



COTSWOLD

District Council

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY – 01 SEPTEMBER 2025 CABINET - 04 SEPTEMBER 2025
Subject	CORPORATE PLAN - REFRESH 2025-28
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council Email: Mike.Evemy@Cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jane Portman, Chief Executive Officer, Email: jane.portman@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To seek Cabinet's endorsement of a refreshed Corporate Plan for the period 2025 through to 2028. While the extant Corporate Plan was agreed last year, there have been significant changes nationally and locally which are reflected in the refreshed plan.
Annexes	Annex A – Draft Corporate Plan Annex B – Refreshed Action Plan
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: 1. Review the appended Corporate Plan 2025-2028 and agree any modifications 2. Subject to modifications, agree to recommend to Full Council to adopt the Plan. 3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with Leader, to finalise the design.
Corporate priorities	The Corporate Plan determines the Council's Corporate Priorities. The draft attached reaffirms the Council's existing priorities, but adds a further priority, 'Preparing for the future'.
Key Decision	Yes



COTSWOLD
District Council

Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Cabinet, via away days and Informal Cabinet meetings



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report presents a revised Corporate Plan for the Council. The current plan and appended action plan were agreed early in 2024, but given the impending changes to local government structures it is vital to reflect these new challenges, and ensure appropriate political oversight of the Council's direction of travel.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Since the adoption of the current Corporate Plan and Action Plan there have been significant changes to the Council's operating environment. There was a General Election in July 2024, leading to a change in national government. In December, we saw the publication of a revised National Planning Policy Framework – and a significantly increased and mandated housing target. The Government also published the English Devolution White Paper, which alongside proposing Strategic mayoral Authorities, also proposes the end of two tier (County/District) local government, and the establishment of new unitary councils. This is a seismic change for Gloucestershire, and for Cotswold District Council, and will be a major work commitment in the coming years as the Council works with partners to design and establish a successor council.
- 2.2** Locally, the Council has seen the transfer in of services from Publica, and changes in administrative and political leadership. Viewing all these changes collectively, it is appropriate to review the Council's Corporate Plan and agree actions to ensure they reflect this new operating environment.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to set out the Council's Aim and Priorities - these are then elaborated upon with an Action Plan, explaining in detail how these will be met.
- 3.2** The refreshed Corporate Plan, attached at Annex A, builds on the aspirations and achievements of the extant Plan.
- 3.3** This reflects that in broad terms the ambitions of the Council remain consistent with those reviewed in 2024. However, the priorities have been supplemented with a further priority, 'Preparing for the future' which will encompass the Council's transformation programme, to realise savings and service improvements, and work to prepare for Local Government Reorganisation.



- 3.4** The Strategy, and the actions derived from it, also seeks to recognise the finite expected lifetime the Council now has. The Council is working to a timeline of a successor unitary authority being vested on 1 April 2028, and accordingly, Cotswold District Council delivery ceasing on 31 March 2028. The focus is on actions which can be delivered by that date, although there is also a recognition that services should continue with as little disruption or reduction in quality as possible.
- 3.5** For clarity, the refreshed priorities are therefore as follows:
- Preparing for the Future
 - Delivering Good Services
 - Responding to the Climate Emergency
 - Delivering Housing
 - Supporting Communities
 - Supporting the Economy
- 3.6** The importance of these priorities is explained in the strategy and illustrated with examples of the Council's performance against these in recent years. Towards the back of the document, these priorities are expanded into an action table, picking up the detail of actions necessary to deliver these ambitions.
- 3.7** At this stage, Cabinet is recommended to approve the Corporate Plan, including the Action Plan (Annex B) and recommend to Council for adoption. Once the content has been agreed, a design version of the strategy will be prepared, with the aim of bringing the work of the Council to life, and to enhance the accessibility for the casual reader. A delegation to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, will enable a designed version to be finalised promptly following the consideration of the strategy by Council.
- 3.8** Two Cabinet 'Away Days' were held earlier in 2025. These provided an opportunity for Cabinet Members to reflect on both the content of the extant plan and changing circumstances to inform the preparation of the attached document. This work has also been matched by a technical exercise with officers reviewing progress against agreed actions and Cabinet Members' direction to inform the refreshed actions presented.



3.9 The draft plan, as attached, has been shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at their meeting on 1 September. O&S Feedback will be presented at the Cabinet meeting.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Ensuring there is an up-to-date Corporate Plan is key to good governance and helps to ensure appropriate political oversight of the Council's direction of travel.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The attached Corporate Plan provides continuity from the current strategy yet reflects the changed circumstances in which the Council operates. Support by Cabinet will enable the Plan to go forward to Full Council, for its adoption to guide the Council's operations for the period 2025-2028.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None resulting immediately from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None resulting immediately from this report.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 This emerging document identifies the Council's priorities for the coming period, up until 2028. Not replacing the current strategy would leave the Council without an up-to-date Strategy and thus without a clear framework to guide Council decision-making during a period of significant change.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 None arising directly from this report. The Corporate Plan sets the strategic framework for the Council's actions. The decisions on these actions will review equalities impact in full detail.



COTSWOLD
District Council

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1** The Council's declaration of a Climate Change Emergency and an Ecological Emergency remain at the heart of the Corporate Strategy, driving specifically identified actions and informing the delivery of services across the purview of the Council.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

(END)