Ambitions: Our Council Plan 2018-2022



Version 0.08

Foreword

Our Council Plan sets out our priorities and vision for the Lancaster district to thrive as a vibrant regional centre in the north west of England.

Lancaster City Council is committed to making the most of our district's many attributes as a great place to live, work and visit.

We recognise that in order to pursue the great opportunities ahead of us, we will need to work closely with partners in our communities, other public institutions, businesses and voluntary organisations. This is in the context of our need to achieve financial sustainability in what is a challenging, uncertain financial climate.

Our Council Plan sets out our four Ambitions for 2018-22;

- A Thriving and Prosperous Economy
- Clean and Safe Neighbourhoods
- Healthy and Happy Communities
- A Smart and Forward-Thinking Council

We have also identified four Principles which describe the approach we will aim to take in all our work. These are:

- Community Leadership
- Shaping the Place
- A Professional Approach
- Valuing Distinctiveness

The Plan summarises our direction of travel in contributing to our Ambitions by setting out:

- The available information which has influenced our thinking;
- How our work currently contributes to our Ambitions;
- Areas of work we will be focusing on during the period covered by this Plan;
- How others can work with us in successfully delivering our priorities; and
- Outcomes we will be measuring our success against.

We know that in order to thrive and continue improving in a demanding environment, we will need to be innovative and creative in designing the way we deliver excellent, accessible services and address the district's needs.

We are committed to celebrating our joint successes and learning from any mistakes. To ensure that our Plan continues to reflect the needs of the district, we will be reviewing the Plan each year.

Achievements

In the last few years we have achieved a lot, and this Council Plan will build on those successes:

Heritage City status Investment and growth in Salt Ayre Leisure Centre Local Plan Supported a number of award-winning arts and culture events Investment in our buildings e.g. The Storey, Museums Successfully bid to deliver Bailrigg Garden Village Funding for a Coastal Communities Team Won the Home Adaptations Service of the Year award

Attained Green Flag status in Williamson Park and Happy Mount Park

Our Principles

Community Leadership

We will engage with residents, businesses and other partners to understand their needs and views, and work with them to develop plans for positive change.

We believe that Community Leadership means

- Seeking the views of our residents and partners;
- Being accessible and transparent;
- Being there on the ground when we are needed;
- Making socially, environmentally and fiscally responsible decisions

Shaping the Place

We want to champion the development of the district as a prime destination for businesses and for visitors, as well as improving the lives of those who live and work here. This means always considering the biggest possible picture and recognising how our work can contribute to further improvement of the district.

A Professional Approach

We are ambitious to see the district fulfil its potential, but recognise that we need to provide our services in an affordable way. Good financial management and stability are essential for our success. We aim to make the best use of our resources in all we do, and deliver services that provide excellent value for money.

As well as saving money where we can through efficiencies and innovation, we will also use our resources to

- Invest in regeneration activities that have a long-term positive impact on the district
- Invest to generate income for the Council, which can then be used to fund our services
- Invest in initiatives that save money without having a detrimental impact
- Develop appropriate commercial opportunities

Our priority is to minimise the impact on communities by avoiding, or lessening as far as we can, any reductions in valued services, as we move to becoming financially self-sustaining. We want to protect the most vulnerable in our society.

Valuing Distinctiveness

We recognise that our district is unique in containing distinctive City, Coast and Countryside locations. We aim to improve the lives of all our residents - in Morecambe, Heysham, Lancaster, Carnforth and the coastal and rural villages. We will deliver our services to each of our neighbourhoods in a way that is flexible and appropriate to local needs. We will also use our resources across different locations in a fair way which benefits the whole district.

Our Ambitions

1: A Thriving and Prosperous Economy Our Priorities | We want to...

- Create strong conditions for growth so that businesses thrive and jobs are created
- With our partners, deliver major regeneration and infrastructure projects
- Support development of new skills and improved prospects for our residents
- Ensure that growth is good for all, and increased wealth benefits our local communities
- Work with partners to drive growth and achieve major investment across the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region

2: Clean and Safe Neighbourhoods

Our Priorities | We want to...

- Deliver, work in partnership and influence to make our district's neighbourhoods, parks and open space clean, well-maintained and safe
- Work towards parks and public spaces becoming financially self-sustaining
- Use innovation, technology and partnership with others to help improve the efficiency of services, improve customer satisfaction and reduce our impact on the environment

3: Healthy and Happy Communities Our Priorities | We want to...

- Work with others to address health inequality, food and fuel poverty, mental health, loneliness
- Enhance community cohesion
- Improve access to arts and leisure, meaningful work, public open space, quality housing
- Protect and improve health focussing on early intervention and involving our communities in service design and delivery

4: A Smart and Forward-Thinking Council Our Priorities | We want to...

- Be customer-focused and customer-friendly
- Ensure our future financial resilience and be financially sustainable
- Make best use of our business intelligence; design our organisation to respond to needs
- Make best use of digital and other technology to provide quality services
- Make best use of our land and other property
- Invest in our staff to ensure we have the internal expertise to deliver our plans
- Be recognised for providing value for money

Snapshot of our Services in 2016-17

- £252,400 funding for voluntary and community services
- Improved 2077 homes, including 61 private tenant and 2016 owneroccupied properties
- 342 homes benefitted from our warm homes initiative
- Rehoused 345 applicants into our council houses
- Prevented 586 households becoming homeless
- Rehoused 549 people into permanent accommodation from the housing register
- Over 7,000,000 bins and boxes of household waste collected in a year
- 100% Gas Safety Inspections completed on our 3165 homes
- Recycled 19,387 tons of household waste: 39% of all waste collected
- Delivered a waste and recycling service to nearly 63,000 properties
- Administered over 1400 planning applications
- Answered over 2500 phone calls per week from our customers
- Over 17,000 claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support
- 100% of high risk food inspections completed
- 960 food inspections and visits completed
- 38 high risk health and safety inspections completed (100%)
- Enabled 168 new affordable homes
- Named and numbered 759 properties
- Worked with over 30 voluntary organisations to support 663 areas of public open space
- Dealt with 2521 pest treatment and pest-proofing service requests
- Welcomed 382,220 visitors to Salt Ayre Leisure Centre
- Attracted an audience of over 80,000 to the Council's 2 major festivals
- Secured £196,900 funding for the arts
- Received over 100,000 enquiries at our Visitor Information Centres

Ambition 1: A Thriving and Prosperous Economy

Our Priorities | We want to...

- Create strong conditions for growth so that businesses thrive and jobs are created
- With our partners, deliver major regeneration and infrastructure projects
- Support development of new skills and improved prospects for our residents
- Ensure that growth is good for all, and increased wealth benefits our local communities
- Work with partners to drive growth and achieve major investment across the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region

What we know

Some of the key issues facing our local communities:

- Our centres of Lancaster and Morecambe need new shopping and leisure facilities
- Unemployment is at 4.7% which is slightly above the national average (4.6%);
- Lower rate of employment in the manufacturing sector both regionally and nationally;
- High number of jobs in the education sector, benefiting from two universities
- The average annual pre-tax personal income is £22,300, £5,100 below the national average;
- The number of people with NVQ2 Qualifications and above is below the national average;
- 77% of residents who are employed work within the district
- High numbers of graduates leave the district for employment

Our Services

- Planning
- Building Control
- Tourist Information
- Regeneration
- Marketing and Communications
- Conservation
- Tourism Development
- Arts and Culture support
- Festivals and Events

- Engineering
- Economic Development and Growth
- Public Realm maintenance
- Visitor and Public attractions
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Property
- Museums

What we will do

Deliver

- Transform our centres and encourage more investment and jobs through major regeneration projects, including the Canal Quarter
- ✓ Facilitate and deliver employment growth at Heysham Gateway

- ✓ Work with partners to deliver an innovative Bailrigg Garden Village settlement as a great place for people to live and work
- Attract investment and regenerate Morecambe by completing the Morecambe Area Action Plan
- Encourage local business growth and start-ups by facilitating access to business support services
- Increase investment and jobs by supporting the development of key employment sectors, including energy and environment, digital, health innovation, and tourism)
- ✓ Support development of new trade and investment opportunities for our businesses
- Position the district and the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region as an outstanding place to do business and invest, as well as live, work and visit
- Promote and provide 'social value' by updating our procurement policies and practices in support of increasing local spend and delivering value for money, as well as tackling modern slavery and encouraging fair tax practices
- Encourage local procurement and increase spend in the local area through a local wealth-building scheme
- Secure local benefits from economic growth by developing new ways of connecting businesses and communities
- Develop and promote our exceptional arts and cultural offer at the national and international level, as a distinctive part of our offer to residents and visitors
- Provide employment opportunities through apprenticeships, work experience, volunteering and mentoring programmes
- Protect the district from the effects of flooding by continuing to deliver sea and river defences and resilience schemes

Develop

- Undertake a programme of public realm improvements to town centres, streets and car parks
- Work with others to consider new ways to develop skills and improve prospects for local people
- Engage with the local business community throughout our urban and rural areas to understand needs and provide support and networking opportunities

Influence

- Find innovative ways to boost tourism and spending in partnership with the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Chamber of Commerce and other partners
- ✓ Support the delivery of an improved retail experience
- ✓ Attract growth funding and create new jobs through working with the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- Enable the delivery of quality infrastructure in partnership with developers and other partners
- ✓ Retain resources and skills locally by working with local businesses and contractors
- ✓ Support the provision of micro-business incubation spaces

How others can help

- ✓ Spending locally and helping to retain wealth in the local area
- ✓ Investing in our economy and employing local people
- ✓ Actively supporting Morecambe and Lancaster Business Improvement Districts;
- Being ambassadors and champions for the district, locally, regionally, nationally and overseas;
- ✓ Continuing to support our thriving arts culture and tourism offer;
- ✓ Providing mutual support, networking and learning;
- ✓ Businesses can invest in employees' skills and development to attract investment
- Supporting local organisations to bid for funding and grant opportunities from the private sector

- Increased regional share of GVA;
- More local jobs and people in employment;
- More new businesses and investment in our district;
- More of the Council's supplies and services being sourced locally
- Increased level of public sector spend retained in the district
- Improved level of skills in the district
- More successful businesses;
- Improved retail offer;
- More visitors and greater spend;
- Regenerated Lancaster city and Morecambe town centre;
- Increased perception of the district as a place to visit

Ambition 2: Clean and Safe Neighbourhoods

Our Priorities | We want to...

- Deliver, work in partnership and influence to make our district's neighbourhoods, parks and open space clean, well-maintained and safe
- Work towards parks and public spaces becoming financially self-sustaining
- Use innovation, technology and partnership with others to help improve the efficiency of services, improve customer satisfaction and reduce our impact on the environment

What we know

This is a snapshot of some of the key issues facing our local communities:

- Anti-Social Behaviour remains a key safety issue to tackle in the district
- The Lancaster District remains a top performer for the low amount of household waste produced; in common with the rest of Lancashire there has been a reduction in the amount of household waste recycled: down from 45% in 2015-16 to 39% in 2016-17
- Fly tipping remains a problem, with on average over 1900 incidents dealt with per year
- Residents and businesses value public CCTV as a tool to provide reassurance on public safety, deter crime and improve our chances of successful enforcement and prosecution
- Visitor numbers continue to increase to our Green Flag-awarded Happy Mount Park and Williamson Park
- The continued input of 'Friends of' groups and others means our parks and open spaces are maintained to a much higher standard, and have better facilities, than the Council could provide on its own

Our Services

We deliver a range of services which we adapt and review to meet local needs and opportunities and to take account of our funding situation. Current services we deliver that help to create clean and safe neighbourhoods include:

- Street Cleansing
- Graffiti Removal
- Grounds Maintenance
- Arboriculture
- Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces
- Street Naming
- Amenity Lighting
- Waste Collection and Recycling
- Bulky Household Waste Collections
- Trade Waste Collection
- Environmental Enforcement (Litter / Waste / Abandoned Vehicles)

- Building Cleaning
- Public toilets
- CCTV
- Civil Contingencies
- Community Safety
- Safeguarding
- Anti-Social Behaviour Team
- Dog Warden Service
- Council Housing Repairs and Maintenance
- Off-Street Car Parking
- Markets

What we will do

Deliver

- ✓ Become nationally recognised as a district that values the importance of all its open space
- ✓ Ensure we provide the services the district needs by fundamentally challenging the way we do our work, and providing value for money
- ✓ Encourage and support our staff to be ambitious for the district and recognise the important part every individual has to play
- ✓ Tackle key issues like Anti-Social Behaviour, fly-tipping, littering through addressing root causes, working in partnership and using technology
- ✓ Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services, deliver savings, and improve customer satisfaction, by making innovative use of technology: for example, building on the current CCTV project with Vodafone to deliver services like litter bin emptying, car parking and trade waste collection more efficiently
- ✓ Develop and invest in our most-visited parks, Williamson Park and Happy Mount Park, to become recognised regional and national visitor attractions
- Ensure all our open space is clean, attractive and serving a useful purpose by gaining an understanding of the different needs of our communities and working with them
- Create a positive image for the district by improving and maintaining the cleanliness of our streets, focusing on litter, fly tipping and graffiti
- Ensure our employees are on the ground when and where they are needed, working with communities to identify and resolve issues
- Contribute to the reduction of waste by providing high levels of service, setting an example as a Council and working with Lancashire County Council and other partners to promote this
- Reduce the amount of single-use plastics through practical projects, partnership working and raising public awareness of the problem

Influence

- ✓ Safeguard vulnerable groups at risk of being victims of crime by working with others and sharing information
- ✓ Use our position to influence others, such as Lancashire County Council, Universities, Environment Agency and others to achieve our aims
- ✓ Improve community resilience by supporting community groups and parish councils with emergency planning
- ✓ Play our part in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour through innovative ways of working in partnership with the police and others
- ✓ Reduce the fear of crime by promoting community safety initiatives and providing safe, welcoming places

How others can help

- ✓ Residents and businesses can reduce waste
- ✓ Keep our local environment clean and tidy through work with Parish / Town Councils, 'Friends of' Groups, volunteer clean-ups etc

- ✓ Look out for the safety of neighbours, especially the elderly and vulnerable residents;
- ✓ Be responsible for personal safety and property
- Accept that we all have a part to play in improving the appearance and safety of the district

- Williamson Park and Happy Mount Park will be financially self-sustaining
- Subsidy of our public realm work is decreased but the overall offer is increased through investment, innovative working, use of technology and generation of income
- Williamson Park recognised as a national visitor attraction for leisure, conferences and weddings
- Increased visitor numbers to our major parks
- Parks and open spaces will continue to be recognised nationally via Green Flag, In Bloom and other awards
- Increased amount of time contributed by volunteers in our parks and open spaces
- National recognition for our approach to managing the public realm
- Recognition from the public and partners as the key influencer of how the public realm is managed
- Reduced amount of waste collected from each household
- Improved efficiency and service delivery in waste collection and recycling through use of technology
- Exemplar approach to repairs and maintenance of Council houses and the surrounding area, giving greater value for money
- Improved energy efficiency, delivering increased use of green energy across our buildings and fleet, including electric vehicles
- Vulnerable residents will be supported and protected when they most need it

Ambition 3: Healthy and Happy Communities

Our Priorities | We want to...

- Work with others to address health inequality, food and fuel poverty, mental health, loneliness
- Enhance community cohesion
- Improve access to arts and leisure, meaningful work, public open space, quality housing
- Protect and improve health focussing on early intervention and involving our communities in service design and delivery.

What we know

This is a snapshot of some of the key issues facing our local communities:

- Our population is estimated to increase by 4.41% to 147,505, by 2024;
- Consultants have recommended that the Local Plan should deliver more than 600 new homes every year to meet the needs of a growing population and expanding economy which has the potential for thousands of new jobs
- 3,300 households in the district are in need of housing now but are unable to afford housing on the open market by buying or renting
- Addressing just the existing and newly arising need for affordable housing would require more than 370 new affordable homes to build each year over the next five years
- In 2016/17 a record number of new homes were built in Lancaster District: 628 homes in a single year. 73% of these were built on brownfield land, with 168 new affordable homes managed by Housing Associations
- Many more students are now living on campus and in off-campus accommodation, in the last year alone planning permission was granted for more than 1,500 new student bedrooms
- 19% of our residents are over 65, 8% are over 75, and 2% are over 85, with the number of residents aged over 75 set to increase by 42% by 2024;
- Carbon Dioxide emissions in the district are below the national average in terms of tonnes per person, but emissions from transport are particularly high;
- The number of people admitted to hospital for alcohol consumption is higher than the national average;
- 16.6% of adults consider themselves as obese, whilst 41.7% consider themselves as overweight;
- 23% of the residents say they did not partake in any physical activity;
- Around 11% of households are socially isolated;
- 18% of residents over the age of 60 live below the poverty line;
- Over 10,978 households seek housing advice every year and around 1,800 households are registered with social housing register;
- Full roll-out of Universal Credit started in the district on 27 July 2016. In excess of 6,000 claimants are in receipt, with a further 3,784 working-age claimants and 2,320 pensioners still receiving Housing Benefit
- 10,687 claimants continue to receive financial support for their Council Tax bills through the Council's local scheme

• On average, residents rated their happiness at 7.48 out of 10, making them happier than the England average of 7.37

Our Services

- Food Safety and Inspections
- Health and Safety Inspections
- Workplace Safety
- Community Protection
- Pest Control
- Licensing
- Housing Standards
- Homelessness Prevention
- Housing Options
- Home Improvements and Adaptations
- Choice based lettings

- Cemeteries
- Parks, play areas and open spaces
- Salt Ayre Leisure Centre
- Leisure Services
- Festivals and Events
- Public health and wellbeing
- Pollution Control
- Control of infected diseases
- Port Health
- Business Support and Advice
- Council Housing
- Housing Benefit

What we will do

Deliver

- ✓ Create and support more and better quality leisure and cultural opportunities
- ✓ Support disabled and older people in staying healthy and active
- ✓ Continue programme of Disabled Facilities Grants to help people remain at home
- ✓ Prevent homelessness by providing help and advice
- ✓ Adopt a preventative early intervention approach to Public Protection services
- Support communities and help businesses to grow through balanced regulatory services whilst taking robust action against those who put our citizens or the environment at risk
- Provide affordable housing by working with developers and social landlords to secure investment
- ✓ Help reduce fuel poverty through a warm homes service
- Provide opportunities for people to increase participation in physical activity through provision of facilities and programmes
- ✓ Promote benefits of activities that improve mental and social health and wellbeing
- Encourage residents to enjoy the outdoors through excellent maintenance and development of our parks and open spaces
- ✓ Allocate the sites needed to deliver thousands of new homes and create opportunities for thousands of new jobs by submitting a new Local Plan to the government
- Progress the proposal in the Local Plan for the Bailrigg Garden Village by preparing an area action plan
- Work with Lancashire County Council and Highways England on proposals for new transport infrastructure, including new roads, a rapid bus route and improved cycling and walking routes
- ✓ Continue the delivery of more new affordable homes by continuing to work positively with active local Housing Associations

Develop

- ✓ Address known community issues such as hate crime by actively engaging with our communities
- Pursue opportunities to transfer some open spaces to local organisations who can look after them for the enjoyment of all
- ✓ Support early action initiatives by developing further relationships
- Meet the housing needs of a growing and diverse population by exploring and developing options to build new council homes
- Support community groups in bringing forward community-led housing developments that will meet a local identified need
- Target Council Tax Support to those who most need it, by working with partners to develop a simpler, more efficient yet fair Council Tax Support system

Influence

- ✓ Attract new investment to bring people together, build on shared values and improve relationships with our communities no matter what their age, gender, race or religion
- ✓ Actively involve young people to design facilities, activities and services which meet their needs
- Promote healthy and active lifestyles for all by creating opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity
- Play our part in addressing the district's health needs in collaboration with other health and social care organisations
- ✓ Improve air quality by reducing vehicle emissions in the district
- Engage with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to help ensure the further roll-out of Universal Credit supports residents in securing their homes as well as employment

How others can help

- ✓ Pursue a healthy lifestyle and take responsibility for personal and family health;
- ✓ Volunteer to help good causes and vulnerable people;
- ✓ Create healthy workspaces and improve people's wellbeing;
- Look out for the physical and mental wellbeing of neighbours, especially elderly and vulnerable residents;
- Seek to develop money management skills, to help take responsibility for personal and household budgeting
- ✓ Work with funders such as Homes England, developers and social landlords to encourage investment in affordable housing;
- Coordinated approach to health and social care and investment in preventative physical, mental and social health activities;
- ✓ Consider using alternate means of transport to help reduce vehicle emissions

- More homes to buy and rent including more affordable homes;
- Better quality housing;

- An increased supply of housing to meet the needs of our growing population
- Increased variety of housing options for those in need;
- More people will be active and healthy;
- More people will be involved in volunteering and community activity;
- Fewer people and families will be homeless;
- More people will be living independently at home;
- More people will be satisfied with the district as a place to live and visit;
- Improved housing conditions in the West End of Morecambe
- Reduced vehicle emissions
- Fuel Poverty will be reduced across the district

Ambition 4: A Smart and Forward-Thinking Council

Our Priorities | We want to...

- Be customer-focused and customer-friendly
- Ensure our future financial resilience and be financially sustainable
- Make best use of our business intelligence; design our organisation to respond to needs
- Make best use of digital and other technology to provide quality services
- Make best use of our land and other property
- Invest in our staff to ensure we have the internal expertise to deliver our plans
- Be recognised for providing value for money

What we know

- By 2020/21 our revenue is forecast to decrease by £2.3million
- Technology is fast-moving, and is having an enormous impact on how many of our residents, businesses and visitors wants to interact with us - but this doesn't include everybody
- We have many opportunities to improve our services and our financial outlook, through transforming our approach and arrangements for service delivery, and how we deploy our resources and we need to prioritise to secure the best results

What we will do

Deliver

- ✓ Serve residents, businesses and visitors by working in a way that reflects Our Principles
- Provide the best possible customer experience and outcomes by adopting digital and other technology, whilst ensuring that no one is excluded
- ✓ Continually review our approach and performance to ensure that we are delivering highquality, value-for-money services
- Invest in our staff to build a highly skilled workforce that is resilient and effective in identifying and meeting local needs
- Take every opportunity to improve by learning from our own experiences and others' best practice
- ✓ Be open, transparent and accountable about how we are performing
- Enable our staff to focus on what matters most by developing innovative ways of working and reducing bureaucracy
- Maintain our financial stability and sustainability by developing innovative approaches to using our resources, making savings and generating income
- Improve the financial and operational performance of our property portfolio (through review, investment and rationalisation) to achieve greater benefits for the district and its communities
- ✓ Benefit communities and enhance our service delivery through smart use of our buildings and assets
- ✓ Focus our resource on prevention, early intervention and protecting the most vulnerable

- Design our services around current and future needs by using a wide range of information sources to inform our decisions
- Continue to invest in initiatives that will deliver long-term benefit and save money for both the Council and across our communities
- Continue to build on the financial, social and health benefits created by the transformation of Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, creating further efficiencies for the Council
- ✓ Reduce carbon emissions
- ✓ Draw on expert knowledge from our partners in the community, other public institutions and businesses

How others can help

- ✓ Accept that we cannot solve all local issues alone;
- ✓ Work with us to deliver initiatives in partnership or independently;
- Understand that our resources are reducing and that we need to adapt our service delivery;
- ✓ Use web and phone apps to contact and do business with us

- More customers are satisfied with our services;
- We will be financially sustainable and money will be spent effectively and efficiently;
- We will have clear corporate values and be committed to openness and transparency;
- More people will interact with us through our website and other digital channels at a time that suits them;
- We will be more innovative in how we deliver services and make a difference locally;
- We will have a high-performing property portfolio, fit for purpose and fit for the future
- Our workforce will be highly engaged and satisfied with the council as an employer of choice