



COUNCIL STRATEGY 2017 – 2020

REFRESH OCT 2017



Our vision

The overarching vision for the strategy is:

Combining a blend of vision and pragmatism, Winchester City Council couples its ambition to look beyond traditional ways of doing things with a distinct focus on making it work on the ground. We are looking to make the district a premier business location, develop quality housing with a balanced range of tenures, focus on protecting and enhancing our high quality environment and deliver developments that encourage residents to lead healthy and happy lives.

The outcome of all these aims will be a district where everyone has opportunity and a high quality of life.

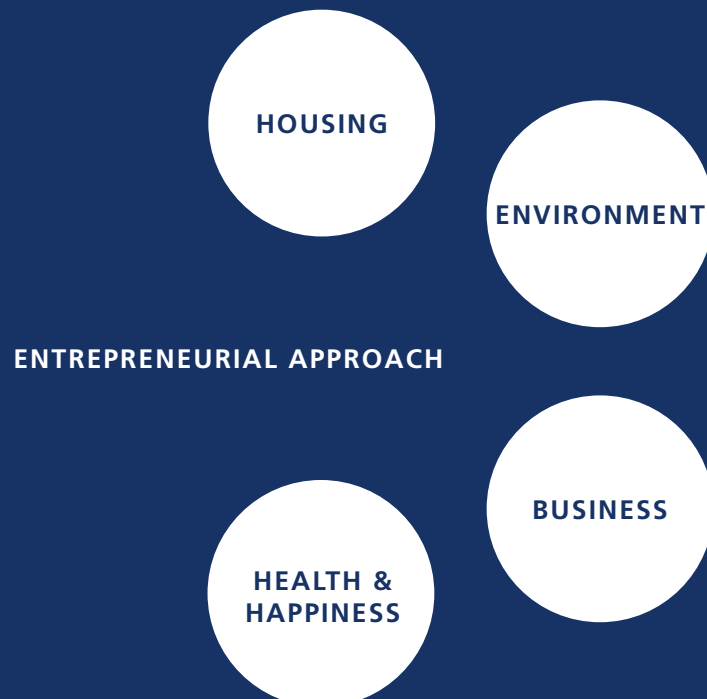
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About this strategy document

This report outlines how the Council will deliver our vision up until 31 March 2020. We face many challenges, and our strategy sets out the key outcomes and core principles which underpin our work. This refresh of the strategy which was adopted by the Council on 23 February 2017 and will continue to evolve over the course of the two-year plan.

A blueprint for Winchester's future



Introduction

Winchester City Council manages a wide variety of services. We have responsibility for planning, housing, waste collection, Council Tax and Business Rates collection, leisure services, tourism, benefits administration and many more services.

This Strategy is focused on the key outcomes that we want to achieve in the coming years in a way that is consistent across our aims. We want this to be an ambitious and challenging strategy, and one that reflects what our residents and local businesses demand of us.

There have been a number of major changes to how we will continue to provide services in the future. The Government has set out some new and changing policies in the past three years including:

- Financial reforms and the 100% retention of Business Rates across the sector
- Housing reform
- Welfare Reforms such as the Housing Benefit cap at £20,000 for working age families
- Planning policy changes.



INCREASE
PARTICIPATION
TO SPORT ACROSS
THE DISTRICT

300

NEW AFFORDABLE
HOMES COMPLETED
BY 2020

140,000

INCREASE OFFICE
SUPPLY (FT²) ON
STATION APPROACH
BY 2020

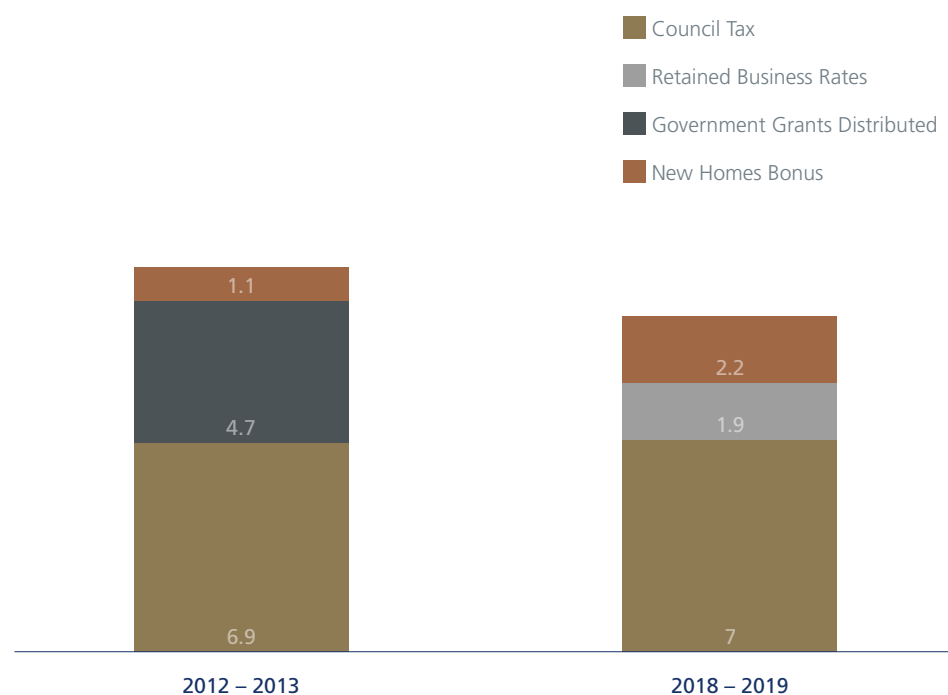
3%

PROJECTED
INCREASE IN
POPULATION
BY 2020

Financial challenge

How we are financed and the role of Government has fundamentally changed over this decade

Changes in Council funding 2012 – 2019 (£m)



By 2019 we will cease to receive any core Government Grant. Our financial future relies upon Council Tax from residents, a small share of Business Rates from business in our District, New Homes Bonus incentive from Government (though no forecast can be made on this beyond 2020), and fees and charges we raise locally for services.

For us to maintain or even grow our

excellent services and deliver our Strategy, we need to balance these pressures on our funding and make sure we are able to grow these income streams as well as seek to obtain new sources of income. As well as setting out what we want to achieve for the District, our Council Strategy also sets out how we aim to be financially resilient against these challenges.

To deliver the strategy we also have a significant Capital programme. We have some major schemes for a new leisure centre, regeneration and building new homes; these need to be affordable so that we do not put undue additional financial burdens on our residents and businesses.

Our four strategic outcomes

One

Winchester District will be a premier business location

Why?

The District is an attractive place to do business. We know that we have great transport links and low unemployment levels. It is vital to us that we help support business growth and success through enabling the supply of new office and employment space to enhance the number of jobs to match our growing population. Our funding will become more reliant on business rates paid by business in our District.

The council will need to help drive growth in business rates in order to secure its financial future.

We will

- Promote a sustainable economy by enabling major regeneration schemes
- Prioritise support for the knowledge-based, creative and tourism sectors
- Utilise our environment to drive business growth and create employment opportunities
- Develop new employment opportunities across the District
- Work with strategic partners to deliver critical infrastructure projects across the District
- Be innovative by exploring opportunities to generate additional revenue and maximise key income streams.



Our four strategic outcomes

Two

Delivering quality housing options

Why?

We believe that it is vital that our residents have access to quality housing options and we recognise the importance of having the right mix of housing options within

the District. We know that housing is expensive across the District and we want to be active in helping to provide different options for our residents and at the same time ensuring that we increase the supply and quality of housing that we control (currently over 6,000 properties).

We will

- Deliver good housing stock condition and energy performance for Council-owned dwellings that meet the Decent Homes standard
- Respond to the need to provide more affordable housing in the District
- Drive down homelessness across the District and support partner agencies in the drive for an improved life for those in need
- Provide good access to affordable housing options across a range of tenures, including affordable and sub market rent (within Local Housing Allowance rates) market rent, shared ownership, student housing etc.
- Be proactive in our tenant engagement, achieving effective representation and insight across all tenant and customer groups
- Restrict permitted development rights in Winchester so that new Houses in Multiple Occupation require planning permission
- Support residents to buy their own home.



Three

Improve the health and happiness of our community

Why?

We know that people's health is key to enjoying a high quality of life. We want to focus on reducing inequalities and improving our community's health and happiness particularly through sport and helping you to be active. We also want to retain festivals and programmes of events that take part across the District and that give the place a sense of cultural vibrancy.

We will

- Work with partners to reduce health inequalities in the District and to promote good mental and physical health
- Provide new leisure facilities in Winchester Town that meet the needs of a broad cross section of our communities for now and the future
- Encourage volunteering to support and extend local services
- Support the delivery of a programme of festivals and events across the District.
- Provide support to residents who are affected by the Welfare Reform and Universal Credit changes
- Work with partners to achieve significant and sustained change for vulnerable families with multiple, complex and persistent problems.



Our four strategic outcomes

Four

Improving the quality of the District's environment

Why?

We provide services in a fantastic and diverse location. We want to keep the District's environmental character but also find ways to improve to quality of the environment to benefit as many people as we can. We expect the District's population to increase by 3% by 2020 and we want to ensure people can continue to expect a clean and safe environment to live and work in, as well as be able to enjoy our beautiful countryside and rural landscape.

We will

- Protect, enhance and respect the District's rich heritage and landscape whilst allowing appropriate development to take place enabling our historic environment to evolve over time having due regard for the landscape character
- By working with our partners and by using powers available to us, make Winchester a safe and pleasant place to live, work and visit
- Protect, enhance and increase the use of open spaces in both the towns and more rural areas of the District
- Work to change attitudes to waste, fly-tipping and littering and significantly improve recycling levels
- Work with strategic partners to continue to develop flood resilience measures to protect our communities
- Improve the environment and reduce harmful emissions through holistic transport planning.



How we will deliver the strategy – core principles

The core principles below will be fundamental to our operating model in the future and will underpin a number of our supporting strategies such as the workforce strategy.

Insight

We want to engage better with our residents and businesses, to better understand their needs and how they can utilise our services to drive change across the District.

Innovation

We want to use the best that the public and private sector offer to explore new ways of providing services across the District.

Improvement

We will focus our services on improving standards so that they can meet the expectations of our customers and reflect the changes that will occur in the coming three years.

Investment

We will use our resources to invest in our services to improve them but also to take advantage of commercial opportunities where they arise to help secure our financial future.

Inspiration

We want our staff to be inspired and motivated to work for the Council and to work closely with our residents acting in a manner which is consultative, considerate and courageous to deliver the strategy.



The Council will be entrepreneurial in its approach to achieve all the outcomes included in the strategy

What do we mean by an entrepreneurial approach?

Responding to the significant challenges facing the public sector and ensuring that Winchester District continues to thrive requires different ways of thinking and new approaches to how to achieve the same/more with less. Traditional ways of tackling this problem such as salami slicing council budgets are no longer an option if we want to keep providing excellent services to our residents, businesses and visitors. This is why Winchester City Council is now adopting an entrepreneurial approach to how it delivers its services and secures its medium term financial strategy.

In working entrepreneurially, we aim to exhibit the following behaviours

- Adopt an imaginative and innovative mind-set towards using our resources
- Clearly understand our residents'/businesses'/visitors' needs and design our services to meet them
- Maintain an open mind when exploring new models for service delivery and provide options for the Council to consider in order to secure the opportunity which works best for the District
- When exploring new opportunities, adopt an agile approach which allows us to rapidly review and learn from experience to ensure the best result
- Actively look for ways to work with partners, both public, private and voluntary sector which will secure the best value for money for the tax payer.

