

## **2020 vision**

### **Bath and North East Somerset, a beautifully inventive place**

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*'Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21<sup>st</sup> century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of wellbeing, where everyone is invited to think big – a 'connected' area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations'*

## **FOREWORD - Leader**

Bath and North East Somerset is a beautiful and historic place at the heart of South West England, and in the spring of 2015 I had the privilege of being elected Leader of the Council.

I believe that we need a financially sustainable, well run Council. Our residents deserve it, so that they have the best opportunities for themselves and their families; and so that we create an extraordinary legacy for future generations.

Over the next four years I want to lead an area where there is good quality housing that local people can afford, where our roads, cycle and pedestrian routes help people to 'get moving', where health is better and older people can live safe independent lives, where educational attainment is good for all of our children and young people and where we produce steady improvements in economic growth generating more jobs for local people. To achieve these aspirations, I set out 3 aims and 6 areas in our manifesto 'Putting Residents First' that I would like the Council to focus on over the next four years. These are:

Aims:

- A Council which is efficient and well-run
- A Council which invests in the future
- A Council which puts the interests of residents first

6 areas of focus:

- Tackle wasteful spending
- Improve local transport
- New homes and jobs
- Invest in our young people
- Cleaner, greener and healthier communities
- Greater choice and independence for older people

You will see references to these areas throughout this Corporate Strategy and the Directorate delivery plans that flow from it.

However, like most Councils throughout the country, we face an unprecedented financial challenge. Reduced funding from central government coupled with increasing demand for many services means that we need to transform the way we deliver some services, whilst holding on to our commitment to excellence.

I am fully committed to addressing the challenges we face. Together with my Cabinet, I remain ambitious about the promises we have made. We will continue to do more for less and look for innovative ways of investing in the things that matter most to our residents.

Alongside senior Council officers, I have agreed the priorities for the next four years and we are passionately behind them. We have a great opportunity to get this right and this Corporate Strategy sets out how.

**Cllr Tim Warren**  
**Leader of Bath and North East Somerset Council**

*“Our ambition is a council which is efficient and well run, invests in the future and puts the interests of residents first in everything it does”*

## FOREWORD – CEO

With a gross budget of over £320 million and around 2,500 employees, Bath and North East Somerset Council provides and commissions hundreds of services to local residents from social care to street cleaning. It serves a part of the west of England stretching from Bath to the Chew Valley, and covering both urban and rural neighbourhoods.

Over the past four years we have seen significant change – population growth, new legislation and a reducing budget have all meant changes to the way we work and deliver services. Not only have we adapted well; we have been innovative and made progress too, ensuring that we deliver high quality services that matter most to our local communities. 66% of the population are satisfied with the way we run things (up 16% since 2011).

We have seen public health responsibilities successfully transfer to the council and welcomed the opportunity for greater local leadership and involvement in public health programmes. We have also built on our strong history of partnership between the Council and NHS which has led to the integration of many local health and social care services.

We have made important changes to the way we work as an organisation. Our One Stop Shops give residents the option of face-to-face contact with a wide range of services, including housing advice and the police. We are also beginning to embrace digital media seen through our new and improved website, use of Twitter and webcasting; helping people engage with the decisions we make.

Importantly, we have been able to make significant savings of £32 million through developing these efficiencies and new ways of working. This is making a real difference and is helping us to protect front-line services which residents have told us matter most to them.

There is further change to come. Our population continues to grow, the money we receive from central Government will continue to decrease and we will need to respond to Government on issues such as devolution and housing growth.

There will be less public money to deliver public services and so we need to make every penny count. These challenging times will require reforms to services and strong Council leadership to bring partners together to deliver new and innovative ways of doing things that also save us money.

Fortunately there is consensus in Bath and North East Somerset on what a better future should be. The purpose of this document is to explain our future agenda so that we can make our case to local people and Government. It will set out how investment in our vision and priorities will help us drive the improvements we would like to make. We know, as a Council, we need to focus on the following areas over the next four years:

- A strong economy and growth
- A focus on prevention
- A new relationship with customers and communities
- An efficient business

This will allow us to shape our business so that we are able to deliver the Cabinet's 6 manifesto commitments: tackling wasteful spending, new homes and jobs, improve local transport, investing in young people, cleaner, green and healthier communities and independence for older people.

If we get this right, not only will we be able to continue to provide exemplary public services for local people but we can help our partners to do likewise. We have a great opportunity to build on our progress and deliver our 2020 vision for the area.

**Jo Farrar**

**Chief Executive of Bath and North East Somerset Council**

*"We have a great opportunity to shape ourselves for the future – to deliver our ambitious vision for Bath and North East Somerset through building on our successes and delivering new and innovative ways of doing things"*

## The Corporate Strategy

### 2020 vision

***'Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21<sup>st</sup> century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of wellbeing, where everyone is invited to think big – a 'connected' area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations'***

The Bath and North East Somerset 2020 vision sets out our aspirations for the future including good health and wellbeing, economic growth, financial sustainability, an effective transport system and an efficient, well run Council. The vision was developed in partnership with the NHS, police, local business, education, the fire service and the voluntary sector. The purpose of this document is to set out how the Council will play its part.

The Strategy is not intended to capture everything that the Council does. Nor is it a blueprint detailing precisely how we will go about delivering our work and projects. That is the role of more detailed work plans that flow from and into this document. But it does set out the Council's key priorities and programmes over the medium term.

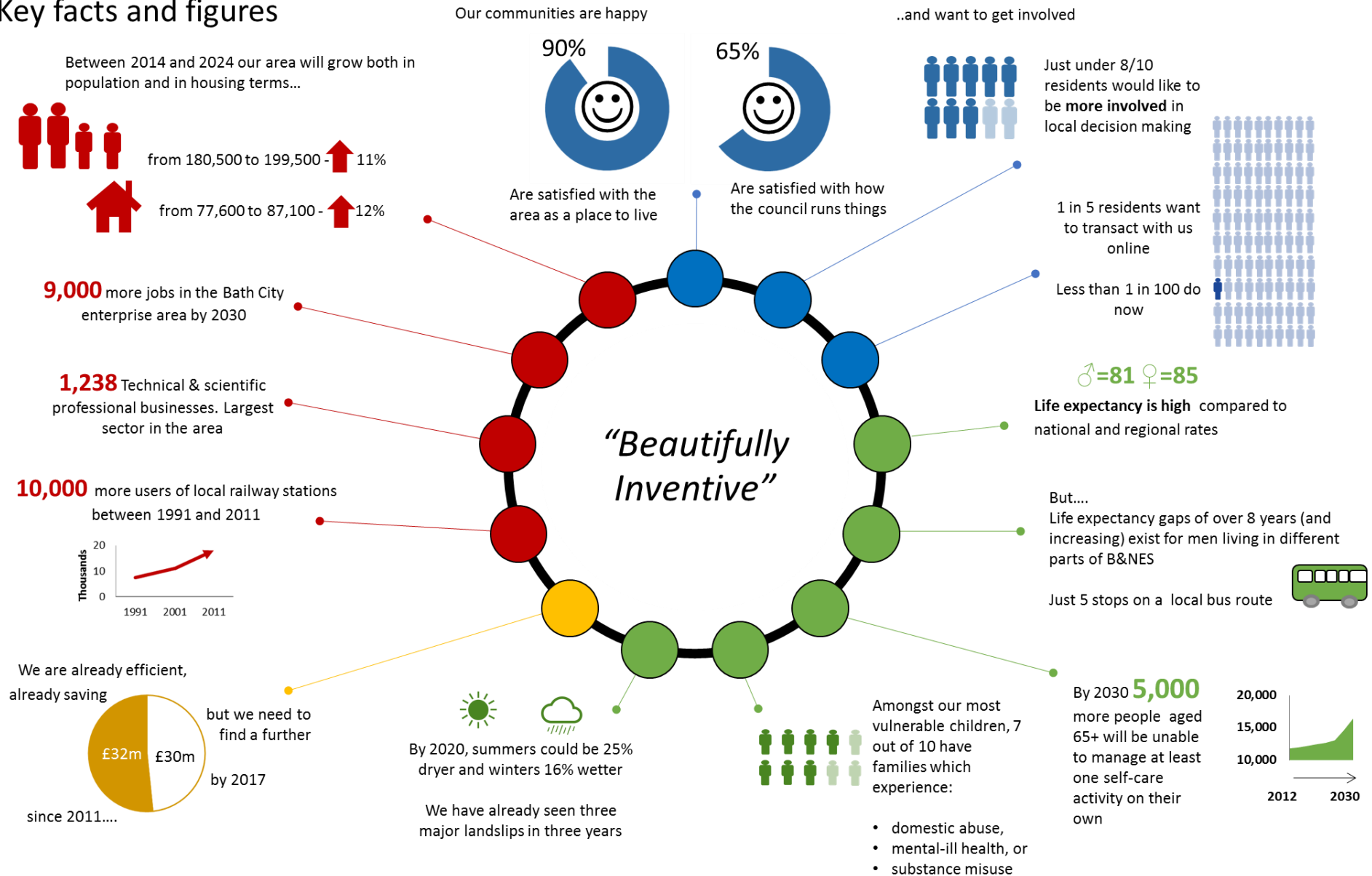
<b>Corporate Strategy priorities</b>	<b>'Putting Residents First' manifesto commitments</b>
A strong economy and growth	Improve transport New homes and jobs Cleaner, greener and healthier communities
A focus on prevention	Invest in our young people Greater choice and independence for older people Cleaner, greener and healthier communities
A new relationship with customers and communities	Cleaner, greener and healthier communities
An efficient business	Tackling wasteful spending

The Strategy is structured by four sections:

- Section one     The case for change
- Section two     Our future agenda
- Section three    Creating the future
- Section four     Our financial strategy 2016 - 2019

# Life in Bath and North East Somerset

## Key facts and figures



**A strong economy and growth** Customers and Communities  
**An efficient business** A focus on prevention

Find out more...  
[www.bathnes.gov.uk/jsna](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/jsna)

## **SECTION ONE – THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

Over the past four years we have made progress and responded well to change. We are a national leader in the integration of health and social care services for both adults and children and our relationship with the NHS continues to grow. Educational outcomes are good at every level and local unemployment is low at less than five per cent. Our Connecting Families programme, working with vulnerable families, is one of the most successful in the country and the Roman Baths is one of the top most visited heritage sites in the UK.

We have significantly reduced the amount of money we spend. £32 million has been saved through efficiencies and changing the way we work, whilst overall satisfaction rates with the Council have gone up.

Despite this, the landscape for public services will continue to change. Over the next four years we will need to adapt to a growing local population, even less public money and new legislation that will change the way we deliver some services. At the same time we will need to do even more, with less, to deliver excellent local services.

Some of the changes facing us:

### **Changing local population**

Our population continues to grow. In the next 4 years there will be 10,950 more people living in Bath and North East Somerset. There will be an additional 2,807 residents aged 65 and over, and 469 more young people (aged 15-24); in part due to the expansion of our 2 renowned universities.

Population growth is positive, but brings with it some particular challenges. From an economic perspective, population growth is generally good news where it increases the productive capacity of the local economy. It also improves tax revenues and helps to balance an aging population. However it will put pressure on existing infrastructure such as transport, housing and school places.

As the number of people aged over 65 increases, the rates and complexity of more acute conditions including heart disease and dementia also rises. This will mean that we will need to think differently about how we provide some services, especially adult health and social care, in order to help people to continue to live independent and fulfilled lives.

The UK performs poorly on several health conditions compared to our European peers including coronary heart disease, stroke and lung cancer. Whilst rates of some of these are comparatively low in Bath and North East Somerset, we can still do more to tackle the underlying risk factors of these conditions and help people to be healthy by stopping smoking, being more active, drinking less alcohol and managing diet and weight.

### **Healthy lifestyles**

Inequality exists in Bath and North East Somerset. Needs assessments show that inequalities exist in different geographical areas, communities, social and economic groups in Bath and North East Somerset; life expectancy for men varies by 9 years along the stops of the 20C bus route in Bath. People living in Twerton have a lower life expectancy than those who live just five bus stops away. There is also



a difference in educational attainment between our more disadvantaged and affluent pupils and we need to do more to narrow this.

### **Finance**

There are likely to be long term pressures on public sector spending until at least 2020. The medium term financial plan to 2015/16 delivered £32 million savings but it is estimated at least a further £30 million will need to be found in the next four years.

To meet this challenge, we will need to continue to change the way we work including reducing our office space, targeting our services to those most in need and exploring new ways of delivering services including shared and commercial services.

### **The economy**

The Bath and North East Somerset economy has made good progress since the 2008 economic downturn. Local unemployment is low and our workforce is skilled and knowledgeable. However, our economy is not as productive as it could be. Average productivity per employee is £41,600 compared to £42,400 nationally. This not only means that we earn less, but we also bring less money into our local economy.

Raising our business productivity is key to increasing our wages and improving our standard of living. For this reason, our focus over the next four years will be to boost high-skilled, better paid jobs by actively promoting business growth - especially growth of higher value businesses such as creative and IT – and promoting training and development.

### **Transport**

Despite improvements in the last few years, there are still challenges facing Bath and North East Somerset and its transport system. Many of our roads, particularly within Bath, market towns and villages, were not designed for the volume and size of vehicles we see today. In addition, parts of the area suffer from poor air quality caused by too much congestion. There is a need to improve our local transport system so that people can get around safely be it on foot or by bike, car, bus or train.

### **Legislation**

Legislative reform – such as the Care Act (which seeks to give people a greater say over their own care) and the Children’s and Families Act (which aims to improve services for vulnerable children and families) – will change the way we think about and deliver some services. Ongoing changes in the education landscape following the Academies Act will also mean that we need to continue to change the way we work with schools.

In addition, the Government continues to consider further devolution to local Councils. The devolution of greater powers, which may include aspects of transport, housing and finance, presents us with opportunities. We will need to ensure that we negotiate with Government to get the best deal for Bath and North East Somerset.

*“We need to invest in our transport infrastructure to cut traffic, improve public transport and get Bath and North East Somerset moving”*

### **Climate change**

Climate change poses significant challenges for the area. Changing weather patterns, severe weather events and pressures around energy supply mean that we will need to consider different choices in how we live our lives.

Making homes more energy efficient and investing in local renewable energy is important to achieving our carbon reduction target and to tackling fuel poverty. Our challenge is to help local people and communities reduce carbon emissions and promote more environmentally-sustainable lifestyles.

The rest of this Corporate Strategy sets out our response to this change and what the future will look like.

*“We are committed to addressing both the causes and effects of climate change in Bath and North East Somerset”*

## **SECTION TWO – OUR FUTURE AGENDA**

The changes that we face mean that we need to continue to work differently to be financially sustainable and deliver high quality services into the future.

We have made good progress. We are building an organisation of talented and committed staff - that have embraced change and saved us money - whilst continuing to deliver excellent local services. This has put us in a good position to lead further innovation and to negotiate with Government on matters such as devolution which can bring economic, political and social benefits to local communities. We have already secured the City Deal which will allow us – and our regional partners – to keep 100 per cent of business rate growth.

However, we have not fully harnessed our potential. There is still more we can do to help people to live well (preventing ill-health), to support and grow local businesses, to involve people in new ways of delivering local services and to create an efficient business. These four areas form our priorities as we move towards our 2020 vision.

## **A strong economy and growth**

Our economic strategy, developed in partnership with education and local business, sets out the steps we need to take to create the right conditions for local economic growth. Our approach will be to regenerate business districts, create new modern office space, support the transition to a low carbon economy, work with others to address the issues of worklessness and open up opportunities for local residents who find the greatest difficulty in entering the labour market.

Working in partnership with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) our underlying ambition is to foster growth and to increase the number of local jobs by 11,500 by 2030. This will require a focus on protecting manufacturing, whilst increasing employment in certain sectors such as creative and digital.

We will seek to raise our business productivity and increase our below average earnings by focusing on a number of local business strengths such as creative industries, professional financial and business services, information technology and software development, tourism, retail, health and wellbeing and environmental and low carbon.

Our growth in some of these areas has been strong (this includes our information and communication, creative and digital, environmental and low carbon industries). We need to continue to support this growth by creating the conditions that meet business needs, from sustainable low carbon office space to new homes and good schools, as these have the potential to turn our economy around.

The development of Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area will be one of our biggest opportunities to create the right conditions for business growth in the City's centre. It has the potential to accommodate up to 9,000 new jobs and 3,400 homes. New employment will focus on Bath's business strengths including the creative industries and software development. Overall the Enterprise Area has the potential to increase the value of the Bath economy by £620 million.

A recent survey of businesses found that one of their top priorities was access to a superfast broadband connection. This is particularly important for growth in information and communications, creative and digital sectors. We are working to make sure that the whole of Bath and North East Somerset is well connected as well as leading a programme to deliver ultra-fast broadband in Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area and the City Centre.

Bath is also a World Heritage Site, an international tourist destination and a regional shopping centre. Tourists currently spend £375 million a year in Bath, supporting 8,700 local jobs. A strong visitor economy is a part of the wider Bath economy and to the continuing success of a broad and diverse retail sector. We will continue to invest in the Roman Baths to ensure it continues to be a top tourist destination in the UK, World Heritage Site and Educational Centre of excellence with Lottery funding.

Whilst Bath is the economic driver for the area, the market towns of Keynsham and the Somer Valley also make a significant contribution with 16,600 jobs, just over 20 per cent of total employment. Recent factory closures including Cadbury in Keynsham have led to job losses. However, investment in regeneration schemes such as Keynsham and Radstock town centres is supporting recovery. The redevelopment of Keynsham civic centre has provided new modern office space, community facilities and retail space.

If Bath and North East Somerset is to continue to grow and compete successfully in the regional economy, we have to develop a local workforce equipped with the range of skills needed to support local business growth.

It is difficult for adults with lower level qualifications to improve this later in life, so it is crucial to get it right first time. We are working with schools to improve careers advice and guidance, employability and vocational training, entrepreneurship and self-employment. We are also using our position to encourage the higher education sector to work with businesses, to help our talented young people stay in the area and find local jobs.

Addressing low skills levels, confidence and work readiness is an important part of tackling worklessness. We are developing a package of engagement and support to help people enter training or work.

As the economy and population grow, the demand for housing and other community facilities, such as schools and GP surgeries, will increase too. House prices in Bath and North East Somerset are already higher than the national average and a housing shortage will push up prices and rents making it even more unaffordable for some. New homes and community facilities must be built to meet our growing housing need for all parts of the local population. Our Core Strategy sets out a plan for 13,000 new homes by 2029, as well as a commitment to high quality local environments and a good quality of life for all.

We will also need a transport system that connects people to jobs and allows people, goods and services to move easily within and throughout Bath and North East Somerset. We are developing a suite of Transport Strategies to ensure that we meet these growth needs; our plans include improvements to walking (we would like to make Bath one of the UKs most walkable cities), the expansion of Bath's Park and Ride sites, managing congestion by investing in roads and traffic management, providing better cycling options and supporting major improvements in the rail network through both the electrification programme and the Metro West scheme.

If we can achieve this economic growth we estimate we will increase the value of the Bath and North East Somerset economy by £3 billion.

*“We will build on our economic strengths and realise the potential of the Bath City Riverside Area to establish B&NES as a world-class 21st century centre of imagination and inventiveness”*

## **A focus on prevention**

Over the next four years we will increasingly need to invest in a range of new approaches that enable people to live well and independently, that are personalised and support choice, that help people to be safe and that prevent or delay the onset of ill health. We will also need to act to address the impacts of climate change.

For many years the focus has been on caring for people when they are ill rather than on keeping them healthy. Changes in our local population – people are living longer with more complex conditions, some of which are avoidable – means that this is no longer financially sustainable. We need to rebalance our health and social care services by helping people to be healthier for longer and avoid or delay the onset of disease. This approach is key to ensuring our services can respond well to our aging population.

We are starting to make the shift towards a more preventative, person centred approach that helps people to help themselves. We are investing in care models that support people to be more informed and involved in their own care. Our ‘Wellbeing College’, which supports mental wellbeing, is a good example of this.

We will continue to proactively lead the integration of local health and social care services. This will reduce service fragmentation, simplify access and referral routes and support better outcomes.

We will continue to work to reduce rates of coronary heart disease, stroke and lung cancers by helping people to make healthy lifestyle choices. Our Fit for Life Strategy support this through investment in good quality sports and leisure facilities such as the major refurbishment of Bath Sports and Leisure Centre and new facilities planned for Keynsham.

As our population continues to both grow and age, we will re-shape services to enable older people to continue to live well. This will include supporting local health and social care providers to develop new services that address the changing needs of our population.

Keeping children and adults safe from harm will continue to be central to our vision. In partnership with the police and NHS and other local partners we will ensure that our response to safeguarding remains strong and effective.

We will continue to invest in our Connecting Families programme, our response to troubled families. This programme has received national praise for its work to support families improve their overall life chances.

Access to education can be a transforming experience, supporting employment and a route out of poverty. We will continue to support and challenge all schools to ensure that every child and young person receives a high quality education. Ambition for all children from the academically most able to those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities is key to achieving the best outcomes and preparing them for civic and working life.

If we can continue to help people to live well, we will strengthen the long term financial sustainability of our services, which in time will reduce or stabilise the demand on more costly interventions.

*“We will support people to live well, be healthy and remain independent for longer – keeping people out of hospital and making our area a great place to walk, cycle and be active”*

## **A new relationship with customers and communities**

We want to make sure that residents' views and needs are at the heart of everything that we do. Sometimes in the past we have delivered services with limited engagement with local people. We want to change this. Over the next four years we will do even more to deliver good value services at the standards local residents expect and we will be clear about what we can and cannot provide.

There are many different ways that we engage with local residents, groups and businesses to understand what they expect and need from us. This includes service specific consultations, conversations with ward Councillors and surveys reaching out to all of our communities. The responses that we get and the things that people tell us help to shape and improve the way services are delivered.

Through our Connecting Communities programme we are working with the Police, housing providers, the NHS and Parish Councils so that we have 'one conversation' about the things that matter most to local people. It also helps us to work together and develop a joined up response, tailor-made to meet the needs of the local community.

Community Forums have been set up in the Somer Valley, Keynsham, the Chew Valley and Bathavon under the Connecting Communities programme. In the autumn of 2015 we launched the Bath City Forum; this has meant that for the first time the whole of Bath and North East Somerset has a clear, common engagement framework at the local level.

Local residents, businesses and voluntary groups often have an incredible amount of energy and capacity to get involved in shaping and improving their local communities. Nearly nine out of ten people want to help out more in their local area and we can already see examples of this through initiatives such as our network of snow wardens, community involvement in libraries and a programme our children and young people are undertaking to tackle homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. We need to build on this enthusiasm and commitment for community volunteering and support more residents to get involved.

We want to make it simpler for residents to access the information they need and transact with the Council 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are beginning to do this. We have made a range of Council services available online including payments, service reporting and feedback. We will continue to invest in digital technology, making even more services online.

Face to face contact will continue to be delivered through our innovative One Stop Shops. These spaces will enable local residents to engage with a range of different services, from the Councils housing advice service to the local police. We are also harnessing the opportunities of modern technologies such as Twitter, online consultations and webcasting of Council meetings to improve the transparency of the decisions we make.

By strengthening our focus on residents and using their insight to develop and deliver improvements, we will in turn provide good value services at the standards people expect. Effective community engagement has never been more important.

*"The needs of our local residents should be central to everything we are doing as an organisation"*



## **An efficient business**

Over the last four years we have reduced the amount of money we spend. We have saved on expensive office space, launched new corporate initiatives which are improving the way we work and adapted well to the challenge of increased demand for services in the context of reducing budgets.

Yet we still need to do more to deliver the savings required. This includes learning, where relevant, from the private sector and looking for new and innovative ways to increase our income. We are already considering the potential of new business initiatives such as a property development company to deliver housing and buying additional commercial estate that will bring in extra revenue.

We are reviewing the way we do things so that we make the most of new technologies, learn from the best and listen to the ideas from our staff and residents about where we can work differently and more efficiently. A good example of this is a project looking into how we can deliver a better energy deal for communities and businesses in the area; this should help reduce energy costs for residents, keep the energy business local, and promote renewable energy whilst generating revenue as well.

We face a significant financial challenge during the next four years and we will be working proactively to maximise these efficiencies and business opportunities ahead of reductions to Council services. We will do all of this whilst retaining our core values as a council - committed to protecting the most vulnerable and delivering quality services for our local residents across Bath and North East Somerset.

Our One Council approach is already acting as an important catalyst for the changes we need to make and is a core part of the way we operate. It reflects our approach towards us working together better as a single organisation, so that we are less focused on individual service areas, to a more integrated structure which enables us to share, support and learn from each other as well as deliver a seamless service to our local residents.

The One Council approach nurtures creativity and innovation through schemes such as the 10-in-100 programme. This programme supports staff to solve problems and improve the way we work and deliver services. We are also continuing to change the way we work through our Workplaces programme. This programme is reducing office accommodation and investing in technology which will enable us to work better and more efficiently. In turn this will reduce the overall amount of money we spend.

We know that we cannot deliver our 2020 vision in isolation and that we need to make the most of our position as a strong local leader to bring our partners – new and established – together and build on our good foundations. We are developing an active and committed Public Services Board, a local partnership of key public sector leaders, which is working towards a One Public Sector approach, and delivering demonstrable benefits for Bath and North East Somerset.

If we can transform the way we work internally to create efficiencies and provide strong local leadership with our partners to encourage collaboration, the result will be a far better future for Bath and North East Somerset.

***“We face significant change in the years ahead and we need to plan proactively to protect the services that matter most to our local residents and to make the most of new opportunities and ways of doing things”***

## **SECTION THREE – CREATING THE FUTURE**

### **DIRECTORATE PLANS**

The Council is organised into three Directorates: People, Place and Resources. This section sets out some of the things the Directorates are doing to deliver our 2020 vision.

#### **A strong economy and growth**

We will:

- Deliver the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area Masterplan including the generation of 1650 jobs and 920 homes
- Continue to deliver plans for Keynsham including the delivery of employment space, housing sites and other town developments
- Manage the City Deal on behalf of the West of England, which is allowing us to keep 100% of growth in business rates in the Enterprise Area
- Continue to roll out Broadband across the district
- Review the needs for additional housing, jobs and infrastructure for Bath and North East Somerset through the Core Strategy, Placemaking Plan and West of England Joint Spatial Plan by March 2016, including the delivery of 5,776 new homes by 2018/19
- Improve transport through the delivery of transport strategies for Keynsham, Chew and Somer Valleys
- Collaborate with the 3 West of England Unitary Authorities to develop further devolution proposals designed to stimulate economic growth and provision of housing
- Complete the marketing and letting of the new retail units in the Keynsham Civic Centre development which is acting as a catalyst for confidence and further development in the area
- Continue to challenge and support schools to promote progression and attainment and ensure that young people leave education with an aptitude for study and training and with good employability skills
- Continue our nationally recognised Connecting Families programme to support workless families to gain training and employment with a view to permanent entry to the employment market
- Continue to target those young people most at risk of becoming NEET so that we support them into education, training or employment and prevent long term unemployment and dependency
- Continue to secure education, training and employment opportunities for our Care Leavers so that we maintain good outcomes into adulthood
- Commission specialist skills and employment support for those adults less able to access the employment market due to ill health or disability.

## **A focus on prevention**

We will:

- Continue to challenge learning settings to promote educational excellence for all children
- Continue the development of our Local Safeguarding Children's Board and children's safeguarding functions so that we have robust and effective systems in place to protect children
- Review our services for children and young people most likely to become Looked After particularly those aged 12-15 years to improve outcomes
- Implement a new, fully integrated Community Services model for community health and care services across B&NES resulting from the Your Care Your Way consultation with communities, partners and providers
- Develop and implement an Older People Five Year Strategy which goes beyond health, care and housing to encompass all of the services which impact upon older people's lives
- Re-provide a B&NES Mental Health Unit which combines specialist acute mental health, dementia assessment and treatment wards so that we develop a provision which is "future-proofed" and able to deliver high quality in-patient care for acute mental illness and dementia
- Continue the development of our Local Safeguarding Adults Board and our adult safeguarding functions so that we have robust effective systems in place to protect adults
- Continue to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on welfare reform and provide free access to the internet and training in libraries
- Continue to work with the Police on local community safety initiatives
- Support the financial aspects of the Care Act and the Your Care Your Way programme especially provision of financial support and implementation of new ICT
- Continue to invest in sustainable energy initiatives including Energy @ Home to provide insulation and energy saving measures (partly funded by Government grant) plus sustainable energy projects in partnership with Bath & West Community Energy
- Inform local planning policy on sustainability issues, develop a new sustainability strategy and possibly create a local energy tariff. Also reduce energy use in council buildings and reduce staff travel by embedding flexible working practices
- Carry out the One Council Reviews programme in collaboration with the relevant service and department, using "lean systems thinking" principles, which encourage prevention of demand plus a greater focus on priorities, and introducing a digital approach with customer self-service wherever this makes sense
- Continue to operate the emergency planning service and integrate even more strongly with the Police who will use the control room plus locate their front of office staff in the Council One Stop Shops

- Work with partners to develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need and deliver 480 affordable homes by March 2018
- Improve air quality through the development of air quality action plans for Keynsham, Salford and Bath by March 2016
- Achieve a 1% year on year increase in participation in physical activity through the delivery of the 'Fit for Life' Active Living Strategy
- Enhance our leisure facilities with a new leisure provider improving Bath's leisure centre by December 2017 and a new centre for Keynsham by March 2019.

## **A new relationship with customers and communities**

We will:

- Lead the Connecting Communities initiative which is helping services to focus on what communities most need, partnership working with parishes, but also enabling communities to do more for themselves
- Provide advice and information through an integrated approach using the One Stop Shops and libraries
- Continue to support community asset transfers where this can be achieved without excessive cost to the Council and where community benefits clearly arise
- Review the local Council Tax support scheme for 2017/18 to achieve greater simplicity, better targeting of support, and alignment with changes arising from Welfare Reform
- Continue to develop feedback and engagement systems with service users so that the voice of children, young people, adults and families influences our practice and provision
- Review children's social care services to determine if we can develop new models of working which build upon our success in Connecting Families, strengthen early help and reduce reliance on "statutorily-based" interventions
- Continue to develop Personalisation, Person-Centred planning and personal budgets to enable individuals and families to take control of their health and care
- Deliver the B&NES Waste and the West of England Waste Strategies, including the redesign of the waste collection service by November 2017
- Work with Parish Council's communities and key partners to deliver and adopt Neighbourhood Plans by December 2015 and Placemaking Plans by December 2016.

## **An efficient business**

We will:

- Reduce net budgets by at least a further 15% and wherever possible this will be achieved through additional income or efficiencies that don't adversely affect the quality of support services or front line services
- Push for greater income generating initiatives to achieve savings, such as through the commercial estate, sustainable energy initiatives, and through the creation of a new property company to deliver housing
- Review commissioning intentions across the Council to identify opportunities to focus on key objectives and achieve economies
- Carry out the One Council Reviews programme which encourage prevention of customer demand and a greater focus on priorities
- Introduce a digital approach with customer self-service wherever this makes sense
- Explore further opportunities to collaborate better with other public sector partners.

Key performance indicators and milestones will be set out within more detailed Directorate Plans. We will use these indicators and milestones to track the delivery of our 2020 vision.

## SECTION FOUR – FOUR YEAR FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The previous Medium Term Service and Resource Plans covered the 3 year period of 2013/14 – 2015/16 and were in line with both budget priorities and the Council’s policy framework.

Since the national and local elections in May 2015 the Government has not provided any information on local government funding beyond 31 March 2016, although the Chancellor announced an Emergency Budget Statement on 8 July 2015. This will be followed by a Spending Review leading to the Financial Settlement for Local Government around Christmas 2015.

We therefore cannot be certain about local government funding from 2016/17 onwards, although we can expect the financial challenge facing the public sector to continue throughout the period of the next parliament from 2016/17 to 2019/20.

Whilst the scale and speed of funding reductions are not yet clear, there are a number of factors which we can identify that will impact on our funding going forwards:

- Continuing reductions in the national control total for local government funding – we assume this will be around 40% over the next four years with an element of front loading.
- A significant increase in employer’s national insurance contributions to fund the new national pension arrangements – equivalent to £2.4M in cash terms.
- The ongoing impact of new legislation including the Care Act 2014 and the cost of adult social care.
- The need to provide for future pay inflation.
- The potential impact of changes to interest rates and the revenue cost of meeting the Council’s full borrowing requirement.
- The level of inflationary and demographic cost pressures.

The initial Financial Planning work to look at the future scale of this financial challenge for the Council originally estimated that the likely savings, or additional income required, would be around £38M for this 4-year period. The position has been reviewed in light of both local and national decisions and announcements resulting in a reduction in the estimated financial planning target to just over £30M. Given the scale of savings already achieved in the current Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget, it is likely that future savings will require some prioritised changes to Council services.

As part of this, the decision of Council to make a contribution of £1.5 million from reserves to meet an on-going revenue budget gap in the 2015/16 budget has been addressed during the current financial year.

It is too early to accurately predict the full financial impact of the Government’s Spending Review and related financial risks, although these have been assessed and may give rise to further savings requirements.

A rigorous process is being applied to support the development of the Council budget and medium term financial planning process going forwards, including a review of both the Council’s revenue budgets and the current Approved Capital Programme.

The Cabinet will therefore seek to put in place new Directorate Plans setting out a new Medium Term Financial Plan to cover the four years from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and will consider a range of options to make savings, explore new models of service delivery, deliver innovation and efficiency, and generate additional income.

A Strategic Review is taking place to do just this, covering the four strategic priorities:

- A strong economy and growth
- A focus on prevention
- A new relationship with customers and communities
- An efficient business

The Review considers spending across the Council to ensure efficiency savings and income generation opportunities are maximised ahead of reductions to Council services.