

West Somerset Council Corporate Strategy 2016 - 20

Our Communities



Business & Enterprise



Our Place & Infrastructure

An Efficient & Modern Council

**"To enable people to live, work and prosper
and for business to thrive in West Somerset"**

Introduction



Cllr. Anthony
Trollope-Bellew
Leader of the
Council

Welcome to West Somerset District Council's Corporate Strategy for 2016-20.

The Strategy outlines our strategic direction for the next four years, setting out our vision, priorities, values and principles. It will guide our planning and allocation of resources as we establish detailed corporate and operational plans each year.

We are committed to putting this Strategy into action and making a difference for local people and business.



Penny James
Chief Executive

We know that our budget remains challenging while the demand for our services that are highly valued by the community is rising. We recognise that we will have to fundamentally transform the way we think and the way in which services are delivered to respond successfully to these challenges and to ensure the Council continues to be a strong voice, at regional and national level, fighting for the best interests of the people and businesses within West Somerset.

Many of the challenges ahead of us cannot be solved by the District Council on its own; partnership working is at the heart of our approach.

We will build upon our successful joint working arrangements with Taunton Deane Borough Council, work positively with our towns and parishes as well as collaborating with a range of other organisations to deliver and enable services to the benefit of all who visit, live and work in West Somerset.

We are determined to preserve and improve the quality of life in West Somerset in a way that is sustainable into the future – both environmentally and financially, and we will target our limited resources to where they will make the biggest difference to the lives of local people through developing our economy and protecting our environment.

Our ambition is to enable people to live work and prosper, and for business to thrive, in West Somerset.

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The Purpose of this Strategy

This Strategy provides a clear direction for the organisation to follow; with four key priority areas where the Council will concentrate its efforts and resources between April 2016 and March 2020.

Our activities will be based on a clear set of values and principles and are dependent upon working together – residents, partners, business, voluntary sector, our colleagues across the public sector and all levels of politicians and public servants regionally in the County of Somerset and London.

This Strategy will lead to a more resourceful and responsive organisation that delivers outcomes to our communities in the most efficient and effective way and continues to play a key role in shaping West Somerset.

This Strategy will provide direction for our Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan will describe the actions we will take each year in order to achieve our aspirations and sets out how we will monitor and measure our progress.

The Plan will be refreshed annually to take account of any local or national changes.

The Corporate Plan in turn will influence team plans as well as individual plans to ensure very service and every person within the organisation is pulling in the same direction and understand the role they play in achieving the priority outcomes for our communities.



Our Role and Purpose

The Council exists to serve and represent the interests of its citizens and communities and to ensure the provision of the best possible services for its residents.

The Council has various roles to play in order to achieve positive outcomes for our communities:

a Enabling -

for example, working with others such as developers and housing associations to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district;

b Championing / Lobbying –

speaking up for West Somerset at County, regional and national level;

c Public Safety –

protecting the public through our statutory roles in relation to health & Safety, dangerous structures, noise nuisance, food safety, air and water quality;

d Supporting –

our communities and in particular keeping rural communities alive;

e Promoting –

West Somerset as great place in which to live and work as well as to visit;

f Challenging –

the performance and plans of other public service providers (e.g. Police, County Council, NHS);

g Taking Strategic View –

taking a district wide view of the needs of all of the communities within West Somerset and designing service provision around this.

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Our Core Values and Principles

At the heart of this Strategy is a set of core values and principles that express the beliefs of the Council and will underpin the actions of the Council over the next four years.

Our values inform our behaviours



Our Design Principles

Our principles inform our decision making

The following key principles will guide our approach to service delivery and the structure of the Council over the next four years:

- a *West Somerset will remain as a separate democratic Council*
- b *The Council's role will be to help deliver outcomes and will use a wide range of service delivery options and providers to achieve this;*
- c *The Council will embrace the principles of a Social Enterprise - acting commercially to deliver surplus to reinvest in the delivery of our priority outcomes and services;*

Our Design Principles - continued

- d We will solely focus on agreed priority outcomes and be customer centric/focused;*
- e We will minimise governance (internal bureaucracy /'red tape') whilst protecting the principles of transparency, probity, good leadership and management;*
- f Our customer access arrangements will maximise self-service;*
- g We will provide a transparent, open and accessible performance management system that enables effective and timely information to members, staff and customers*
- h All services should offer value for money and be business-like in their approach;*
- i Wherever possible, we should work with partners in our locality to collectively commission locally important services using our combined resources and avoiding duplication;*
- j Councillors should be supported to be active advocates, champions and lobbyists to challenge partners on issues that affect their wards or wider areas;*
- k We will develop an organisation where work is an activity and not a place.
The Council will go to the community rather than require the customer to physically come to it;*
- l We will recruit, retrain, redeploy, and reward our people to ensure we have the right skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to deliver our ambitions;*
- m We will deliver a 'case management' approach to dealing with customers that see's one point of contact take responsibility for customer's issues to the point of resolution. This negates the need for the customer to know how the system operates, which tier of government is responsible and who does what within the Council;*

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Key Theme 1

Our Communities

Why is this important?

Helping our communities remain sustainable and vibrant is vital in keeping West Somerset a great place in which to live and work.



The key issues we aim to influence and improve:

- a *Increase the availability and affordability of homes for local people – to both buy and to rent;*

- b *The retention of young people – West Somerset experiences a net migration of young people which impacts negatively on the sustainability, balance and vibrancy of some of our communities;*

- c *The wellbeing of older people – West Somerset's has the oldest average age of any district in England. Rural isolation and loneliness in particular, are real issues.*

- d *Support improvement of public transport provision within West Somerset.*

Key Theme 2

Business & Enterprise

Why is this important?

Access to well-paid employment is key to retaining young people and raising living standards across West Somerset.



The key issues we aim to influence and improve:

- a *Encourage inward investment and the creation of new higher-paid jobs for local people;*

- b *Support and promote West Somerset's vital tourism and agricultural sectors;*

- c *Work with stakeholders to improve the skills, knowledge and aspirations of young people in particular;*

- d *Greater promotion of West Somerset as a place in which to set up business;*

- e *Maximise the local economic benefits from Hinkley Point C;*

- f *Push for the rollout of fibre broadband and better mobile phone signal coverage across the District.*

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Key Theme 3

Our Place & Infrastructure

Why is this important?

West Somerset is a beautiful place to visit and in which to live and work. We want to keep West Somerset a place to be proud of and one which is well-maintained and welcoming to residents, visitors and businesses alike.



The key issues we aim to influence and improve:

- a *Support measures and proposals that protect local communities from flooding;*

- b *Influence others to improve the road network within West Somerset and the way in which it is managed and maintained;*

- c *Work with others to find solutions that ensure facilities valued by local communities and visitors (such as public toilets) continue to be available;*

- d *Work with partners and the community to tackle speeding in rural areas;*

- e *Mitigate negative impacts on the community from the construction phase of Hinkley Point C;*

Key Theme 4

An Efficient & Modern Council

Why is this important?

Like all Councils, we continue to be challenged by significant budget cuts and pressure on services. Many of the challenges ahead of us cannot be solved by the District Council on its own. We need to continue to collaborate with a range of organisations to deliver and enable outcomes that are important to our communities and find new ways of working that ensure we continue to get the best possible value out of the funds available to us.



The key issues we aim to influence and improve:

- a *Make better use of our land and property assets; transferring or selling assets where it makes sense to do so;*

- b *Review how services are delivered, by whom and to what standard in order to best allocate our resources;*

- c *Facilitate ways of giving members more time in their communities and greater, more timely access to information;*

- d *Work more closely with the County, Town and Parish Councils to achieve mutually desired outcomes for the community.*

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For more information contact

Corporate Strategy & Performance Manager
West Somerset
West Somerset House
Killick Way
Williton, Taunton, Somerset TA4 4QA

Email: customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk



English

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Bengali

অপনি যদি এই দলিলপত্র অন্য কোন ভাষায় অনুবাদ করে চান, বা ব্রেল, বড়ো ছাপার অক্ষর, অডিও-ট্যেপ বা সিডিতে চান, তাহলে আমাদের টেলিফোন করুন এই নম্বরে 01643 703704 বা অথবা ই-মেল করুন customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk

Chinese

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Hindi

अगर आप इस दस्तावेज़ का अनुवाद दूसरी भाषाओं या ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों वाली छपाई, ऑडियो टेप, या सीडी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया हमें इस नंबर पर फ़ोन कीजिये 01643 703704 या यहाँ ईमेल कीजिये customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk

Portuguese

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Polish

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