



Draft Corporate Plan 2012-2016

The Corporate Plan is the Council's main strategic document. It is a clear statement of our vision and strategic priorities for the next four years.



OUR VISION: A HIGH SPEED DISTRICT OF GROWTH, ENTERPRISE AND OPPORTUNITY

**our vision:
a high speed
district of growth,
enterprise
and opportunity**



Dover District Council Corporate Plan 2012 - 2016

Introduction

The Corporate Plan (Plan) is Dover District Council's main strategic document, providing a framework for the delivery of services. It is a clear statement of our vision and strategic priorities for the next four years. Under each priority the Plan identifies specific actions we will undertake to achieve these priorities; within this there are some short-term and some longer-term actions. The actions will be updated annually.

The Plan is an outward facing document, so it not only sets the direction for all officers and members but it identifies to all residents, stakeholders, investors in the district and partners how the Council will achieve the vision by focusing our attention. Therefore, by its nature, it does not cover in detail all the wide range of services the Council provides.

The Council produces an annual "State of the District"¹ report. The latest report highlighted the average full-time earnings for people living in the district have steadily increased from 2001 to 2010; the number of businesses still operating in the district has remained fairly constant and more residents were qualified in 2010 as compared to 2009. The report also showed that life expectancy for men is lower than the England average; with obesity and diabetes being particular health problems. Crime in the district is below the England average and the overall employment rate has improved over the last two years.

However, there are still challenges around pockets of unemployment, skills, education and training and we have yet to feel the full impact of Pfizer reducing their employment base at Sandwich.

Although the Council does not control all the areas that need to be addressed, it recognises through the objectives set out in this Plan that physical redevelopment and inward investment opportunities, together with the housing developments sought, play a huge part in keeping and attracting employers and skills to the district. These factors in turn have a positive effect on growth and enterprise, job and wealth creation and health and well-being.

The Council has won awards for its Local Development Framework (LDF)²; this is a major document setting the future pace, scale, pattern and quality of development

1. The State of the District can be found at: www.dover.gov.uk/council_democracy/corporate_plan

2. The Local Development Framework can be found at: www.dover.gov.uk/regeneration_delivery/local_development_framework

in the district. With the Statement of Community Involvement, it is the main way in which the Council ensures development is sustainable. This means it meets social, environmental and economic objectives and helps to create communities rather than just buildings. Extensive consultation was undertaken during the process – this Plan builds on the consultation results and delivery of the LDF.

Summary

**The vision:
'A high-speed district of
growth, enterprise and
opportunity'**

To deliver the vision the Council has identified the following Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority 1:

Enabling and supporting growth of the economy and opportunity for investment and jobs

Strategic Priority 2:

Facilitating strong communities with a sense of place and identity

Strategic Priority 3:

Serving our communities effectively

The Corporate Plan details the actions and outcomes needed to deliver these priorities.

Strategic Priority 4:

An effective and efficient Council

A fourth strategic priority is about maximising the resources available to deliver services that benefit the public. This priority is addressed through actions and outcomes contained in the Chief Executive's Organisational Objectives.

Foreword from the Leader of Dover District Council, Cllr Paul Watkins:



The vision for this Council is to ensure we support delivery, growth and enterprise, whilst preparing for the changing local government landscape. Striving to achieve what is best for local residents and businesses, to improve quality of life for all those living and working in the district, to keep local businesses and encourage new ones.

Over the period of this Plan we will have to make some difficult decisions about reducing, transforming or maintaining services. However, we remain committed to providing good quality services and making every penny work hard by focusing on the things that can make the most difference.

The Council has been successful in driving down costs and achieving considerable savings but, to achieve a balanced budget, we will need to continue undertaking reviews of what we do, and how we do it, through our Delivering Effective Services programme.

We don't work in isolation and much of our work is done in partnership. There are many different issues that affect the quality of our lives, and there is a wide variety of organisations involved. We need to work together to make a real difference – the public, private, voluntary and community sector and our communities. As our funds are limited, we will target them where they are needed most.

Despite the tough economic climate facing the district, and the UK as a whole, the Council continues making progress with our plans to regenerate the district. We are engaging in increased partnership working with a range of partners and, where available, providing match-funding to enable and encourage delivery of a number of projects that will transform the district:

- Our development status is good following adoption of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and associated awards, our growth point and regional (transport) hub status.
- In the past year, we have seen the Dover Sea Sports Centre officially open and, following multimillion pound Sea Change funding, the unveiling of the extensive refurbishment of the esplanade on Dover seafront. Deal Pier and Dover seafront have also both won awards.
- The high-speed rail link (HS1) is up and running, with improvements made to Dover Priory Station. A trial service is also operating from Sandwich and Deal.

- A new £1.3m indoor tennis centre for Deal has opened.
- A range of projects continues to move forward. This includes work progressing on site at Cannon Street in Deal; Aylesham regeneration and Betteshanger Colliery redevelopment; Development of the Dover Town Investment Zone in the St James' area of Dover and the Buckland Mill development.
- The Council worked closely with partners to ensure a safe and successful Open Golf Championship, which returned to Sandwich in July 2011, delivering a multimillion pound boost to the area.
- The majority of the targets set within the Council's Interim Corporate Plan (2010 – 2013) have either been achieved or are being progressed. The Council is now delivering shared services in a number of ways as a partner in: the Joint Waste Partnership; East Kent Services for Revenues and Benefits, ICT and Customer Services; East Kent Housing; East Kent HR & Payroll and East Kent Audit. We will continue to work with our partners to deliver these services as efficiently and effectively as possible for our residents.

These achievements reflect Dover District Council's positioning as a district doing all that it can to support economic growth, enterprise and regeneration, creating job opportunities and prosperity.



However, we must also be aware of, and ready for, a changing local government environment over the period of this Plan. One with opportunities and challenges, new partnerships, alternative ways of working and a shift from councils directly delivering a multitude of services to an environment of enabling others, where appropriate, to deliver services for themselves.

Some elements of this progression are already happening:

- **Localism and the plans for NHS Reforms.** Dover District Council was one of the first district councils to be an 'early implementer' for a local Health and Well-being Board. These newly developing boards will ensure better co-ordination and integration of health and social care issues and all the elements that impact on our day-to-day living and health requirements. This includes factors such as housing, environmental quality, transport, leisure, preventive health and health needs. This is one of the new partnerships we find ourselves working within, alongside GPs, clinicians, adult and children social care services, voluntary and community sector organisations and Kent County Council, among others. The Council is committed to this partnership and believes it will bring about better health outcomes for the population of the district.
- **The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)** is a partnership of local authorities and businesses with the aim of driving sustainable private sector growth and job creation in the area. The South East LEP covers all of Kent, and areas of Sussex and Essex. Within this large partnership is a Coastal Communities Group, which will be holding a conference in Dover in 2012. We are actively involved in these arrangements and working hard to access funding through these partnerships for further investment in our communities and district.
- The decision by Pfizer to significantly contract its operations at Sandwich and sell its landholding, led to the formation of a Ministerial Task Force, with representatives from Dover District Council, Kent County Council and key government agencies. This led to a successful bid by

the LEP for the site to be designated an Enterprise Zone, assisting regeneration through business rate discounts, simplified planning via a local development order and future capital allowances for investors and occupiers on the site. Enterprise Zones are an expression of the Government's pro-growth agenda; allowing areas with real potential to create the new businesses and jobs that they need, delivering positive benefits across the wider economic area. Discovery Park at Sandwich will be particularly challenging in view of the substantial buildings already on-site and major environmental concerns including nature conservation, flooding and access that will all need to be addressed. This will be a huge focus and area of work for the Council.

The coalition government is introducing many significant changes to national policies affecting the Council and the way we deliver services to our communities. These include the newly passed Localism Act 2011; proposals for Open Public Services and the Reform of Local Government Finance. These changes will involve residents, communities and the Council working together to identify suitable and sustainable solutions.

We will need to identify work streams to take these policies forward over the next months and years. The most significant for the Council in financial terms are:

- Localising Support for Council Tax Benefit
- Retention of Business Rates
- Implementation of Universal Credits
- Self-financing of Council Housing
- Neighbourhood Development Plans

Due to the uncertain nature of these changes, this Plan is an evolving document. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan supports the Plan, which we will review each year with the Council's budget. As new policies are developed nationally, regionally and at county level, the Council will ensure that it considers the effects of these policies and takes action where necessary.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 1: Enabling and supporting growth of the economy and opportunity for investment and jobs

Everyone (communities, public services, local businesses and individuals) has been affected by the national economic downturn. It is therefore important to focus on economic recovery and growth and continue attracting and enabling inward investment to the district, to support the creation of local jobs, and aim to keep wealth locally to see our district grow and thrive.

We have been working closely with partners to support, enable and encourage development and enterprise and will continue focusing our efforts on creating a district we can all be proud of.

Here are some of the things we aim to have delivered, with partners, by 2016:

Priority Actions:

- A. Continue the district's regeneration programme with the following as a priority focus:
 - o The Dover Waterfront, St James' and Town Centre improvements;
 - o The 1st Phase of the Whitfield Expansion programme;
 - o Connaught Barracks;
 - o The new development at Aylesham;
 - o The White Cliffs Business Park Phase 3.
- B. To make land available at Western Heights / Great Farthingloe Farm to enable progress towards the comprehensive proposals for regeneration, linked to the Town Centre, and maximise the tourism potential of this area, enabled and facilitated through a Planning Performance Agreement.
- C. The Local Development Order (fast-track for Pfizer site and potential for improved superfast broadband) will be in place.
- D. Adoption of the Land Allocations Document to identify land for development through the Local Development Framework.
- E. Providing improved parking and access facilities to support and promote HSI.
- F. Introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy¹ to maximise income and investment.
- G. Following the granting of the Harbour Revision Order for Terminal 2, we will support the development of the Port of Dover to regenerate the area and keep pace with the Port of Calais development, building on our Anglo-French relationship.

¹ On 6 April 2011, the Council agreed in principle to prepare a Charging Schedule for the purposes of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The CIL is a new charge that local authorities may apply to most types of development to mitigate impacts of the development and any funds obtained must be used to help provide appropriate infrastructure.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- H.** Participate actively in the revision of Dover Harbour Boards submission to the Department of Transport to achieve maximum benefits – environmental, economic and social - for the community from the possible sale of the Port of Dover.
- I.** Working with the Homes and Communities Agency and Hadlow College to develop the Betteshanger Colliery and Fowlmead Country Park sites as a Sustainable Futures Campus, a mixed use educational, employment and tourism facility, to secure the long-term future of the area.
- J.** Working with partners to enable and facilitate a centre of excellence for the Marine Skills sector.
- K.** Refresh the existing employment land and retail assessments and review business terms and conditions to ensure support for businesses to stay in the district.

Key Outcomes:

- Addressing the 5-year land supply deficit and identifying the inward investment / regeneration delivery actions needed to help ensure the most significant development schemes, once permitted, are implemented.
- Encouraging investment and development in areas to support the continuing prosperity of the district and improve the quality of life for all.
- To further develop the district to enhance business growth and employment opportunities.
- Raising aspirations, educational attainment and skills: Training and education is linked to economic growth and we will continue our enabling role working with local employers and training providers to identify skills shortages to meet local business needs and improve access to local job opportunities.

We will deliver some of these actions in partnership and make it a priority to support these partnerships to stay on track in delivering these projects.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 2: Facilitating strong communities with a sense of place and identity

The Coalition Government's Localism agenda is about the value of local, small-scale activities as opposed to those on a national or global scale. Strengthening local democracy so local people can make more decisions rather than central government. This, alongside the government's Big Society agenda, seeks to encourage people to take an active role in solving problems and delivering public services in the places that they live.

These developing agendas bring both challenges and opportunities for communities and local authorities.

Opportunities around areas such as:

- o Participatory budgeting - encouraging residents to recommend where grant funding should be awarded for community projects in their area,
- o Community right to bid for assets that are important to local communities such as pubs, libraries and shops, when they are sold,
- o Community right to challenge - allowing local groups to trigger a full procurement process for some locally delivered services and communities taking on the delivery of services,
- o Neighbourhood Development Plans - allowing local communities to guide the future of their areas within the Council's overall planning framework,
- o Less national targets for local authorities and fewer ring-fenced centrally allocated budgets.

Challenges around areas such as:

- o A backdrop of decreasing public funding and a difficult funding environment for voluntary and community services;
- o A move to increased outsourcing of public services, and the capacity within the community and other sectors to take on the delivery of services and achieve value for money and efficiencies.

The Council will encourage communities to become self-reliant and thrive. Councillors will act as strong community leaders to support residents and businesses and support initiatives to empower communities and groups to consider how they can help themselves, and their neighbours, and work towards a "Big Society".

Here are some of the things we aim to have delivered, with partners, by 2016:

Priority Actions:

- A. Holding Neighbourhood Forums meetings and Participatory Budgeting events, with partners, across the district. This will ensure residents are able to have a say in the services provided for them and allocating grant funding.
- B. Helping local groups to access available funding, for example, through participatory budgeting and Bridging the Gap;
- C. Through the Housing Strategy we will enable housing growth and the delivery of more affordable homes, as well as improving the condition of existing homes, addressing inequality, and enabling vulnerable people access to quality housing to live independently¹.
- D. Involving and engaging with the voluntary and community sector to manage and deliver the transfer of identified assets.
- E. Introducing a fully enhanced recycling service across the district.
- F. Improving the energy efficiency of our corporate buildings and supporting delivery of the actions in the Kent Environment Strategy.
- G. Enabling smarter use of the CCTV service and working with partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- H. Continue coordinating the activities of the Dover District Community Safety Partnership (CSP), ensuring it achieves the objectives in the CSP Plan to make the district a safer place in which to live.

Key Outcomes:

- Thriving and self-reliant communities, able to identify their own community needs and how to address them;
- Supporting economic growth and prosperity through carefully managed housing growth;
- Councillors as strong community leaders;

¹ The targets and actions associated to this priority are included in the Housing Strategy 2010 to 2015, which can be found at: www.dover.gov.uk/housing/strategic_housing_documents.aspx

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 3: Serving our communities effectively

The view of our residents, customers and visitors are all-important in improving our district. Working together we need to recognise and make the most of any opportunities to improve the quality of life for all our residents.

The Council will operate in an open and transparent way. We will communicate effectively and encourage resident involvement in the development and delivery of our services and plans for the district.

Maintaining a clean, green and safe district will continue to be important. In order to achieve this, the Council will work in partnership and explore opportunities for alternative service delivery.

Here are some of the things we aim to have delivered, with partners, by 2016:

Priority Actions:

- A.** Increasing funding into the district (Council or communities);
- B.** Co-ordinating high-profile events to support the economy and profile of the district such as the Olympic Torch Relay;
- C.** Transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making: ensuring Council information is easily accessible through an up-to-date website and two electronic newsletters each year.
- D.** Improve the health, safety and welfare of people working in, living in and visiting the district by:
 - o Providing an efficient, effective and consistent customer focused Environmental Health & Licensing Service;
 - o Supporting and identifying sport, leisure and recreation opportunities through the delivery of the Local Development Framework;
 - o Providing a co-ordinated and integrated Parking Service that is complementary to traffic management strategies, ensuring enough parking is available where needed;
 - o Implementing the National Food Hygiene Rating System (formerly Scores on the Doors);
 - o Increasing the level of street scene related enforcement activities.
- E.** Creating, in partnership, a local Health and Well-being Board, to identify health and social care needs and improve health outcomes;

- F.** Reviewing funding opportunities to ensure an accredited Museum and integrated Visitor Information Centre;
- G.** Working with partners to promote the district as a visitor destination and maintaining a clean and green approach to the appearance of the district;
- H.** Delivering, with partners, the new River Dour Greenway.
- I.** Heritage Lottery Fund allocation for a landscape partnership scheme to manage grassland areas around Dover, dependent on match-funding;
- J.** Ensuring buildings are safe and compliant with the Building Regulations, by delivering a sustainable and effective Building Control service;
- K.** Developing a Locality Board of county and district members to bring more democratic accountability to local services and identify local priorities.

Key Outcomes:

- The Council will act as a community leader to influence a fair share of resources for the district and hold partners to account.
- Maintaining a clean, green and safe district.
- Improve ease of travel and encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- Effective communications to encourage resident involvement in developing and delivering services and alternative service delivery.



Related plans

In developing this Plan we have taken into account priorities and issues set out in other local and Kent-wide plans. The Vision for Kent, for example, has been developed by partners across Kent from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to achieve three county-wide ambitions to grow the Kent economy, tackle disadvantage and put the citizen in control.

Our Local Development Framework is another major document setting the future pace, scale, pattern and quality of development in the district including a key housing growth objective of 14,000 new homes over the next twenty years. It will play an essential part in shaping the district to improve lives and prosperity.

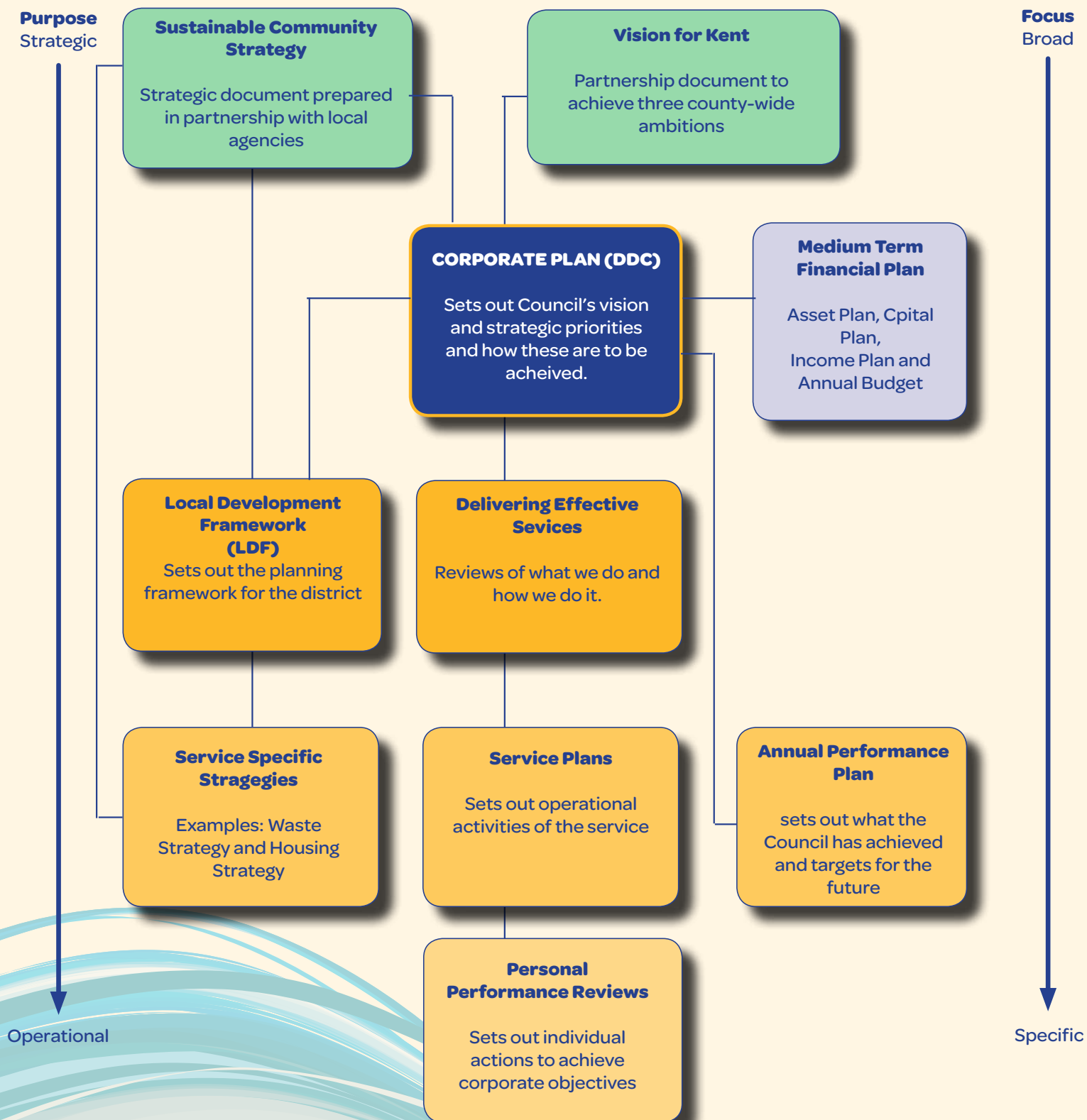
Getting involved in your community

We are keen to encourage people to become involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Please see our website for further information: www.dover.gov.uk/gettinginvolved

If you have any ideas, comments or suggestions about your area, please contact your ward councillor. You can find full details of your ward councillors on our website: www.dover.gov.uk/councillors

Have Your Say - Find out when our Neighbourhood Forum meetings are being held: www.dover.gov.uk/neighbourhoodforums

How it all fits together



The Corporate Plan sets out the vision and strategic priorities of the Council and provides the context for other strategies and plans that we may produce. The outcomes contained in this Plan are cascaded throughout the organisation, with targets to keep us on track. Each service has its own Service Plan, which sets out the operational commitments and service specific activity we carry out. This in turn leads to individual work objectives. In this way, there is a "golden thread" linking everything we do to achieve our overall vision. In addition to this plan we have an internally focused document - the 'Chief Executives Organisational Objectives' - which ensure the Council is making the best use of available resources and the workforce is supported to work effectively and efficiently to realise our ambitions and achieve our targets.



This is our Corporate Plan for 2012-2016

The priorities will be reviewed annually during the period 2012-16 and updated as appropriate. This information will be made available on our website.

Your views on the Corporate Plan are important to us – please have your say by e-mailing: policy@dover.gov.uk;

Or you can write to us at:
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White Cliffs Business Park,
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Kent CT16 3PJ

Want to know more?

If you'd like to know more about the work of the Council, please see our website: www.dover.gov.uk

You can also visit our main offices in Whitfield or one of our Area Offices – please see www.dover.gov.uk/contact_us for addresses and opening times.

You can also email us at: customerservices@dover.gov.uk or telephone us on: 01304 821199.

You can also get this information in other formats, including large print, audio tape and other languages. Please contact our Customer Services Team (details above).

Council: 07 March 2012

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