

Council Strategy



Housing • Business • Health & Happiness • Environment • Entrepreneurial approach

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Winchester
City Council

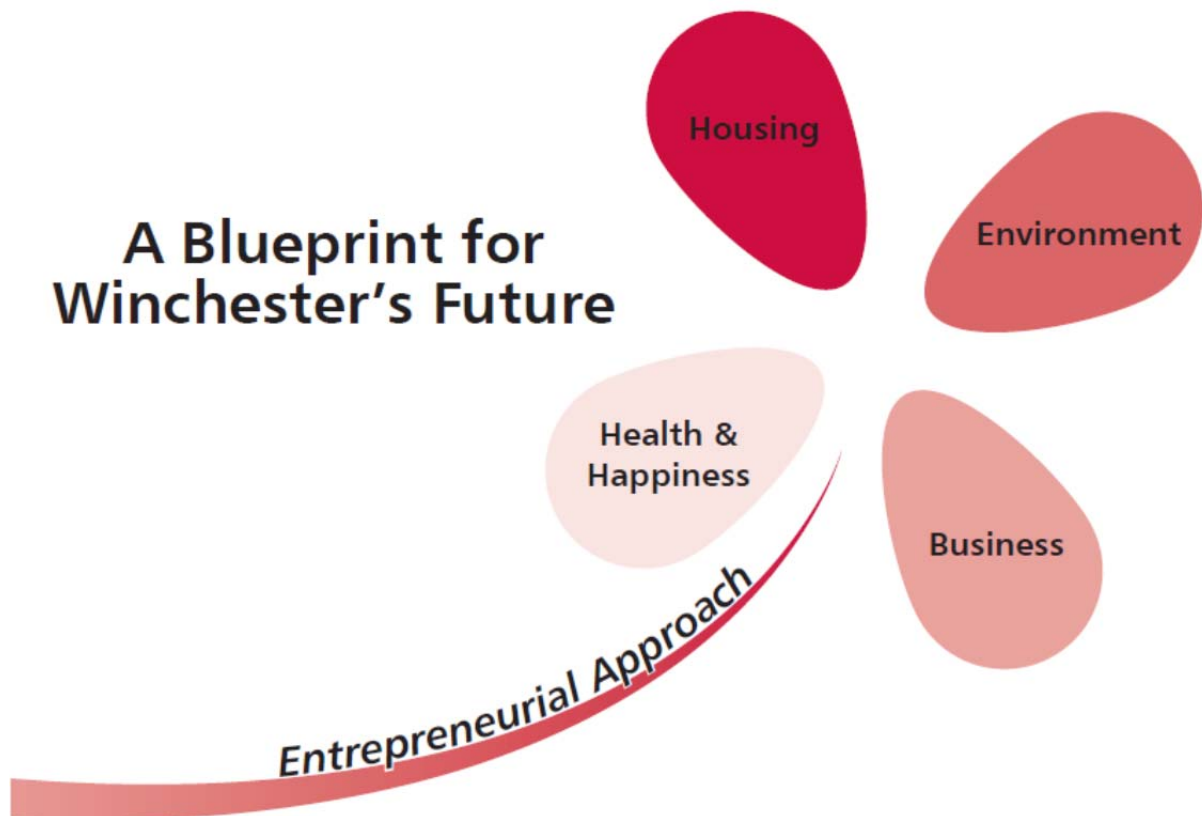
Winchester City Council - Council Strategy: 2017-20

A Blueprint for Winchester's Future

The over-arching vision for the strategy is:

Our vision is to maintain and enhance Winchester by working together to give everyone positive opportunities for their future

This update to the strategy focusses on how this will be delivered over the coming three years. We face many challenges as a Council, and this strategy sets out the key outcomes that we want to deliver to achieve this vision. This document also sets out some of the key principles as to how the Council works and direction we need to take to deliver for our residents.



Introduction

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

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

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

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

Council Strategy 2017—2020



Increase participation to sport across the District



300 new affordable homes completed by 2020

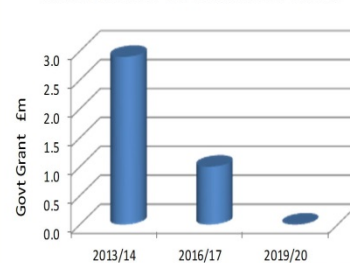


Increase office supply of 140,000 ft² on Station Approach site by 2020



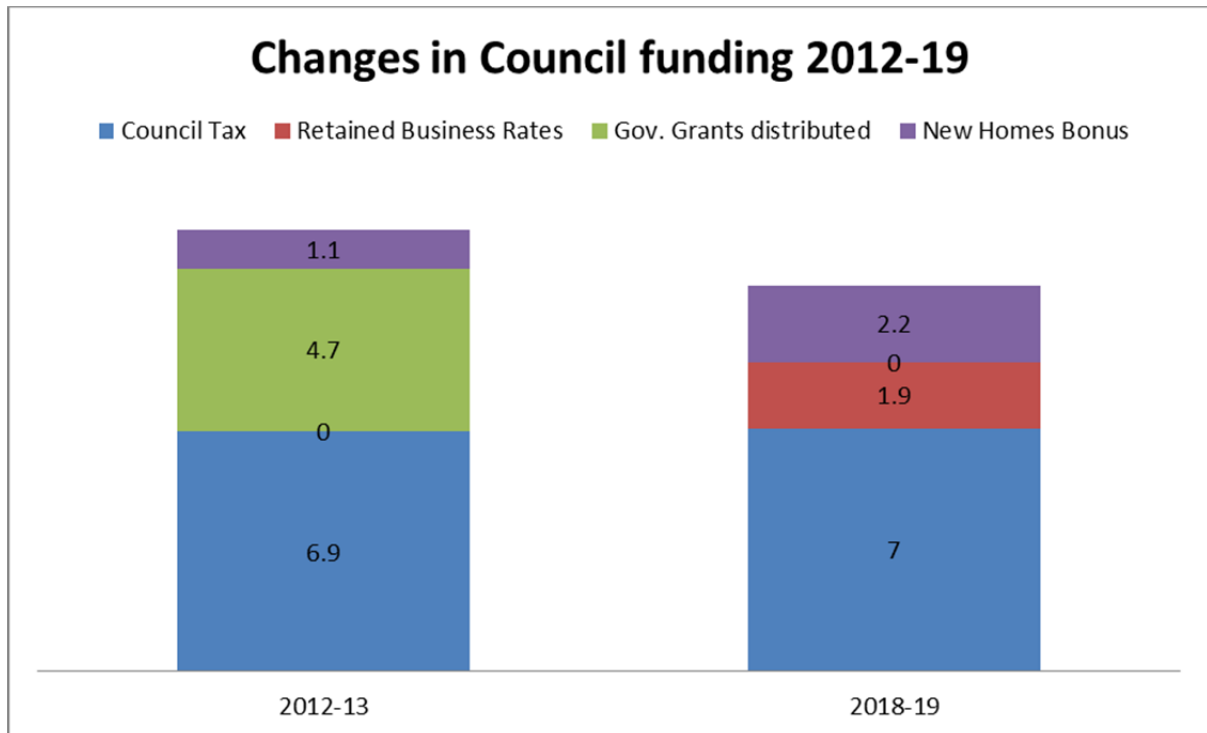
3% projected increase in population by 2020

Reduction in Government Grant



Financial Challenge

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



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

For the Council to maintain or even grow the excellent services that it currently delivers, we need to balance the pressures and ability to grow these respective income streams as well as seek to obtain new sources of income so that we can deliver our strategy.

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

Our five Strategic themes

- 1) Delivering an **Entrepreneurial** approach to efficient public services

Why?

We will be self-sufficient from our own sources of income from 2019. We need to replace lost Government funding with different income streams that also benefit local residents and business. We also need to change how we work as a Council. Technological change is rapid and we need to make sure our services can be accessed in new ways to help our customers as well as make us as efficient as possible to add more value.

We will

- **Ensure that we have the right governance structure in place to enable the Council to act in an entrepreneurial way**
- **Protect and enhance our assets in order to maximise income possibilities**
- **Use a strategic asset purchase scheme to generate financial returns**
- **Promote digital infrastructure and new channels for our services**
- **Create a property company in order to gain General Fund returns**
- **Optimise the subsidies WCC funds**
- **Ensure the Council maximises key income streams**
- **Inspire staff by investing in a collaborative and flexible working environment that leads to the delivery of high quality services**

2) Winchester will be a premier **business** location

Why?

The district is an attractive place to do business. We know that we have great transport links and the district has low unemployment. It is vital to us that we help support business across the district through enabling the supply of new office and employment space to enhance the number of jobs across the district to match our growing population. Our funding will become more reliant on business rates paid by business in our district; to ensure the financial future of the Council will need to help drive this growth in business rates.

We will:

- **Promote a sustainable economy by enabling major regeneration schemes**
- **Prioritise support for the knowledge-based, creative and tourism sectors**
- **Make the most of our environment to drive business growth**
- **Develop new employment opportunities across the district**
- **Work with strategic partners to deliver critical infrastructure projects across the District**

3) Delivering Quality **Housing** Options

Why?

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

We will:

- **Deliver good Housing stock condition and energy performance for City Council owned dwellings that meet the Decent homes standard**
- **Double the number of Council houses built in the period 2017 -2020**
- **Establish a Housing Company or other specialist vehicle to support development.**
- **Drive down homelessness across the District and support partner agencies in the drive for an improved life for those in need**
- **Provide good access to affordable housing options across a range of tenures, including affordable and sub market rent (within Local Housing Allowance rates) market rent, shared ownership, student housing etc.**
- **Become experts in finding innovative solutions to support residents trying to buy their own home**
- **Provide residents with direct access to affordable Private Rented Housing (within Local Housing Allowance rates)**
- **Be proactive in our Tenant engagement, achieving effective representation and insight across all tenant and customer groups**
- **Restrict permitted development rights in Winchester so that new HMOs require planning permission from the Council.**

4) Improve the **health and happiness** of our community

Why?

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

We will

- **Ensure that a holistic approach to travel and movement is integrated into all Council plans and strategies, to improve health and reduce emissions**
- **Promote active communities by supporting programmes to encourage increased physical activity across the District**
- **Work with partners to improve the Health of residents in the district**
- **Provide new leisure facilities in Winchester that meet the needs of a broad cross section of our communities**
- **Encouraging volunteering to support and extend local services**
- **Support the delivery of a programme of festivals and events across the district**



5) Improving the quality of the district's **environment**

Why?

We provide services in a fantastic and diverse location. We want to keep the district environmental character but also fund ways to improve to quality of the environment to benefit as many people as we can. We expect the district's population to increase by **3% by 2020** and we want to ensure people can continue to expect a clean and safe environment to live and work in.

We will

- **Protect and enhance the District's rich heritage whilst allowing development to take place which enables our historic environment to evolve over time.**
- **By working with our partners and by using powers available to us, make Winchester a safer and more pleasant place to live, work and visit**
- **Enhance and increase the use of open spaces**
- **Work to change attitudes to waste, and significantly improve recycling levels**
- **Find creative ways to reduce harmful emissions, based on sound evidence and holistic transport planning**
- **Work with strategic partners to continue to develop flood resilience measures**



How we will deliver the strategy?

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

Delivering the Blueprint



Insight

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

Innovation

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

Improvement

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

Investment

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

Inspiration

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