

# BUSINESS STRATEGY

## 2019/23



# FOREWORD

We are pleased to present Warwick District Council's 2019-23 Business Strategy which sets out the Council's priorities for the next four years.

Our Vision for the District is to **“to make Warwick District a great place, to live, work and visit”**. To help deliver this Vision, the strategy describes the challenges that Warwick District faces over the coming years to meet the needs of local people and how we will use our resources to meet those challenges.

The Council's overriding challenge is to tackle the Climate Emergency that faces us all. Whilst we are fortunate to live in such a wonderful part of the country, identified by its parks, gardens and trees, we recognise that the emergency needs a response like never before. We need to be “greener”; act in a more sustainable fashion; and ultimately ensure that future generations continue to experience a District renowned for its wonderful surroundings. We are up for that challenge.

We hope you can take the time to read this Strategy which explores how the Council needs to do things differently to ensure we can continue to deliver our priorities and maintain the quality of life we value in the District.

**Andrew Day**, Leader Warwick District Council

# INTRODUCTION

## Our challenges

The public sector, and in particular local government, has experienced a period of unprecedented change and uncertainty, with no indication of when this period may end.

The pressure on resources, brought about by the largest public sector budget reductions in history, is immense, and comes at a time of continuing increases in demand and expectation from a District with a growing population.

Our ability to continue to deliver the quality services you've come to expect and the key actions we plan to prioritise during the life of this Strategy is dependent on how well we address the financial pressures. We have made savings of £7m since 2010 and need to find at least a further £2m from our base budget (i.e. permanent savings) over the next four years. The way councils are funded is currently being fundamentally reviewed by Government, the outcome of this is as yet unknown and at present funding post 2020/21 is unclear.

The Council has unanimously declared a Climate Emergency and has the ambition to be the first council to become carbon neutral, achieving internationally recognised UN Climate Neutral Status. Tackling the Emergency is at the heart of this Strategy and will underpin our approach to providing our services over the coming years.

Affordable housing is desperately needed in the District. There are nearly 2,000 on the HomeChoice register. We have a Local Plan in place to provide the total number of homes required but we need to ensure that people can access those homes at a reasonable cost. We will put all our energies into securing land so that we can undertake an extensive social housing building programme.

We recognise that although the District is by-and-large an affluent area there are those who need our support whether because of illness, temporary unemployment or infirmity. The Government is rolling out its Universal Credit programme and this may cause financial difficulties for some of our residents. We have put in place a comprehensive support mechanism for our tenants and we will monitor and where necessary amend this support.

The District will see its population grow from 137,700 in 2011 to 177,119 in 2029. We will see expanding and new communities in the District. We will need to ensure that our services respond to this growth and that we use new technology to ensure that our service delivery is effective and efficient as possible.

# KEY FACTS about the District and Services

Warwick District Council is one of five district / borough councils within Warwickshire. It lies in the south of the county, covering approximately 28,288 hectares, and is home to around 58,700 households (137,700 people).

The area includes the towns of Kenilworth, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick and Whitnash, which account for around 80% of the population. The remainder of residents live in a number of villages, many of which are Green Belt. The district is bordered to the south and west by Stratford-on-Avon District, to the east by Rugby Borough and to the north by Solihull and the city of Coventry.

Positioned at the centre of the UK, the district has excellent road and rail links providing easy access to the whole country. There are major routes across the area including the M40 providing direct access to London and indirect links to the north-west via the M6 and M5 respectively, as well as links to the north and east. There are also excellent rail services to the rest of the West Midlands and London.

Warwick District Council has the largest population in the county and the population density of 4.9 people per square hectare is the second highest in Warwickshire and above national/regional

averages. The population grew over the ten years from 2001 to 2011 by over 9%, a faster rate than England and Wales and the West Midlands and second only to Rugby in the county.

With a rich cultural heritage, the district is home to the popular tourist attractions of Warwick Castle and Kenilworth Castle, as well as several museums in Warwick. The Royal Pump Rooms in Royal Leamington Spa offer a rich cultural and tourist experience, whilst the Royal Spa Centre runs an exciting programme of events in its 667 seat main house and 188 seat studio cinema. The district has been successful in achieving five prestigious Green Flag and Green Flag community awards in recognition of its outstanding green spaces. Royal Leamington Spa has also achieved a Purple Flag, acknowledging the excellent night-time management of the town centre.

Both Kenilworth and Royal Leamington Spa were recently ranked in the top five of places to live in the Midlands as part of The Sunday Times' 2019 Best Places to Live in Britain list. The University of Warwick is partly in the District and we house thousands of students. Sunday Times' also ranked the District as in top 20 places in country to live as a student.

We offer valuable and accessible services for the community which helps to promote Warwick District as a great place to live, work and visit and these include;

## Cultural Services

- Sports & Leisure Management
- Active Communities
- Arts - Royal Spa Centre, Town Hall & Royal Pump Rooms and Museum

## Finance

- Accountancy
- Audit & Risk
- Exchequer
- Benefits & Fraud
- Procurement

## Health & Community

### Protection

- Community Partnership Team
- Regulatory
- Safer Communities

### Chief Executive

- Human Resources & Media
- ICT Services
- Democratic Services
- Asset Management

### Housing Services

- Housing Needs
- Sustaining Tenancies
- Housing Strategy & Development

## Development Services

- Policy & Projects
- Building Control Consortium
- Development Management

### Neighbourhood Services

- Bereavement Services
- Green Spaces
- Business Support & Development
- Car Parks
- Contract Services

# VISION

Warwick District a great place to live, work & visit.

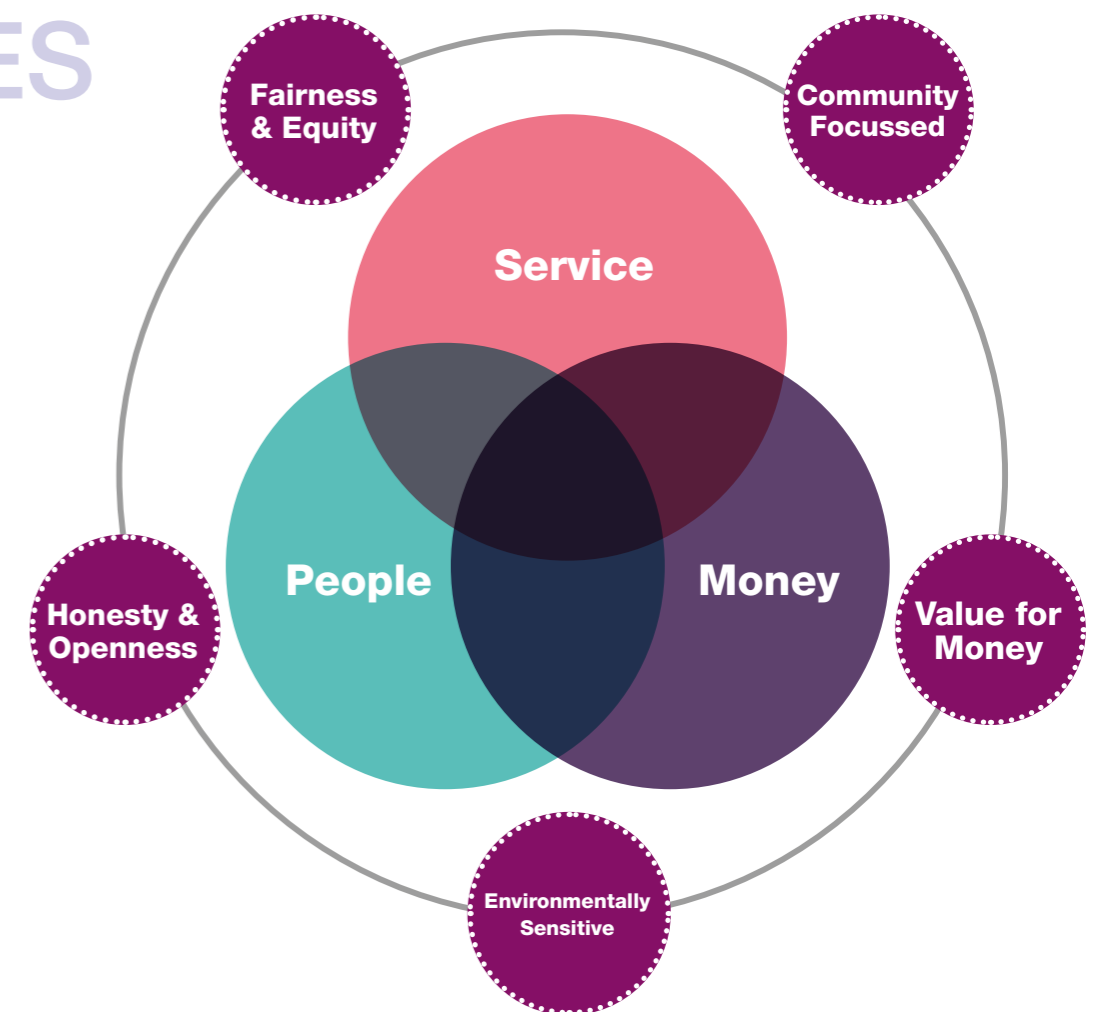
We have a passion to improve services and we want to be able to ensure our effectiveness each and every-day. Our workforce is central to our success and is key to us being able to develop an organisation that is fit for the future. To do that we need to recruit the right people to join us on that journey.

Our aspiration is for an engaged and committed workforce which is customer focused, business-like and able to develop and deliver efficient and effective services.

Warwick District Council has a constructive, transparent and cordial relationship with Unison and GMB as recognised Trade Unions.

# VALUES

Our values help to guide how we work with each other, with our partners and residents and communities to achieve the vision.



# FIT FOR THE FUTURE (FFF)

Our values are at the heart of everything we do.

They provide the framework within which we engage with our employees, and ultimately influence and shape our organisational culture.

They are the driving force behind all the work we do.

## HONESTY AND OPENNESS

We will be truthful & transparent about how we run the council.

## VALUE FOR MONEY

We will make efficient use of resources to offer the best service at the best price.

## FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

We will value all citizens and work without bias or prejudice.

## COMMUNITY FOCUSED

We will put the needs and aspirations of our local communities to the fore and work collaboratively and flexibly as one council.

## ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE

We will ensure our long term impacts are minimised and are sustainable for future generations.

# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are an Equal Opportunities employer throughout our recruitment and selection procedures, as well as learning and development, appraisal and promotion opportunities.

We quite simply aim to recruit the best person for the job. We use fair and open selection, based on knowledge and experience, skills and behaviour and welcome applications from all.

We promote an environment free from discrimination harassment and victimisation and ensure we offer equality of opportunity to all of our staff.

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver its Vision for the District.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The Council's Service Area Plans (link to the plans to be created) are the programme of work fundamental to the delivery of the strands described in the table below.

| FFF STRANDS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PEOPLE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | SERVICES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | MONEY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| External                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Health, Homes, Communities (Ref A)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Green, Clean, Safe (Ref B)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment (Ref C)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved health for all</li> <li>Housing needs for all met</li> <li>Impressive cultural and sports activities</li> <li>Cohesive and active communities</li> </ul>                                                                         | <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025</li> <li>Total carbon emissions within Warwick District are as close to zero as possible by 2030</li> <li>Area has well looked after public spaces</li> <li>All communities have access to decent open space</li> <li>Improved air quality</li> <li>Low levels of crime and ASB</li> </ul> | <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dynamic and diverse local economy</li> <li>Vibrant town centres</li> <li>Improved performance/ productivity of local economy</li> <li>Increased employment and income levels</li> </ul>       |
| Internal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Effective Staff (Ref D)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Maintain or Improve Services (Ref E)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Financial Footing over the Longer Term (Ref F)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff are properly trained</li> <li>All staff have the appropriate tools</li> <li>All staff are engaged, empowered and supported</li> <li>The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours</li> </ul> | <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focusing on our customers' needs</li> <li>Continuously improve our processes</li> <li>Increase the digital provision of services</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Intended outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better return/use of our assets</li> <li>Full Cost accounting</li> <li>Continued cost management</li> <li>Maximise income earning opportunities</li> <li>Seek best value for money</li> </ul> |

## The following section outlines the key themes of work we will focus on in order to deliver the intended outcomes for 2019 and beyond.

The overarching theme for the Council, which will run through all its initiatives and service delivery, will be responding to the Climate Emergency declaration. The Council's Portfolio Holder for Business & Environment is leading a group of Council members to produce a fully-resourced action plan which will be reported to Council although the following priorities have already been identified.

| INITIATIVE                                                                                                              | FFF Ref |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| To acquire land to build social housing to the highest environmental standards.                                         | A B     |
| To enable the planting of 160,000 new trees over the next four years.                                                   | A B     |
| To enable the expansion of the water refill scheme.                                                                     | A       |
| To bring forward a development plan document for environmental standards of new build properties.                       | A B     |
| To expand the provision of cycle ways in parks and cycle storage facilities in towns.                                   | A B     |
| Explore solar/battery energy opportunities                                                                              | B F     |
| To ensure the public realm contracts are designed in such a way as to minimise the environmental impact on the District | A B C E |
| To provide outstanding country parks at Newbold and Bishops Tachbrook                                                   | A B E   |
| To undertake a Local Plan Review and develop a new transport and parking strategy for the district with WCC             | A B C E |

Transforming of the Council's working practices and business processes, utilising technology and enabling digital services to reduce costs. The following priorities have already been identified but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off to Councillors for February 2020.

| INITIATIVE                                                                                  | FFF Ref |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Install a new Financial Management system                                                   | E F     |
| Install a replacement for Civica AAP system (Licensing, Planning, Neighbourhood management) | E F     |
| Install a replacement for Accolaid System (Planning)                                        | E F     |
| Review and upgrade the ActiveH system used for asset and housing management                 | E F     |
| Deliver an organisational change programme                                                  | D E F   |
| Update the ICT and Customer Access Strategies                                               | D E F   |

Maximising income by taking a more entrepreneurial approach to income generation and developing new income streams. The following priorities have already been identified or agreed but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off to Councillors for February 2020.

| INITIATIVE                                                               | FFF Ref   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Produce and implement a masterplan for St Nicholas Park and Myton Fields | A B C E F |
| Review approach to treasury management                                   | F         |
| Upgrade CCTV Service                                                     | B C E F   |
| Review delivery model for Enterprise Team's work                         | C E F     |
| Develop more commercial approach to a. pest and b. kennel services       | E F       |
| Develop St Mary's Lands commercial opportunities                         | C E F     |
| Undertake car parking charge review                                      | C F       |

Investing in the Council's built assets to enhance service delivery and/ or increase the financial return. The following priorities have already been identified but a full programme of work will now need to be developed and reported for sign-off to Councillors for February 2020.

| INITIATIVE                                                                                                  | FFF Ref   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Adopt an Asset Management Strategy                                                                          | F         |
| Review the Council's commercial property portfolio for potential disposals, acquisitions and revised leases | F         |
| Review built corporate assets energy costs                                                                  | B F       |
| Review the Council's operational asset requirements                                                         | D E F     |
| Build new, high quality, energy efficient affordable homes                                                  | B F       |
| Maximise the return from the Council's landholdings within the Stratford Road employment site               | F C       |
| Complete District-wide Leisure Development Programme                                                        | A B C E F |

Supporting the local economy to produce high quality jobs and increase the prosperity of the District. The following priorities have already been identified.

| INITIATIVE                                                                                                                          | FFF Ref   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Undertake the Covent Garden redevelopment                                                                                           | C F       |
| Develop the Creative Quarter                                                                                                        | A C       |
| Develop a strategic parking strategy to support the district's town centres                                                         | A B C F   |
| Support our Town Centres to adapt to changing environmental, social and economic conditions                                         | C         |
| Develop North of Gallows Hill (Stadium et al) projects                                                                              | A B C E F |
| Implement proposals for hosting Commonwealth Games 2022 at and around Victoria Park and the railway station in Royal Leamington Spa | A B C E F |
| Work to improve the diversity of the employment land and premises offer within the District                                         | C E F     |
| Planning, funding and delivery of infrastructure to support new housing                                                             | A B C     |

# RESOURCE STRATEGIES

The Council's Asset, Digital, Financial and People Strategies set out the resources used to deliver the strategic outcomes over the medium term, whilst taking account of developments in national priorities. These strategies will be reviewed to ensure they are aligned to delivery of the Council's intended outcomes.

## ICT Strategy

The Government's digital strategy is to provide "digital services which are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded". The ICT Strategy outlines the approach that the Council will take to develop and deploy digital technologies that support service delivery, ensuring that these solutions work for our customers. It defines our vision, key themes and overall direction of travel for ICT and Digital services.

## People Strategy

The People Strategy 2016/2020 sets out how the Council's approach to resourcing, learning and development, and cultural change ensures that its workforce is able to support the Fit for the Future Strategy, as it is our staff that deliver the Council's vision to make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved by Council in February 2019. This document sets out the financial framework used to ensure adequate financial resources are available to achieve Council's objectives, and that appropriate action is taken to address significant future challenges.

## Asset Strategy

We are developing a new and updated Asset Management Strategy which will enable us to assess, categorise and agree options and interventions initially for each of our corporate and commercial assets. This will also assist in meeting the Climate Emergency agenda and the emerging Council Action Plan.

## Resource Planning

In tandem with the development of the Business Strategy, a review has been undertaken to determine the senior management resources required to deliver the Strategy. Specifically, the Council has decided that it needs to make further investment in staff if it is to properly respond to the challenges posed by Climate Change. Therefore, it will be making available £x from the Council's New Homes Bonus allocation for 2019/20 to support the delivery of the Climate Change action plan. It will also make a further allocation of £x to support the Council's other change initiatives.

## Managing, Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy

The delivery of this strategy will be overseen by the Council's Corporate Management Team. Performance will be monitored on a monthly basis and reported to Councillors twice yearly. At the end of each financial year the strategy will be reviewed to determine whether any changes are required.

