



# STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN PART 2 – SHAPING THE FUTURE ESTATE

**North Somerset Council**

*February 2021*

# Content



#	Report Section	Pages
1	<b>Introduction</b>	3
	• Purpose of Document	4
2	<b>Asset Management Objectives</b>	5
	• Vision	5
	• Forming the SAMP	5
	• Priorities	6
	• Key Themes	7
	• Departmental Strategies and Needs	8
	• SAMP Objectives	9
3	<b>Decision-Making Framework</b>	10
	• Strategic Objectives	10
	• Operational Objectives	11
	• Financial Objectives	12
	• Scoring Matrix	13
	• Decision Making Process	14
4	<b>Shaping the Future Estate</b>	16
	• Operational Estate	16
	• Office Accommodation Strategy	17
	• Sports & Leisure	19
	• Libraries	24
	• Depots and Public Convenience	29
	• Weston Super-Mare Regeneration Strategy	30
	• Economic Plan	31



# Introduction



# Purpose of Document

## Overall aim

North Somerset Council holds property to sustain and support its corporate objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan, and other strategies.

The aim of the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) is to set out the Council's vision, aspirations and objectives for its land and property assets portfolio, and to outline a 10-year plan for how it intends to achieve these outcomes. It is a strategic framework setting the core principles for the future use and management of the Council's assets in order to enable the successful delivery of council services.

This document forms the second part of the Asset Management Strategy and provides the strategy to deliver the future estate through a review of service-based asset strategies, the vision, objectives and the decision-making framework for the asset review.

When combined with Part 1 – Strategic Context and Part 3 – Delivering the Strategy, the report forms a complete Strategic Asset Management & Property Plan (SAMPP) and replaces the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016-2021. All parts of the report should be read in conjunction with the Council's land and property rules.



# Asset Management Objectives

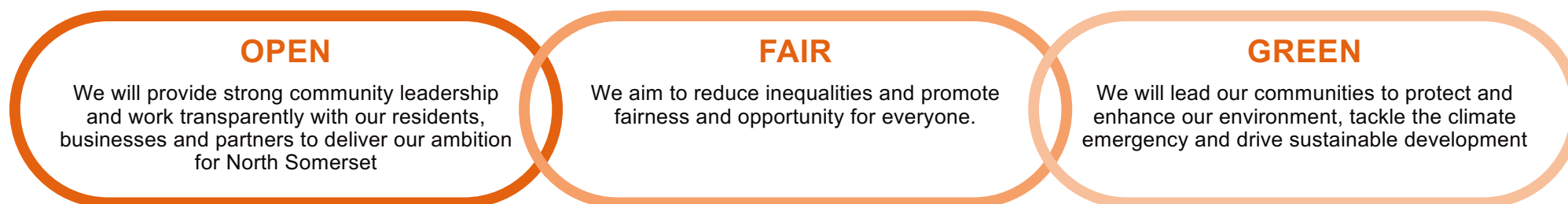
## Vision

“A portfolio of assets, which facilitates the future needs of council services and functions within our financial means; whilst maximising opportunities for our residents, visitors and businesses.”

## Forming the SAMP objectives

### Corporate Plan

The SAMP objectives have been established following a review of the Corporate Plan 2020, the emerging priorities from the 2038 Local Plan and via consultation with senior stakeholders. The below illustration summarises the council’s Corporate Plan.





# Asset Management Objectives

## Priorities

The vision is ambitious and long term. To help focus on delivery, North Somerset have set three broad aims, each with a set of priorities described as follows:

### **A thriving and sustainable place**

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- To be 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 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 enables 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
- Collaborative with partners to deliver the best outcomes.



# Asset Management Objectives

## Key themes

The Council has reviewed the above priorities in the context of how they relate too and impact Assets and reduced these into key themes outlined below:

### KEY THEMES

1	Financial – To act more commercially where appropriate. The council have assets that are owned and maintained but have very little benefit to our services and community. These assets should be disposed or developed.
2	Equality – address north/south divide The council is keen to ensure that the location of key services and assets for future regeneration are evenly distributed across the county and use these to address the north/south divide.
3	Outputs – facilitate transformation of service delivery That assets align with service and community requirements and support their future strategies.
4	Estate Management – enable proactive estate management with sufficient resources Assets are appropriately managed and maintained, leading to proactive assets management.
5	Flexibility – need for multi-purpose flexible assets Assets should be multi-purpose and flexible providing suitable accommodation for our services and communities. Assets should not be service specific, but flexible and open for all.
6	Community benefits – ensure socio-economics are considered Asset Management and regeneration should consider more than just finances, but also the wider socio-economic impact and community benefit they provide.
7	Consolidation – assets should be fully utilised The council wants to make sure that all assets are fully utilised and plan to consolidate staff and services where possible.
8	Climate Emergency – achieve zero carbon by 2030 Our assets need to be energy efficient and we will achieve zero carbon by 2030. The council will lead by example for the benefit of our community.
9	Deliverable – ensure strategy translates into delivery plans Whilst aspirational, this strategy will be deliverable.
10	Partnership – One Public Estate approach Our assets should not just be used by our services and community but will be open to other public sector and third sector partners. This will improve efficiency and value to our community.
11	Modernise – ensure an ageing estate meets current/future needs Our assets will be fit for purpose, managed and appropriately maintained.
12	Strategy – align to the Council's Corporate Plan vision and strategic priorities Our Asset Management Strategy will align and help deliver our corporate plan and strategic priorities.



# Asset Management Objectives

## Departmental Strategies and needs

In addition to the review of the Corporate Plan and establishment of key themes, the development of the SAMP has also been informed by a range of departmental and organisational strategies. Our aim is to ensure that Asset Management is service driven.

The SAMP will therefore be informed and based on department needs, organisation needs and priorities with corporate property and assets supporting the service delivery.

Set out in this section is a summary of the key priorities and needs that have been identified through the engagement and consultation sessions and review of the strategy documents.

The table below lists the documents that were reviewed as part of the consultation process: -

### Emerging Departmental Strategies

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016-21                  |
| 2 | Sport, Leisure & Playing Pitch Draft Strategy 2020-2036  |
| 3 | Libraries: An Essential Part of Local Recovery July 2020 |
| 4 | Weston-Super-Mare Regeneration / Town Strategy           |
| 5 | Economic Plan  |
| 6 | Capital strategy & latest capital programme              |



# Asset Management Objectives

## SAMP objectives

The SAMP objectives, formed from the Corporate Plan, Local Plan and Key Themes and Service Strategies are shown below with their alignment to the Vision. The objectives have been split across three strands; Strategic, Operation and Financial:

### Vision

A portfolio of assets, which facilitates the future needs of council services and functions within our financial means; whilst maximizing opportunities for our residents, visitors and businesses.

#### Strategic

Acquire sites that meets our needs, invest wisely in our towns and communities, help drive sustainable growth and attract wider private sector investments

Ensure our assets are aligned to our council requirements and objectives, and invest to provide professional, efficient and effective services.

A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes, maximizing accessibility and encouraging healthier lifestyles, as well as supporting the vulnerable and building resilience to aid recovery following the pandemic.

Collaborate with partners to ensure best use of public assets and best possible outcomes.

#### Operational

Provide a framework for an accommodation strategy that achieves efficiency in space through remote working, empowers our staff and encourages continuous improvement and innovation.

Ensures our assets are appropriately located, provide flexible, multi-purpose accommodation that is fit for purpose, and promote co-working with our partners and communities.

Dispose of assets that do not align to our requirements / priorities, are a liability, or will not generate an income.

Our assets must have a net carbon zero footprint by 2030.

#### Financial

Achieve financial savings from our assets through consolidation / rationalisation and invest in their adaptation to improve efficiency.

Use our assets to generate income to support our budget pressures and where necessary, this should be balanced against community benefit and social value.

Ensure that we have the adequate resources to manage our assets and embrace digital technology to support and maximise flexibility.

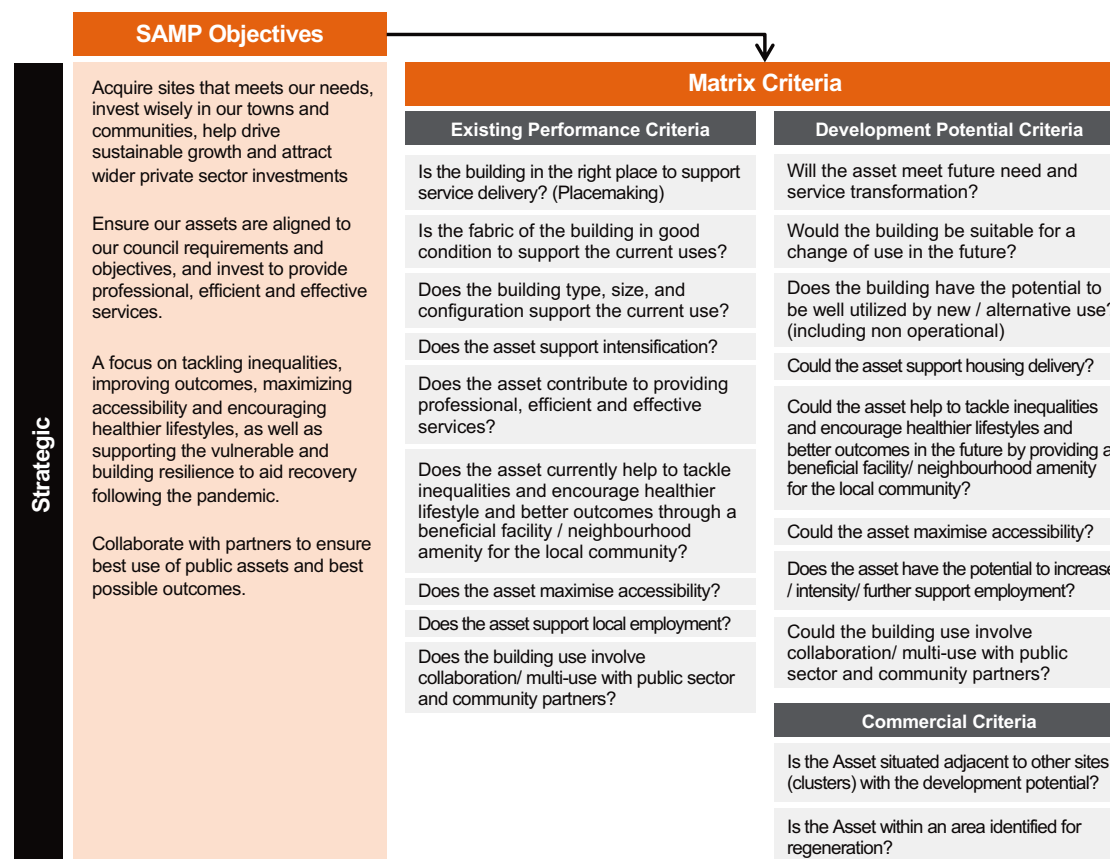
Re-invest in our core retained facilities to ensure that they are efficient and fit for purpose.

# Decision-making Framework

The SAMP objectives (figure 1) have been translated into a decision-making matrix into which assets can be placed to assess their conformance. Each objective with their strand is broken down into a series of questions, split between 'existing performance' and 'potential performance' of the assets.

## Strategic objectives

The strategic criteria focus on how the asset supports the current service use and strategic objectives of the Council and how the asset could potentially support service use and corporate objectives in the future. The commercial element tests the sites ability to support regeneration and development. It is important to understand if assets are fully supporting service delivery and contributing to the Councils objectives and aims. If an asset is performing well and supports objectives it should be retained and invested in.



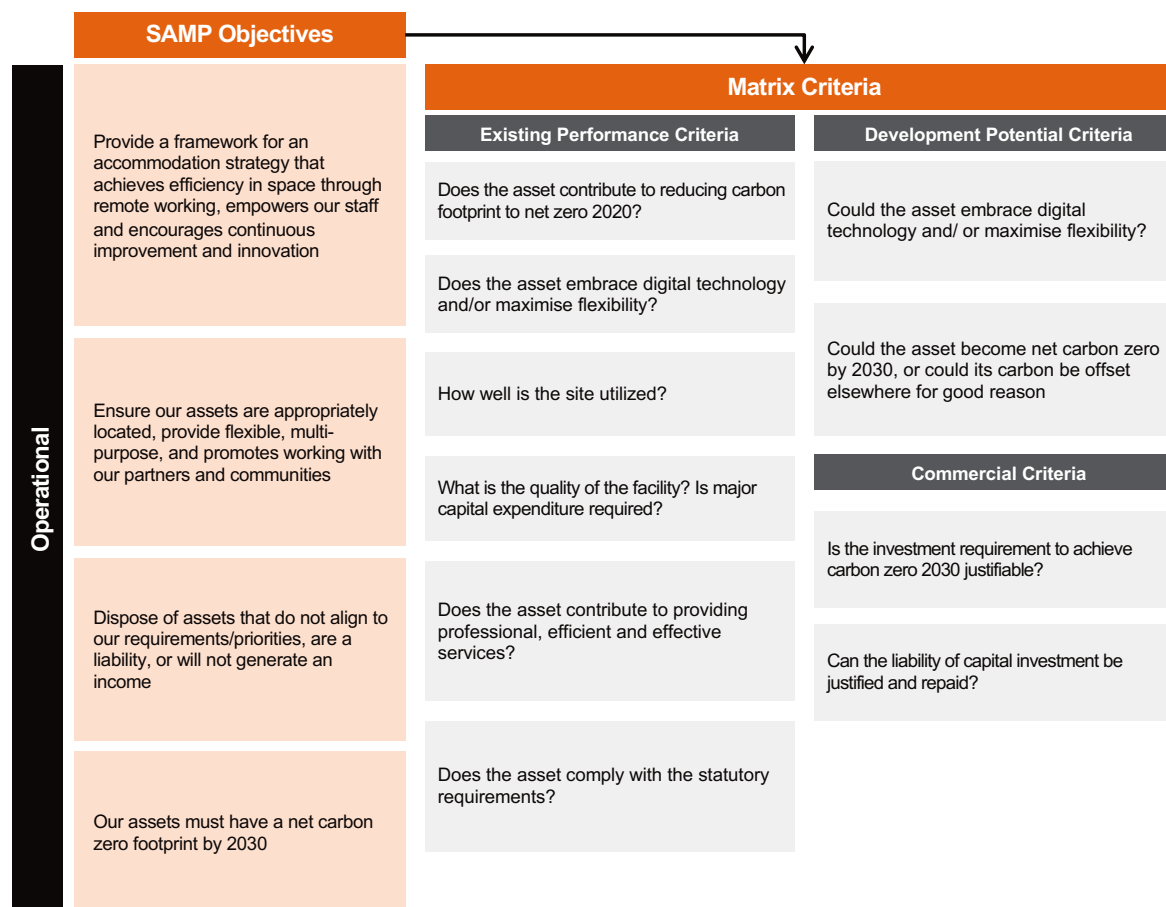
# Decision-making Framework

## Operational Objectives

The operational criteria focus on how the asset is currently performing, its utilisation, cost in use, future liability, and potential for change of use and improvement.

Understanding utilisation and current performance is critical for delivering a fit for purpose and cost-effective estate. An asset may be cost effective to run, but if utilisation is poor then the cost should not be considered low as it is not being used and is therefore a liability.

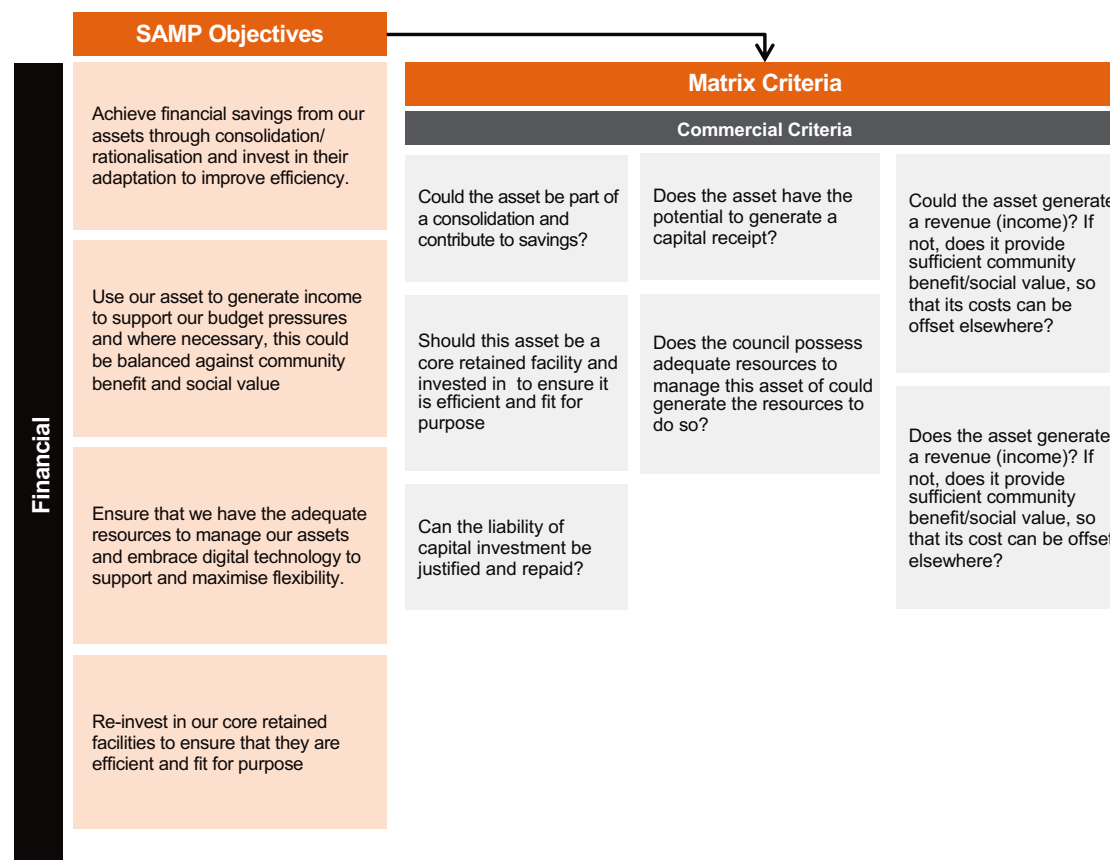
The commercial criteria consider the return on investment for improving the carbon rating and energy efficiency and also the cost associated with capital replacement and refurbishment. There may be instances where it is more cost effective to relocate or purchase a new building due to the medium to long term costs of retaining a building.



# Decision-making Framework

## Financial Objectives

The financial criteria focus purely on the asset's financial merits. The test challenges the cost in use, capital investment liability and the opportunity to generate a capital receipt or income. There are likely to be properties that are well performing but carry high costs or potentially have a high capital value and where these instances occur it is important to look at options to potentially relocate to accommodation that could still support service delivery, but release value or reduce liability.





# Decision-making Framework

## Scoring matrix

The decision-making matrix uses a simple 1-5 scoring method to assess the properties conformance with each of the criteria set out. A description of each score is set out in the table below:

Score	Description	Detailed Description
1	Fails to contribute	The property fails to meet any part of the criteria and there is little prospect of this changing
2	Part contributes	The property meets some or part of the criteria but fails to meet the majority of the most important elements
3	Meets minimum targets	The property meets the minimum criteria or the key criteria but fails to meet some of the less important elements
4	Exceeds targets	The property performs well and exceeds all of the criteria or excels against the key criteria and meets the targets of the less important elements
5	Excels against targets	The property scores highly against all elements of the criteria



# Decision-making Framework

## Decision making process

Over the course of the 10-year period that the SAMP will be in place every property asset should be subject to the Decision-Making Matrix process. As a priority, all operational property assets will be reviewed and scored against the evaluation matrix. This will ensure that those assets that are supporting front line services are assessed, scored and categorised at the earliest opportunity.

Through the assessment process opportunities will be identified to reduce the operational estate, generate income, capital receipts or bring forward development. Therefore, the assessment process will help the council to determine whether an asset should be retained, adapted, developed or disposed in line with ISO 55001 requirements.

The Decision-Making Matrix is formed of two parts, the first is the “Existing Performance Review” and the second is the Potential Performance Review.

The Existing Performance Review is made up of 18 core questions that are scored 1-5 against the Strategic, Operational and Financial criteria described above. In principle, where the total evaluation score is 54 or more the asset will be retained and managed to support service delivery. However, all properties that score a marginal 50-60 should be moderated and reviewed in more detail with the respective service and the property team to determine whether the asset passes or fails Gateway 1. Any assets that ‘pass’ the Gateway 1 criteria, will need to be fully assessed to understand the full impact on the long-term retention and management of this asset. As part of this assessment, the property team will develop a Planned Maintenance programme.

Where properties score less than 54, they will ‘fail’ Gateway 1 and move to part 2 of the assessment “Potential Performance Review” where the asset will be assessed against a further 13 questions.

# Decision-making Framework

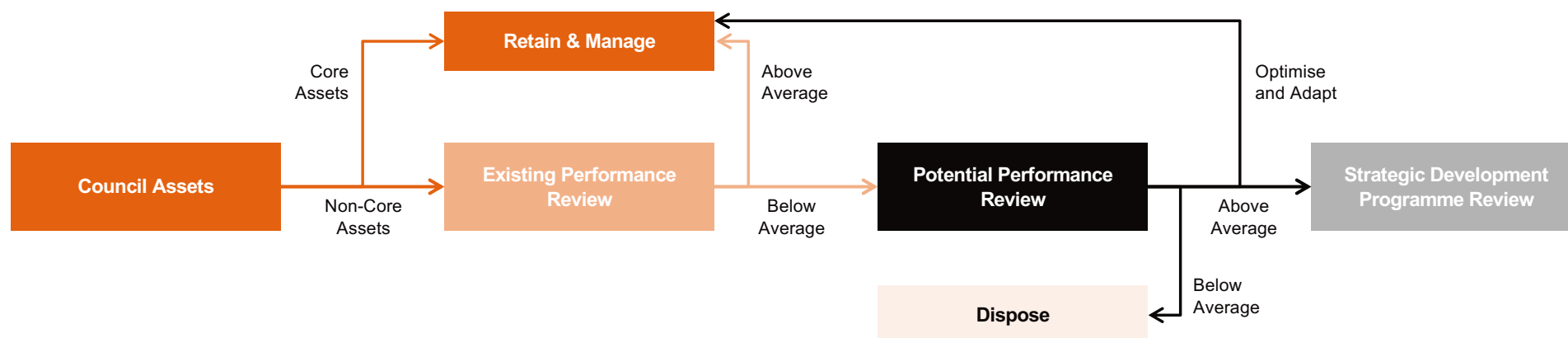
## Decision making process cont.

Assets that score 39 or more, will 'pass' Gateway 2 and following a review of the specific answers to the 13 questions will proceed as follows:

1. 'optimise and adapt' – This route will involve the asset being assessed by the Major Projects team as a future capital project; or
2. be reviewed by the Regeneration team for consideration for the Strategic Development Programme.

Assets that score below 39 will be reviewed by the property team for an appropriate disposal and generation of a capital receipt.

The illustration below provides a summary of the process:





# Shaping the Future Estate

## Operational estate

The Council's core operational estate is made up of buildings that support service delivery. This accommodation includes:

- Offices (Civic and back-office accommodation),
- Libraries
- Children's Centres, Schools, Nurseries and PRU's
- Cemetery, crematorium, mortuaries
- Leisure Centres

The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan was drafted and adopted in 2016. The plan sets out a background and summary of the Council's property portfolio and identifies key issues and priorities for change over the 5-year period to 2021. The plan was drafted to support the Council's Corporate Plan and is based around 5 key themes and sets out 10 specific priorities. The themes and priorities are set out in the table below and a summary of each is provided further on in this section.

Theme No.	Theme Description	Priority No.	Priority Description
1	Portfolio Management	1	Ensure the Estate is of Optimum Size
		2	Improve Property Utilisation
		3	Co-operation with Public Bodies to enable co-location and/or integration of services
		4	Identify Opportunities for Service and Asset Transfer
2	Estate Management	5	Enhance Income from the Estate
		6	Make the Estate Safe and Fit for Purpose
4	Energy Efficiency	7	Ensure Effective Estate Management of Leased Estate.
		8	Reduce Carbon Omissions
		9	Ensuring Compliance with Provisions of the Energy Act 2011
4	Regeneration Strategy	10	Support North Somerset's Growth Ambitions
		11	Develop a Regeneration Framework for Council's Involvement
5	Property Investment Strategy	12	Develop a Property Investment Framework & Strategy



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Office Accommodation Strategy

North Somerset Council (“the Council”) have, like many organisations, had to adapt their ways of working rapidly in response to the COVID- 19 pandemic. Whilst this brought about challenges, it also shone a light on opportunities and demonstrated that the Council can maintain effective service delivery with significantly reduced availability of the corporate estate. This report provides a vision for a new, flexible working operating model in a post COVID-19 world, a position statement in the context of the Council’s readiness to realise this vision, as well as a framework for the required transformation programme.

The Council’s corporate estate underwent significant rationalisation in 2014 moving from 18 to 2 primary locations. The ICT landscape too was partially upgraded to facilitate remote working. In recent years, however, the number of staff working in Council offices has reduced with agility ratios in the Town Hall, and in particular Castlewood, moving close to 1:1. This, together with the results of the October 2020 pulse survey, indicate there remains opportunity to further rationalise the corporate estate through either sale or lease. Analysis indicates future desk space requirements could reduce by up to 50% or higher subject to final working practices<sup>^</sup>. Feedback received from colleagues in the pulse surveys aligns with the Council’s ambition to capitalise on the flexible work practices established and tested during COVID-19.

### **There are five primary aspects to the proposed accommodation strategy in a post COVID-19 world**

1. Retention of the Town Hall as the primary office location and culture heart of the Council, but with a recognised need to invest in the building to support new ways of working
2. Continuation of home working, where this is possible considering the employee’s job role and home circumstances
3. An on-going need for family and children centres etc. outside the core Council office environments to facilitate face-to-face meetings in ‘neutral’ locations that are needed to support delivery of Council services. There is also a need for these teams to have touch-down focus workspaces away from their home working environments
4. A phased transition from Castlewood by Q3 2022 to release the site for re-development, starting with a consolidation of Council occupation from Q1 2021 and subsequent release of space to support local regeneration and / or generate an income for the Council
5. Touch-down locations beyond the Town Hall as required to support the provision of Council services in communities across the County



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Office Accommodation Strategy Cont.

A target operating model setting objectives for the strategy upon full implementation has been developed in consultation with stakeholders. These are set around three pillars of: People & Culture, Place & Community and Planet.

Three project workstreams are required to deliver the vision:

Workstream #	Description	Key Outcomes	Key Milestones
Workstream 1	Re-imagine ways of working and invest in the Town Hall	A reconfigured Town Hall embracing new ways of working, with the Town Hall embedded as the cultural heart and primary office location of the Council. Remote working fully adopted along with transformational working practices	Feb '21 – Adoption of Accommodation Strategy 2021 Q3 – Agreement on the final plan Oct '22 – Refurbishment completed
Workstream 2	Castlewood Transition	Council staff initially relocated to a single area in Castlewood with vacated space re-purposed for alternate use that supports local regeneration and / or generates an income for the Council. Exit from Castlewood to release land for development by 2022 Q3	Feb '21 – Adoption of Accommodation Strategy 2021 Q3 – Agreement and sign-off of strategic development proposals Oct '22–'25- Exit building and commence site redevelopment
Workstream 3	Touch-down Locations – Project Phase	Identification of touch-down locations for Council staff beyond the Town Hall based on service need to support communities across the County. Adaptation of retained assets in accordance with the SAMP to meet future needs	Feb '21 – Complete role mapping and persona development of Council staff 2021 Q3 – Agreement on the locations of touch-down points beyond the Town Hall Oct '22 – Complete adaptation of retained assets, and enter agreements with other public sector bodies regarding co-working arrangement to meet future service needs in communities across the County



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Sport & Leisure, Built Facilities Study 2019-2036 – Draft Strategy

A draft strategy has been produced setting out the vision, aims and needs over the next 15 years. The Council has developed this strategy based on demographic information, growth forecasts and engagement with residents and sports / recreational clubs and groups.

*Suggested Vision: 'to ensure that there are high quality sustainable facilities offering a range of sports / physical activities in order to meet current and future levels of demand and provide even more opportunities for active participation and healthier lifestyles.' - based on Corporate Plan*

### **The aims of providing sufficient high quality, fit for purpose and accessible facilities, places and spaces are to:**

- Develop a portfolio of fit for purpose, modern, accessible and operationally effective sport and leisure facilities
- Provide facilities which provide opportunities to participate, maintain and grow physical activity levels.
- Develop additional facility provision where need is evidenced e.g. as a result of population growth, and invest in refurbished/replacement facilities where needed
- Design in flexibility; future facility provision may need to be more multi-purpose in nature, reflecting changing participation trends and opportunities and unforeseen activities and management practices
- Work with partners to enable opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces, and particularly at a very local level, using e.g. community centres/halls.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Sport & Leisure, Built Facilities Study 2019-2036 – Draft Strategy Cont.

Set out in the table below are the key priorities that have been identified through the drafting of the Sport & Leisure Built Facilities – Draft Strategy.

FACILITY TYPE	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION
Sports Halls	Secured access for community use incorporated as part of planning conditions.
	Long term replacement / refurbishment of ageing facilities.
Swimming Pools	Increased community access water space, equivalent to 193-225 sq. m (just over 1 x 4 lane x 25 m pools) as a minimum; additional housing development could increase the amount of water space needed.
	Replacement / refurbishment of ageing facilities.
Health and Fitness	Retain provision of existing levels of community access and affordable fitness facilities as a minimum.
	Invest in the existing fitness offers at Strobe and Scotch Horn Leisure Centres.
	Potential to increase number of fitness stations at North Somerset Council leisure facilities.
General Provision	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of community halls and active environments, reflecting active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking/cycling/jogging routes.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Sport & Leisure, Built Facilities Study 2019-2036 – Draft Strategy Cont.

### The emerging needs are based on:

- North Somerset has a very good range of existing sport and leisure facilities across the area; however, some existing facilities are of a poorer quality than others, and some will require replacement /refurbishment in the medium and long term.
- On education sites some facilities are now ageing and will require investment to upgrade or replace provision in the medium to long term. Also, access to these facilities is largely at the discretion of those in charge of the school. Mechanisms to guarantee community access to these facilities outside school hours needs to be addressed wherever possible. It is recognised that the advent of Academy status for many secondary schools has resulted in changes impacting on wider use of school facilities. Local arrangements are key to moving forward.
- In North Somerset, there is unmet current and future demand for community accessible swimming pool provision. There is also a need to retain existing levels of community access and affordable fitness facilities into the future and develop additional provision.
- North Somerset's population is forecast to increase significantly between now and 2036 (by 16,979), so there is a particular need to ensure sufficient provision of accessible, quality and affordable facilities – formal and informal – and multi-purpose spaces to meet increased local need.
- While 60.9% of the population achieves the Chief Medical Officer's target of 150 minutes of physical activity per week (Source: North Somerset Public Health Report – 2015) it is clear there is work to do to increase levels of regular participation amongst the 24.5% who are inactive, many of whom will be living in the more deprived areas of North Somerset and may not have access to private transport. (The reason the % do not total 100% is that there are also people who are active, but not active enough; this is the missing 14.6%).
- Good geographical distribution of facilities and physical activity opportunities across North Somerset will enable more people to access facilities in the urban area by walking, and/or cycling. It also means better use of existing community places and spaces for sport and physical activity i.e. more use of community centres/halls for badminton, fitness classes etc.
- More, and better, access to physical activity at a local level is important for residents, particularly those who are currently inactive, and those without access to private transport, to participate, and become physically active. Linking facility provision, informal and formal, to good levels of public transport access and opportunities for active travel, and informal use facilities will help to facilitate more active lifestyles for more people. This is important given the need to retain and continue to grow existing levels of physical activity in North Somerset and continue to positively address both child and adult obesity, plus the health inequalities across the area.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Playing Pitch Strategy (May 2020)

The playing pitch strategy has been developed as part of the Sport & Leisure Strategy and therefore has been subject to the same engagement process. The findings in this report are based on data collected from several credible sources, including but not limited to:

- Local authority and public policy strategic documentation
- Sport England tools, including Active Places Power, the Active Lives Survey and the Sports Facility Calculator
- Stakeholder consultation, including Council Officers, Sport England, Wesport, relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport, local clubs; and
- Site visits, undertaken at all sites across the Study area.

At a strategic level, the following key recommendations have been identified for each of the sport typologies, as well as for general sports provision.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Sport & Leisure, Built Facilities Study 2019-2036 – Draft Strategy Cont.

### General Recommendations

FACILITY TYPE	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION
<b>Playing Fields</b>	Protect all playing field land including current and disused playing pitches and sporting facilities in line with the NFFP, Council Local Plan Policy and Sport England Playing Fields Policy.
<b>General</b>	Utilising the planning system to ensure provision is added and updated in line with population growth.
<b>Changing Facilities</b>	Address the issue of poor ancillary and changing pavilion quality through the refurbishment and replacement of existing ancillary facilities, prioritising those on multi-pitch sites that are currently well used. Utilise the action plan to identify specific sites for development.
<b>Community Support / Community Asset Transfer</b>	Work with well-run sports clubs to utilise the existing volunteer networks across North Somerset and provide more autonomy for clubs, allowing those organisations that have adequate governance and financial stability to develop facilities and participation.
<b>Pitch Capacity</b>	Enhance the drainage and maintenance of both natural turf and artificial pitches that are currently operating over-capacity, to increase the pitch capacity to accommodate demand of current user clubs, especially on council-maintained pitches. Utilise the action plan to identify specific sites for development
<b>Pitch Capacity</b>	Work with educational establishments that provide playing pitches for use by community teams to secure formal community use of pitches and ancillary facilities through a Community Use Agreement. Where these community use agreements currently exist, work with education establishments and users to ensure that requirements for community use are being enforced
<b>Community Support / Community Asset Transfer</b>	Work with clubs based at council owned sites, to establish long-term security use agreements, ensuring that clubs and participants have security of tenure and are able to grow and develop through grant funding wider investment.
<b>Site Specific Needs</b>	Work with clubs to address site specific needs as identified in the full strategy



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Libraries: An Essential Part of Local Recovery (July 2020)

Libraries play critical role to every community in the UK. From a place for quiet reflection, to babies' rhyme time and mother support groups to a place of study for young adults and for older residents to avoid isolation. Libraries have become more than buildings, and over the past decade have transformed to digital hubs and community engagement locations. In July 2020 Libraries Connected produced; "Libraries: An essential part of local recovery" to support Council's, communities, education providers and communities to re-open libraries.

### A summary of the key findings in the report is set out below:

- During lockdown, libraries expanded their digital and remote offer to continue to provide services to their communities:
- They've seen a 600% increase in digital membership as well as fourfold increase in the number of eBooks borrowed.
- These activities support children learning at home, reduce isolation and include exciting new events created in partnership with local artists and arts organisations.
- There were over 226m library visits in the UK last year (Public Library Statistics, CIPFA, 2018-19), and 72% of people in England think that libraries are an essential or very important service to the community (Shining a Light, Carnegie UK Trust, 2017). Many of these people depend on libraries as one of the few free and safe public spaces in their communities.
- Libraries also provide computers to access local authority and other community agencies such as Citizens Advice as well as support for those who aren't comfortable with IT. But as a driver for inclusion, community cohesion and social mobility, libraries offer far more.

Five key areas have been identified where libraries can play a central role in meeting the needs of individuals and communities who may be struggling to overcome the effects of the Covid-19 crisis. These are:

### 1. Economic recovery with help and training for job seekers and entrepreneurs

- Employment support and training (support to get online, job searching, CV writing, improving IT skills)
- Business and entrepreneur support (access to data/intelligence, mentoring/training, networking, accessible & welcoming space with wifi, PC, desks etc).

### 2. Education support for children and SEND students who struggled to learn at home

- Through the Universal Information and Digital Offer and the Reading Offer, underpinned by The Children's Promise, libraries provide free, local access to a range of IT, learning and information resources and activities to schoolchildren of all ages.
- Free computer and internet access
- Homework clubs



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Libraries: An Essential Part of Local Recovery (July 2020) contd.

Five key areas have been identified where libraries can play a central role in meeting the needs of individuals and communities who may be struggling to overcome the effects of the Covid-19 crisis. These are:

### 1. Economic recovery with help and training for job seekers and entrepreneurs

- Employment support and training (support to get online, job searching, CV writing, improving IT skills)
- Business and entrepreneur support (access to data/intelligence, mentoring/training, networking, accessible & welcoming space with wifi, PC, desks etc).

### 2. Education support for children and SEND students who struggled to learn at home

- Through the Universal Information and Digital Offer and the Reading Offer, underpinned by The Children's Promise, libraries provide free, local access to a range of IT, learning and information resources and activities to schoolchildren of all ages.
- Free computer and internet access
- Homework clubs
- Class visits
- STEM and code clubs
- Makerspaces (STEAM activities)
- National reading and learning partnerships



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Libraries: An Essential Part of Local Recovery (July 2020) contd.

### 3. Isolation mitigation for vulnerable groups and to help people to reconnect locally

Through the Universal Health and Wellbeing Offer, libraries offer a range of creative and social activities which engage and connect individuals and communities, combat loneliness and improve wellbeing. These include:

- Social prescribing: Libraries connect people to community groups and services and work through local partners to raise awareness of the local support that's available
- Early years activities: These include Baby bounce, rhyme times and stay and play sessions that provide social opportunities for young children and their carers
- Community groups: These cater for a range of people including teens, older people, and include activities such as Knit and natter, coffee mornings and reading groups
- Libraries of Sanctuary: Libraries are working with City of Sanctuary to welcome refugees and other new arrivals into their community and to foster a culture of inclusivity
- Support for those with special needs or disabilities: These include autism-friendly libraries, visually impaired reading groups and sensory equipment in libraries that provide support and connections for carers also
- Mobile libraries and home delivery services: These visits are a key source of social interaction for those who have difficulty leaving their homes.

### 4. Digital inclusion for residents who lack IT skills or have no access to the Internet

Through the Information and Digital Offer, libraries offer a huge amount of digital support, training and access to some of the most disadvantaged people in the UK. Services include:

- 26m hours of supported internet access each year on 40,000 PC's<sup>4</sup>
- An estimated 99.3% of libraries offering free WiFi, thanks to DCMS funding<sup>4</sup>
- 91% helping library users to get online via one-to-one and group support<sup>5</sup>
- 76% providing specific support for older people<sup>5</sup>
- 18,426 library staff have completed the Digital Skills training on Learning Pool.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Libraries: An Essential Part of Local Recovery (July 2020) contd.

### 5. Cultural partnership to help local artists and arts organisations to continue their work.

Library services support the local arts community by providing:

- Space: 94% provide or hire out space for cultural activities
- Activities: Over 80% provide cultural activities at least monthly or quarterly
- Events: Over 80% organised events connected with books such as talks and workshops with authors and writers, at least monthly or quarterly, while over 60% organised events such as film screenings, live performances and concerts at least once a year
- Partnerships: 81% have some form of cultural partnership in place with the arts, museums and galleries sector, 40% have cultural education partnerships and digital partnerships in place and 26% have economic partnerships with creative businesses
- Programmes: Over 80% offered programmes such as Celebrating Shakespeare or Fun Palaces.
- 60% organised events such as film screenings, live performances and concerts at least once a year
- Partnerships: 81% have some form of cultural partnership in place with the arts, museums and galleries sector, 40% have cultural education partnerships and digital partnerships in place and 26% have economic partnerships with creative businesses
- Programmes: Over 80% offered programmes such as Celebrating Shakespeare or Fun Palaces.
- 60% organised events such as film screenings, live performances and concerts at least once a year
- Partnerships: 81% have some form of cultural partnership in place with the arts, museums and galleries sector, 40% have cultural education partnerships and digital partnerships in place and 26% have economic partnerships with creative businesses
- Programmes: Over 80% offered programmes such as Celebrating Shakespeare or Fun Palaces.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Library Engagement Summary

The Library service were engaged as part of the development of the SAMP. A summary of their feedback, opportunities and priorities is set out below:

### General Feedback

- There are 11 libraries with some operating as children's centres too
- There was a lot of capital investment during the earlier consolidation programme
- Location of libraries is critical to ensuring they are well used and form part of the community
- The libraries service works with other public sector partners to provide a full offer to residents
- The current depot site is used as for library storage and also staff back office
- The existing revenue budget is stretched
- Portishead gains rent from adjacent shops

FACILITY TYPE	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION
Library Buildings	The libraries at Nailsea and Clevedon need new facilities / refurbishment
Library Buildings	The size of most libraries is adequate, but accessibility is an issue for those less able, those with young children and the elderly
Technology	The ICT connectivity in most libraries is not very good
Library Utilisation	Co-working takes place at Yatton and there is shared office space between the council and community organisations
Library Utilisation	Libraries have bookable space for local groups and individuals and there is an opportunity to improve the amount of hire that takes place and promote spaces
Library Utilisation	Some days libraries are not open – there may be opportunities for the spaces to be used for other purposes?
Library Buildings	There is a gap in more rural locations, but no suitable sites have been identified



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Depots & Public Convenience

The Council currently operate 15 depot sites across North Somerset. These depot sites provide both waste and recycling facilities for residents and small businesses as well as operational facilities for Council staff including 2 no. maintenance depots and a highways depot.

The Council owns and leases 24 public conveniences across the borough, 22 are freehold and 2 leasehold. The facilities are mainly located in the Town Centre locations of Weston Super Mare, Clevedon and Portishead.

The Council is developing a future depot strategy and it is anticipated that this will be completed by Summer 2021. As part of the development of the SAMP stakeholders were engaged and consulted in relation to their issues, priorities and requirements in relation to Depots and Public Conveniences.

### The key issues relating to depots at the present time are:

- The site Civic Waste Site at Weston-Super-Mare is leased to / from xx and expires in 2024
- Sale of neighbouring distribution park as housing estate could result in the need to relocate the depot
- The Lorry park is not fit for purpose and therefore lorries park off site and in close proximity to another housing estate under development
- The Lorry park requires £200k capital expenditure to make it fit for purpose

FACILITY TYPE	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION
Depot	The site Civic Waste site at Weston-Super-Mare is leased to / from xx and expires in 2024. Decision needs to be made to extend or terminate
Depot	The sale of a neighbouring distribution park for development as housing next door to the Civic Waste site at Weston-Super-Mare could result in the need to relocate the depot
Lorry Park	The Lorry park is not fit for purpose and therefore lorries park off site and in close proximity to another housing estate under development
Lorry Park	The Lorry park requires £200k capital expenditure to make it fit for purpose
Public Convenience	All facilities are considered to be in poor condition and requiring refurbishment.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Weston-Super-Mare Regeneration/Town Strategy

A Placemaking Strategy for Weston- super-Mare town centre has been drafted and adopted that sets out a vision and an ambition for a ten-year programme of project delivery to help Weston become a healthier, greener and more prosperous place to live, work and enjoy. Critically, it is also an exercise to use a new place-identity to better broadcast Weston to existing and future residents, employers, investors and visitors.

The strategy is the result of deep and wide engagement with the local community, data capture and analysis and developing project proposals. Much of the initial work was undertaken leading up to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown of 2020 which had a very significant impact on the town centre and visitor economy. The set of proposals recognise the profound longer-term implications for the community, the economy and people's daily lives.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Economic Plan

In September 2020 the Council launched its response to the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic with ambitious new plans to protect jobs and boost the economy. The new strategies were agreed by the council's Executive and have been pushed forward as a key priority in response to the challenges and opportunities presented by the coronavirus crisis. The new Economic Plan sets out 15 commitments designed to create new jobs, bring in investment, generate opportunities for young people, address North Somerset skills gaps, and look to upskill individuals who are facing redundancy.

### **The new plan has two core drivers:**

1. Helping those suffering economic hardships and building on the opportunities the crisis has revealed. Our priority is to first identify projects which can help residents experiencing exacerbated deprivation due to the impact of the pandemic. Job losses, business closures, reduced access to digital learning or reskilling courses must be addressed to lessen the impact felt by our vulnerable communities. The Governor of the Bank of England said that how we respond to these key issues will be the true measure of effectiveness 'rather than the scale of any short-term plunge in GDP' and we at North Somerset Council agree.
2. The second driver is rooted in the changes we've all had to make to the way we live and work and the opportunities that has created. Economic and financial values will remain a core priority in our recovery, but the lockdown has also highlighted a different set of values. Community, connectivity and wellbeing, as well as a healthy and sustainable environment, are now much more prominent drivers for decision-makers.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Economic Plan – Continuation

**The council is prioritising economic renewal activity around three key pillars:**

- providing inclusive growth and wellbeing for North Somerset people
- delivering digital access for all
- supporting green business and low carbon activities.

One of the commitments from the new Economic Plan is to launch an Employment and Skills Strategy.

**This will focus on:**

- empowering young people to achieve their potential
- addressing under-employment and low pay
- supporting those with barriers to employment
- developing workforces' skills for emerging jobs
- creating conditions which enable businesses to attract and keep the talent they need.
- These plans build on the delivery of a package of immediate support put in place over the summer, which includes:
- public outdoor seating which runs until mid-October in town centres and supports local retail, creates space for the public to reconnect post lockdown and encourages visits to our towns
- the launch of a Made in North Somerset Market Place which provides a selling platform for food, drink and creative businesses whose products are made, grown, reared or produced in North Somerset
- investment in town centres to develop their own business-led virtual high streets to increase resilience and reach more customers
- the introduction of a North Somerset wide cultural programme to enliven our town centres, encourage people to visit and support our local economy
- a universal pre-start, early growth and business support service, delivered with the West of England Growth Hub and set up to help anyone looking to start their own business.

This is a 5-year plan but during a time of economic uncertainty, it needs to be flexible and responsive. It will be reviewed every three months by an Economic Plan Steering Group and the commitments will be continuously assessed to ensure they are responding to needs and opportunities.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Economic Plan

The council has committed too and will prioritise the following projects:

THEME	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION
Fair	Full fibre and 5G: Ensure next-generation digital connectivity and telecommunications technology is supplied into premises, workplaces, and homes.
Open	North Somerset Local Plan: Develop evidence-led economic input into the new Local Plan to deliver mixed and sustainable communities with new homes, jobs, and infrastructure.
Open	Town centre transformation: Encourage our town centres to become thriving places to live, work, and enjoy.
Open	Tech adoption: Ensure businesses can adopt digital technology and maximise the benefits.
Green	Mobility as service: Develop wider access to on-demand transport, mobility services and carbon-efficient local delivery solutions.
Fair	Low carbon inward investment: Grow North Somerset's green economy by working in partnership with regional inward investment organisations and working with residents to access skills to support the sector
Fair	Infrastructure for local working: Provide digital infrastructure and facilities for local working so that our places can realise the maximum opportunities of distributed and flexible working.
Green	Retrofitting buildings, community energy, renewable energy and carbon reduction: Maximise benefits of energy efficiency schemes by ensuring local people have the right skills to make the most of the job opportunities.
Fair	Employment and skills strategy" Focused activity around opportunities for those who have lost their jobs and are disenfranchised from the labour market combined with the provision of opportunities to reskill, upskills and deliver access to further and higher education.
Fair	Strategic employment sites: Protect jobs and deliver sustainable activity which retains positive outcomes within the economy and benefits local employment, businesses, and communities
Open	Visitor economy action plan: Deliver a plan which prioritises the promotion and growth of environmentally friendly holidays, and targeted support to improve the quality and diversity of our visitor economy.
Green	Creative industries action plan: Deliver a plan which prioritises sustainability throughout the supply chain, makes the case for investment and nurtures talent.
Open	Enhanced business support programme: commission a universal pre-start, early growth and business resilience service and support SMEs to develop inclusive practices into their business models, such as employee ownership.
Fair	Voluntary, community and social enterprise: Work with the sector to help them demonstrate the positive impact they have on the economy and jointly make the case for increased investment.
Fair	J21 enterprise area: Directly invest and seek investment to help the creation of jobs.
Open	West of England working: Prioritise regional partnerships to ensure maximum impact across the West of England to grow businesses, protect, and create jobs.



# Shaping the Future Estate

## Economic Plan

### Priority Incentives, Stimulus and Existing Resources

**There are specific Government initiatives and existing resources which will also drive our plans and projects, these include:**

- Securing £1.7m from the Getting Building Fund for Weston General Stores a scheme to repurpose vacant retail space in Weston Super Mare creating local workspace and collective trading for local producers.
- £6m investment from Heritage England to bring historic places, rich in heritage back to life to attract residents, tourists, businesses and investors, and create economic growth.
- £1.2m to create a new High Street Heritage programme.
- £55k direct council investment in a cultural programme for our town centres.
- Opportunities for businesses to access the Government's Plan for Jobs which offers businesses financial incentives to recruit young people and apprentices.
- A proportion of £14m funding secured for a Weston College-led Institute of Technology to improve digital training facilities and investment in cyber security training.
- Initial £700k to improve and promote cycling and other green transport.
- Existing dark fibre asset under Weston which could encourage roll out and connection to public sector assets in the town – unlocking full fibre to the town's households.
- Control over North Somerset Council owned land and assets, for example, Weston Business Quarter and the Sovereign Centre.
- £150k Universal Business Support Programme (council and West of England Growth Hub investment)
- North Somerset Council's significant capital programme including Portishead Rail, North-South Link Road, new schools and health centres.
- Access to the Government's Green Grants Programme which can unlock opportunities for businesses and residents.
- £97m for infrastructure to support future housing growth.

These financial incentives and existing resources will support us in prioritising projects and making decisions about which activities we can deliver quickly for maximum impact. Further detailed resource mapping will take place with the Economic Renewal Steering Group to support the delivery of the Plan.