



Big Plans Bright Future

Council Plan 2019-2022



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Big plans, bright future

FOREWORD

In thinking about writing the foreword for this Council Plan we reflected on what was included last year and many of the statements and sentiments expressed then still remain.

As a Council we continue to face huge challenges with the continuous and sustained reductions to local authority and other public sector budgets. This is very clearly a position and context that the vast majority of us delivering public services believe is not viable going forward.

We've had to adapt to funding reductions of £52million over the last six years and are still confronted with having to find further savings. At the same time demand for services – particularly adult social care and children's services – continues to rise.

What we can be sure of is that we are in as strong a position as we can be. We have a strong track record of sound financial management and we have been dealing with these problems successfully for many years. Finding additional savings by 2020/21 isn't going to be easy. Further difficult decisions will need to be made.

The scale of the challenge we are facing during the period of this Council Plan makes it inevitable that there will be further job losses and cuts to services and the harsh reality is these cuts will become increasingly more notable. In making the tough decisions that inevitably face us we will continue to use our policy principles to support our decision making:

- Protect the vulnerable
- Create economic prosperity
- Tackle inequality
- Help people to be healthier

In spite of all of this we remain fiercely proud of what has been achieved over the last year across all of the themes within the Council Plan.

Many of our residents and visitors to our Borough positively comment on how welcoming and inviting the place is, how pleased they are with the changes made to our town centres, housing regeneration schemes and the 'invest to save' street lighting improvements. Our year-round programme of events, the majority of which are free, remains hugely popular and successful both in terms of people experiencing them and the additional income they bring in to the Borough.

We continue to do the very best that we can for the children and young people in our care, often in difficult circumstances, and remain resolute on our commitment to this as corporate parents. We are challenging and supporting our schools to carry on making improvements and are actively encouraging local businesses to create more apprenticeship opportunities as well as developing them in the Council.

We are heartened by our most recent independent Borough-wide residents' survey which indicates that the people we are here to serve are satisfied with and trust the Council, believe that we act on resident's concerns and that we provide value for money.

With our strong political and executive leadership, committed and resourceful employees, solid partnerships and robust financial and corporate governance we firmly believe we are better placed than many to rise and respond to both the challenges and the opportunities.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'B. Cook'.

Councillor Bob Cook
Leader, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Neil Schneider'.

Neil Schneider
Chief Executive

Our vision for the Borough

Economic Regeneration and Transport...

is of an economically prosperous Borough that is dynamic, exciting and inviting with infrastructure to support the development of business start-ups, business growth, new jobs and skills.

Big plans for an outstanding borough

Environment and Housing...

is to make the Borough a better place to live and a more attractive place to do business with clean streets, carefully tended parks and open spaces, affordable and desirable housing.

Big plans for our places and open spaces

Community Safety...

is to make the Borough a place where levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime are low and people feel safe and secure.

Big plans for keeping our community safe

Health and Wellbeing...

is for a place where people are supported to be healthy.

Big plans for the health of our people

Children and Young People...

is of a great place to grow up, where children and young people are protected from harm and supported to be the best they can be in life.

Big plans for the young people of our borough

Strong Communities...

is for communities that are diverse, cohesive, caring and vibrant.

Big plans for helping our communities prosper

Adults...

is that people can get the right level and type of support at the right time to help, prevent, reduce or delay the need for ongoing support and maximise their independence.

Big plans for the care we provide

Arts, Culture and Leisure...

is of a Borough where our heritage, festivals, cultural activities and leisure facilities help us attract visitors and investment, and where sport and active leisure opportunities help people sustain healthier lifestyles.

Big plans for great experiences

Our Council...

is of a Council that prides itself on being open, honest and fair. On leading by example. On having big plans and the determination to see them through. We're facing difficult financial challenges and we can't do all we used to do so we're facing some tough decisions. Throughout this we'll stay focused on delivering genuine value for money, on setting the highest standards of public service, on communicating clearly and regularly with the community we serve and on being challenging, innovative and well organized.

Ambitious, effective and proud to serve

OUR POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Council has to take decisions about the basis on which services will be delivered with the resources available. In doing this we have to take account of a number of factors such as reduced funding, changing demographics, increasing demand for services and new legislation and national policy direction. However under-pinning all our decisions are our four policy principles. We apply these principles to all our decision making. Wherever possible we will:

- **Protect the vulnerable by**
 - protecting people who are subject to or at risk of harm
 - helping people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
 - supporting people who are financially excluded
 - assisting people whose circumstances make them vulnerable
- **Create economic prosperity by**
 - ensuring the businesses and people of Stockton-on-Tees are part of a thriving and productive Tees Valley economy
- **Tackle inequality through improving**
 - health
 - job opportunities, skills and training
 - educational attainment for all
 - affordable housing and fuel poverty
 - financial inclusion
- **Help people to be healthier by**
 - providing mainstream services that are available where needed
 - providing preventive services that are available where needed



OUR CULTURE

We deliver services by drawing on our **workforce culture** – the values and behaviours we have agreed we want to encourage here at the Council.

We are an organisation where we all make a positive contribution at work for the whole Council. Where we never lose sight of the fact we are here to serve the people of the Borough.

This is a place where...

- We are valued, trusted and supported
- We are heard
- We take responsibility for our own development
- We work hard
- We are not afraid to try something new
- We belong



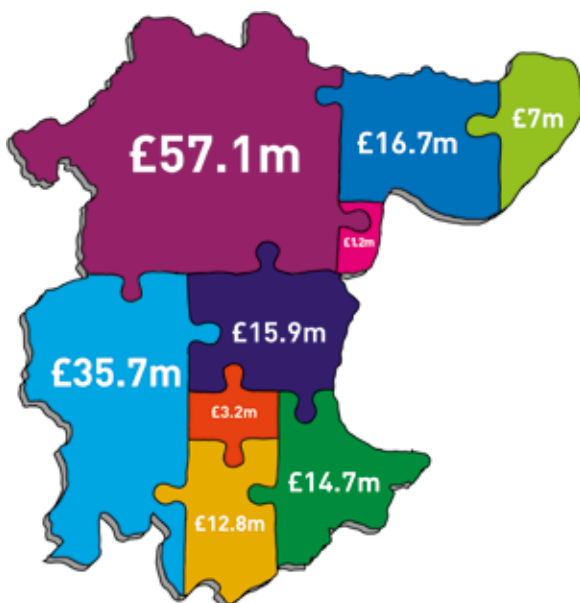
OUR RESOURCES

We've had to adapt to funding unprecedented funding reductions over the last eight years and are still confronted with having to find further savings. At the same time demand for services – particularly adult social care and children's services – continues to rise.

Finding additional savings by 2020/21 isn't going to be easy. Many difficult decisions will need to be made. We've made difficult decisions in the past which means we are as well placed as we can be in the future.

What we can be sure of is that we are in as good a position as we can be. We have a strong track record of sound financial management and we have been dealing with these problems successfully for many years. We have continued our programme of service reviews through our **Medium Term Financial Plan**:

- We have restructured and reduced the size of our senior management team to ensure it reflects the Council's changing shape and size, with further reductions planned
- We're continuing to focus on managing demand and reducing costs in our big areas of spend such as adult social care, children's social care, energy and waste
- We have received another extremely positive report from our Auditors, who said: "the Council manages its finances carefully to balance service needs and available resources in the short and medium term. The Council's most recent MTFP recognises the ongoing financial constraints and the need to continue to review services to identify cost efficiencies."
- We have made a long term commitment to continue to invest in our employees through the **Shaping a Brighter Future** programme
- We are challenging and changing the way we think about work, how we do it, our supporting infrastructure and how we can work smarter through our **Smarter Working** programme



www.stockton.gov.uk/thebigpicture

OUR PEOPLE

Working closely with elected Members and with a close and constructive relationship with Trade Unions, the Council's workforce of 3,250 people strive to deliver the very best services across the Borough in the face of unprecedented challenges arising from reductions in funding and increased demand for services.

We pride ourselves that we value, care for and invest in our employees, we do this because we are ambitious and want to continue to deliver our services well. This investment in employees has been a long term commitment which is encapsulated in our **Shaping a Brighter Future** programme.

This programme is looking at who we are and how we do things, at staff support and development, at helping employees to make the very best of their existing skills and talents and develop their potential, to cope with stresses, and to be happy and well-motivated in the job that best suits them.

We continue to build on this and have maintained our Silver Investor in People award and the Gold Better Health at Work award accreditation.

The 2018 Employee Survey results provided a measure of the value of the investment in our employees from their perspective. The results showed that we continued to maintain a high survey response rate and that our staff strongly believe that the Council is a good place to work.



OUR WAYS OF WORKING

We are a successful organisation with a long and positive track record of continuous improvement.

We are challenging and changing the way we think about work, how we do it and how we can work smarter through our **Smarter Working** programme:

- Providing digital access to our services
- Using existing and new technologies to help us work differently
- Making optimum use of the places where we work
- Ensuring that our policies, processes and procedures are as efficient and productive as they can be
- Ensuring our infrastructure is fit for purpose for a modern organisation

OUR CUSTOMERS

We are committed to developing the Council and ensuring we deliver high quality, customer focused services that meet the changing needs of our communities.

We have continued to implement improvements in direct response to the Ipsos MORI residents' survey undertaken across the Borough in 2015. The results showed:

- a general improvement from the last survey and help us to focus our work in areas that we think need improvement
- our results are very positive with almost 9 in 10 residents satisfied with the local area (just 7% are dissatisfied)
- over 7 in 10 are satisfied with how the Council runs things (just 12% are dissatisfied)
- 7 in 10 trust the Council a great deal/ fair amount (with only 7% saying "not at all")
- Almost 7 in 10 agree that the Council acts on residents' concerns a great deal/ fair amount (just 6% say "not at all")
- Almost 6 in 10 agree the Council provides value for money (19% disagree)

Last year we were ranked as best in the country by our residents in an annual public satisfaction survey carried out by independent market research specialist Ipsos MORI collecting local resident's perspectives on, and satisfaction with, Highway and Transport Services in Local Authority areas.

Last year we also maintained our Customer Service Excellence accreditation for the sixth consecutive year, securing the highest possible "compliance +" rating in 9 categories. We have also launched the new "My Views" consultation portal, which provides an improved online platform to support consultations on service changes and proposals.



During the last year in Stockton-on-Tees



OUR PLACE

Stockton-on-Tees is a Borough of wide contrasts; a mixture of busy town centres, urban residential areas and picturesque villages.

The principal settlements are Stockton, Billingham, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Norton, and Yarm; whilst Wynyard is expected to grow into a substantial residential location.

The River Tees courses through the Borough and sustains a variety of uses; from a working river upstream; a leisure destination; and forming part of the tranquil green corridors.

The Borough is bounded by County Durham to the north; Darlington to the west; Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Hartlepool to the east; and Hambleton to the south.

Stockton-on-Tees benefits from good access to the strategic road network – A1M, A19, A66 and A67 – and a network of bus routes that provide frequent services to connect residents to work and leisure destinations predominantly across Tees Valley, and for the movement of goods and services.

There are six train stations in total providing frequent access to destinations in Tees Valley and across the North, and a direct link to London via the East Coast Mainline.

The south east of the Borough is home to Durham Tees Valley Airport.

The Borough covers approximately 20,000 Hectares with a population of about 195,700 people living in 85,700 households.

Using indices of multiple deprivation, the Borough is ranked 88th most deprived out of the 326 local authorities in England. However, whilst 28% of the population live within the top 20% of most deprived areas of England, 28% live in the 20% least deprived areas.



OUR REGION

Stockton-on-Tees is part of the wider Tees Valley region covered by five local unitary Councils (Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Darlington, Redcar and Cleveland, Hartlepool).

The five Councils have a long track record of public and private partnership working to address strategic economic development and transport matters and have, through Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU), pooled strategic economic functions – covering business engagement, economic strategy and intelligence, inward investment, marketing and promotions, strategic transport, and investment planning.

This success of this strong partnership working has been built upon and further formalised through the creation of the Tees Valley Combined Authority which came into effect in April 2016. The first Tees Valley Mayor was elected in May 2017.

The creation of the Combined Authority has given us the opportunity to negotiate a devolution deal with Government. The devolution deal, which was agreed in October 2015, included a commitment of £15m per annum additional investment funding for 30 years and was firmly focused on driving economic growth across a range of areas: transport; education and skills, housing and place; business growth; culture; and innovation and energy

With opportunities for further funds to be added in future and the flexibilities to use funds between years it allows for much more ambitious investment planning in the Tees Valley than we have previously enjoyed.



Key objectives

ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT

Our vision

is of an economically prosperous Borough that is dynamic, exciting and inviting with infrastructure to support the development of business start-ups, business growth, new jobs and skills.

Strategic links

The Economic Strategy sets out the Council's long term vision and ambitions in relation to economic regeneration and transport and is reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet.

The Economic Growth Plan sets out what will be delivered in the next 3 years to deliver the outcomes and ambitions in the Economic Strategy and is also reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet.

Cabinet receive quarterly update reports for the themes of 'Business', 'Place', and 'People' plus an 'Annual Round-Up' report. These quarterly reports contain key indicators plus key announcements and developments.

Big Plans for an outstanding Borough

Key objectives

- Have a successful business base where existing companies have experienced sustainable growth and new businesses have been created and attracted
- Provide sufficient sites and premises in vibrant, connected and distinctive places that businesses are attracted to
- Ensure that people have the opportunity to learn/train and gain the appropriate level of skills to maximise the employment opportunities available in the economy



ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

Our vision

is to make the Borough a better place to live and a more attractive place to do business with clean streets, carefully tended parks and open spaces, affordable and desirable housing.

Strategic links

The Economic Strategy sets out the Council's long term vision and ambitions in relation to environment and housing is reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet.

The Economic Growth Plan sets out what will be delivered in the next 3 years to deliver the outcomes and ambitions in the Economic Strategy and is also reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet.

Cabinet receive quarterly update reports for the themes of 'Business', 'Place', and 'People' plus an 'Annual Round-Up' report. These quarterly reports contain key indicators plus key announcements and developments.

Key objectives

- Provide sufficient sites and premises in vibrant, connected and distinctive places that people choose to live, work, play and visit
- Deliver effective environmental services

Big Plans for our places and open spaces



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Our vision

is to make the Borough a place where levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime are low and people feel safe and secure.

Strategic links

The Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) deals with crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse related crime. The Partnership sets out its current ambitions in the Community Safety Plan.

Key objectives

- Deliver effective community safety services
- Deliver effective licensing services

Big plans for keeping our community safe



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Our vision

is for a place where people are supported to be healthy.

Strategic links

The Health and Wellbeing Board brings together people from a number of agencies and organisations to develop and oversee the delivery of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS). The JHWS is the overarching plan to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults in our Borough and to reduce health inequalities.

The Director of Public Health Annual Report is an independent report on the health of the population and outlines some of the key health and wellbeing challenges and opportunities in Stockton Borough.

Key objectives

- All children and families get the best start in life
- All people in the Borough live well and live longer
- All people in the Borough live in healthy places and utilise assets within their communities

Big Plans for the health of our people



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our vision

is of a great place to grow up, where children and young people are protected from harm and supported to be the best they can be in life.

Strategic links

The Children's Services Strategy sets out what will be delivered in the next 3 years to achieve the Council's outcomes and ambitions in relation to children and young people and is reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet. Cabinet receive quarterly update reports that contain key indicators plus key announcements and developments.

The Children and Young People's Partnership brings together people from a number of agencies and organisations, across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors to ensure a focus on the things that will make the most difference for children and young people. The Partnership sets out its current ambitions in the Children and Young People's Plan.

Key objectives

- Giving children the best start in life
- Focusing on schools and learning outcomes
- Delivering effective early help – supporting families
- Safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children, backed by outstanding social work practice
- A consistent and relentless focus on better outcomes for children in our care and leaving our care
- Work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently

Big Plans for the young people of our borough



STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Our vision

is for communities that are diverse, cohesive, caring and vibrant.

Strategic links

The Brighter Borough For All - Tackling Poverty Framework sets out a plan for tackling poverty in the Borough.

The Stockton Strategic Partnership brings together different parts of the public sector as well as private, business, community and voluntary sectors.

Key objectives

- Deliver effective local democracy
- Provide financial advice and support to our communities
- Support the continued development of a strong and vibrant voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector
- Deliver effective consultation and engagement
- Develop a community cohesion strategy

Big Plans for helping our communities prosper



ADULT SERVICES

Our vision

is that people can get the right level and type of support at the right time to help, prevent, reduce or delay the need for ongoing support and maximise their independence.

Strategic links

The Adult Social Care Strategy: Promoting Independence sets out what will be delivered in the next 3 years to achieve the Council's outcomes and ambitions in relation to adults social care services and is reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet.

Key objectives

- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Work in partnership
- Work with individuals, their families and carers
- Continue to work closely with the NHS
- Deliver our statutory duties
- Safeguarding adults
- Maximise the use of scarce financial resources
- Ensure the most effective and appropriate use of our own and our providers' workforces

Big Plans for the care we provide



ARTS, CULTURE AND LEISURE

Our vision

is of a Borough where our heritage, festivals, cultural activities and leisure facilities help us attract visitors and investment, and where sport and active leisure opportunities help people sustain healthier lifestyles.

Key objectives

- Deliver sustainable events and attractions that contribute to the delivery of vibrant and economically successful town centres and economic prosperity
- Deliver an effective library service that supports literacy, access to knowledge and inspiring activities for everyone in safe accessible spaces across the Borough
- Support all sectors of our communities to secure enjoyment, learning and achievement through sport and active leisure



Big Plans for great experiences



OUR COUNCIL

Our vision

is of a Council that prides itself on being open, honest and fair. On leading by example. On having big plans and the determination to see them through. We're facing difficult financial challenges and we can't do all we used to do so we're facing some tough decisions. Throughout this we'll stay focused on delivering genuine value for money, on setting the highest standards of public service, on communicating clearly and regularly with the community we serve and on being challenging, innovative and well organized.

Strategic links

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) summarises the Council's financial position over the next 3 years and is reviewed and approved annually by Cabinet and Full Council. Cabinet receive quarterly update reports that contain key indicators plus key announcements and developments.

The Shaping a Brighter Future programme is a long term commitment to continue to invest in our employees. The Smarter Working in Stockton programme is challenging and changing the way we think about work, how we do it and how we can work smarter. Cabinet receive an annual report on progress.

Xentrall Shared Services, the Stockton and Darlington partnership, was established in May 2008. Cabinet receive an annual report that contains key indicators plus key announcements and developments.

Key objectives

- Deliver a balanced and sustainable medium term financial plan
- Maximise and safeguard income for the Council
- Ensure the Council uses its assets effectively
- Develop and ensure delivery of a robust governance framework
- Continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our services
- Continue to attract, develop and support diverse, capable and resilient employees
- Deliver effective communication

Ambitious, effective and proud to serve



Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council,
Municipal Buildings,
Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees,
TS18 1LD

www.stockton.gov.uk

