

---

## **West Sussex County Council Reset Plan**

### **Background and context**

- 1** Our experience of supporting communities through COVID-19 has helped the County Council consolidate and strengthen the progress that had already started. In the first wave of the pandemic, staff were redeployed, partnership working was accelerated, and we have transformed our digital capability, supporting a predominantly remote workforce. As we continue to deal with the ongoing pandemic, we are building on what have done in 2020 and reflecting it in the Reset Plan.
- 2** Although we have made significant progress in key service areas like Children's Services, Fire & Rescue as well as with our corporate governance, we must not forget where we were before the pandemic. We know we needed to change and the good governance project identified key areas for us to focus on, including a commitment to put residents at the heart of everything we do; to create strong and visible collective member and officer leadership; to work closely with partners; to invest in and value our staff; and to make the way we work as straightforward as possible.
- 3** We have demonstrated to ourselves and to others during Covid-19 what we are capable of and the uncompromising commitment of members and our workforce to the residents of West Sussex. We have shown through the co-operation across the health and social care sector and the formation of the community hubs, that we can work well with partners. Things are different already, but we need to keep changing to build on the progress we have made.
- 4** It is vital that the County Council develops an integrated business and financial planning cycle that is based on a good understanding of the local evidence base, the national and local policy context, a comprehensive understanding of the financial position (revenue and capital) and the service challenges in meeting the needs of residents, businesses and communities.
- 5** The Reset process brings together our policy, business, financial planning and risk management processes. It will be the vehicle for the County Council's decision making and planning to ensure we are making the very best use of the resources available, understanding the value for money we deliver and focussed on our priority outcomes. It will also ensure we understand the implications of the tough choices that will need to be made in the face of huge resource and demand challenges and also uncertainty.

### **Principles**

- 6** Given the financial challenge we face and the changing nature of demand on our services, we know we have to reset our priorities now, but we must do it in a way that is collaborative and inclusive. As such, we are developing the plan with staff, partners and members to ensure we go on the journey together and make the plan real and focused on the most important things we all need to do in West Sussex. We must do all of this by making the best use of the funding we have.
- 7** We have been working to a set of principles agreed at full Council in July, which underpin the approach we are taking.

---

**Table 1 - Principles**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>What we are aiming for</b>
1. Led and made in West Sussex reflecting residents, communities and businesses needs and building on our strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan with a sense of identity for West Sussex</li><li>• A plan that is developed and owned by our staff, partners and elected Members</li></ul>
2. Strong learning from our own and others' experiences including COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pausing, listening and reflecting great work we know about</li><li>• Reflecting what our communities need most from us</li></ul>
3. Based in realistic optimism and a sustainable business plan (performance, resources and risks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have a sense of direction and are clear on what we are doing and how we will know we've been successful</li></ul>
4. Held together consistently with a focus on agreed priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan that focuses on the outcomes we want to see for West Sussex and we can say which priority we deliver on and the role WSCC staff play to achieve them</li></ul>
5. Providing clarity about what successful outcomes look like in 12 months' time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have a clear set of measures that everyone understands and will tell us if we've been successful</li></ul>
6. Aligned to the Council's budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan that is affordable and can be delivered within the resources the Council has available.</li></ul>

### **Developing the Reset Plan**

**8** Our approach to developing this first iteration of the Reset Plan has been to involve staff, partners and elected members in the process, and use the research we have already done with residents (including during COVID-19) to reflect what we should focus on and why, and use our learning from the Good Governance Project and improvement activity already taking place across the organisation. This has meant that we have a plan that is being 'led and made in West Sussex' and can be built upon further. The following activities have been part of the process:

- **Workshops with WSCC staff and external partners** – workshops involving the top 100 senior managers in WSCC and more than 50 partners from across West Sussex have provided an opportunity to build a plan that is both reflective of what WSCC will do on its own and in partnership with others
- **Webchat with WSCC staff** – Becky Shaw hosted an online conversation with WSCC staff where staff were able to ask questions and suggest what they thought should be reflected in the plan
- **The Big Exchange** – WSCC staff were able to post ideas and suggestions on what they wanted to see in the plan using an online platform available to all staff
- **Community conversations** – led by the WSCC Communities team, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with voluntary and community sector

- organisations and other local public bodies
- **COVID-19 resident research** – we have used the survey conducted after the first wave of the pandemic to gauge what is important to residents and what needs to be prioritised in the plan
  - **Elected member engagement** - an all-Member session was hosted on 12 November 2020 sharing the first draft of the plan and capturing views on the content of the plan. This was reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 24 November 2020 prior to this further report to the County Council
  - **Scrutiny** - the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee on 3 December is being asked to help set some principles and methods for the scrutiny of the Plan, once it has been approved, and this will be built upon by the other Scrutiny Committees in January by reference to the sections of the plan relevant to their business.

### Reset Plan priorities and delivery outcomes

- 9 The process we have taken has enabled us to iterate the four priority outcomes underpinned by the theme of climate change agreed by full Council in July 2020. Through the engagement we have been able to shape the outcomes we want to see. These are set out in Table 2 below alongside the specific outcomes we want to achieve.

**Table 2 – Reset Plan priorities and outcomes**

Priority	Outcomes we want to achieve
1. Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early help to prevent needs escalating</li> <li>• Support to people when they need it</li> <li>• Independence in later life</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>
2. A sustainable and prosperous economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resetting and rebooting the local economy</li> <li>• Achieving social value in West Sussex</li> <li>• Sustainable growth by developing modern infrastructure</li> <li>• Supporting people to develop the skills they need for the future</li> <li>• A sustainable economy that tackles climate change</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>
3. Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to excellent education and learning</li> <li>• Tackling inequality</li> <li>• Promoting and enabling independence</li> <li>• Safe, connected and cohesive communities</li> </ul>
4. Making the best use of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working together as 'one council'</li> <li>• Getting the best from our people</li> <li>• Maximising our income and the productivity of our assets</li> <li>• Value for money</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>

The draft of the plan **set out at Appendix 1** sets out activities we will undertake

to achieve these outcomes and deliver on the priorities.

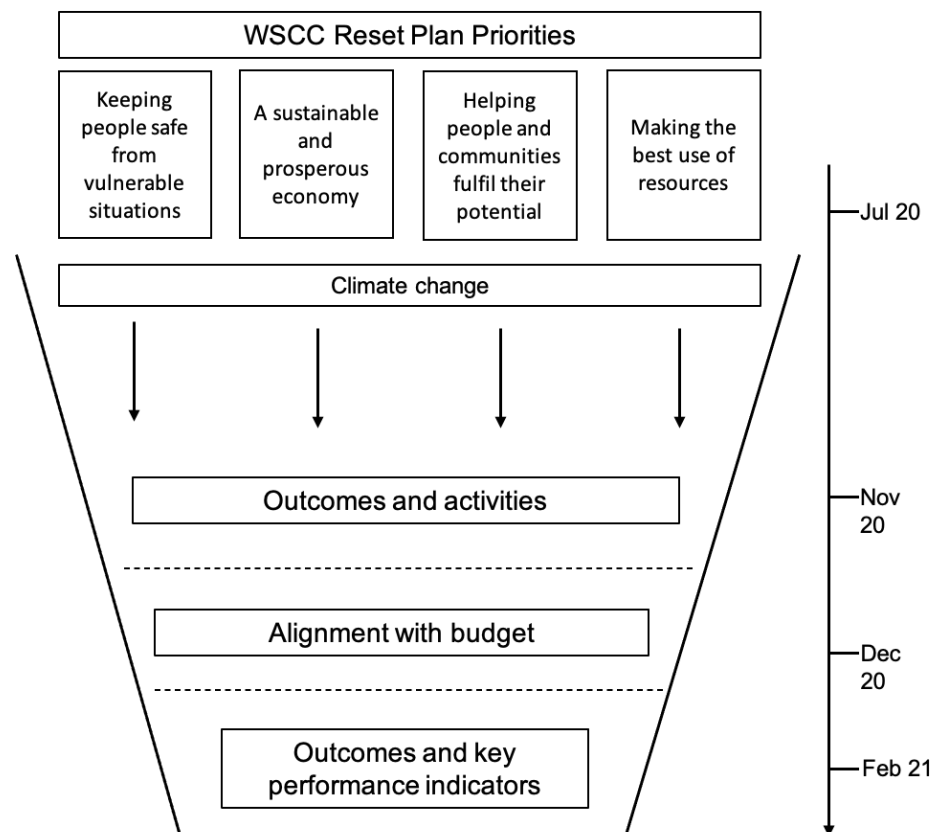
### Iterating the Reset Plan

**10** Over the next two months we will continue iterating the plan. The next set of activities include:

- **All-member engagement** – using the feedback from the all-member workshop on 12 November to update the plan
- **Delivery planning** – planning the activities we are going to undertake in more detail, with timescales and alignment to outcomes and budget
- **Key performance indicators** – development of performance indicators to sit alongside the outcomes and priorities as measures of success
- **Equality impact assessment** – an assessment of how the public sector equality duty will be assured through the implementation of the plan for residents and communities in West Sussex
- **Scrutiny of the plan** – working with the scrutiny committees on methods for effective scrutiny of the delivery of the plan and its performance measures.

**11** Figure 1 below illustrates the process we are taking alongside the high level timescales.

**Figure 1 – the iterative approach to developing the plan**



### Recommended

That the first iteration of the Reset Plan be noted.

**Paul Marshall**

Leader of the Council

---

**Contact Officer:** Becky Shaw, Chief Executive, 033 222 22620

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Draft Reset Plan

**Background papers**

None