet on 5th March 2024 and Council on 6th March 2024 and details the financial pressures and plans to address the financial challenges. The Corporate Plan is being updated to ensure the vision, strategic goals and focus reflect the council's financial situation and the MTFS is aligned.
4. The vision is: Southampton - Our city of opportunity. The core goals have been reviewed and refined, with outcomes that focus on improving the lives of residents and growing the economic and health prosperity of our city.
5. Strategic objectives have been developed that provide more specifics around areas of focus to make that step-change, and the business planning framework will ensure the work of all areas of the council are aligned to the achievement of these objectives, outcomes, and goals.
6. The Corporate Performance Framework is in place, and being further developed to ensure we have the right overview of performance across the organisation. As part of this, a regular Key Performance Indicator (KPI) report will be developed to ensure council performance is aligned with the Corporate Plan. These reports will be shared and

BRIEFING PAPER

discussed within the council regularly to ensure that we are making progress. Updates will also be provided on our website.

7. Equality and Safety Impact Assessments will be drafted for new strategies and policies which sit under the Corporate plan.
8. A City and Corporate Plan will be developed for 2025/26 onwards, building on the work delivered to date.

RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

9. Any resource implications required to deliver the objectives within the Corporate Plan will be defined through the transformation plan (through a business case approach) and existing service budgets as developed through business plans.
10. Any property or other implications required to deliver the objectives within the Corporate Plan will be defined through the transformation plan (through a business case approach) and existing service budgets as developed through business plans.
11. S.111 Local Government Act 1972 provides the power to do anything calculated to facilitate the delivery of the council's primary functions.
12. S.1 Localism Act 2011 permits the council to do anything a private individual may do subject to any conditions on the use of the power (none applicable in this instance). S.1 authorises the development and delivery of the corporate priorities and behaviours in accordance with the business plan. Itemised deliverables may be subject to their own statutory delivery powers, and these are addressed in the budget report or individual decisions and delegations as appropriate.
13. The formulation of the Plan has had regard to the provisions of the Equalities Act 2020 (in particular s.149 – the Public Sector Equality Duty), together with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
14. The Corporate Plan is consistent with the Policy Framework.

OPTIONS and TIMESCALES:

15. The Corporate Plan will be brought to Cabinet on 19 March 2024 for approval.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

16. There is a risk that the Council will face increasing financial pressures over the next three years. The Corporate Plan will need to be updated to reflect any major pressures which will affect the implementation of the Corporate Plan.
17. The Corporate Risk Register provides a framework to consider the key risks facing the Council. The need for good governance in change and service redesign projects is recognised within the register.

BRIEFING PAPER

Appendices/Supporting Information:

Annex 1: The Corporate Plan (updated 2024)

| | | |
|--|----------------|--|
| Further Information Available From: | Name: | Munira Holloway – Director, Strategy & Performance |
| | Tel: | 023 8083 4476 |
| | E-mail: | munira.holloway@southampton.gov.uk |

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Draft Corporate Plan (update 2024)

Foreword

Southampton... our city of opportunity.

As the new Leader and Chief Executive for Southampton City Council, we have developed the 2024 update of the Corporate Plan to reflect our changing circumstances as a council and a city.

With a challenging financial position, we are going to need to make some difficult decisions to get us to a place that means we have a balanced budget for 2025/26 and confidence that the planned budget is sustainable.

Despite the current challenge, we truly believe that Southampton is a city of opportunity. So, our Corporate Plan supports our aspirations, that we're building and delivering ambitious plans for change, improvement and growth, and to be a place that fosters and grows ambition and enables people to understand and develop their possibilities.

We are determined to continue to support those who are most in need, while working with community leaders, partners and businesses to take Southampton forward, expanding on everything the city has to offer and recognising the ambitions we share for our great city.

Together we will build a proud, pioneering global destination and maritime city - investing in infrastructure, skills and technology to attract more businesses, create quality jobs and renew and regenerate housing across the city. Building on the inclusive diversity of our city, we will promote and develop our vibrant culture and events to promote Southampton as a destination city. Through the green economy, emerging technologies and creative industries we'll work collectively to develop our local talent and deliver quality jobs that benefit local people.

Through the corporate plan we are committed to delivering on those things that will genuinely help improve the quality of life of our residents. Through our transformation programme we will change the way we engage with people and the way we work both within the council and with others to achieve our goals.

We look forward to working together alongside cabinet, council officers, community leaders, partners and businesses to deliver the plan for and with the people of Southampton, to achieve Southampton's ambitions.

Councillor Lorna Fielker - Leader of Southampton City Council

Andrew Travers - Chief Executive Officer, Southampton City Council

Introduction

At Southampton City Council we are committed to creating a place where people want to live, work, study, visit and enjoy. This is Southampton City Council's updated medium-term plan.

We want Southampton to be a city that creates opportunities for all ages and backgrounds. We want residents to have strong foundations for life, pride in their city and a successful city council to depend on. We are dedicated to working together to make Southampton a city of opportunity. A city of diversity where all are welcome, we are a city of music, dance, theatre, and art. Our two universities are leading the way with innovative research.

As well as our proud history and thriving cultural scene, we have difficult challenges that we must face head-on. Our residents experience greater health inequality than some of our statistical neighbours and we score higher in the index of multiple deprivation than other areas in Hampshire, despite this we want to tap into the potential we have for economic growth, tackle health inequalities, and be part of making Southampton a city of opportunity for all.

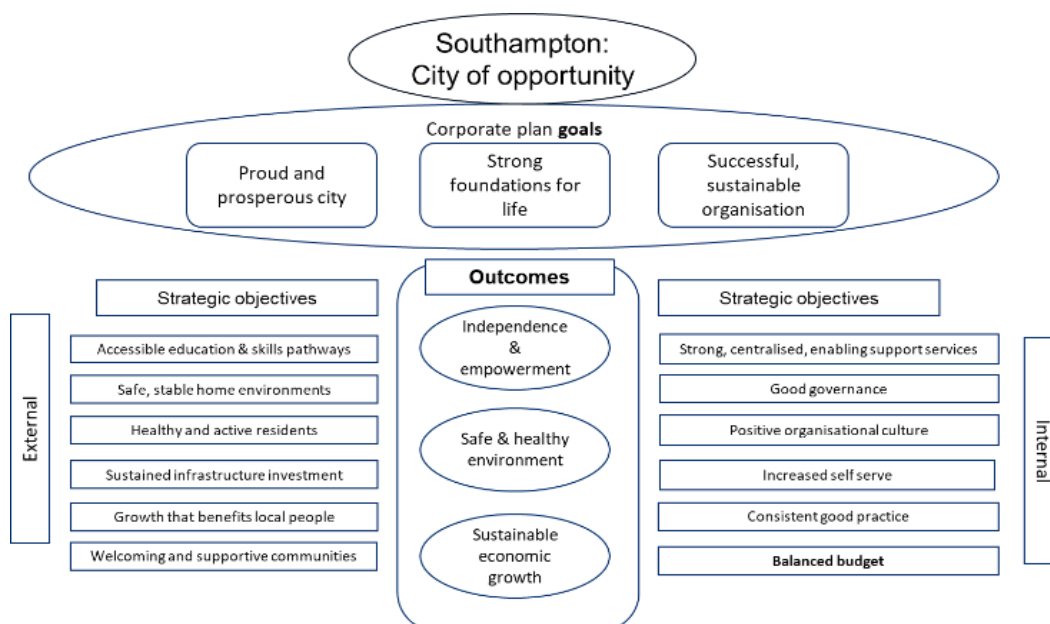
Southampton City Council is a unitary authority. That means we are responsible for all local services within the city. We provide services for our 250,000 residents, 16,300 tenants, 60,000 businesses and over 3,000 employees. These include:

- Libraries
- Highways
- Social services
- Processing planning applications
- Waste collection and disposal
- Council tax
- Housing
- As a local education authority, we run some schools as well.

We are committed to delivering these services to a high standard, despite growing financial challenges, we know that this plan will help us deliver this. We want to build our future as an enabling, inclusive, and productive council that delivers for our residents, partners, businesses, and visitors, whilst working together to help Southampton achieve its potential.

Our plan

Our vision is Southampton as a city of opportunity.



Outcomes focused:

Our outcomes, whilst broad, are fundamental to Southampton’s success. Our strategic objectives and everything we do is focused around achieving these outcomes and the corporate plan goals. These goals, outcomes and objectives provide the clear links throughout all directorate business plans, service plans and employee’s individual performance objectives.

Strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives have been developed by working with Cabinet Members and listening to residents, businesses and council officers. Thriving communities and businesses create places where people want to live, work and study. We will focus on growing our local economy and bringing investment into our city. Working with partners and businesses across the city, Southampton City Council is committed to enabling residents of all ages and backgrounds to better help themselves by supporting people to develop the strong foundations that will help them flourish throughout their lives.

We recognise that there is work to do to improve ourselves, so we have also developed a set of internal objectives that will support us to develop our role as a contemporary, inclusive and productive council.

- **Safe and stable home environments**

A safe place to call home should be a fundamental right for everyone. Home, in whatever form that takes, gives stability and a sense of belonging. It is where we make memories, and it helps us to build a strong foundation for our lives. We will focus on helping individuals to remain in a safe home, by providing quality housing across the city, and access to support when needed.

- **Accessible education and skills pathways**

From early years and throughout life, accessing good quality education and developing useful skills provides strong foundations from which people can build. We are committed to working with partners and businesses across the city to enable more Southampton residents to have the opportunity for higher-skilled, higher-paid jobs. We will support access to education, training, and advice throughout people's lives.

- **Healthy and active residents**

Physical and mental health and well-being are key for a good quality of life and a thriving city. They impact people's life chances, education, and employment opportunities. We will work to protect and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of everyone who lives, works, and learns in Southampton.

- **Sustained infrastructure investment**

We will continue work to ensure that Southampton benefits from funding opportunities on a continuous basis. Building better sustainable infrastructure, with safer, more affordable, and accessible modes of travel options around Southampton will support our communities and businesses to grow. This will enable economic, environmental, and social benefits and offer opportunities for all.

- **Growth that benefits local people**

Everyone benefits most when there is growth and opportunity that local people can tap in to. Whether that's local business, more job opportunities or investment in the city that attracts visitors to our events, shopping and attractions.

- **Welcoming and supporting communities**

Our focus is on working with communities to creating a welcoming environment for all people from all backgrounds. We will continue to celebrate and embrace Southampton as a culturally rich and diverse city.

The successful delivery of the internally focused outcomes in this plan are rooted in the culture of our organisation. We are transforming the way we deliver services to ensure we are an efficient, well-run organisation with clear and sustainable goals.

- **Strong centralised enabling support services**

Continuing our drive for productivity and efficiency, we are evolving the way we work, and the way we set up work to improve our services, maximise skills and capacity, and build a stable, efficient, and innovative organisation.

- **Positive organisational culture**

A positive, open culture supports people to feel inspired, connected and empowered. We want to develop an ambitious, forward-thinking, and optimistic organisation. Having the right people working in the right way and understanding and embedding our values will help us create an enabling council that supports a city of opportunity.

- **Increased self-serve**

Where practical we are working to make sure people can easily access useful information and digital council services. We are continuing to develop systems and approaches to enable residents, employees and partners to help themselves. With new digital and data strategies we are working to ensure we have systems that work for everyone.

- **Good governance**

Fast paced, robust decisions and actions are supported by good governance. Promoting accountability, transparency, and efficiency in our decision-making will build trust and stability across the organisation and city.

- **Consistent good practice**

We are dedicated to upholding ethical, fair, and transparent practices, understanding what we need to do and embedding good practice throughout the organisation. This will build trust, deliver better and more consistent services, reduce cost and risk, and promote long-term stability.

- **Balanced budget**

We are committed to achieving long-term financial sustainability for the council. This is so we can invest purposefully into the city and help it to grow to its full potential.

Financial challenges

Against a challenging economic climate, with increasing demand for services alongside increasing costs of delivery, the council is facing significant financial pressures. We have worked together to develop a new medium-term financial strategy to support the organisation achieve financial sustainability. We currently have a nearly £40m budget gap for the 2024/25 financial year and a continued ongoing deficit that needs addressing through transformation activity across the organisation, working alongside more tactical cost reduction and savings activities.

As well as our direct financial challenges, residents are experiencing a cost-of-living crisis. This is affecting all residents, particularly those in more deprived households. We have taken a city-wide partnership approach to providing support for people across the city.

We recognise that some of the decisions we make over the next few years will not be easy. We must address the difficult choices to make sure we provide services for those who need them and deliver on our commitments to the city. This Corporate Plan reflects our approach to support residents and businesses across the city as well as visitors, to understand and access the opportunities Southampton has to offer.

The medium-term financial strategy is key to providing clarity on our financial position and ensuring our ongoing financial strategy supports our goals. We have a financial management improvement plan that will ensure that our staff are grounded in financial acumen, understand the importance of financial challenges and are thinking commercially when redesigning services. Some of the principles include enabling more people to help themselves, rationalising council buildings, seeking income generation opportunities, creating the conditions for economic growth and recovery, and considering the needs of communities. Together with the key strategies and transformation plan it is critical to identifying how we will align our existing and future resources with the goals, outcomes and objectives within the Corporate Plan.

Business planning

Our business planning framework has been developed to align all business planning activity to the vision, strategic objectives, savings proposals and change activity, enabling us to address both short-term challenges and longer-term goals.

Building an evidence informed, enabling council

The active use of data is ever more important, our new data strategy is fundamental to shaping the way we gather, process and use data to understand and inform the decisions we make. Evidence informed decision making is a core principle of the way we work.

Digital thinking and innovation are key enablers for our transformation and improvement work. Our digital strategy has been developed with expert support and provides a roadmap for digital development and continuous improvement, including additional use of robotics, artificial intelligence, and appropriate automation.

Our People Strategy will support delivery of the Corporate Plan by ensuring we develop a positive organisational culture that enables a proactive, innovative, skilled and engaged workforce that work together to deliver our strategic objectives. This strategy is inextricably linked with the data and digital strategies and will help to develop our peoples' data and digital skills so that we can fully utilise the new tools, solutions and innovative technologies.

We have evolved our employee values to reflect how we work best together in challenging times of great opportunity

- Trust - We work together and trust each other.
- Pride - We are proud and passionate about Southampton.
- Respect - We take time to listen and understand.
- Accountable - We take personal responsibility, deliver value for money, and try new things.

As we work towards delivering this, we are evolving a set of consistent organisation design and operating principles that will help to provide the foundations for the way we operate and all our service redesigns.

Our commitment to a prosperous, healthy city is stronger than ever. Our promise to positively address health in all policies, and our successful bid to become a Health Determinates Research Collaboration (HDRC), provides us with funding to set up a research hub that will support our work with partners and communities across the city to ensure that initiatives we implement have positive impact on the health of our residents.

Transformation

We have been working on, and are further developing, an organisational transformation programme. This programme of activity will address what we do, how we work and what technological, process and structural changes are needed to enable us to reshape the organisation to deliver quality services within a balanced budget. The programme will be supported by the implementation of the data, digital and people strategies.

The programme will be underpinned by a set of organisational design principles, focused around building an enabling council.

Business planning throughout the council will align to achieving the strategic objectives, savings proposals and transformation activity (as it develops) following our agreed approach.

How we will measure success:

We have identified a core set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that will demonstrate our progress towards achieving the outcomes and objectives. These will be reviewed and published on an annual basis so that we can be held accountable for our performance.

In addition to this we have a Corporate Performance Framework that is being further developed to ensure we have the right overview of performance across the organisation, which is regularly monitored. As part of this, a wider key performance indicator report will be developed to ensure council performance is aligned with the Corporate Plan. These reports will be shared and discussed within the council on a regular basis to ensure that we are making progress, we'll also provide updates on our website.

- Percentage of homes that meet the decent homes standard
- Rate of Looked After Children (per 10,000)
- Percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English & Maths
- Percentage of economically active population with no or low qualifications
- Gap in median weekly pay between residents and workers (£)
- Male/Female healthy life expectancy at birth (years)
- Percentage of Year 6 children with excess weight (%)
- Proportion of physically active adults (%)
- Economic growth measured by GVA per head (£)
- Percentage of working age adults claiming out of work benefits (%)
- Proportion of residents that agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (%)
- Southampton's relative deprivation rank amongst Local Authorities in England