CORPORATE PLAN 2023-2027 - ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2026/27	
Executive Summary	**This report and accompanying appendix present the 2023 – 2027 Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan for the period April 2026 – March 2027 to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment.**
Options considered	**The actions detailed in the Annual Action Plan have been developed in support of the five themes in the adopted Corporate Plan recognising the increasing pressure on the Council's budget, the moves towards establishing a Combined Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk and Local Government Reorganisation which will change the context in which the District Council operates and works over the next two years, alongside continuing with Business As Usual maintaining service delivery for the district's residents until any proposals for new unitary councils in Norfolk are agreed and put in place.** **The actions proposed seek to balance the capacity of the organisation to deliver, taking into account the staff and financial resources available to the Council, the increased resource and focus required in supporting the transition of services into any new unitary council(s) and the potential to access external funding or partnership resources, with the aspirations laid out in the Corporate Plan.** **In this respect it is recognised that as the process of local government reorganisation moves forward beyond the Government announcing its preferred option for new councils in Norfolk in the next two or three months there will be increasingly less scope for the Council to deliver against the actions proposed in the 2023 – 2027 Corporate Plan as focus and resource needs to shift to establishing the new unitary authority/ies.**
Consultation(s)	**The development of the 2026/27 Annual Action Plan has therefore been later than in previous years. This has been due to the LGR process and the lateness of the Government publishing the 2026/27 local government financial settlement impacting on the setting of the Council's 2026/27 budget.** **The 2026/27 Annual Action Plan has involved internal processes of consultation and engagement with regards to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and preparation of the 2026/27 budget, which was approved by Full Council at its meeting of the 18th February 2026, after discussion by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny processes.**

Recommendations	**That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and as appropriate makes comments on the Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan for 2026/27.**
Reasons for recommendations	**Sound management of the authority's staff, property and financial resources to deliver projects and initiatives which support improved service delivery and positive outcomes aligned to the previously agreed Corporate Plan themes and seeks to position North Norfolk's residents, communities and businesses strongly in the context of proposals to establish a Norfolk and Suffolk Combined Authority and the process of local government reorganisation in Norfolk which will see the establishment of new unitary council(s) in Norfolk in March 2028.**
Background papers	2023 – 2027 Corporate Plan

Wards affected	All
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr Tim Adams, Leader of the Council
Contact Officer	Steve Blatch, Chief Executive Email:- steve.blatch@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel:- 01263 516232

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	This report details the list of actions and proposals the Council proposes taking forward in support of the five Corporate Plan themes in the twelve months April 2026 – March 2027.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	Proposed actions, projects or initiatives will need to give due consideration to the Council's financial position as detailed in finance reports and a revised Medium-Term Financial Strategy and have the necessary resources allocated to them or efficiency savings as identified through the preparation of the 2026/27 budget.
Council Policies & Strategies	See comment under Corporate Plan heading above

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	Yes
Has the public interest test been applied	Yes – there is no private or confidential information to be considered by this report
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	N/A

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 This report and accompanying appendix present the 2023 – 2027 Corporate Plan Action Plan for the period April 2026 – March 2027 to Cabinet for approval.

1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment on the actions to be taken forward through the 2026/27 Annual Action Plan recognising the increasingly challenged financial context in which the Council is operating and the need for the Council to create capacity to support public service reform through the establishment of a strategic combined foundation authority (as a predecessor for a mayoral combined authority) and transition to any new unitary authority/ies proposed by Government through local government reorganisation, alongside maintaining Business As Usual core service delivery.

2. Introduction & Background

2.1 Following the District Council elections held on 4th May 2023, the Council adopted a new Corporate Plan for the four years 2023 – 2027 at its meeting held on 19th July 2023.

2.2 In agreeing the new Corporate Plan and making a positive recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Plan at its 19th July 2023 meeting, the Cabinet meeting of 3rd July 2023 resolved to :-

1. **Agree the content of the draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 as a statement of the Council's intent and ambition for the term of this Council administration.**
2. **Authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree any minor revisions and changes to the final draft of the Corporate Plan document and thereafter the format / design of the document for publication, following adoption by Full Council.**
3. **That Cabinet publishes an Action Plan detailing how the objectives detailed in the Corporate Plan will be delivered / achieved to its November 2023 meeting; and**
4. **Recommended to Full Council that it adopts the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027.**

2.2 In agreeing the Corporate Plan members were advised that, given experience of delivering against the 2019 – 2023 Corporate Plan, where organisational capacity was initially hindered by the need for the Council to develop a local response to the COVID pandemic and subsequently responding to the cost of living pressures experienced in the national economy; there would be some merit in looking to develop an Annual Action Plan of project delivery in each year of the Plan.

2.3 This would allow the Council to respond flexibly to changing circumstances over the four-year lifetime of the Corporate Plan, not least in response to possible changes to the policy framework nationally associated with a General Election which had to be held before January 2025.

2.4 This position has subsequently been confirmed as sound given the significant number of policy announcements made by the incoming Government following the July 2024 General Election across a range of service areas (Planning, Waste, Housing, Local Government Finance) requiring a response from the Council and then the publication of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024. The passage of this legislation through Parliament initially proposed establishing a new strategic mayoral authority for Norfolk and Suffolk (now delayed until the election of a mayor in May 2028, but to be progressed in the meantime through the establishment of a strategic combined foundation authority for the two counties); and the process of local government reorganisation which has taken up much time and capacity over the past twelve months, but is now moving towards a decision from Government and will then require greater resource and focus in establishing the new unitary council/s through transition arrangements, alongside maintaining current service provision.

3. Proposals and Options

3.1 In looking to agree the Annual Action Plan for 2026/27 consideration has been given to the progress made in delivering the objectives and actions in the 2025/26 Action Plan; the status of a number of in-progress projects; and the anticipated Structural Changes Order which will follow on from the Government confirming a new unitary council model of local government in Norfolk and may place restrictions on this council to commence new projects and spending decisions over the next two years.

3.2 Given this context, it has been considered necessary to significantly review our capacity to propose new actions for delivery during the period April 2026 to March 2027.

3.3 This year's Annual Action Plan has therefore been developed to include a scaled back number of actions and commitments reflecting the Council's Corporate Plan for 2023-27, emerging legislative requirements (with respect to review of Local Plan, introduction of food waste service), and a number of actions outlining our readiness for LGR. The attached appendix therefore now outlines a proposed series of actions to be taken forward through an Action Plan covering the period April 2026 – March 2027.

3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is therefore asked to comment the Corporate Plan Action Plan for 2026/27**.**

4. Corporate Priorities

4.1 The outcomes from this report will contribute to the Corporate Plan priorities and reflect the capacity and availability of resources across the Council to support project delivery and positioning of North Norfolk's residents, communities and businesses in the context of any new Strategic Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk and local government reorganisation during the 2026/27 civic year.

5. Financial and Resource Implications

5.1 The proposals made within this report and the Annual Action Plan for 2026/27 reflect the financial resources and capacity issues available to support project delivery and improved working in the 2026/27 civic year

5.2 The Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) has provided the following comments in advising on the preparation of this report:-

Comments from the S151 Officer

The Annual Action Plan for 2026/27 has been prepared to reflect the position the Council finds itself in with regards to Local Government Reorganisation and the financial context the authority is operating within.

The Annual Action Plan includes existing schemes to be delivered through to completion, some "legacy" type projects with respect to the Council's assets so that at transfer to any new unitary authority they are in a good condition and a number of actions specifically related to the Council's preparedness for Local Government Reorganisation

The proposals are sensible in light of the financial position and LGR and the capacity of our staffing resource to deliver "projects" as well as Business As Usual service delivery.

6. Legal Implications and Comments from the Monitoring Officer

No specific legal issues arise regarding this report around the Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan for 2026/27, which takes into account the current financial climate and the capacity issues and challenges that Local Government Reorganisation will bring.

7. Risks

7.1 None as a direct consequence of this report, beyond the uncertainties which exist at present in terms of waiting for the Government's Minded To decision in respect of Local Government Reorganisation.

8. Net Zero Target

8.1 None as a direct consequence of this report, although one of the Corporate Plan's five themes is "our Greener Future" where the issue of Net Zero is a key consideration for and objective of the authority over the lifetime of the Corporate Plan.

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

9.1 None as a direct consequence of this report, although a key theme running through the Corporate Plan is the issue of inclusion and equity – particularly under the themes - Meeting our local housing need; Developing our communities; Investing in our Local Economy and Infrastructure and A strong, responsible and accountable council.

10. Community Safety issues

10.1 None as a direct consequence of this report

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and as appropriate makes comments on the Corporate Plan Annual Action Plan for 2026/27