

Bath and North East Somerset Council - Place Directorate Plan

2016/17 to 2019/20

Introduction

This plan sets out the future direction of the Place Directorate over the 4 year period ending in March 2020. The plan was first published in the autumn of 2015 and has just been updated. Year one of this plan is coming to a close and the budget to reflect year 2 is due to be set in February. The plan will be updated each year until 2020.

The Place Directorate plan is one of 3 departmental plans and reflects the Corporate Strategy and 2020 Vision, both of which were adopted in 2016 by the Council. The Place Directorate is one of three Directorates in the Council.

The plan contains a greater level of detail for year one. The detail for the following years will continue to develop as Council policy evolves and will take into account consultation about the services affected. There will be a staged approach to consultation with equalities impacts considered at the same time.

This edition of the plan will be considered by PDS panels in January 2017 having been developed on behalf of the Cabinet, and will inform the 2017/18 budget setting process.

The corporate strategic context remains largely unchanged but the financial context continues to deteriorate as increasingly tough financial targets are applied. The Council is now expecting to be self-sufficient and not reliant on general government grant from 2020.

The remainder of this four year plan remains as previously published last year except where highlighted by the use of italics. In addition the financial context section has been rewritten.

PART ONE – CORPORATE CONTEXT

Strategic context

The Bath and North East Somerset 2020 vision sets out our overarching 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, the fire service and the voluntary sector.

‘Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21st 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’

We are already making good progress in working towards this vision. 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 GCSE 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.

However, we know that we need to do even more in order to be financially sustainable and deliver high quality services into the future. The landscape for public services continues to change and over the next four years we will need to adapt to accommodate the needs of a growing local population, reduced funding from central government and new legislation that will change the way we deliver some services.

These changes, coupled with an increasing demand for many services means that we need to transform the way we deliver some services, whilst holding onto our commitment to excellence. We have identified four corporate priorities for achieving this as we move towards our 2020 vision:

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

By getting this right we will be able to continue to provide exemplary public services for local residents.

Financial Context

The previous Directorate Plans were primarily constructed to cover the 2016/17 financial year with some future direction of travel in line with the specific budget priorities and the Council's Corporate Strategy.

The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2016/17 provided definitive figures for 2016/17 together with an offer from Government to provide a guaranteed "minimum" funding settlement covering the period to 2019/20 in exchange for Council's providing 4 year efficiency plans. The Council submitted its plan in October and received confirmation that this had been accepted with confirmation that the Council can expect to receive the funding allocations published as part of the 2016-17 local government finance settlement in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

The multi-year settlement shows continuing significant reductions in the Council's core grant funding during the period to 2019/20. The Settlement also came with a number of further changes to local government finance during this period including:-

- Ongoing reductions to Public Health and education Support Grant funding in addition to core grant reductions.*
- A consultation on the future of the New Homes Bonus, as substantial changes are considered to reduce this funding stream by up to 60% by the end of the Spending Review period.*
- The implementation of the Business Rates Revaluation from April 2017 – this should be neutral across the country as a whole but there will be regional and even local impacts, including likely appeals from local businesses on any changes.*
- A series of consultations on Government proposals to provide for a 100% locally retained business rates scheme. This will have substantial implications for local government funding and Government has indicated this will be accompanied by an updated needs assessment of local government funding and, a transfer of additional unfunded responsibilities from Government.*
- Expansion of the Better Care Fund, including an additional £1.5bn of national funding between 2017/18 to 2019/20. The service or outcome delivery requirements accompanying this have not yet been set out.*

In light of these changes and the significant funding reductions already announced it is clear that we can expect the scale of the financial challenge facing the Council to continue right through to 2019/20 and potentially beyond.

Whilst the scale and speed of funding reductions will vary depending on the outcome of these national changes, there are also a number of factors which we can identify that will impact on local government funding going forwards:

- *The ongoing impact of demographic changes for Adult Social Care.*
- *The likelihood of increasing pay inflation (direct and indirect).*
- *The potential impact of changes to interest rates and the revenue cost of meeting the Council's full borrowing requirement.*
- *The level of inflationary cost pressures arising on Council services.*

The current Financial Planning work to look at the scale of this financial challenge for the Council over the 4-year period covering 2016/17 to 2019/20 estimates that the likely savings, or additional income required, will be around £49M. The Budget for 2016/17 included £12m of savings and additional income which are on track to be delivered, leaving a further £37m to be delivered over the next 3 years.

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 has been considering a full range of Spending Review options to make savings, explore new models of service delivery, deliver innovation and efficiency, and generate additional income in response to the financial challenge. The review has considered spending across the council to ensure, where possible, efficiency savings and income generation opportunities are maximised ahead of reductions to Council Services. The outputs from this review are reflected in the Directorate Plans.

The specific financial aspects of the proposals for this Directorate are set out in Appendix 4 – Budget proposals and Service Impact Statement

PART TWO – DIRECTORATE PLAN

Directorate Summary

The Place Directorate is comprised of three key areas: Environmental Services, Community Regeneration and Development.

The Directorate employs over 750 Fte providing both key frontline and professional services.

The Council's vision for Bath and North East Somerset is:

to be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21st 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.

Key aspects of the vision link into the work and delivery of services associated with the Place Directorate as outlined below:

- **'Internationally renowned'** – to be a place where businesses want to relocate and where visitors continue to be attracted.
- **'Beautifully inventive'** – continue to deliver services effectively and efficiently through constantly seeking new and improved ways of working.
- **'Strong social purpose'** – promoting positive social outcomes from the services we deliver
- **'Spirit of wellbeing'** – putting health and wellbeing at the core of what we do.
- **'Connected'** – ensuring connectivity issues are addressed.

Values

The Council's core values are:

Only promise what we can deliver
Nurture creativity and innovation
Excel in everything we do

The Place Directorate will therefore strive to be:

Honest
Creative
Excellent in all that we do

In order to achieve this we will continue to learn, develop and adapt to changing environments and priorities.

Main report: Directorate intentions

The next three years will continue to be challenging but will provide some opportunities. *Considerable progress has been made in 2016/17 as set out in the budget challenge consultation workshops. The presentations used for these can be found online.*

The Place Directorate's strategic intentions are set below against the Council's 4 corporate priorities:

A strong economy and growth

We will:

- **Continue to** deliver the Core Strategy Target for jobs and infrastructure for Bath and North East Somerset, including the delivery of around 3,900 new homes between 2016/17 & 2019/20 *through the Placemaking Plan*
- Continue delivery of the Economic Strategy and launch a new B&NES wide business support contract by April 2017 and an employment hub by Spring 2018.
- Produce a draft Destination Management Plan by summer 2017 and gain approval of this and an Events Management Framework by *Autumn 2017*.
- Complete Transport Strategies for Chew and Somer Valleys by March 2017 having completed the Keynsham Transport Strategy in July 2016.
- Continue to deliver 'Better Business for All', which aims to deliver jobs and growth linked to regulatory services.
- Deliver the Heritage Services Business Plan 2016-2021. Establish the project management team from the Archway Centre by April 2017 and hit key milestones towards being on site during 2018 and 2019.
- Complete a Parking Review Study by March 2017 and commence implementation of any changes ensuring they link with strategic aims.
- *Continue to deliver* the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area Masterplan including the generation of 1650 jobs, 920 homes by 2020 and agreement on Bath Quays North and South development.
- Agree the Somer Valley **Enterprise Zone** Implementation Plan with the Midsomer Norton digital pilot established by *Summer 2018*.
- Agree Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spend Priorities based on income estimated at £1.5m by 2018/19. Review B&NES Infrastructure Delivery Plan as part of the CIL spend process by *summer 2017*
- Following approval of the Highway Asset Management Plan in March 2017, begin implementation improving the overall highway network and its safety.
- Develop business plans to access the Economic Development and Local Growth Funds, supporting infrastructure proposals for the Enterprise Area. Target Local Enterprise Partnership funding, Local Growth Fund £500k pa and implement Cycle Ambition Fund by Autumn 2018.
- Continue to roll out broadband within B&NES, by launching the Bath City Centre Wi-Fi project by *Summer 2017* and signing contracts for the second phase of *Connecting Devon & Somerset by winter 2017*.
- Present a report to Cabinet *early in 2017* on the *site* options for the Park and Ride to the East of Bath as part of an integrated transport solution.
- Prepare and adopt the Joint Spatial Plan and Transport Study in partnership with the other West of England authorities by December 2018.

A focus on prevention

We will:

- Complete the Water Space Study by *spring 2017*, and continue to develop and deliver projects and capital works relating to this during *2017-18*
- Implement the Network Management Plan following its approval in March 2017.
- Re-locate and develop a modern purpose built waste facility by March 2020.
- Implement actions following review of the Fleet Management service. Replace 20% of the light fleet with alternative fuel vehicles by March 2020.
- Consider ways to continue to deliver an Urban Gulls Strategy and present options to Members for consideration in the budget setting process.
- **Continue to** work with partners to develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need. Deliver 465 new affordable homes over a 3 year period 2015 -2017 comprising: intermediate housing; Starter Homes; and affordable homes for rent.
- Improve air quality through the monitoring of air quality action plans for Keynsham and Saltford and develop an air quality action plan for Bath by December 2017.
- 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 our partner GLL by improving Bath's leisure centre by *February 2018* and refurbishing the leisure centre in Keynsham by March 2019
- **Continue to work with partners on flood mitigation and prevention.**

A new relationship with customers and communities

We will:

- Deliver the B&NES Waste and the West of England Waste Strategies, including the redesign of the waste collection service for B&NES following a decision by Cabinet in July 2016 with implementation commencing October 2017 and a new waste disposal contract with the WoE by 2020. Achieve an 80% household waste recovery rate.
- Work with Parish Councils, communities and key partners to deliver and adopt **around two** Neighbourhood Plans *per year*.
- Maintain 50% of major planning applications delivered within 13 weeks.
- Continue to complete 95% of land searches within 10 working days and 90% of building regulations applications to receive a decision in 3 weeks.
- *Continue to maintain our Customer Service Excellence status achieved in December 2016.*
- **Continue to progress the local plan documents in the Council's local development framework including a Review of Houses of Multiple Occupation supplementary guidance.**

An efficient business

We will:

- Explore bids for hybrid buses for the East of Bath Park and Ride if/when Members choose to progress the delivery of such a scheme.

- Continue to Investigate the benefits of a possible joint Highways Contract with North Somerset Council with a view to issuing tender documents during 2018
- Continue to explore ways to develop the parks service and generate income through events and weddings and consider other options as part of a “Parks Review” during 2018.
- Explore in detail the options available for the delivery of the Bereavement service to generate greater income and investment during 2017.
- Continue to deliver a three year rolling plan for Highways capital works throughout 2017-20.
- Implement the projects outlined as part of the Strategic Review and continue to look for ways to generate income and make processes more streamlined and efficient in order to make savings

Risks

The key risks associated with the Place Directorate are:

Key risk	Mitigating Actions
Inability to achieve the Business Rate return required from the Enterprise Area.	<i>Enterprise Area</i> Masterplan Approved and adopted by Council and linkages made with the Placemaking process to ensure that the proposals have a policy base
Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) not in format required to secure government funding.	Consultants and officer appointed to increase capacity to deliver a successful HAMP and undertake valuation of assets
Income and savings targets not delivered	Strategic Review being undertaken in order to identify potential income and saving opportunities
<i>Difficulty in achieving the affordable housing provision.</i>	Council funded schemes where appropriate; use of sec 106 and CIL funding where appropriate and effective partnership working with Housing & Communities Agency and housing associations to secure new provision
Lack of capacity and recruitment difficulties within specific service areas.	Restructures and targeted recruitment and joint working opportunities with neighbouring authorities.
Renewal of major contracts	Contract Board established along with appropriate cross directorate project teams which are being supplemented with external expertise
Delivery of the Bath Transport Strategy	Strategy approved, action plan being developed, funding being sought
<i>Delivery of capital projects and capitalised fees.</i>	<i>There is a risk with all capital projects where fees have been capitalised against them for potential reversion to revenue if the project is not implemented.</i>
<i>Devolution timescales</i>	<i>Officers are fully participating and leading on key emerging issues associated with Transport and Planning to ensure that we are able to react effectively</i>

Performance Management

The Directorate intentions will be reflected in individual Team Plans for each of the Divisions in the Council. These team plans are a mixture of deliverable actions and key performance indicators. Overall performance of these plans will be reported quarterly and via an Annual Report through

senior management teams, Informal Cabinet and the Policy Development and Scrutiny process. The underlying information will be published as Open Data.

PART THREE: DIRECTORATE RESOURCE PLAN

The Directorate's financial strategy is to deliver the changes set out in the previous section in accordance with the budget summary, impact statement, and capital programme attached.

Within this Directorate there is a dedicated business support team which work closely with the services to support all aspects of finance. The lead role for finance is carried out within the Resources Directorate by the Divisional Director for Business Support, who is the S151 officer, and responsible for the corporate finance strategy.

In terms of workforce it is expected that the number of posts will fall as indicated in the impact statements. However, through TUPE transfers and effective management of staff turnover it is intended compulsory redundancies will be kept to a minimum. There will continue to be a shift in skills requirements towards commercial skills.

Partnerships with external commercial organisations, especially in finance, have been developed to support this. For capital project delivery external expertise will continue to be bought in to work as part of the Project Delivery structure to enable a flexible approach and to minimise overheads.

The property needs of the whole Council will continue to be reviewed and flexible working will be further developed to help provide better integrated services, and enable key partners to be accommodated. The main opportunities to rationalise the corporate estate (mainly offices) have already been taken but new opportunities are arising from the success of flexible working and office reconfiguration linked to the Workplaces 2018 project. Further integration with health may provide opportunities as the Your Care Your Way initiative progresses but will also be influenced by the Strategic Transformation Programme within the NHS.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Directorate structure
- Appendix 2: Analysis of Headline Numbers for 2016/17 for comparison purposes
- Appendix 3: Draft Capital Programme - new & emerging items
- Appendix 4: Budget proposals and Service Impact Statement