

Meeting: Cabinet
Date: 29 July 2024
Classification: Part 1
Key Decision: No
Title of Report: Southend-on-Sea City Council Annual Report 2023-24

Executive Director: Claire Shuter, Executive Director, Strategy & Change
Report Author: Kelly Jenkins, Strategy and Performance Officer,
Corporate Strategy Group

Executive Councillor: Councillor Daniel Cowan, Leader of the Council

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Council's Annual Report 2023/24 is a key document in the policy and accountability framework of local government. It sets out what activity has been delivered to progress the priorities and outcomes detailed in the Council's Corporate Plan. It provides a high-level overview of the past year's successes and achievements, summarises how services are funded and briefly looks to future plans.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council note the achievements, successes and challenges within the Annual Report 2023-24**

3. Background

- 3.1. The Annual Report details how the Council's key achievements have progressed towards the outcomes under each of the Corporate Plan's four corporate priorities. It is set within the context, constraints and opportunities in which the Council is operating in and aligns with the Council's financial year end-report reports and the Annual Governance Statement. The report is an important element of demonstrating our public accountability and provides an opportunity for the Council to build trust through increased transparency in public finances and the delivery of local services.
- 3.2. The Council has delivered many successful outcomes for our residents, business and visitors this year, making significant progress towards the identified priorities.

- 3.3. The Appendix of the Annual Report presents the Council's corporate performance indicators, these are grouped by the four priorities. Of the 27 performance indicators, 10 are on target, 2 are progressing, 15 are failing to meet the target and one where the figure is outstanding. Where indicators are not on track, explanation is given and for many indicators this relates to challenges outside of the Councils' control.
- 3.4. In addition to reporting our successes and performance, the Annual Report also provides a breakdown of how the Council's budget is generated and allocated. This important element of the report highlights the breadth of services managed and delivered and how funding, including Council Tax, is accounted for.
- 3.5. The report also outlines several key aspects which will inform activity over the coming year. This includes a refresh of the city's vision and the development of a vision for our organisation. Both will drive ambition and align aspirations to achieve better outcomes. This section of the report also describes how progression of the Council's Transformation programme will continue to align those ambitions to the ongoing financial challenges the sector faces.

4. Reasons for Decisions

- 4.1. The Annual Report is a key document of the Council's adopted Policy Framework and sets out what has been delivered against the Council's Corporate Plan. Publishing the Annual Report not only provides an opportunity to celebrate collective successes and achievements, but it also delivers an important accountability purpose to our public and local businesses, whose Council Tax and Business Rates fund the activity. It provides an opportunity to build trust through increase transparency about the management of public funds as well as increasing knowledge about the breadth of services the Council delivers and the complex and often difficult decision making that takes place as a result.
- 4.2. This report has been compiled by reviewing key outcomes of the organisation and performance indicators.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The Annual Report summarises key financial data including how budgets are generated and allocated across services.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. The Annual Report is a document of the Council's adopted Policy Framework as set out in the Council's Constitution Article 4.

7. Policy Context

- 8.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 is the principal corporate strategy of the Council. It recognises the Council's primary role in delivering good

quality local government services and sets out areas of focus in three overarching priorities and underpins them with a fourth priority for our organisation. The Annual Report details how the Council's resources have been used to deliver against the Corporate Plan's priorities.

8. Carbon Impact

- 8.1. One of the four Corporate Plan priorities commits the Council to delivering 'A clean city with a resilient environment'. As a key anchor institution in the city, it is important to demonstrate our commitment to this agenda for the future of our residents and valued public spaces. The Annual Report details what activity we have delivered to progress outcomes against this priority.

9. Equalities

- 9.1. The Annual Report details how the Council is delivering against its Public Sector Equality Duty through delivery of its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and improvement plan, as well as evidence of committed activity in support of its identified Equality Objectives.

10. Consultation

- 10.1. The Annual Report explains how the Council's decision making and delivery of service is enhanced in partnership or in consultation with our residents and stakeholders. Examples include traffic calming measures and the election cycle.

11. Appendices

- 11.1. **Appendix 1**: Draft Annual Report 2023-24
11.2. **Appendix 2**: Draft Annual Report 2023-24 – Appendix 1

12. Report Authorisation

This report has been approved for publication by:		
	Name:	Date:
S151 Officer	Joe Chesterton	01.07.24
Monitoring Officer	Susan Ziess	24.06.24
Executive Director(s)	Claire Shuter	10.06.24
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Daniel Cowan	09.07.24