

Rotherham Council Corporate Plan 2013-16

Priority 1: Stimulating the local economy and helping local people into work

- *We will use the council's buying power and influence to increase the use of the local supply chain and local labour*
- *We will market Rotherham as an attractive business location by investing in initiatives to promote business growth*
- *We will focus on lifelong learning to improve the qualifications, skills and economic wellbeing of children, young people and their families*

Priority 2: Protecting our most vulnerable people and families, enabling them to maximise their independence

- *We will intervene early to prevent problems developing and protect children, young people, families and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, violence and neglect*
- *We will ensure that all adults in need of support and care get help early and have more choice and control to help them live at home*

Priority 3: Ensuring all areas of Rotherham are safe, clean and well maintained

- *We will make sure that Rotherham's roads and footpaths are safe to use and that their condition is at least as good as the national average*
- *We will improve the quality of public spaces through better management of street cleansing and grounds maintenance*
- *We will reduce anti-social behaviour and crime and ensure people feel safe where they live*

Priority 4: Helping people to improve their health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities within the borough

- *We will work with communities to deliver services that are tailored to local conditions*
- *We will respond quickly to people's needs, mitigating the effects of poverty and helping them to thrive*
- *We will ensure that people are able to live in decent affordable homes*

The way we will do business

- *Talking and listening to all our customers and treating everyone fairly and with respect*
- *Supporting and enabling our communities to help themselves, whilst meeting the needs of the most vulnerable*
- *Getting it right first time, reducing bureaucracy and getting better value for money*
- *Working with partners to ensure people get the services and support they need as early as possible*
- *Having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time*

Context

- *Substantial reductions to council funding* – we have made cumulative savings of around £70m between 2011 and 2014 with further significant year on year reductions confirmed for 2014/15 and 2015/16. This trend is almost certain to continue until at least 2018. In addition, local authority funding is changing so that an increasing proportion derives from business rates and bonuses paid for building new homes, rather than being allocated by government according to local need.
- *Demographic pressures increasing need* – the ageing population is one of the major challenges facing local government, with increasing pressure on adult social care services. The care bill, which is likely to come into force in 2015, will result in further cost and activity pressures, for example an increase in the number of assessments and new assessments and support for carers.
- *Welfare reform* – the government’s Welfare Reform Act aims to simplify the benefits system and ensure “work pays”, but in the difficult economic climate its ongoing implementation is causing hardship and uncertainty for some of our vulnerable communities and for the council itself. In general, benefits are being reduced and where people are unable to find work (e.g. due to poor skills, high costs of childcare, disability or ill health) their resources can be stretched to the limit. There is a risk of more children living in conditions of neglect, people falling into rent arrears and facing eviction, and the additional stresses of a reduced income exacerbating health problems. All of this combines to put more pressure on support services provided by the council and our partners. The introduction of a localised council tax support scheme (with reduced funding) and – at some stage – universal credit brings further challenges and risks.
- *Devolution and service transformation* – a range of recent and ongoing developments signal a shift in the way local services are configured and delivered and in the relationship between central government; local authorities and their partners; and local communities. These include:
 - The 2011 Localism Act providing new community powers to bid, build and challenge on public assets and services and to develop neighbourhood plans.
 - “Whole place” and neighbourhood level community budget pilots exploring the benefits of joined up services and aligned budgets
 - Service integration now seen as central to the health and social care agenda, catalysed by the new better care fund
 - Growth deals promising further devolution of economic growth resources and powers to private/public local enterprise partnerships.

These factors led to us identifying a small number of budget principles that will enable the council to operate effectively within the funding available. These are:

- Focus and deliver on business and jobs growth
- Help people to help themselves wherever possible
- Provide early support to prevent needs becoming more serious
- Continue strong financial management and governance and tight control on spending.

Reflecting this new financial reality and structural changes, the corporate priorities provide a framework for the council, working with our partners, to deliver the best possible outcomes for local people.

The priorities

Priority 1: Stimulating the local economy and helping local people into work

To respond to the financial challenges and funding changes set out above, we will need an increased emphasis on business and jobs growth. This will have a direct impact on the council's finances and will also provide more opportunities for people to move from benefits into employment.

We will try to make the "Rotherham pound" go further by procuring more of our goods and services locally and will work with partners to improve people's skills and qualifications, ensuring they meet the needs of businesses.

Priority 2: Protecting our most vulnerable people and families, enabling them to maximise their independence

Supporting the most vulnerable people in our society and protecting them from abuse, violence and neglect will remain a central priority for the council.

Identifying problems and intervening at the earliest possible stage will enable us to prevent needs becoming more serious and will be more cost effective in the long run.

Priority 3: Ensuring all areas of Rotherham are safe, clean and well maintained

This is an area that local people consistently tell us is extremely important to them and so it will continue to be a key priority.

Though our performance is generally good on crime, reduced funding is presenting real challenges for street cleaning and road maintenance services. To address this, we must work with communities to engender pride in local areas, helping us to create and maintain quality public spaces and safe environments.

Priority 4: Helping people to improve their health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities within the borough

There remains a strong correlation between poor health and deprivation and there is a large gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in the borough.

In the context of welfare changes, we will need to take targeted action to build the resilience of people and communities, giving them the tools to overcome hardship and fulfil their potential. More self-reliant and healthier communities will also require less support, reducing costs for public services in the longer term.

Business principles

In light of the factors set out above, it is felt that our current business principles remain fit for purpose:

- Talking and listening to all our customers and treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Supporting and enabling our communities to help themselves, whilst meeting the needs of the most vulnerable
- Getting it right first time, reducing bureaucracy and getting better value for money
- Working with partners to ensure people get the services and support they need as early as possible
- Having the right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time

Performance management

Directorate and service plans will be aligned beneath the four priorities and eleven commitments, representing a “golden thread” that demonstrates each service’s contribution to corporate objectives.

For each commitment, a range of indicators will be monitored regularly to provide a comprehensive measure of progress. These comprise a mix of milestones for key projects, local measures and relevant national indicators.

Performance reporting will be quarterly via our strategic leadership team (officers), cabinet (executive) and self-regulation select commission (scrutiny).

By 2016, successful delivery of the corporate plan will see:

- More people with relevant skills and qualifications
- An environment that enables businesses to flourish
- Roads and footpaths that are safe to use
- Vulnerable people getting early help to protect them and prevent problems worsening
- Those in need of support and care having more choice and control to live independently
- Better quality public spaces
- More people feeling safe where they live
- People having greater influence on how local services are delivered
- Resilient communities where people in poverty are helped to thrive
- Everyone able to live in decent housing