

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 18 FEBRUARY 2020

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CORPORATE PLAN

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

**MEMBER PRESENTING: COUNCILLOR DONALD DAVIES
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

KEY DECISION: NO

REASON:

N/A – Council decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council approves the attached Corporate Plan and authorises officers to finalise the document for publication.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report presents the draft new Corporate Plan and summarises the views of residents, staff and stakeholders gathered through the consultation.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan is the Council's key overarching strategic document setting out what the Council aims to achieve for local people and the area over the medium term. A good quality Corporate Plan serves to:
- Communicate the Council's vision to key partners and stakeholders, including staff, partner organisations, businesses and contractors;
 - Ensure that effort and resources are aligned and focused on agreed priorities, thereby increasing the chance of success;
 - Promote accountability by setting clear and measurable goals against which performance can be assessed; and
 - Inform plans and objectives at all levels, through Directorate, Service and Team Plans, down to individual staff objectives.
- 2.2 The existing Corporate Plan covered the period 2015-2019 and is therefore due for replacement. The elections in May 2019 led to a new partnership

administration for North Somerset with new priorities for the area, strengthening the need for a new Corporate Plan.

3. DETAILS

- 3.1 The Plan sets out a new vision: an open, fairer, greener North Somerset, and three aims for the next four years:
- A thriving and sustainable place;
 - A council which empowers and cares about people; and
 - An open and enabling organisation
- 3.2 Each aim has a set of priorities and a high-level plan of what the Council will do to achieve the priorities over the next four years, and how success will be measured. There is also a section summarising the context and evidence which have shaped the Plan.
- 3.3 The Executive approved the high-level content of the plan – the draft vision, aims and priorities - at its meeting in in October 2019, and approved the draft text of the full document for consultation at its meeting on 7 January 2020.
- 3.4 Design work has been done to make sure the draft is readable. Once the Plan has been approved by Full Council the design will be finalised. It will be published in electronic rather than hard copy form.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There has been extensive engagement and consultation with residents, staff, and other stakeholders, including town and parish councils and partner organisations.
- 4.2 The outcome of the first phase of consultation and engagement was summarised in the report to Executive on 7 January. This phase comprised:
- Focus groups with small groups of residents held in Portishead, Worle, Nailsea and Weston-super-Mare;
 - four interactive sessions open to all council staff. Over 500 staff attended and the presentation was shared online with staff who were unable to attend an event in person;
 - A session for all members hosted by the Corporate and Community Organisation Policy and Scrutiny Panel on 13 November; and
 - Consideration by the Council's Equalities Scheme Implementation Group, made up of stakeholders from organisations for people from various groups, such as older people, people with disabilities, black and ethnic minority residents and the LGBT community.
- 4.3 The second phase was an online consultation about the full document. The consultation was delayed by the General Election, and associated pre-election restrictions, but opened ahead of the Executive meeting in order to

maximise the time for people to respond. New functionality in the council's online platform e-consult was used to make the consultation more attractive and accessible, and it was widely publicised through social media, stakeholder newsletters and direct emails.

- 4.4 The online consultation opened on the 17th of December and ran until, the 17th of January. There were a total of 193 online responses, including 12 from organisations. In addition, several organisations or local councils sent their comments by email. Email responses are included in the qualitative analysis but not the quantitative summary. A detailed summary of the responses is included with this report at appendix one but some of the main points are highlighted below.
- 4.5 There are two important caveats to bear in mind. Firstly, the number of residents who took part in the consultation represents only a very small proportion of the population (around one in a every two thousand residents). Secondly the respondents were disproportionately in older age groups, particularly those aged 50-70. Nonetheless this is a significant increase on similar exercises in the past.
- 4.6 Overall the vision was positively received with, 66% of responses agreeing, or strongly agreeing that the vision is right for North Somerset, with 18% disagreeing, or disagreeing strongly. Similarly, the vast majority (73%) agreed the aims were right for North Somerset, with only 10% disagreeing.
- 4.7 The questionnaire also sought free text answers. These gave a wide range of opinions, from those who were extremely positive about the plan, to those who were highly critical, or sceptical that the council would deliver on its commitments. There were many other specific comments about particular issues or priorities. Some clear themes in the free text responses were:
- Concern about the scale and location of housing development and whether it is consistent with being 'green' or sustainable;
 - Many feel infrastructure should be provided before more development occurs;
 - Many raised lack of public transport, particularly at weekends or in evenings;
 - For some the overriding priority is to minimise taxes and charges;
 - Although many like the vision and aims others see them as 'buzz words' or jargon
- 4.8 There were also a number of comments about current issues, in particular parking and charging for garden waste. The vast majority of these comments were against charging for garden waste or concerned about the impact of parking charges on shops.
- 4.9 Some partner and stakeholder comments were made through the online questionnaire but several emailed or wrote directly, either in addition to or instead of online responses. The most substantial comments from partner organisations and local councils are highlighted below.

- 4.10 Weston College, whilst welcoming the priorities, felt that the plan underplays the skills agenda, and does not reflect the importance of the College in delivery of education, including for special educational needs and the wider skills agenda.
- 4.11 The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner made helpful suggestions to better reflect the importance of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and the partnerships in place to achieve this.
- 4.12 Weston Town Council supported the document but would like it to go further in committing to devolve services to towns and parish councils where practical. This needs further consideration and discussion with other towns and parishes.
- 4.13 Wrington Parish Council's response focused largely on the proposed expansion of Bristol Airport which they strongly oppose.
- 4.14 Bristol Airport's response supported the vision and aims. They stated that the challenge of climate change is rightly highlighted but cautioned against local action on issues like aviation emissions which they believe are better tackled on a national and international basis.
- 4.15 Clevedon Town Council welcomed the broad aims of the Corporate Plan but made a number of comments. They welcome more joint initiatives with local councils, but stress the need to consult towns and parishes before taking any decisions. In general, they consider the plan to be too focused on Weston-super-Mare with insufficient reference to other towns and villages. They would like to see a longer-term vision and a clear explanation of the approach to be taken in light of the Planning Inspectorate's criticism of the Joint Strategic Plan. Other comments included the view that there is insufficient promotion and integration of both social and affordable housing across the district, and a lack of clarity about the difference between these types of housing.
- 4.16 Banwell Parish Council emphasised the importance of the Banwell bypass, and also of local bus services.
- 4.17 Voluntary Action North Somerset emphasised changing needs within communities and pressure on voluntary and community organisations to support residents. They also stressed the importance of the council recognising this and prioritising support to these partners.
- 4.18 Given the positive overall response to the plan, wholesale changes have not been made. However, many improvements have been made informed by the consultation. These include:
- Redesigning the 'plan on a page' to incorporate the values and make the relationship between the vision and priorities clearer;
 - Ensuring that the success measures and milestones in the action plans are all clear and specific;

- Strengthening the actions on working jointly with the police to ensure safer communities;
- Amending wording to strengthen coverage of the skills agenda;
- Recasting the equalities section, emphasising accessibility and explicitly identifying equalities objectives;
- Strengthening the wording on working with town and parish councils and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations;
- Updated wording on the Local Plan following the Council's decision to withdraw the Joint Spatial Plan; and
- Numerous minor textual amendments and corrections.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The new Corporate Plan has been developed alongside a comprehensive refresh of the four year Medium Term Financial Plan. It is essential that these plans are consistent and complementary, because otherwise the commitments in the Corporate Plan will not be deliverable.

Costs

- 5.2 The direct costs of developing the Corporate Plan are low and mainly in the form of staff time. The cost of new commitments has been considered alongside the resources available to the Council in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Funding

- 5.3 The budget proposals for 2020/21 include provision for new priorities in the Corporate Plan. These include:
- A more generous Council Tax Support Scheme supporting low income residents;
 - Funding for early intervention and prevention in children's services;
 - Increased support for foster carers;
 - Investment to deliver the cultural strategy; and
 - Investment to enhance consultation and engagement.
- 5.4 The Corporate Plan also seeks to maximise resources available, whether through efficiency, income generation or demand management. Key priorities in this context include:
- Manage our resources and invest wisely;
 - Engage with and empower our communities;
 - An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
 - A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children to achieve their full potential;
 - Embrace new and emerging technology; and

- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is no statutory duty to produce a Corporate Plan but a good quality and well implemented Corporate Plan can help the Council to carry out the full range of its functions effectively.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Corporate Plan can be an important vehicle to help deliver the Council's response to the climate emergency.

- 7.2 Making North Somerset greener is integral to the Council's proposed vision and, under the theme of 'a thriving and sustainable place' the draft priorities include:

- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030; and
- A transport network which promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 If the council lacked a clear statement of its vision and objectives it would struggle to perform well and to demonstrate that it was doing a good job on behalf of local people. A good quality and up to date Corporate Plan should substantially mitigate this risk.

- 8.2 The draft Corporate Plan has been informed by assessment of the council's strategic risks and opportunities, and will help to direct risk management effort by identifying the key priorities and projects of the council.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The proposed vision of a fairer North Somerset is consistent with the council's obligations under the Equality Act to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Encourage good relations between groups.

- 9.2 The new administration is determined to tackle the disparities in opportunities and outcomes between individuals and areas within North Somerset, and reducing these is proposed as an explicit priority. The plan therefore has the potential to have a positive impact from an equalities point of view.

- 9.3 An equality impact assessment of the draft plan has been completed. This identified that the Plan should have a positive impact on all equalities groups,

reflecting the vision of a fairer North Somerset. Specific priorities and initiatives are aimed at reducing social and health inequalities, enhancing provision for children with special educational needs, and enabling more children to fulfil their potential. The scope for positive impact on some groups is therefore assessed as greater, specifically:

- People on low incomes
- Children and young people
- People with disabilities; and
- People who are in poor health, or more likely to suffer poor health

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Corporate Plan is an important tool to help align effort across the organisation and ensure that services are all pulling in the same direction. It does this by communicating the vision and priorities and providing the framework for service, team and individual planning, and performance management. A 'golden thread' should run through from the Corporate Plan to each member of staff's objectives.
- 10.2 The Plan also helps to inform other key strategies and plans, whether council documents or those of our partners and partnerships. These documents vary widely in purpose, scope, degree of statutory prescription and time horizon. The Corporate Plan does not replace these other documents but it should shape them whenever they are being updated.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 There is no formal requirement to have a Corporate Plan and the Council could choose not to have one.
- 11.2 This option is not recommended because without a clear statement of what the Council is trying to achieve for the area and for local people it would be very difficult to hold the Council properly to account for its performance. It would also be much more difficult to ensure that resources and effort are effectively prioritised and aligned across the organisation.
- 11.3 The Council has, of course, complete discretion over the content of the Corporate Plan and could choose a different vision or ambitions for the area, or a different programme of projects and initiatives.

AUTHOR

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APPENDICES

Consultation Report
Draft Corporate Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Corporate Plan 2015-2019
Report to Executive 24 October 2019
Report to Executive 7 January 2020
Equality Impact Assessment

Consult North Somerset



Corporate Plan
consultation



Jan 2020

Background

- New Corporate Plan in development from summer 2019
- Plan will run from 2020 to 2024 and sets out the vision, aims and priorities for the area and the council as an organisation
- Draft plan went out for consultation from 17/12/2019 to 17/01/2020
- The consultation ran on eConsult (online platform) with an open invitation to residents, local organisations, partners and business through our website and social media. Direct comms were also out to town and parish councils
- During the consultation period we received 193 responses
- In addition several organisations and local councils sent responses by email without answering the questionnaire.

The vision

Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset

Fair

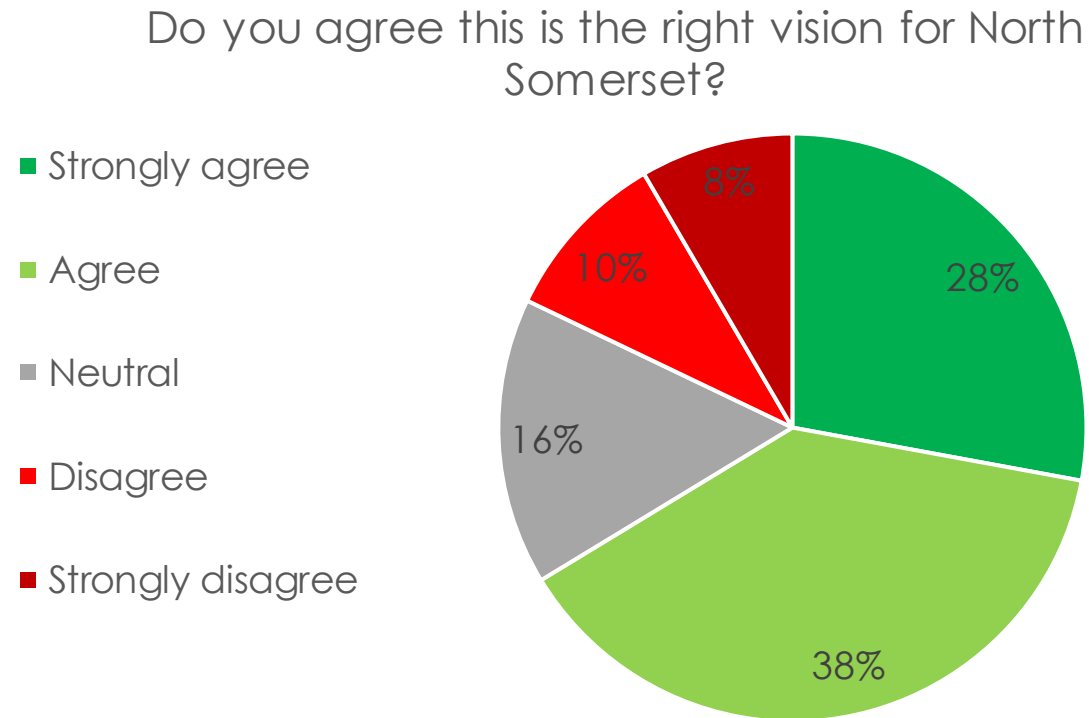
We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone

Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development

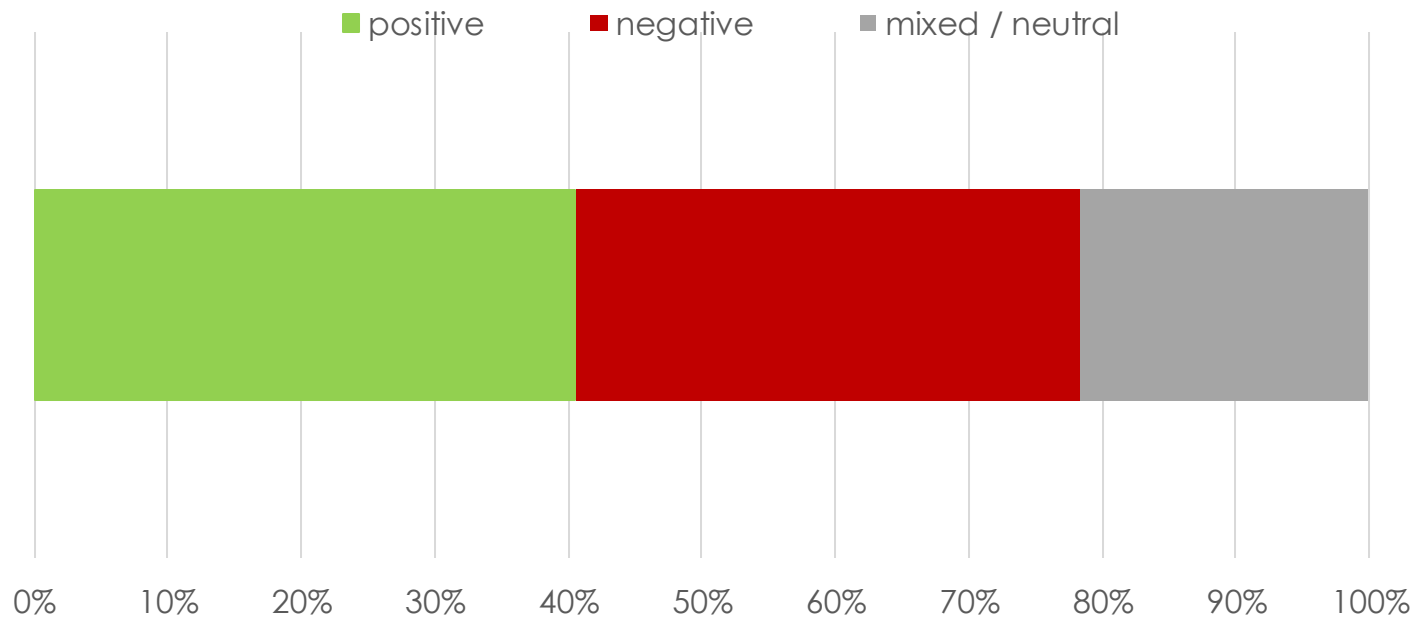
The vision - agreement

- 66% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that this is the right vision for North Somerset
- 16% of respondents were neutral
- 18% did not agree it is the right vision for North Somerset.



The vision - comments

- 106 comments were given on the vision
- 41% of comments were positive
- 38% were negative
- The rest were neutral or mixed i.e. they included positive, negative and/or neutral elements.



The aims

A thriving and sustainable place

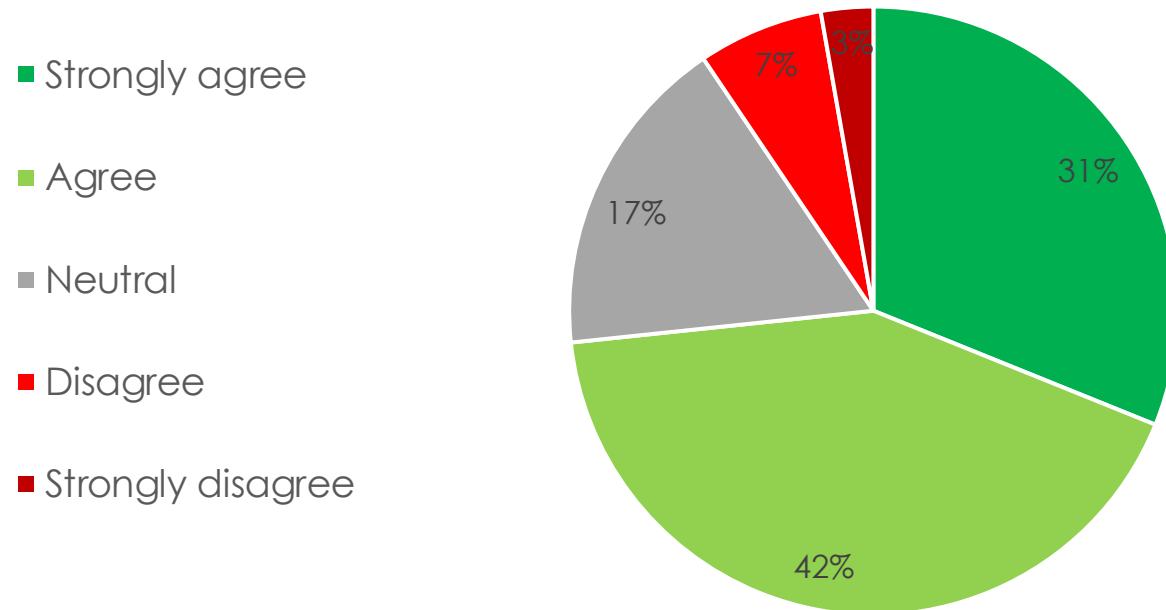
A council which empowers and cares about people

An open and enabling organisation

The aims - agreement

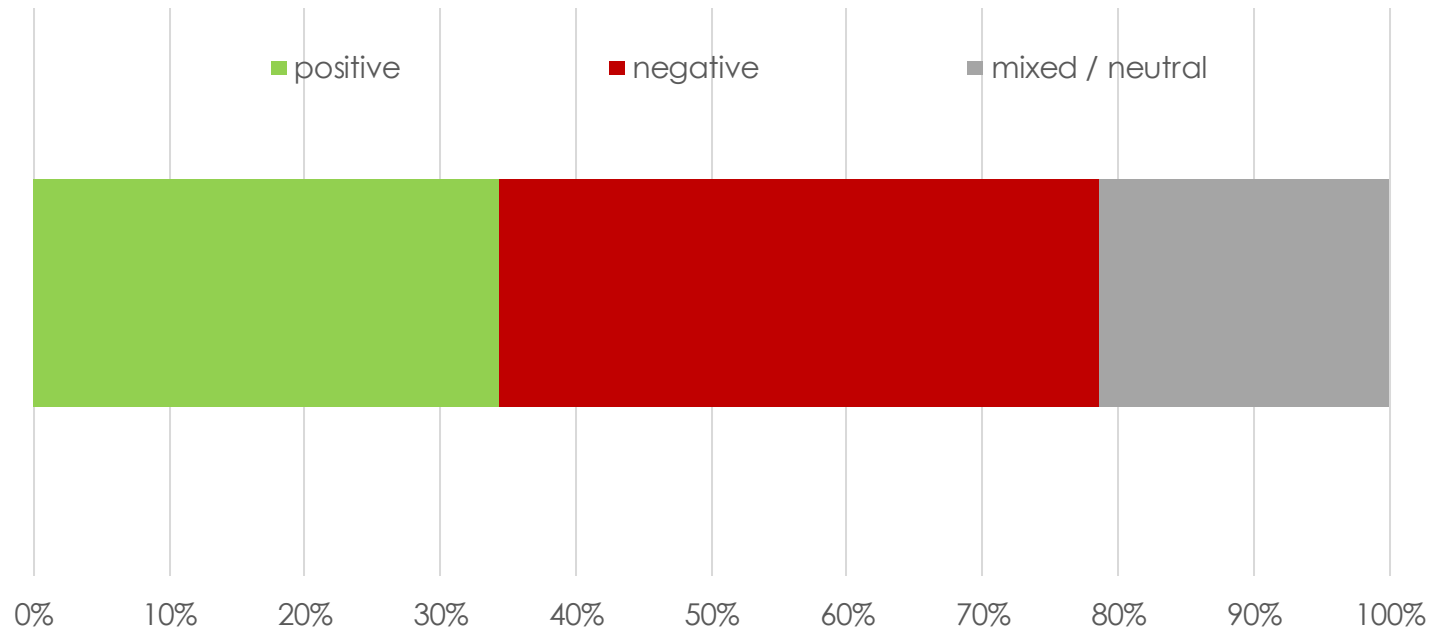
- 73% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that these are the right aims for North Somerset
- 17% of respondents were neutral
- 10% did not agree that these are the right aims for North Somerset.

Do you agree these are the right aims for North Somerset?



The aims - comments

- 70 comments were given on the aims
- 34% of comments were positive
- 44% were negative
- The rest were neutral or mixed i.e. they included positive, negative and/or neutral elements.



A thriving and sustainable place

A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- A transport network which promotes active and low carbon travel
- An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth
- A broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability

Scoring

Priorities for 'a thriving and sustainable place' were scored by respondents from least to most important

Most important priorities (scored 5) were:

- *A great place to live, work and visit*
- *Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods*
- *To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030*

As multiple scorings were used most priorities were given an 'important' score (score 4 or 5) by a high proportion of people suggesting broad support across the range.

A council which empowers and cares about people

A council which empowers and cares about people

- A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
- A focus on tackling inequalities and improving outcomes
- A community which promotes learning and employment opportunities
- A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential

Scoring

Priorities for 'a council which empowers and care about people' were scored by respondents from least to most important

Most important priorities (scored 4) were:

- *A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities*
- *A community which promotes learning and employment opportunities*

As multiple scorings were used most priorities were given an 'important' score (score 3 or 4) by a high proportion of people suggesting broad support across the range.

An open and enabling organisation

As an open and enabling organisation, we will

- Engage with and empower our communities
- Manage our resources and invest wisely
- Embrace new and emerging technology
- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation
- Make the best use of our data and information
- Provide professional, efficient and effective services
- Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

Scoring

Priorities for ‘an open and enabling organisation’ were scored by respondents from least to most important

Most important priorities (scored 6) were:

- *Provide professional, efficient and effective services*
- *Manage our resources and invest wisely*
- *Engage with and empower our communities*

As multiple scorings were used most priorities were considered important (score 5 and 6) by a high proportion of respondents and there seems to be fairly broad support across the range.

Comments

Overall comments on the vision and aims

Many were positive

- *'Transparent and listening administration, reducing inequalities and responding to the challenge of climate change are absolutely the right priorities.'*
- *'If we are a thriving, sustainable community with a council that empowers and cares as well as being open, I don't think as a lifelong Weston resident I could ask for more.'*

But some disagree

- *'They are bland enough statements to ensure virtually universal acceptance.'*
- *'I'd much rather you stopped wasting your time, and our money, on these 'initiatives' and worked to reduce council tax charges please.'*

Concerns about delivery

- *'It will only work if you really listen to people and understand their issues.'*
- *'The vision is good, the implementation is where conflict will arise.'*
- *'There is nothing to disagree with such a vision, but it may be ambitious.'*
- *'Your Aims as expressed above are ideal! MAKE IT HAPPEN!'*

Comments on priorities

Some want more emphasis on the environment and climate change...

- *'The key aims are good, however, considering the climate emergency that is upon us the priorities need to shift so that Green is the primary objective.'*
- *'Protecting our environment and driving sustainable development should be our number 1 priority.'*

Others less...

- *'Balance is wrong. When individuals and families are suffering financially, socially and medically the priority should be to enhance their daily quality of life. Climate change etc is all well and good but the emphasis should be on health, education, welfare and gainful employment.'*
- *'Carbon neutral - get on with the day job first!'*

Priorities to change or add

- *'A broad range of new homes, etc. These already exist. What is required is a greater number of affordable homes for young people & new families, i.e.: on low incomes!*
- *'It would be nice to see more done for disabled children , most in unsuitable homes and part of a financially struggling family like my son .Also with so many children needing support more placements in specialist schooling would be welcomed.'*
- *'Your number one priority needs to be social care and making North Somerset a Dementia Friendly Community.'*
- *'Lower taxes. Obviously good for everyone. Let us decide how to spend our hard earned.'*

Demographics

Of those that answered these demographic questions (around 150 respondents)

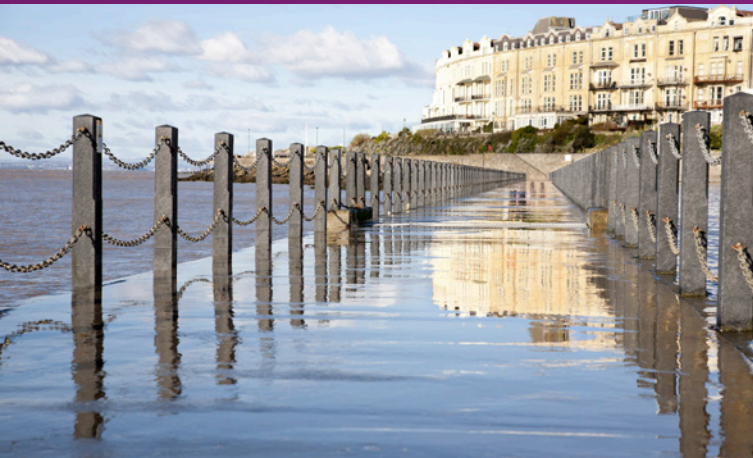
- 94% individuals, 6% organisations
- 97% North Somerset residents
- BS20, BS21, BS22, BS23, BS24, BS25, BS40, BS41, BS48, BS49 and BS8 postcodes
- 59% male, 39% female
- 6% under the age of 30, 48% aged 30-59 and 46% aged 60 plus.
- 12% disabled
- 98% ethnicity of 'white British, Irish or other

Please note, we do not have a representative or statistically significant sample of our residents from this survey. Comments quoted have been selected to give an overall sense of the responses and should not be read as comprehensive or representative.

North Somerset

CORPORATE PLAN 2020-24

FINAL DRAFT FOR APPROVAL



An open, fairer, greener North Somerset



OUR VISION An open, fairer, greener North Somerset

Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset.

Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.

Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

Our priorities

A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- A transport network which promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel
- An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth
- A broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability

A council which empowers and cares about people

- A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
- A focus on tackling inequalities and improving outcomes
- Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities
- A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential

An open and enabling organisation

- Engage with and empower our communities
- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation
- Manage our resources and invest wisely
- Embrace new and emerging technology
- Make the best use of our data and information
- Provide professional, efficient and effective services
- Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

Our values

We act with
INTEGRITY

We
RESPECT
each other

We
INNOVATE

We
CARE

We
COLLABORATE

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FOREWORD

BY COUNCILLOR DON
DAVIES LEADER OF NORTH
SOMERSET COUNCIL

We are living through a period of great change locally, nationally and indeed globally. Whilst the global economy grew in the last decade, the impact has been variable across our communities. Some of our residents have seen a fall in their living standards and we have responded by targeting our reducing resources on our most vulnerable residents.

We have reached a tipping point in tackling climate change, which this council is committed to address by not only declaring a climate emergency, but also developing an action plan.

Whilst technology is transforming **how** we live, we also need to focus on shaping **where** we live as our High Streets change and the need for housing and employment land increases.

We want to maximise the things which make North Somerset such a great place to live whilst tackling the big and urgent issues, like climate change, reducing inequalities and how we engage more effectively with our residents.



The results of the local elections in May 2019 brought change. No single party now has a majority on the council and many new councillors were elected. Four political groups – Independents, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Greens have formed a new partnership administration. This means working together across party boundaries for the benefit of our residents.

This is a new style of local government for North Somerset and it means working in new ways. We are determined to be more transparent about what we are doing and why, and to involve residents much more in tackling issues together.

We also want to strengthen our partnerships with local businesses, voluntary organisations, Town and Parish Councils and other public services like Health to improve outcomes despite tight budgets.

This Plan sets out our shared vision for North Somerset together with an ambitious set of priorities backed by realistic action plans. It will help us to make the right choices over the next four years, and begin to tackle our long term challenges.

ABOUT THE PLAN

The Corporate Plan is the council's overarching strategic document. It is the only plan which covers the full range of the council's responsibilities and is an important tool to help focus our effort and resources on the right things. This is even more important in the context of constrained budgets and rapid change.

By prioritising a clear set of commitments the Corporate Plan also helps residents to hold the council to account for its performance and challenge it to improve.

The Corporate Plan informs other key strategies and plans, whether council documents or those of our partners. These documents vary widely in purpose, scope, and time horizon. The Corporate Plan does not replace these other documents but it should shape them whenever they are being updated.

Good strategic planning also means aligning financial and service planning. This plan has developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan, and will be signed off alongside the budget by the full Council.



CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The views of residents, staff and other stakeholders have been sought to help shape this Plan. The first phase of engagement included a series of focus groups for residents held in different locations around North Somerset, and internally a series of council staff engagement sessions.

These activities helped shape the draft plan which was published for consultation. The vast majority of responses were positive about the plan overall whilst making detailed comments and suggestions. Improvements have been made in light of these comments.

BASELINE, OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

A good plan depends on a realistic appraisal of our starting point and a thorough analysis of the context. A wide ranging data analysis was conducted in preparing this plan. The headlines are set out below.

A more detailed summary of the key issues and evidence follows at the end of the plan.

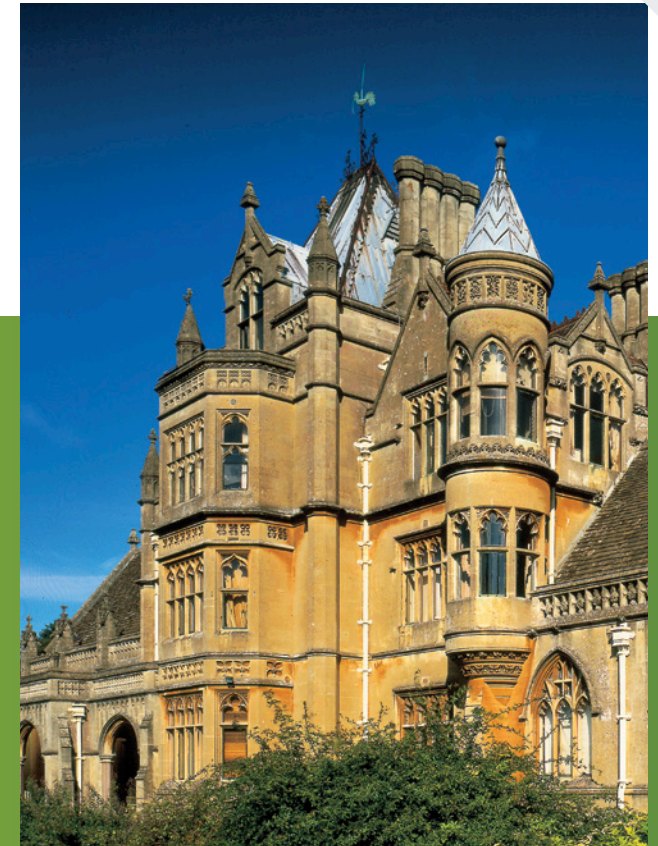


DRAFT



OPPORTUNITIES

- **A great location** - strategically positioned close to Bristol and Bath and the M4 corridor, whilst enjoying the benefits of beautiful countryside and coast. North Somerset is well connected nationally and internationally with the airport, port, the M5 and direct trains to Paddington, South Wales, the Midlands and the South West
- **Weston-super-Mare** - our largest town is set to become the second biggest settlement in the West of England over the next decade. Opportunities include the University Centre, Enterprise Area, Food Works and the developing arts, culture and heritage scene.
- **Natural assets** - North Somerset has some wonderful natural assets including part of the Mendip Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 39 sites of Special Scientific Interest and 25 miles of coastline.
- **Learning and skills:** The area has a high proportion of good or outstanding schools (94% as of 2019), and an outstanding College providing further and higher education.
- **Communities** – North Somerset has a variety of different communities, ranging from large Towns to villages and rural settlements. There is a network of formal and informal community groups which together provide an enormous range of activities and services.
- **Digital revolution** – new and emerging technologies are bringing opportunities to rethink how services are provided and make better use of data.
- **Business investment** – attracting businesses to continue to invest in the area, to provide more and better paid local jobs, and promote sustainable growth in sectors like the green economy, food and drink and the visitor economy.



- **Innovative staff** – our staff have shown great resilience and creativity to maintain quality services. Tight resources will continue to spur innovation in how we manage demand and deliver and fund services.
- **Partnerships** – we have good relationships with our partners across the public, private and third sectors. There are opportunities to work together even better to deliver our objectives.



CHALLENGES

- **Demographic change** – North Somerset’s population is both growing and aging. In many ways that is good news but it does increase demand for health and social care services, school places and other services, and puts pressure on infrastructure.
- **Climate emergency** – the serious impact of global warming is already evident. Urgent action is needed to avoid temperatures increasing to dangerous levels, which would bring rising sea levels and increased flooding and extreme weather.
- **Inequalities** – North Somerset is a prosperous place but it has large inequalities in income, health and life chances. Patterns of inequality between areas have been persistent.
- **Housing** – there is a need for significantly more homes to meet the demand of our growing population and government targets, including affordable homes with the average house costing nine times average earnings. We also need to ensure we have sufficient employment land.
- **Balancing development and sustainability** – particularly in the context of the climate emergency and our wealth of natural and heritage assets will be an ongoing challenge.
- **Fragile care market** – locally and nationally care providers are under pressure. Delays in national reform of social care funding compound issues of rising costs and difficulty recruiting and retaining care staff.
- **Local transport network** – despite good strategic links getting around North Somerset by road or public transport is not always as easy due to congestion and a limited bus network.



- **Resource constraints** – after a decade of unprecedented reductions in government funding, resources are expected to remain constrained throughout the time frame of this plan.

OUR JOURNEY

Maximising our opportunities and overcoming our challenges will take time. We can't do everything at once and we know resources will remain tight for the foreseeable future.

But the longer the journey, the more important it is to be clear about the destination. We are therefore setting a clear new vision for North Somerset, one which sets out what we want both for the area, and for the council as an organisation.



OUR VISION IS FOR A MORE OPEN, FAIRER, GREENER NORTH SOMERSET

Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset.

Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.

Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

AIMS AND PRIORITIES

The vision is ambitious and long term but we want to start progressing towards it at once.

To help focus on the right things we have set ourselves three broad aims, each with a set of priorities. Achieving these priorities will help us to realise our vision.

Our aims are:

- A thriving and sustainable place

- A council which empowers and cares about people; and
- An open and enabling organisation

For each aim we have identified a set of actions and projects which we will strive to deliver by 2024. We have also identified a set of success measures to monitor our progress. These will be included in the Council’s basket of Key Performance Indicators and built in to the performance management and reporting system.

EQUALITY COMMITMENTS

Public services rightly have equality duties. These include eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between groups.

The new vision reinforces the council’s commitment to meeting these duties; promoting fairness and working openly for everyone. North Somerset is a diverse place and we want to make sure that people are able to live, work and enjoy North Somerset regardless of their background, needs or characteristics.

We will consider the diversity of our communities as we deliver the important equality duties we have committed to. This applies to all the priorities in this plan, but there are some commitments which are particularly relevant from an equalities perspective. These equality objectives are marked **EO** in the action plan sections.

A THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE PLACE

PRIORITIES

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming safe and clean neighbourhoods
- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- A transport network that promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel
- A broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability
- An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth

FACTS & FIGURES



- CO2 emissions per capita in North Somerset have fallen from 6.3 tonnes in 2005 to 4.2 tonnes in 2017¹.



- Passenger journeys by bus have increased in North Somerset from 4.4 million in 2009/10 to 5.9 million in 2017/18.



- The number of enterprises (businesses) in North Somerset has increased by 24% from 2010 to 2019 (7,050 to 8,755).

CASE STUDY


MetroWest

A nationally significant scheme to improve transport links in the West of England region is moving forward. MetroWest will see the Portishead Rail branch line re-open in 2023 as well as a series of vital improvements to passenger services along the Severn Beach and Bristol to Bath railway Lines.

Over £31m of funding has been received from the Department for Transport for this scheme and in November 2019, the Development Consent Order was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, kicking off the first phase.

Once launched it is anticipated that 0.4 million people a year will use the new line.

Action Plan

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: a great place for people to live, work and visit</p>		
<p>Planning policies that shape inclusive growth, attract investment and secure infrastructure for healthy, mixed and prosperous neighbourhoods in a way that helps tackle the climate emergency, the housing crisis and persistent socio-economic inequalities. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare a new Local Plan (the North Somerset Plan) covering the period to 2036 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Early engagement on draft Plan in 2020 ● Pre-submission engagement in 2021 ● Plan submitted for Examination in Public 2022 ● North Somerset Plan adopted 2023
<p>A flourishing arts, culture and heritage sector supporting inclusive growth, placemaking and healthier communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● North Somerset Cultural Strategy ● Weston Heritage Action Zone projects ● Culture Weston (a new cultural development initiative supported by arts Council England) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased participation in cultural activities across North Somerset ● Adoption of Cultural Strategy in 2020 ● Culture Weston established and supporting activity by end of 2020
<p>North Somerset’s natural environment playing a more instrumental role in our communities through improved health and wellbeing, helping our response to the climate emergency through rewilding and additional woodland, and supporting sustainable development and inclusive growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt and implement a ‘green infrastructure strategy’ to ensure an integrated approach to management of the natural environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High quality green spaces, species rich and with a variety of habitats. ● Reduce short, frequently mown grass areas on Council owned land ● Increase area of woodland
<p>High-quality library and leisure services, accessible by all, that remain relevant to the changing needs of North Somerset residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt and implement Library Strategy ● Adopt and implement Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategies in place in 2020 ● Projects completed to timescales ● Increased Service user satisfaction

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
North Somerset recognised as a key part of the regional visitor economy with places to visit across the year and throughout the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt and deliver a Visitor Economy Action Plan to support placemaking, active travel and economic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase value of North Somerset's visitor economy
Priority: Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods		
All of our town centres and high streets to be places people choose to go to for fun, social and safe experiences. They will be able to attract people throughout the day. Supported by active participation by business groups and community networks and town and parish councils, they will be lively, safe and clean.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt the North Somerset Plan which will encourage people to live and work in town centres ● Deliver a programme of activity within the Weston Placemaking Strategy ● Support a programme of meanwhile uses to ensure active use of vacant town centre properties and sites ● Maintain Purple Flag for Weston-super-Mare town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weston Placemaking Strategy in place in 2020 ● North Somerset Meanwhile Partnership in place by Q1 2021 to occupy vacant town centre spaces ● Purple Flag status retained
Crime and anti-social behaviour are reducing and victims of crime and exploitation are supported effectively by the council and its partners. There is a coordinated strategy to reduce domestic abuse and the harm caused to the victims and their children. An integrated approach to neighbourhood enforcement is supported by a transformed control centre and camera network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work jointly with the police and communities to stabilise or reduce anti- social behaviour and crime ● Develop a new Domestic Abuse Strategy and transform support service provision through re-commissioning ● Work with partners and town councils to improve Public Space Surveillance system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Domestic Abuse Strategy in place by April 2020 ● Increase reporting rate of domestic abuse ● Reduce proportion of residents who feel anti-social behaviour is a problem in their local area
Neighbourhood management is well coordinated, and delivered in partnership with local communities, with everyone playing their part and taking responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review approach to neighbourhood management and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New approach in place by end 2021 ● Positive resident views of their neighbourhood

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030</p>		
<p>To be well on our way to becoming a net zero carbon council and a net zero carbon place by 2030. Our North Somerset Plan will be shaping sustainable growth in the most accessible places. We'll be working with partners, business and residents to support them to make low carbon decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement Climate Emergency Strategy ● Reduce emissions from our estates and operations with the aim of being carbon neutral ● Review policies to promote sustainable development and an energy efficient built environment ● Promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources, and behaviour change ● Green infrastructure Strategy and rewilding programme (see above) ● Promote active and low carbon travel (see below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Year on year reduction of carbon emissions from the council's direct activities in delivering services ● Area's carbon emissions reduced ● Approximately 500 precision manufactured energy efficient homes under construction ● Enable a greater proportion of mixed-use development on brownfield land, in town centres close to public transport and major employment hubs ● Increase the number of existing homes where energy efficiency is improved
<p>Households are supported to minimise the waste they produce, and recycle what they do, with North Somerset having low residual waste volumes and high recycling rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Challenge everyone to reduce, reuse, repair and recycle ● Introduce measures to boost home and community composting supported by new charges for garden waste collections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Zero kerbside waste to landfill with an increasing percentage recycled and the remainder used as energy from waste ● Recycling rate above SW and national average ● Increase levels of composting

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: a transport network that promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel		
Passengers boarding trains in Portishead and Pill on the reopened rail line, reducing car use and traffic congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete Metro West project (Portishead rail) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development Consent Order granted by Autumn 2021 ● Construction start by Spring 2022 ● Open December 2023
Safer roads for pedestrians and bikes. More people choosing low carbon and healthier ways to travel. Better use of limited parking space in town centres across the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver key strategic cycle routes – Coastal Path & Strawberry Line extension to Clevedon. ● Deliver local cycling and walking infrastructure plan. ● Implement 20mph zones in Backwell & Wrington by December 2020 and at least one additional scheme a year from then on ● Update the Public Rights of Way Strategy in 2020 ● Introduce cycle audits for all highway capital schemes. ● Introduce fairer parking charges and resident parking zones across the district to better manage parking ● Space in residential areas, town centres and car parks ● Deliver Highways maintenance programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projects completed on time ● Reduced road traffic accidents ● Increased cycling and walking, including for travel to work ● Better use of parking space in high streets to support local business
More people using the bus network, and improvements in reliability and passenger satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver bus lane enforcement ● Showcase bus corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased bus patronage ● At least one new showcase corridor by 2023 ● Bus Lane enforcement by 2021

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>More places where people can charge electric cars and motorcycles, encouraging people to switch to lower carbon, zero emission vehicles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Portishead electric charging hub operational by 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Portishead project completed on time ● Increased number of electric charging points across North Somerset
<p>Priority: a broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability</p>		
<p>The North Somerset Plan will be supporting a mix of housing types and tenures in sustainable locations in the area. Quality and affordable new homes will be being built on the council's own land with infrastructure projects underway to unlock further delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commence delivery of New Secondary School at Weston Villages and Banwell Bypass ● Increase supply of affordable homes ● Deliver 500 precision manufactured homes on our land with Homes England funding. ● Agree a Development Programme and Delivery Prospectus setting out how we deliver high-quality, mixed-tenure homes and employment on our own land and with partners ● Stimulate development which addresses the future care requirements of our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver Banwell bypass and associated works by 2024 ● Deliver secondary school at Parklands Village by 2024 ● Increased completions of affordable homes ● Facilitate and monitor delivery of housing to ensure our five-year housing supply is in place, including through the ongoing delivery of 6,500 new homes at the Weston Villages ● Agree and implement the Development Programme and Delivery Prospectus, including delivery of 500 precision manufactured homes on NSC-owned land ● Further extra care housing schemes delivered
<p>The private rented sector in North Somerset will be improved through purpose built new development and action on existing accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivery of the Private Rented Sector Action Area in central Weston-super -Mare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased number of homes improved through Local Authority intervention ● Number of privately rented properties within the Private Sector Action Area owned by accredited landlords

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: an attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth</p>		
<p>North Somerset to be recognised as having a distinct commercial identity, attracting increased levels of investment which support wider Council priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete Food Works build and embed the offer for the Food and Drink sector through the development of future phases ● Support the scale-up and roll out of successful employment space approaches ● Ensure the local plan reflects employment requirements which enable business investment and growth ● Understand demand for emerging sectors such as green technologies, creative industries and advanced manufacturing and deliver interventions which encourage their growth in North Somerset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Net increase in businesses registered for NNDR across North Somerset ● Increase in number of jobs ● Increase in number of business start-ups ● Increase in inward investment activity ● Increase in average earnings for jobs in North Somerset
<p>The Junction 21 Enterprise Area will have a clear offer to investors in the West of England economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review Enterprise Area strategy and identity ● Agree proposals for commercial development on council-owned land at Weston Airfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase in business rates from the Enterprise Area ● Increase in jobs in the Enterprise Area



A COUNCIL WHICH EMPOWERS AND CARES ABOUT PEOPLE

PRIORITIES

- A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
- A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes
- A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential
- Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities

CASE STUDY

Shared Lives Scheme

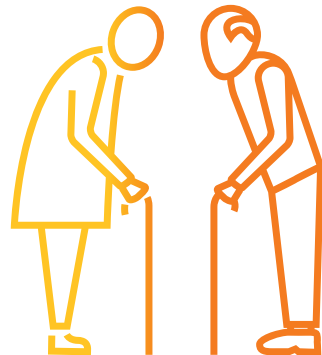
We are expanding our successful Shared Lives Scheme which provides care for adults with disabilities and mental health problems in a family setting.

The latest CQC inspection graded the service 'good' in all aspects and said "People told us they were very happy with the care and support. One person said, "It is much better than living in X (care home). It is like a big family" ...It was evident... people enjoyed and benefitted from living as part of a family."

FACTS & FIGURES



- An increase in Early Help episodes in North Somerset i.e. a robust early help offer with over 1,200 episodes in 2018/19




- An average of 1,700 adults supported in their own home through assistive technology




- Over 80% of adults in North Somerset with a level 2 qualification and 43% with a level 4, above the national average

Action Plan

















By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: a commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safeguarding is seen as every one's business and partners work together to enable the people of North Somerset to live free from abuse and neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with others to realise the vision of the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board ● Ensure the success of the new North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership, working with the police and the CCG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase proportion of people who are satisfied with the way their adult safeguarding concern was handled ● Increase in the proportion of children's case audits graded good or outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children and adults who need the most support consistently receive good quality services, which keep them safe and promote their wellbeing, whether provided by the council, other public services, voluntary organisations or private care providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update Market Position Statement to identify necessary action to deliver sustainable care capacity to meet the future care needs of our community ● Implement Ofsted and SEND Local Joint Area Review action plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Market Position Statement published in 2020 ● Positive OFSTED and CQC inspection outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refugees resettled in North Somerset are welcomed and supported to make the area their home  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to participate in the national Resettlement Scheme, welcoming refugees to settle in North Somerset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target number of refugee households resettled met

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: an approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives		
<p>More people are able to live independently in their own homes and communities. Young people with disabilities are well prepared for adulthood, and have a smooth transition. North Somerset is recognised as a pioneer in the use of new technology to maximise independence. Technology Enabled Care Strategy is addressing future social care challenges. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Deliver North Somerset's Maximising Independence transformation programme  Expand the shared lives scheme  Improve transitions for young people through the new integrated Transitions Team  Work with health partners to develop a coordinated and effective social-prescribing offer  Complete pilots of technology enabled care, and roll-out the most successful innovations  Adopt and implement strategy to combat loneliness and social isolation  Review and update the Carers Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Increase number of shared lives placements  Increase service user and carer satisfaction  Increase number and value of social prescriptions  Technology enabled care projects are progressed to timescales  Reduce rate of long term residential & nursing home placements  Increase numbers of young people and adults placed in supported accommodation  Increase the number of carers supported in their caring role
<p>Outcomes for Care Leavers are improving and young people who have been looked after are consistently well supported through to independence. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Work with care leavers to improve education, employment and accommodation outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Increase the proportion of care leaver in employment, education or training and suitable accommodation

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: A focus on tackling inequalities and improving outcomes		
<p>A range of strategies and initiatives are in place which together will reduce inequalities over the long term, including action plans for areas ranked in the 10% most deprived in England. Outcomes for those with the poorest life chances have begun to improve. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review Council Tax Support Scheme ● Work with schools and academies to reduce the attainment gap between children entitled to free school meals or pupil premium and their peers ● Continue to implement initiatives and projects to prevent and tackle homelessness ● Reduce the gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities in North Somerset ● Target support to tackle the main causes of ill health that drive inequalities ● Analyse the factors causing some small areas to have persistent high levels of deprivation and develop action plans with partners to address them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduced minimum contribution to Council Tax in place for 2020/21 ● Reduce attainment gap between children entitled to free school meals or pupil premium and their peers ● Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation ● Increase the proportion of homelessness prevented ● Longer life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, and reduced gaps ● Increased access to and participation in interventions to improve key outcomes, for example, stop smoking, physical activity or mental health and wellbeing. ● Area Based Action Plans in place by 2021

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: a collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential</p>		
<p>Families receive the right help and support to achieve the best for their children.</p> <p>Fewer children need to be looked after by North Somerset Council, and those that do have the right placement, which for the vast majority will be a local family placement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate to develop a whole system approach to providing effective early help for children and families ● Deliver North Somerset’s Families for Children transformation programme ● Scale-up ‘step-down’ approach to support children to move from residential and out of area placements to local foster placements ● Design and commission an evidence-based service to prevent the need for younger children to enter care ● Recommission supported accommodation for care leavers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase number of families receiving early help ● Reduce rate of children looked after ● Number of North Somerset foster carers ● Proportion of children looked after placed in local foster placements



By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>Priority: partnerships which enhance learning, skills and employment opportunities</p>		
<p>Children and young people gain the knowledge and skills they need to flourish as adults. More children with special educational needs attend local schools. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Implement the Commissioning Strategy for education provision to ensure there are sufficient school places  Implement the Specialist and Alternative Provision Review, including expanding local SEND provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Continue to offer every eligible child a school place on national offer day  New SEND school places provided to timescale
<p>North Somerset’s residents enhance their skills and benefit from economic growth, demonstrated by increased levels of economic resilience and inclusion in our communities. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Adopt and deliver Employment and Skills Strategy  Deliver an employment gateway for those accessing employment or skills support  Support residents to respond and adapt to change caused by technological advances and access emerging jobs in the green economy  Secure additional funding to deliver interventions which provide employability support for those with barriers to good quality, secure employment  Work with North Somerset businesses to provide high quality job opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Employment and Skills strategy in place  Increase percentage of adults with learning disabilities or mental health difficulties in paid employment  Increase number of people from targeted cohort (care leavers, young people NEET) gaining employment  Reduction in JSA claimant/unemployment rate (long-term unemployed)  Increase in average earnings for North Somerset

AN OPEN AND ENABLING ORGANISATION

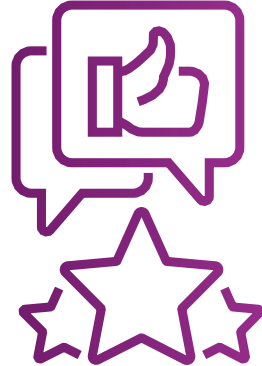
PRIORITIES

- Engage with and empower our communities
- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation
- Manage our resources and invest wisely
- Embrace new and emerging technology
- Make the best use of our data and information
- Provide professional, efficient and effective services
- Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

FACTS & FIGURES



- The Council now employs around 1300 people. This compares to over 2400 in 2006. These figures do not include school staff, illustrating the scale of change.



- 86% of customers satisfied with the service received in our gateways




- 98% of customers satisfied with the service received on the telephone


CASE STUDY

Using technology to increase access to library services


Embracing digital and self service technology has enabled libraries to reach new customers and extend access to library resources.

In 2018 North Somerset library customers downloaded 12,000 library eBooks, 12,700 eAudiobooks and 30,000 eMagazines. 'Extended Access' technology is enabling increasing numbers of customers to use four libraries on a self-service basis 8am – 8pm across the week (8,500 visits in 2018-19). Self service kiosks, available in all libraries, typically perform 82% of routine book lending transactions and provide self service printing, releasing staff to focus on supporting in-depth customer enquiries.

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: engage with and empower our communities		
<p>A menu of opportunities for residents and communities to engage at a level which suits them best. Wide-ranging informative and accessible communications with residents. Consistent, timely and good quality engagement in decisions, service design and financial planning. Best practice has become common practice. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and implement a whole organisation Engagement & Consultation Strategy ● Review Communications Strategy ● Embed consideration of engagement across the authority for every policy or key decision of the council ● Publish budget proposals earlier in 2020/21 and actively engage public in financial planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence of impact of resident and community views ● Systems to ensure routine consideration of engagement in place ● Budget proposals published each Autumn from 2020 onwards.
<p>More residents have the opportunity to attend Executive meetings, either in person or online</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold Executive meetings in different venues around North Somerset ● Explore the feasibility of webcasting Council meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings held at range of venues across North Somerset from 2020 ● Options and costs of webcasting identified, and progressed in 2020/21 if feasible and affordable
<p>Council services to be easily recognisable as such through clear and consistent branding which reflects the council's vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Branding reviewed and updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased resident awareness of council services
<p>Residents are well informed about the things they can do to prepare for emergencies and to support one another when they occur</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with the Local Resilience Forum and our Community Resilience scheme to expand and enhance emergency preparedness in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased awareness among residents of what they can do to prepare for emergencies individually and as communities.

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: empower our staff and support continuous improvement and innovation		
<p>The Council is recognised as a good employer. It gets the most from its staff and has the right people and skills to deliver its objectives. Plans are in place to address any workforce challenges. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop new People Strategy, aligned to the new Corporate Plan ● Review and refresh learning and development offer across whole organisation ● Review appraisal process ● Refresh staff values and behaviours framework ● Seek renewal of Disability Confident Leader Status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Turnover between 10 and 15 percent ● Increase proportion of staff who would recommend the council as an employer ● Reduce gender pay gap ● Number of staff whose learning and development needs are recorded ● Proportion of agreed learning and development needs met ● Disability Confident Leader Status maintained
<p>It is easy for staff to work efficiently and seamlessly anywhere, reducing the need for office space and travel, whilst remaining accessible to residents and colleagues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure a consistent and fair approach to flexible and mobile working ● Ensure policies and technology in place to support flexible and mobile working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase the proportion of staff who are able to work flexibly
<p>Staff feel innovation is encouraged and recognised and see good ideas taken forward</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design and implement a scheme to encourage and recognise innovations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scheme in place in 2020 ● Examples of ideas taken forward
<p>Programmes and projects are well managed and delivering significant benefits including savings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver a portfolio of well-designed and managed change programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projects consistently achieve planned benefits, including savings, on time and within budget

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: manage our resources and invest wisely		
Resources well aligned to priorities and robust plans are in place to address budget pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain robust Medium-Term Financial Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce medium term budget gap ● End of year budget variance no greater than 1% (plus or minus) ● All budget proposals assessed for Equality Impact
A sustainable portfolio of buildings which support the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and implement Asset Strategy, reviewing all of the Council's buildings and property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategy enables programme of projects to be delivered ● Benefits achieved (efficiencies, reduced carbon footprint, modern, accessible buildings, surplus assets released)
Commercial investments deliver reliable income streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to implement commercial investment strategy to generate revenue ● Identify next opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achievement of income targets
Priority: embrace new and emerging technology		
New and emerging technologies are harnessed effectively to deliver efficient and good quality services. The Council is well on the way to 'paperless' and 'cashless' operation and is beginning to make use of robotics and Artificial Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and implement updated Digital Strategy ● Offer accessible and effective online services, designed around user needs and supporting channel shift ● Organisation wide channel shift programme Technology enabled Care projects (see above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated digital strategy in place by 2021 ● Projects delivered to timescales ● Channel shift targets achieved ● Satisfaction with online services increases ● Full compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines by September 2020

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
<p>More residents have basic digital skills and are able to take advantage of national programmes to improve broadband speeds and roll out 5G. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote digital inclusion, increasing skills and confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital inclusion projects delivered Resident's digital skills increase
<p>Priority: make the best use of our data and information</p>		
<p>The Council is using rich data sets to make evidence-based decisions and evaluate the impact of those decisions, whilst protecting resident's information and privacy. Council and partner data sets are combined where possible and consistent with information governance standards. Performance data is available for managers as and when needed. More council data is made open as part of our transparency agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement tools to make better use of council data Implement new approach to the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) Analysis with health partners Real time performance reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Tools in place from April 2020 JSNA underpinned by multi-agency data set Increased availability of real time data Increased amount of council data which is 'open'
<p>Priority: provide professional, efficient and effective services</p>		
<p>A strong and consistent customer focus evident across the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the customer services culture across the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Customer, service user and resident satisfaction
<p>Services, whether in-house or commissioned demonstrate good quality and value for money.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set clear customer service and client service standards. Ensure both in-house services and commissioned services meet the required standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services compare favourably to peers in benchmarking Ofsted and CQC inspection outcomes Achievement of service standards

By 2023 we want:	Actions and Projects	Success Measures
Priority: Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes		
A strong partnership with West of England neighbours helps deliver better outcomes for North Somerset. By sharing with other local authorities and public services we provide better quality or value for money for North Somerset residents than if we acted alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to collaborate across West of England and reconsider applying to join the Combined Authority ● Share accommodation, services, systems and infrastructure with other public services where it makes sense to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projects in place and milestones achieved ● Increase proportion of office space occupied ● Number of shared arrangements in place
Delivering priorities through town and parish councils and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations (VCSE) where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with town and parish councils and VCSE organisations to explore opportunities for joint working including development of different devolved delivery models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projects in place with key milestones to achieve the best outcome for residents
Contracts are consistently well managed and deliver expected benefits and added value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work in partnership with contractors to ensure contracts consistently deliver expected standards and benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resident and service user satisfaction ● Contract performance targets met ● Additional social value delivered
More effective, sustainable and integrated health and social care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Play a strong role in strategic partnerships with health and social care organisations and providers ● Effective Joint Commissioning to support our local health and care provision ● Healthier Together (the Sustainability and Transformation Plan) ● Better Care Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Joint Plans and Strategies agreed ● Commissioning projects delivered to support joint plans, and maximise funding opportunities
Joint Projects with the police and other partners reduce crime and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Safety Partnership ● Work with the police, communities and other partners to reduce crime, including hate crime ● Violence Reduction Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce crime and fear of crime

OUR VALUES

Our organisational values are important because they help guide us in how we work and provide services for our residents.

In developing this Plan we have taken the opportunity to refresh and restate our values, producing them with our staff. These five value form a strong ethos which will help us to deliver our ambitious agenda, working in partnership across the the council and beyond:



We act with
INTEGRITY

We
RESPECT
each other

We
INNOVATE

We
CARE

We
COLLABORATE

ISSUES AND EVIDENCE

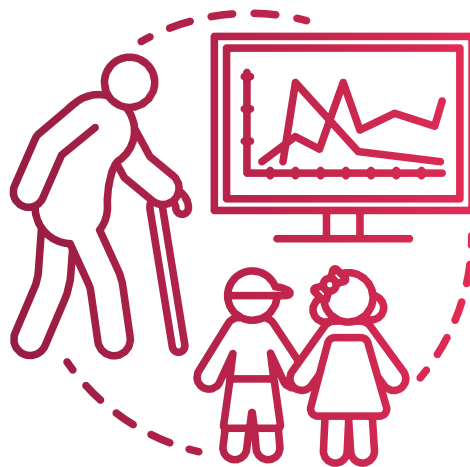


GROWING AND AGING

The population of North Somerset is both growing and aging and is projected to continue to do so faster than the national or regional average.



The population of North Somerset is expected to rise from 211,500 in 2016 to 251,700 by 2041ⁱⁱ. This continues a long term trend and would represent an increase of 16%, compared to a projected increase of 12% for England as a whole.



The number of children and young people aged under 20 is expected to increase by 12%, but the number of people aged 85 plus is expected to more than double: from 7,000 people in 2016 to 15,000 by 2041. In the period covered by this plan, the number of people aged 85 plus in North Somerset is expected to increase by 10.8%.

This is good news, but brings challenges.

The population is growing because people want to live in North Somerset, and most of us want to live longer, so long as we can be in good health. However a bigger population does increase demand for housing and services, and it puts pressure on infrastructure like schools and transport. Healthy lifestyles and staying connected to our communities and social networks can keep us independent for longer but once we reach our late eighties we are far more likely to need health or social care services.

According to the Alzheimer's Society there are around 850,000 people in the UK with dementia. One in 14 people over 65 will develop dementia, and the condition affects 1 in 6 people over 80.

SOCIAL CARE

The system for funding adult social care is widely recognised as no longer fit for purpose with a national solution for sustainable funding being essential. Care markets locally and nationally are challenged by rising costs, staff shortages and the ongoing need to maintain quality.

As demand for these services increase in line with an aging population, so does the cost to the council, coinciding with almost a decade of reducing government funding for local authorities.

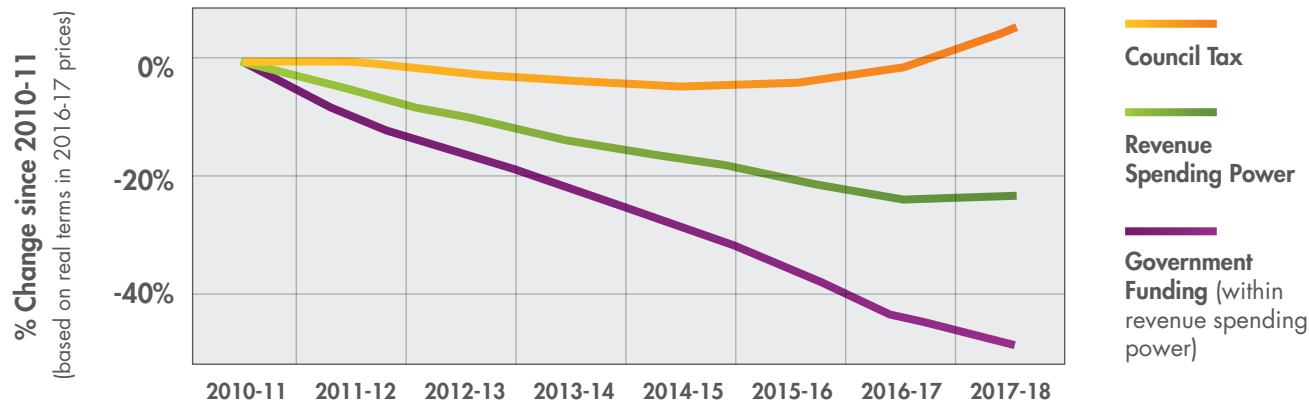




GOVERNMENT FUNDING

There have been a sustained reduction in government grants over the last decade, only partially mitigated by permission to raise more money locally, through Council Tax and other sources.

North Somerset UA - Revenue Spending Power, Government Funding within RSP and Council Tax



Between 2013/14 and 2019/20, central government grants to North Somerset Council fell from £35 million to just £2 million, a decrease of over 90%. Between 2010/11 and 2017/18, the net 'spending power' of North Somerset Council fell by 23.2% allowing for inflationⁱⁱⁱ. In order to meet this pressure, while meeting the needs of a growing population and unavoidable costs e.g. the national minimum wage, the council has made over £100 million in savings since 2010.

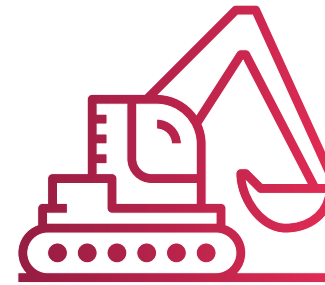
Against this background it is unsurprising that there are significant strains on capacity and budgets. Apart from adult social care, some of the biggest pressures are in children's services, particularly placements for looked after children and services for children with special educational needs, including home to school transport. New legal responsibilities in terms of special educational needs together with radical changes in the educational landscape, with more academies and a diminished role for the local authority have added to these pressures.

The government was expected to publish a four-year spending review in 2019, together with proposals for a new approach to funding social care. Instead, only a one year spending settlement was announced. Whilst this provided increases in funding for 2020/21, it does not provide a sound basis for long term planning.

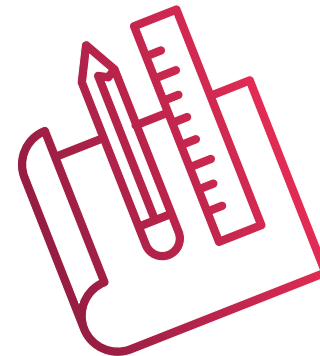


HOUSING DEMAND

Demand for housing outstrips supply both nationally and locally. This is partly due to our increasing population but also reflects increasing numbers of households.



The number of households in the UK increased by over 1 million between 2011 and 2018, including an additional 347,000 one person households^{iv}.



There are also significant issues about supply and affordability. Developers understandably do not want to build homes faster than they can sell them.

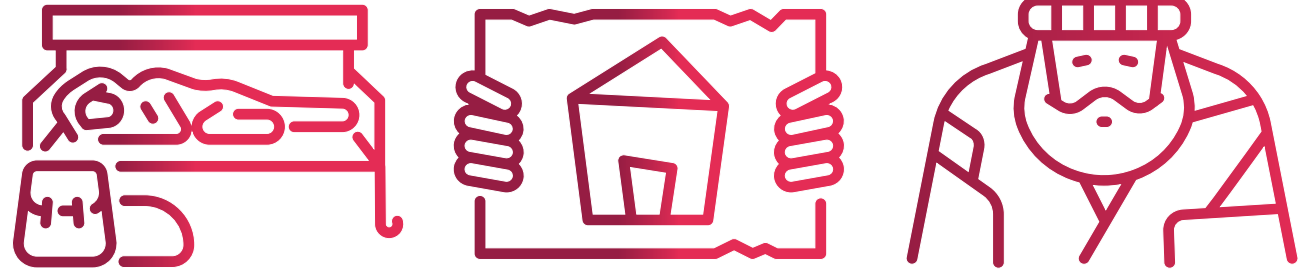
In 2018 sites that could accommodate up to 8,000 homes had planning consent in place. During that year, 863 homes were built, of which 155 were affordable.



Affordability is a major issue with the average home costing 9 times average earnings in North Somerset compared to a national figure of 7.8 times earnings.

HOMELESSNESS

Recent years have seen an increase in homelessness.



Nationally, the number of households in temporary accommodation increased from 64,710 in 2015 to 84,740 in 2019, an increase of 31%.

Locally, the increase has been less marked but still significant, with the average number of households in temporary accommodation increasing by 16.9% over the same period. Meanwhile the number of people sleeping rough has visibly increased in many towns and cities.

Annual rough sleeper counts recorded 4,677 people in 2018, more than twice the number in 2010. In North Somerset 11 people were recorded sleeping rough in 2018 compared to 2 in 2010.

This increase is partly due to changes in the benefit system, including restrictions on housing benefit, exacerbated by the wider issues in the housing market.

Balancing the pressing need for housing, infrastructure and local employment, with the imperatives of tackling the climate emergency, persistent inequalities and preserving our beautiful natural environment and built heritage remains one of our greatest challenges.

Work has begun on a new North Somerset Plan which will set the framework for investment and growth in homes, infrastructure and space for business through to 2036.

The proposed West of England Joint Spatial Plan will not now be taken forward, but North Somerset will continue to work closely with Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils.





CLIMATE CHANGE

The UK is legally committed under the Paris Climate Agreement to limiting global warming to well below 2°C and if possible to 1.5°C.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded that even warming of 1.5°C will have significant impacts including rising sea levels, increased likelihood of extreme weather events, threats to food and water supply and loss of biodiversity, and that limiting warming to this level requires unprecedented “rapid and far reaching” changes in all aspects of society, including a need to reach ‘net zero’ by around 2050. As a result the UK amended the Climate Change Act to include a binding target of net zero by that date. This will require a combination of dramatic reductions in emissions and removal of carbon from the atmosphere, both through natural processes, such as tree planting, and technological solutions which are still being developed. Whilst government, both local and national can lead this change, the public has a huge role to play.



Published data shows an overall downward trend in emissions in North Somerset (a 25% reduction between 2005 and 2016 in local authority influenceable emissions).

Progress is encouraging but sustaining and accelerating this trend will be challenging as most of the early reductions were achieved through the switch away from coal fired power generation, now largely complete. Furthermore these figures do not include emissions from national transport infrastructure such as the airport and the M5 Motorway.

In February 2019, North Somerset Council became one of the first local authorities to declare a climate emergency, recognising that only immediate and urgent action, requiring changes in all our behaviour, will now be sufficient to avoid an increase of more than 2°C.

PROSPERITY AND INEQUALITIES

Overall, North Somerset is a prosperous area.

Average earnings are close to the national average, and well above the regional average: Unemployment, at 3.1% is below the national average.^v

Average weekly earnings for residents of North Somerset are £585 compared to £587 for Great Britain and £561 for the South West^{vi}, but the average earnings of someone who works in North Somerset, (who may or may not be a resident), are £522.^{vii}



Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are above the national average for both men and women. However this positive overall picture masks some key challenges.

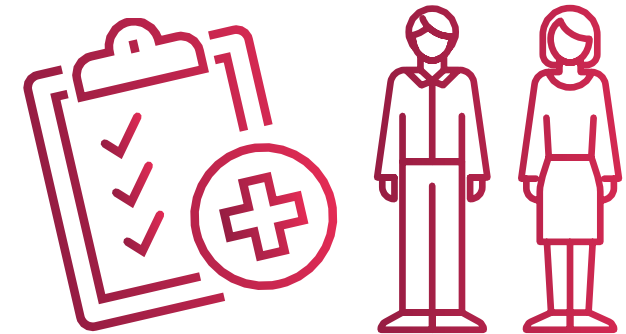
Firstly there is a big difference between the earnings of people who live in North Somerset and those whose jobs are here. This is because many of the better paid jobs are in Bristol, pushing up average earnings, particularly in the north of the area.

This reflects the fact that there are fewer high paid jobs in North Somerset and more jobs in relatively low paid sectors, including care and tourism. Secondly there are significant contrasts between areas and individuals.

Average earnings in the North Somerset parliamentary constituency are the second highest in the South West of England, (£660) whereas those in the Weston-super-Mare constituency are amongst the lowest (joint 48th out of 55 constituencies at £510).^{viii}



Similarly there are contrasts in health and wellbeing.



Men in the least deprived areas of North Somerset can expect to live on average 9.6 years longer than those in the most deprived areas. For women the figure is 8.8 years and in both cases the gaps are bigger than for England as a whole, reflecting the fact that North Somerset has areas at both extremes in terms of deprivation. Deprivation is associated with both lower life expectancy and lower healthy life expectancy.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation brings together a range of indicators of deprivation for small geographical areas. These are called lower super output areas and each has a population of about 1500 people. The latest iteration, published in October 2019 showed that while North Somerset as a whole was not ranked highly for deprivation, (128 out of 151 local authority areas where 1 is the most deprived), the most deprived small area in North Somerset ranked 156 out of 32,844 areas in England, and the least deprived 32,733. In other words there are areas in both the 1% most deprived and the 1% least deprived in England.

OTHER CHALLENGES

Transport and connectivity also present challenges. Whilst North Somerset is well connected to the rest of the country and beyond, local transport links and services, particularly in rural areas, or at evenings and weekends are patchy.

The council works closely with public sector partners, voluntary and community organisations, Town and Parish Councils and businesses on behalf of residents. Relationships are generally very good, but the partnership landscape has changed significantly in recent years, with major changes in health and schools. These changes have many positive aspects but they often present a challenge in progressing partnership initiatives.

OPPORTUNITIES

Whilst it is important to understand the challenges we face it is just as important to recognise the opportunities which will help us to meet them.

North Somerset is well positioned geographically, close to Bristol and with good communications links, including an international airport, the royal Portbury docks, which has the largest entrance lock of any port in the UK, and the M5, linking to the Midlands, the South West and the M4 corridor, and the Severn crossings which are now toll-free. There are five railway stations and direct trains to London Paddington.

We are part of a dynamic West of England regional economy, with total economic activity valued at £33.5 billion (Gross Value added or 'GVA').

In terms of value per head, GVA was £29,352, compared with £27,555 for UK as a whole.^{ix}

North Somerset also benefits from a skilled workforce and some outstanding education providers.



The proportion of working age residents qualified to the equivalent of degree level or above (NVQ4) is higher than the national or regional average: 43.1% for North Somerset compared to 39.3% for Great Britain as a whole and 38.7% for the South West. Conversely there are fewer people with no qualifications: 3.9% in North Somerset, compared to 7.8% for Great Britain and 5.3% for the South West.



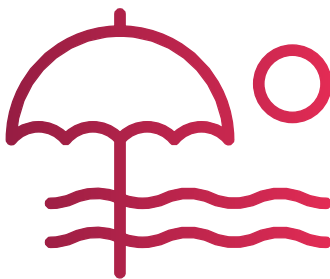
The area has a high proportion of good or outstanding schools (94% as of 2019), and an outstanding College providing further and higher education.



We have wonderful environmental assets, including part of the Mendip Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 39 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and 25 miles of coastline.

The area also has a rich history and important heritage assets including archaeologically important iron-age hillforts, the National Trust properties of Tynesfield and Clevedon Court and the birth place of world-famous philosopher John Locke. Architectural gems include Clevedon Pier, the only grade 1 listed pier in the country which can be visited, and the magnificent buildings of local architect Hans Price. Historic England have designated two Heritage Action Zones in Weston-Super-Mare, in recognition of the importance and potential of the town's heritage assets.

The area hosts an estimated 7.8 million day visit trips and over 500,000 staying visitor trips a year, with a total visitor spend estimated at £328 million a year (2017 data).



North Somerset has an active, skilled and caring volunteer community. People regularly give their time and energy to a wide range of organisations, clubs, causes and groups. This helps people of all ages to stay connected and enjoy life, and contribute to their communities.

Digital technologies are bringing change to every aspect of life at a breath taking speed. Whilst the pace of change is often disconcerting, digital technologies have huge potential to facilitate communication and collaboration, make it easier for citizens and customers to get things done at times which suit them, and for businesses and public services to increase efficiency and provide better data to drive continuous improvement.

It is becoming easier for people to work flexibly from wherever they need to, reducing the need for travel and bringing environmental benefits. Technology enabled care is developing rapidly and offers new ways to deliver care at the right time. For example North Somerset is working with care homes and technology firms to pilot innovative technology to check that residents are properly hydrated, and alert staff to any problems. More residents are becoming confident in using digital technologies, but there is still a need to promote digital inclusion and ensure that other channels remain for people unable to use digital methods.

The transition to a low carbon economy also brings opportunities. Britain is already a leader in some fields, such as wind turbines, and there are many fields in which technology needs to be developed or scaled up, including electric vehicles and carbon capture and storage. There are opportunities in the region including, exploiting the tidal potential of the Bristol Channel.

The most recent ONS survey of the low carbon and renewable energy economy, found that in 2017, businesses active in the sector generated £44.5 billion in turnover and employed an estimated 209,500 full-time equivalent employees. This was an increase of 6.8% and 0.6% respectively when compared with 2016.

The reductions in local authority funding over the decade have been a spur to innovation. Many services have been redesigned and new technology used to mitigate reductions in spend. Our staff have shown tremendous adaptability, resilience, commitment and creativity. There have had to be cuts in services and increases in charges but the extent of these has been much reduced by successful innovation.

Financial challenges are shared by other local authorities and by other public services. There are therefore opportunities for further collaboration and partnership working, such as shared services and shared buildings.



There is also an opportunity to reset the council's relationship with residents and communities, by empowering people to do more for themselves and each other. This requires trust which can only be built through transparency and genuine dialogue.

REFERENCES

- i UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2017. These are the most recent official statistics available at local authority level. The figure excludes national and international transport infrastructure such as the M5 motorway.
- ii All demographic data comes from the Office for National Statistics mid-year population projections (2016 based)
- iii National Audit Office
- iv Office for National Statistics
- v Office for National Statistics Annual Survey, July 2019- June 2019 data reported in the North Somerset local authority Labour Market Profile on nomisweb.co.uk
- vi Office for National Statistics annual survey of earnings 2018
- vii 2018 figures rounded to the nearest pound
- viii House of Commons Library statistics
- ix West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, 2017 Data





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