

BUSINESS STRATEGY 2020/23





FOREWORD

We are pleased to present Warwick District Council's 2020-23 Business Strategy which sets out the Council's priorities for the next four years.

Our Vision for the District is to **“to make Warwick District a great place, to live, work and visit, and carbon neutral by 2030”**. To help deliver this Vision, the strategy describes the challenges that the Council faces over the coming years to meet the needs of local people and how we will use our resources to meet those challenges.

The Council's overriding challenge is to tackle the Climate Emergency that faces us all. Whilst we are fortunate to live in such a wonderful part of the country, identified by its parks, gardens and trees, we recognise that the emergency needs a response like never before. We need to be “greener”; act in a more sustainable fashion; and ultimately ensure that future generations continue to experience a District renowned for its wonderful surroundings. We are up for that challenge.

We hope you can take the time to read this Strategy which explores how the Council needs to do things differently, acting as “One Council”, to ensure we can continue to deliver our priorities and maintain the quality of life we value in the District.

Andrew Day, Leader Warwick District Council

INTRODUCTION Our challenges

The public sector, and in particular local government, has experienced a period of unprecedented change and uncertainty, with no indication of when this period may end.

The pressure on resources, brought about by the largest public sector budget reductions in history, is immense, and comes at a time of continuing increases in demand and expectation from a District with a growing population.

Our ability to continue to deliver the quality services you've come to expect and the key actions we plan to prioritise during the life of this Strategy is dependent on how well we address the financial pressures. We have made ongoing savings of £7m since 2010 and need to find at least a further £2m from our base budget (i.e. permanent recurring savings) over the next four years. The way councils are funded is currently being fundamentally reviewed by Government, the outcome of this is as yet unknown and at present funding post 2020/21 is unclear.

The Council has unanimously declared a Climate Emergency and has the ambition to be the first council to become carbon neutral, achieving internationally recognised UN Climate Neutral Status. Tackling the Emergency is at the heart of this Strategy and will underpin our approach to providing our services over the coming years.

Affordable housing is desperately needed in the District. There are nearly 600 individuals with a housing need on the Homechoice Register. We have a Local Plan in place to provide the total number of homes required but we need to ensure that people can access those homes at a reasonable cost. We will put all our energies into securing land so that we can undertake an extensive social housing building programme.

We recognise that although the District is by-and-large an affluent area there are those who need our support whether because of illness, temporary unemployment, infirmity or just events. The Government is rolling out its Universal Credit programme and this may cause financial difficulties for some of our residents. We have put in place a comprehensive support mechanism for our tenants and we will monitor and where necessary amend this support.

The District will see its population grow to 177,000 in 2029. We will see expanding and new communities in the District. We will need to ensure that our services respond to this growth and that we use new technology to ensure that our service delivery is as effective and efficient as possible.



KEY FACTS about the District and Services

Warwick District Council is one of five district / borough councils within Warwickshire. It lies in the south of the county, covering approximately 28,288 hectares, and is home to around 58,700 households (137,700 people).

The area includes the towns of Kenilworth, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick and Whitnash, which account for around 80% of the population. The remainder of residents live in a number of villages, many of which are in the Green Belt. The district is bordered to the south and west by Stratford-on-Avon District, to the east by Rugby Borough and to the north by Solihull and the city of Coventry.

Positioned at the centre of the UK, the district has excellent road and rail links providing easy access to the whole country. There are major routes across the area including the M40 providing direct access to London and indirect links to the north-west via the M6 and M5 respectively, as well as links to the north and east. There are also excellent rail services to the rest of the West Midlands and London.

Warwick District Council has the largest population in the county and the population density of 4.9 people per square hectare is the second highest in Warwickshire and above national/regional

averages. The population grew over the ten years from 2001 to 2011 by over 9%, a faster rate than England and Wales and the West Midlands and second only to Rugby in the county.

With a rich cultural heritage, the district is home to the popular tourist attractions of Warwick Castle and Kenilworth Castle, as well as several museums in Warwick. The Royal Pump Rooms in Royal Leamington Spa offer an enlightening visitor experience, whilst the Royal Spa Centre runs an exciting programme of events in its 667 seat main house and 188 seat studio cinema. The district has been successful in achieving five prestigious Green Flag community awards in recognition of its outstanding green spaces. Royal Leamington Spa has also achieved a Purple Flag, acknowledging the excellent night-time management of the town centre.

Both Kenilworth and Royal Leamington Spa were recently ranked in the top five places to live in the Midlands as part of The Sunday Times' 2019 Best Places to Live in Britain list. The University of Warwick is partly in the District and we house thousands of students. The Sunday Times also ranked the District as in top 20 places in country to live as a student.

We offer valuable and accessible services for the community which helps to promote Warwick District as a great place to live, work and visit. These are managed through the following teams:

Cultural Services

- Sports & Leisure Management
- Active Communities
- Arts - Royal Spa Centre, Town Hall & Royal Pump Rooms and Museum

Finance

- Accountancy
- Audit & Risk
- Exchequer
- Benefits
- Procurement

Health & Community

Protection

- Community Partnership Team
- Regulatory
- Safer Communities

Chief Executive

- Human Resources & Media
- ICT Services
- Democratic Services
- Asset Management

Housing Services

- Housing Needs
- Sustaining Tenancies
- Housing Strategy & Development

Development Services

- Policy & Projects
- Building Control Consortium
- Development Management

Neighbourhood Services

- Bereavement Services
- Green Spaces
- Business Support & Development
- Car Parks
- Contract Services

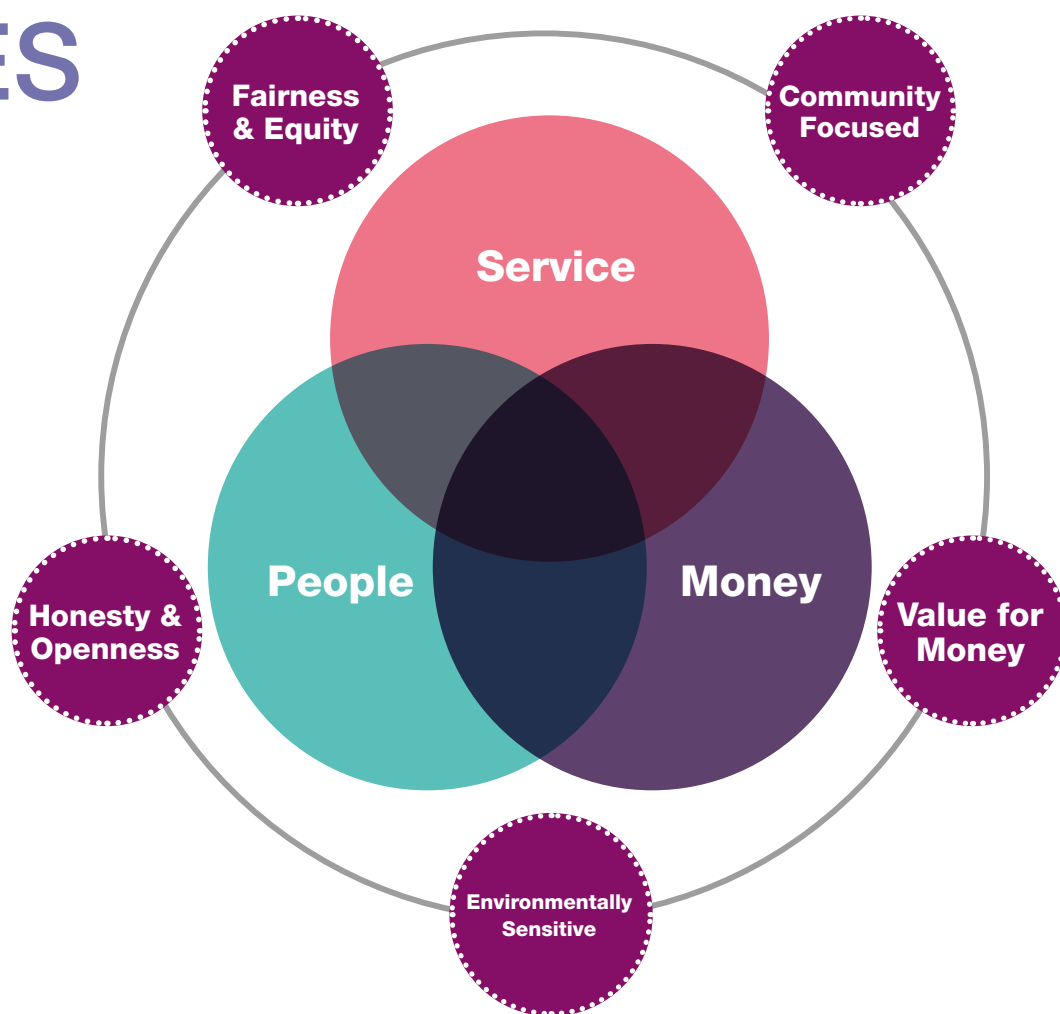
We have a passion to improve services and we want to ensure our effectiveness each and every-day. Our workforce is central to our success and is key to us developing an organisation that is fit for the future. To do that we need to recruit the right people to join us on that journey.

Our aspiration is for an engaged and committed workforce which is customer focused, business-like and able to develop and deliver efficient and effective services.

Warwick District Council has a constructive, transparent and effective relationship with Unison and GMB as recognised Trade Unions.

VALUES

Our values help to guide how we work with each other, with our partners and residents and communities to achieve the vision.



Our values are at the heart of everything we do.

They provide the framework within which we engage with our employees, and ultimately influence and shape our organisational culture.

They are the driving force behind all the work we do.

Honesty and Openness

We will be truthful & transparent about how we run the council.

Value for Money

We will make efficient use of resources to offer the best service at the best price.

Fairness and Equity

We will value all citizens and work without bias or prejudice.

Community Focused

We will put the needs and aspirations of our local communities to the fore and work collaboratively and flexibly as one council.

Environmentally Sensitive

We will ensure our long term impacts are minimised and are sustainable for future generations.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are an Equal Opportunities employer throughout our recruitment and selection procedures, as well as learning and development, appraisal and promotion opportunities.

We quite simply aim to recruit the best person for the job. We use fair and open selection, based on knowledge and experience, skills and behaviour and welcome applications from all.

We promote an environment which offers opportunities for all our staff.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE (FFF)

The Council’s FFF Strategy is designed to deliver its Vision for the District.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an “external” and “internal” Council element to it. The Council’s Service Area Plans are the programme of work fundamental to the delivery of the strands described in the table below.

FFF STRANDS		
PEOPLE	SERVICES	MONEY
External		
Health, Homes, Communities (Ref A)	Green, Clean, Safe (Ref B)	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment (Ref C)
<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities 	<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025 Total carbon emissions within Warwick District are as close to zero as possible by 2030 Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB 	<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Internal		
Effective Staff (Ref D)	Maintain or Improve Services (Ref E)	Financial Footing over the Longer Term (Ref F)
<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours 	<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services 	<p>Intended outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money

The following section outlines the key themes of work we will focus on in order to deliver the intended outcomes for 2020 and beyond.

Responding to the Climate Emergency

The overarching theme for the Council, which will run through all its initiatives and service delivery, will be responding to the Climate Emergency declaration. The Council's Portfolio Holder for Business & Environment is leading a group of Council members to produce a fully-resourced action plan to be considered in tandem with this Strategy although the following priorities have already been identified.

INITIATIVE	FFF Ref
Deliver the climate emergency action plan	A B C D E F
To acquire land to build social housing that is affordable to residents to high environmental standards and explore options for improving energy efficiency of the Council's current buildings	A B
To enable the planting of 160,000 new trees over the next four years	A B
To bring forward a development plan document for improved environmental sustainability of new build properties	A B
To expand the provision of cycle ways in parks and cycle storage facilities in towns	A B
Explore solar, battery and other energy opportunities	B F
To ensure the public realm contracts are designed in such a way as to minimise the environmental impact on the District	A B C E
To provide outstanding public amenities at Newbold Comyn, Bishops Tachbrook and Country Parks	A B E
To undertake a Local Plan Review and develop a new transport and parking strategy for the district with WCC ensuring that air quality issues are addressed	A B C E
Explore ways to support the objectives of the climate emergency through more sustainable and green requirements of event organisers in the District	A B C E

Transforming Services

Transforming of the Council's working practices and business processes, utilising technology and enabling digital services to improve the customer experience and access, and reduce costs. The following priorities have already been identified but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off in the annual Service Area Plans.

INITIATIVE	FFF Ref
Implement a replacement Financial Management software solution	D E F
Implement a replacement Licensing and Neighbourhood Management software solution	B D E F
Implement a replacement Development Services software solution	B C D E F
Enhance the capabilities of the existing asset and housing management software solution	E F
Embed a culture of continual improvement	B D E F
Update the Digital and Customer Access Strategies	B C D E F

Maximising Income

Maximising income by taking a more entrepreneurial approach to income generation and developing new income streams. The following priorities have already been identified or agreed but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off in the annual Service Area Plans.

INITIATIVE	FFF Ref
Produce and implement a masterplan for St Nicholas Park and Myton Fields	A B C E F
Review approach to treasury management	F
Upgrade CCTV Service	B C E F
Capitalise on proven Enterprise Team business model: Expand service provision to maximise income and targeted support	C E F
Develop more commercial approach to our community protection services	E F
Develop a commercial investment strategy	C E F
Undertake car parking charge review	C F
Develop a more commercial approach to events in the District	D E F
Develop the strategic approach to grant finding and other sources of public funding	D E F

Investing in Property

Investing in the Council's built assets to enhance service delivery and/ or increase the financial return. The following priorities have already been identified but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off in the annual Service Area Plans.

INITIATIVE	FFF Ref
Deliver the Asset Management Strategy Action Plan	F
Review the Council's commercial property portfolio for potential disposals, acquisitions and revised leases	F
Review built corporate assets energy costs	B F
Review the Council's operational asset requirements	D E F
Build new, high quality, energy efficient affordable homes	B F
Maximise the return from the Council's landholdings within the Stratford Road employment site	F C
Complete the District-wide Leisure Development Programme	A B C E F

Supporting the Local Economy

Supporting the local economy to produce high quality jobs and increase the prosperity of the District. The following priorities have already been identified but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off in the annual Service Area Plans.

INITIATIVE	FFF Ref
Relocate the Council's Headquarters	C F
Develop the Creative Quarter	A C
Develop a Transport Strategy to support the district's town centres	A B C F
Support our Town Centres to adapt to changing environmental, social and economic conditions, including exploiting any opportunities presented through the Future High Streets Fund	C
Develop North of Gallows Hill (Stadium et al) projects	A B C E F
Implement proposals for hosting Commonwealth Games 2022 at and around Victoria Park and the railway station in Royal Leamington Spa	A B C E F
Work to improve the diversity of the employment land and premises offer within the District	C E F
Planning, funding and delivery of public infrastructure to support the District's communities	A B C

RESOURCE STRATEGIES

The Council's Asset, Digital, Financial and People Strategies set out the resources used to deliver the strategic outcomes over the medium term, whilst taking account of developments in national priorities. These strategies will be reviewed to ensure they are aligned to delivery of the Council's Vision.

Digital Strategy

The Government's strategy is to provide "digital services which are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded". The Digital Strategy outlines the approach that the Council will take to develop and deploy digital technologies that support service delivery, ensuring that these solutions work for our customers. It defines our vision, key themes and overall direction of travel for ICT and Digital services.

People Strategy

The People Strategy sets out how the Council's approach to resourcing, learning and development, and cultural change ensures that its workforce is able to support the Fit for the Future Strategy, and deliver the Council's vision to make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit. Our external focus ensures we communicate and engage with our residents through consultation and conversation.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial framework used to ensure adequate financial resources are available to achieve the Council's objectives, and that appropriate action is taken to address significant future challenges.

Asset Strategy

We have developed a new and updated Asset Management Strategy which will enable us to assess, categorise and agree options and interventions for each of our corporate and commercial assets. This will also assist in meeting the Climate Emergency agenda and the emerging Council Action Plan.

Resource Planning

In tandem with the development of the Business Strategy, a review has been undertaken to determine the senior management resources required to deliver the Strategy. Specifically, the Council has decided that it needs to make further investment in staff if it is to properly respond to the challenges posed by Climate Change.

Managing, Monitoring, Measuring and Reviewing the Strategy

The delivery of this strategy will be overseen by the Council's Corporate Management Team. Performance will be monitored on a monthly basis and reported to Councillors twice yearly. At the end of each financial year the strategy will be reviewed to determine whether any changes are required.



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