

Plus Dane Housing

CORPORATE
PLAN
2021- 24

tackling social
inequality by
enabling individuals
and communities
to thrive





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context

Our 2021-2024 Corporate Plan has been developed against the backdrop of one of the most challenging years in recent history that has resulted in impending financial and economic crisis, ongoing austerity and funding cuts, and rapidly changing government thinking.

The pandemic has shone a spotlight on social injustice and structural inequality; and we recognise the increasing vulnerability of many of our tenants and residents through ageing, health inequality, wellbeing, lower incomes in work (as well as out of it) and the consequences of reductions in services elsewhere.

However in spite of this many communities have shown a desire and capability to come together to look for solutions. Our focus now is to look collectively beyond the challenges to the resulting opportunities and maximise these for the benefit of our tenants and residents. Our role is more important than it has ever been in

providing good quality homes, support and services for those who need them most and building resilience in our communities.

In addition, we must be fully sighted on, and mindful of, the multitude of policy and legislative changes that will come into effect over the next few years such as the Social Housing White Paper, Building Safety Regulator, new Consumer Standards and accountability, and broader issues such as the implications of BREXIT on our supply chain and employment legislation, the enduring economic and societal impact of COVID, and the drive to be carbon neutral by 2050 and any outcomes from COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021 which aims to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.



making sure that our organisation is the best that it can be

by having a positive work culture through authentic leadership, common purpose and shared values, inclusivity, effective engagement and collaboration. A mind-set of innovation encouraged throughout.

commitment to reducing our carbon footprint

through the investment we make in existing homes, design and build of new homes and how we deliver services to benefit our customers. We will remain mindful of how our operations impact on the planet and how actions today around carbon emissions, adaptation, waste and biodiversity will impact positively on climate change and sustainability.

shifting public and political will to effect change

we will work with like-minded partners and stakeholders to build the public and political will to create an imperative for change at every level. We have seen through 2020 a renewed, compassionate focus on what it means to be a just society, and a recognition that many people, trapped by injustice, deserve a better deal than they have been getting. As a social purpose organisation, we will build on this, and help shape a consensus that solving inequality is both right and possible.

gathering insight and shaping local/national policy

we will use our insight to develop meaningful and impactful narratives on priorities that matter to tenants that challenge and support policymakers by working with like-minded organisations.



looking forward

We will continue to respond to the challenges of the pandemic, making sure our recovery is sustainable and supports us in co-creating and implementing our new operating model. Our Board is clear about the roles Plus Dane will play in effecting social change and the direction in which we are heading.

Our refreshed ambition is to



tackle social inequality by enabling individuals and communities to thrive

The principles underpinning how we will do this are:

delivering quality homes and services

this is our core business and for the majority of customers all they want and need - a safe and secure base in a thriving community. We also provide support at times of vulnerability with the aim of achieving

independence wherever possible.

We recognise the homes and services we provide are part of somebody's life journey, and we want to provide homes and services that allow tenants to thrive and progress across a full range of tenures within Merseyside and Cheshire. This will be underpinned by our approach to neighbourhood planning which considers a number of socio-demographic factors.

co-creating solutions

as long-term investors in place we will work with local residents, local authorities, health, third sector organisations and other key partners, to identify innovative and sustainable solutions that drive change and regeneration, and improved health and well-being. Co-creating a 'route map' for communities to enjoy a sustainable future. We will support the creation of an environment in which communities can thrive and our organisation is also able to thrive. To do this we will continue to build relationships with willing partners that are founded on trust, a strong sense of belonging and a shared purpose.



what we will do

Our strategic objectives for 2021/24 are:

1 COVID

to continue to manage, plan and mitigate for the immediate and long-term impact of the pandemic on communities, colleagues and the organisation.

3 locality working

using our insight and planning framework we will work with communities to identify their aspirations and deliver the actions and investment needed to support regeneration and build resilience at a place level; both directly and by working with others.

5 colleague experience

continuing our development of a values-based organisational culture where colleagues are actively engaged in the delivery of Plus Dane's vision and feel valued, fairly rewarded and accountable for their contribution. A shared sense of achievement in making a positive difference.



Each of these strategic objectives are underpinned by robust delivery plans which are monitored by Board & relevant Committees.

2 customer experience

building a mutual understanding on the technological and cultural investment to date, to create with current and future customers an experience that is efficient and responsive, allows choice, and is tailored to individuals and their circumstance. Generating a sense of belonging, that gives a positive value to being a Plus Dane customer.

4 sustainable organisation

delivering a long-term sustainable future achieved through inspiring leadership at all levels, high performance, financial resilience, robust governance and assurance, digital enablement, innovation and strong environmental credentials.



how we will do it

The Way We Work

We are a mission-led organisation and our values drive how we do things right across the organisation. This Corporate Plan will have a keen focus on how we do what we do, with our style and approach being equally as important as what we deliver.

Our values are:



learn and grow

we embrace change

we learn from our experiences

we take pride in developing ourselves and others

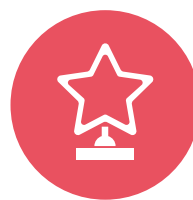


work together

we are one

we share a purpose

we support and are supported



achieve for our customers

we care

we go the extra mile

we create positive experiences for our customers



take ownership

we are decisive

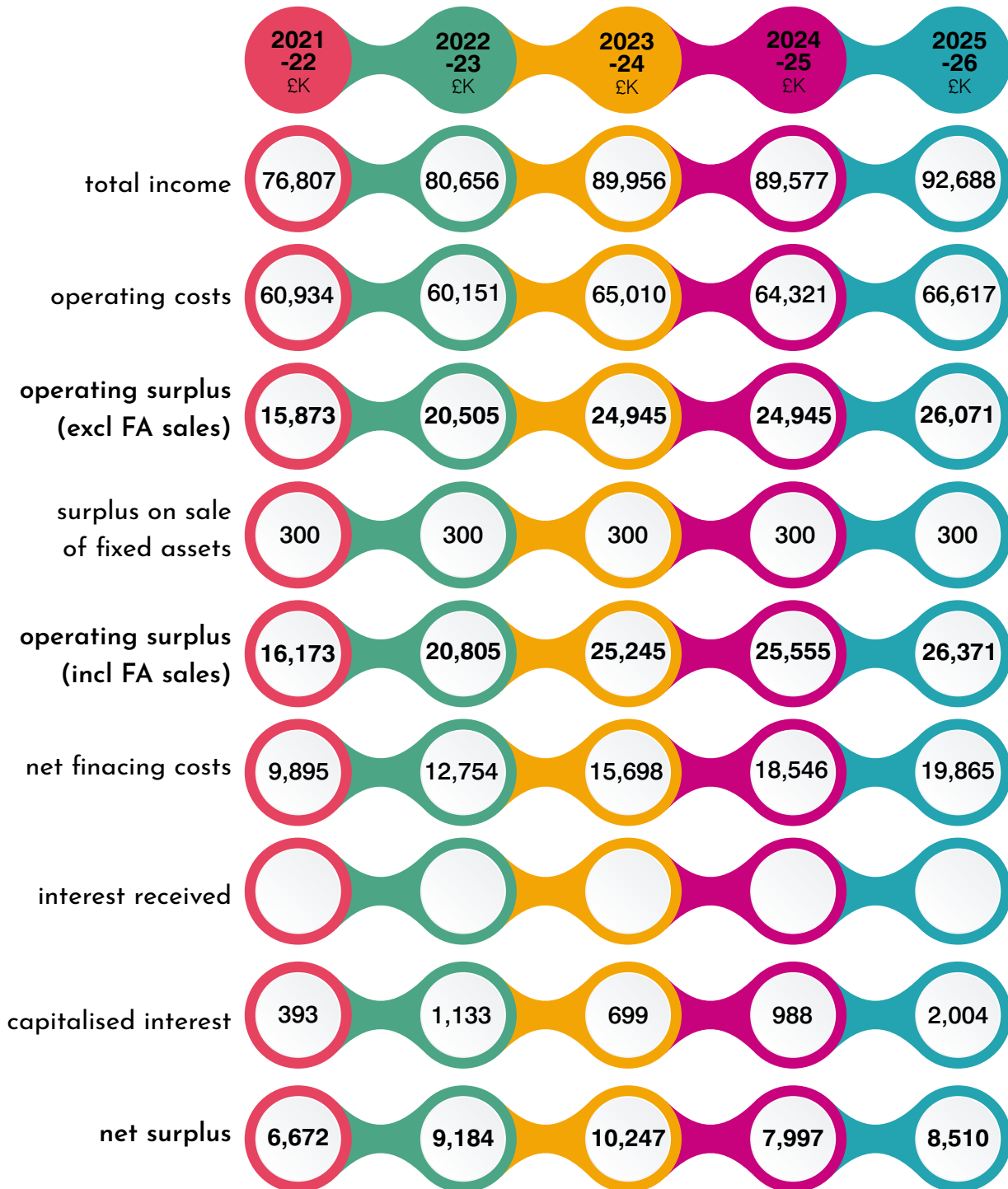
we see things through

we trust and are trusted to do the right thing



our finances

We have a detailed Business Plan to support our ambition. Below is a headline summary. The table below shows the Income and Expenditure account over the next 5 years.



- The growth agenda along with a programme of efficiency gains contributes to the improving net surplus position over the period.
- The planned position continues to support a fully compliant covenants position.

treasury position

the plan includes the delivery of long term fixed rate debt to provide certainty of cost for the funding of the growth programme. The maximum debt level throughout the plan is £620m in 2032. The Gearing ratio is comfortable at 43% demonstrating that the funding is only needed to support the delivery of new homes.

development plan

the plan includes net expenditure on development of £153.8m over the first five years, which allows for the delivery of 1,415 homes.

The plan also includes spend to support the delivery of continued development of 300 homes per annum in years 6 -10. Inclusion of this allows for the planning of longer term funding requirements.

reinvestment plan

the plan includes £531m for reinvestment in existing homes, £68m of which is in the first five years of the plan. We are clear in our commitment to carbon zero and have begun detailed work to assess the level of investment required. This work will include a number of pilots over the next year to identify the right solutions, after which we will factor the full extent into our investment and business plans.

savings delivery

given the ongoing impact of Covid, the approach taken to inclusion of efficiency savings within the plan has been carefully considered and is supported by a robust plan of delivery.

our approach to risk management

Our Board accepts that risk cannot be reduced to zero and to mitigate and manage risk has both resource and cost implications. This risk appetite statement is a critical element of our risk management framework and sets out the level of risk the Board is willing to take in pursuit of our objectives; this is under constant review.

We recognise that through our operations and activities risks may be managed in line with, above or below our risk appetite. Overall our risk appetite is cautious.

However we have a high appetite where this contributes to our social purpose, development of new homes and investment in our existing homes and neighbourhoods.

Our Board places the upmost importance on compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks which govern the business and ensure that we maintain statutory compliance and keeps our colleagues and customers safe. We appreciate a strong reputation attracts staff and partners and builds the trust of our customers, partners, funders and Regulators.

Our strategic risk register, outlined below, is reviewed to ensure that it is an accurate reflection of the business' risk profile in relation to the internal and external operating environment.



strategic risk

mitigation overview

ineffective governance architecture and application of framework

The Board sets Plus Dane's strategic direction as set out in the Corporate Plan. Progress is monitored through four sub-committees with defined Terms of Reference to inform decision making. The Scheme of Delegation, policies, procedures, and forward plan of business make up the remainder of our governance architecture. Its effectiveness is assessed by our Code of Governance. Internal control is exerted through our Risk Management system at a strategic and operational level.

ineffective long term strategic planning

Our business planning cycle marries together Plus Dane's ambitions with our operating environment, which is set within our defined risk appetite to articulate our long-term ambitions. Our finances are managed prudently to ensure resources are allocated efficiently. Our projects team delivers our business change portfolio to ensure the business is equipped to deliver its plans.

inability to appropriately defend and protect the business

Business operations are protected by business continuity arrangements including plans for service disruption, severe weather, and emergencies. A suite of policies set out our probity infrastructure. Data security is managed through our cyber security arrangements and Data Protection Office and there are disaster recovery arrangements in place. This is all set against intelligence gathered through constant horizon scanning and threat detection.



strategic risk

mitigation overview

finances are not managed

Our finances are stress tested against a range of adverse scenarios to ensure Plus Dane's ongoing viability and our core financial controls protect Plus Dane's financial assets against loss and fraud. We have an operating model designed to deliver productivity and efficient service delivery. Budgets are set and reported in a timely manner. Treasury management ensures Plus Dane has the available cash to meet its obligations. Contracts are procured through our specialist team to deliver value for money.

ineffective leadership through change

The strategic direction of the business is communicated regularly and clearly through weekly CEO messages in addition to the corporate plan. Individual contributions and performance are managed through the PDR and 121 process and underpinned by a proactive coaching culture. Feedback mechanisms are in place, including pulse surveys, to triangulate and follow up on colleague sentiment.

failure to provide homes or services that meet the requirements of our customers, market or support our business objectives

We consistently seek tenant feedback through formal and informal mechanisms including Plus Dane Voices, our scrutiny panel and service specific transactional surveys. The Executive Management Team are members of key influencing groups in the areas in which we operate including the Liverpool City Region and Cheshire. We have a range of strategies to deliver core services for tenants, including those who are vulnerable. Plus Dane's social purpose is reinforced by our culture and values.



 **strategic risk**

 **mitigation overview**

**not maximising
or optimising all
available income**

We have a dedicated income team that manages both current and former tenant arrears. We have developed services providing opportunities to employment and skills training, supported third sector organisations in tackling food poverty and digital isolation and established a floating support to help those in need to maximise their incomes and sustain their tenancies.

**breaching
regulation and/
or legislation**

Our assurance team manage corporate compliance with regulation and core legislation. The finance team manage statutory compliance in our accounts. Our health and safety team manage the safety of our staff. Our compliance team manage our properties to ensure compliance with key standards including fire safety.

**ineffective
management
of data quality
and integrity**

A dedicated cross-functional data accuracy group oversees data management and quality across all areas of Plus Dane. Our IT systems are designed to create one version of the truth, which is accurate and accessible at the point of need.

 **strategic risk**

 **mitigation overview**

ineffective identification and management of safety & compliance obligations

Our compliance against the Big 6 areas of property safety is managed through our compliance team. This is underpinned by robust data. Much of the testing and remedial work is done in house, with a contractor in place to manage extra demand. Performance is closely monitored, and internal audit carried out to identify and correct any control weaknesses.

inability to retain or attract talent at board and staff level

Our Terms and Conditions have been reviewed to ensure they are competitive to retain and attract talent. The work environment and colleague experience are driven by our values and behaviours framework. We have a significant wellbeing offer to ensure that we support our colleagues when they need it.



how we know how we are doing

We measure and monitor our performance at an organisational, operational and place based level.

At an organisational level we will measure success through the lenses of:

customer experience

strength of advocacy from those who live in our homes and use our services

financial health

gauges operating effectiveness, solvency and profitability

business effectiveness

considers value for money and how well we deliver services

colleague experience

recognition as a good employer

The scorecard below shows the metrics that we use to assess each aspect and is monitored by Board; these are underpinned through a combination of operational metrics that are monitored through our sub-committees.

financial health

- 1 Turnover
- 2 Operating Margin
- 3 Net Surplus
- 4 Gearing
- 5 Efficiency gains

customer experience

- 1 Customer net promoter score
- 2 Customer effort score
- 3 Tenancy turnover - 24 months
- 4 Views are listened to and acted upon
- 5 VfM measurement - good value from rent and service charge

business effectiveness

- 1 Homes occupancy rate and tenancy turnover
- 2 Income collection
- 3 Complaints upheld
- 4 Safe homes compliance
- 5 Decent homes

colleague experience

- 1 Employee net promoter score
- 2 Absence percentage
- 3 Employee turnover
- 4 Colleagues feel their views are listened to and acted upon
- 5 Colleagues understand what Plus Dane is working to achieve



Our success measures at a locality level will be agreed jointly with stakeholders and aligned to the nature of the work involved. These will be outcome focused and monitored by our Neighbourhood Committee and Property Committee.

assurance

Our approach to assurance ensures that Board has a holistic view of the organisation in terms of performance, programme delivery, and risk management providing a clear line of sight through performance measures derived from the Corporate Plan priorities and aiding improved decision making based on reliable information.

We report quarterly performance to the Board and its committees with the Executive Management team receiving a monthly report detailing performance against the full suite of indicators, overlaid with financial performance.

The Plus Dane scorecard indicators have been agreed with the Board and

identified as the critical measures of success for the Corporate Plan. Within each Committees' terms of reference it is clear which aspects of performance and delivery they are responsible for scrutinising.

The system of internal control is designed to provide the Board with reasonable but not absolute assurance that risks are identified on a timely basis and dealt with appropriately; that assets and people are safeguarded; that proper accounting records are maintained; and that the financial information used within the business or for publication is reliable. In addition we recognise the importance of providing transparent assurance across all main stakeholders.

We have a number of arrangements in place that comprise the overall internal control framework that is used to provide Board Members with assurance about the adequacy of this framework.