

Emerging Council Business Plan

Corporate and Resources Scrutiny Committee
7 September 2023

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Somerset
Council

Council Business Plan

This presentation provides an outline of the emerging Council Business Plan (slides 8 to 11), as we seek to capture and articulate the key outcomes and actions that will start to deliver the four priorities within the approved [Council Plan 2023-2027](#).

This meeting is one of many sources of engagement, input and challenge that will help shape the final Plan, prior to its consideration Executive on 4 October 2023.

Our Ask of the Committee:

Does the emerging Business Plan capture the key outcomes and areas of focus?

- Is it “on the right track?”
- What could be missing or need changing?
- What outcomes need to be given particular emphasis?
- Which outcomes are you particularly keen to track progress on (and any thoughts on measures/ targets)?

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Why we Need a Business Plan

- The Business Plan is part of the ‘Golden Thread’ that turns the Council Plan into activity so we are ‘pulling in the same direction’.
- We cannot do everything and cannot do it all at once, so it says what the most important things are so our work aligns with our overall goals
- The plan sets out where we will deliver ourselves, with others or by influencing others.
- It doesn’t cover day to day transactional or operational activities: it covers more strategic activities and projects that deliver our ambitions.
- It holds us to account to do a good job **together**

A good Business Plan will drive and stress the importance of:

- ✓ **Leadership** at both political and managerial levels, and the need for clear vision, strategy, and direction for the council.
- ✓ **Financial management** and ensuring that we have robust and realistic budgets, and financial discipline.
- ✓ **Service delivery** so we know what matters and maintain or improve the quality and accessibility of services for our communities, while seeking opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and transformation.
- ✓ Good **governance** with clear and transparent decision-making, scrutiny and accountability.

The 'Golden Thread'

Broad detail: **Administration intentions** and Member/ stakeholder input into policy development (What and Why)

More detail: **Delivery** (How, Who and When)



Context for our Teams

As well as the Council Plan, there are some other important drivers for a Business Plan. For Somerset Council these include:

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Ensure that we manage our financial resources effectively so that spending commitments do not exceed available resources and that the Council's long term financial health and viability remain sound.

Empowerment, leadership and accountability

We seek to empower ourselves as individuals, teams and services, allowing us to lead confidently, be accountable for successes and empowered to solve problems and take advantage of opportunities

Business as Usual

Something like 70-80% of what we do we continue to do each day. The Business Plan describes the critical activity to take the council forward to deliver the council vision, priorities and overall ambition: it doesn't try to list all we do.

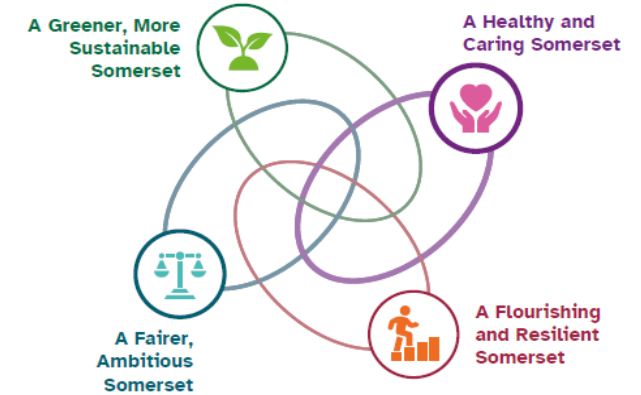
Public Sector Funding, Demand and Staffing

Contraction in public sector funding combined with increased demand and a difficult employment market

Live Strategies and Plans

Commitments have been established in existing active strategies and plans, which are already producing results (for example, Homes and Horizons partnership, and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).

Strategic Picture



Housing Strategy 	Education for Life Strategy 	Climate Emergency Strategy 	Digital Strategy and Customer Strategy 	Integrated Health & Care Strategy
Medium Term Financial Strategy 	Tree Strategy 	Adult Social Care Strategy 	Somerset Future Transport Plans 	Local Plan(s)
Improving Lives Strategy 	LGR Transition Programme 	Our Transformation Programme 	Children & Young People's Plan 	Economic Strategy (ies)

And others

Emerging Activities (draft)

Following workshops etc **four broad delivery clusters** have emerged for the activities that will deliver and support the Council's four priorities. These delivery clusters are:

- A Sustainable and Effective Council
- A great education for life through access to good education at all levels and strong leadership to make it happen
- A healthy environment that supports physically, mentally and emotionally healthy lives
- Creating the conditions for Somerset to have a flourishing and resilient economy

Activities may feature across several clusters – this shows the cross-cutting nature of what we do.

We are working to provide the following level of detail (red sections are under development). This will include who our partners are.

Outcome (what we want to see)	Critical activity to deliver that outcome	“When will we see significant change?”	What does success look or feel like?	Targets	Additional barriers to overcome (if any)

The next 4 slides provide:

- A more worked up version of one cluster (Sustainable and effective council)
- High level detail of other clusters, with more detail yet to be added

Detailed cluster (in draft): A Sustainable and Effective Council

Outcome (what we want to see)	Critical activity to deliver	“When will we see significant change?” (NB: to be validated)	What does success look or feel like?
A financially sustainable council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFP 2024-25 • Balanced budget outturn from 2023-24 • Council Transition Programme 	1 year 1 year 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A balanced 2024-25 MTFP • Delivery of financial recovery plans, agreed savings, staffing opportunities and underspend opportunities • Realisation of remaining LGR financial and non-financial benefits
Services aligned in the new council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Transition Programme • Service structure transition (part of transition programme) • Council Transformation Programme 	2 years 2 years 2-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realisation of remaining LGR financial and non-financial benefits • Realisation of full benefit identified in the Business Case • Longer-term benefits defined in the Business Case and other activity tbc.
A positive culture in the new council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with staff to develop an agreed set of values and behaviours • Embed the operating model • Agree and embed a council approach to commissioning 	1 year 1 year 1 year	An organisation culture that is recognisably confident, productive and supports effective delivery of the council’s work.
Digital innovation in our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Digital Strategy • Transition Programme • Transformation Programme 	1-2 years 2 years 2-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the “getting started” top 10 activities in the Strategy • Under development • Under development

Emerging cluster (in draft): A great education for life through access to good education at all levels and strong leadership to make it happen

Outcome (what we want to see)	Critical activity to deliver that outcome	“When will we see significant change?”	What does success look or feel like?
Give children the best educational start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Education for Life Strategy 		Being developed
Young people and adults stay in, or return to, Somerset because they have the option of well-paid, meaningful employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Education for Life Strategy • Somerset Community Learning Programme 		
With communities, attract and retain working age adults to ensure a skilled workforce is available within the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somerset Community Learning Programme 		

Emerging cluster: A healthy environment that supports physically, mentally and emotionally healthy lives

Outcome (what we want to see)	Critical activity to deliver that outcome	“When will we see significant change?”	What does success look or feel like?
People live healthy, independent lives, supported by thriving communities with timely and easy access to high quality and efficient public services when they need them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership across the health & care system using the Somerset Board • Deliver the vision, ambition and aims of the Integrated Health and Care Strategy • Deliver the Adult Social Care Strategy priorities • Deliver the Children and Young People’s Plan • Deliver the Education for Life Strategy • Embed the Public Health operating model • Transition Programme • Transformation Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Local Plan • New Local Transport Plan • Develop Local Community Networks 		
Decent quality, low carbon, social housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and deliver the new Housing Strategy for Somerset • Create a new Local Plan • Transition Programme • Transformation Programme 		Being developed
More people access active and sustainable travel options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and deliver a new Local Transport Plan 		
Somerset is a proactively climate and biodiversity conscious place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the climate emergency strategy including considering climate and ecological issues in all that we do, and decarbonising council assets & activities 		Net Zero County by 2030
Medium- and long-term plans for infrastructure to create a green economy, protected environment and connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New economic development and tourism strategy • Develop and expand on the emerging Place Narrative to support development of policy and key strategies / activities • New arrangements regarding Local Enterprise Partnership responsibilities transferred to Somerset Council 		
Somerset Council is a strong leader of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and expand on the emerging Place Narrative to support development of policy and key strategies / activities • Work with Government and others on effective planning for changes to LEPs 		

Emerging cluster: Creating the conditions for Somerset to have a flourishing and resilient economy

Outcome (what we want to see)	Critical activity to deliver that outcome	“When will we see significant change?”	What does success look or feel like?
Reduced economic inequality and increased social mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Education for Life Strategy • Deliver the Integrated Health and Care Strategy • Create and deliver a new Local Plan • Create and deliver a new Local Transport Plan • New economic strategy(ies) (wording/detail tbc) 		Being developed
Drive increased inward investment, especially where it is most needed and/or can have the greatest benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as an influencer and partner to create the conditions for economic growth • Working to deliver benefit from Hinkley Point C and ultimately a strong legacy • Delivery of Gravity (subject to final announcement) • New economic strategy(ies) (wording/detail tbc) • Improved physical and digital connectivity • Work with Government and others on effective planning for changes to LEPs 		

Recent feedback

Include or give greater emphasis to:

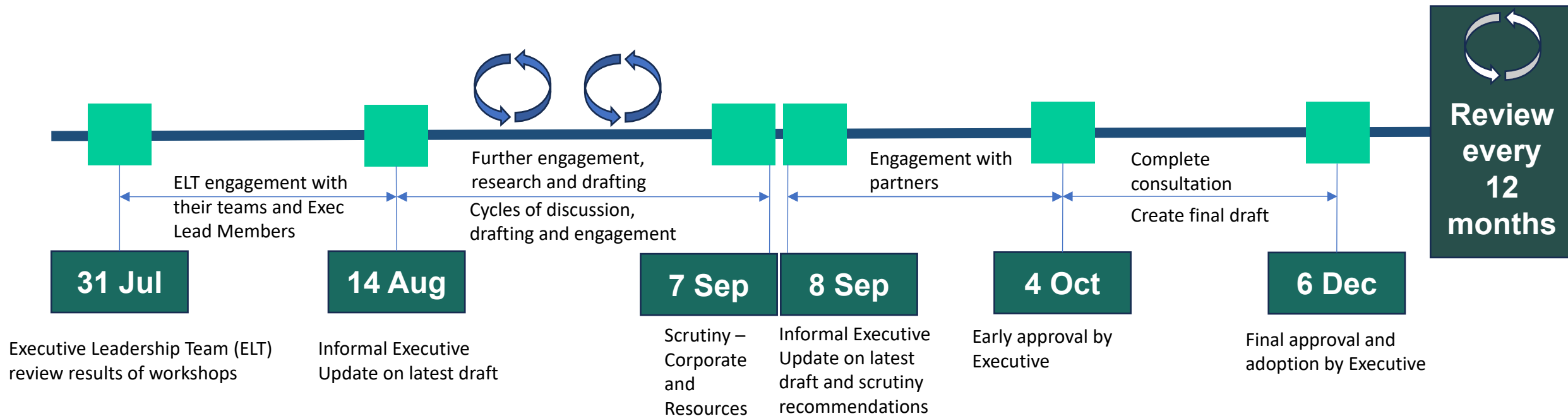
- Our Digital offer
- Active travel
- Environment & climate change – 2030 target
- Ensure doesn't appear to be a 'county council' Plan
- Agility and responsiveness to unexpected challenges
- Support for unpaid carers
- Role of VCFSE sector and communities in defining and delivering the outcomes we seek
- The following outcome covers too much: "People live healthy, independent lives, supported by thriving communities with timely and easy access to high quality and efficient public services when they need them."

Next Steps

1. Continue to develop iterations of the Plan.
2. Feedback to Informal Executive on latest iteration of the Plan, including any comments from Corporate and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
3. Meet with Directors and their teams to identify:
 - Any gaps
 - Their Action Plans
 - How impact will be measured – (measures and targets)
3. Engage with partners and seek feedback
4. Finalise the Plan for early approval by Executive on 4 October 2023.

Timeline*

The Plan is being developed iteratively.



* Committee publication timescales have been taken into account

Discussion

Does the emerging Business Plan capture the key outcomes and areas of focus?

- Is it “on the right track?”
- What could be missing or need changing?
- What outcomes need to be given particular emphasis?
- Which outcomes are you particularly keen to track progress on (and any thoughts on measures /targets)?