

Dover District Council: Our Plan 2016-2020 (summary version)

‘Securing a prosperous future for the Dover district’

Our vision and strategic priorities for the next four years

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Corporate Plan, which sets out our vision and priorities for the next four years. It provides a focus for all our activities and services, and the context for other strategies and plans that we produce, to ensure clarity of direction and accountability in delivering good quality, value for money services for our residents. As a result, it informs decision-making and the allocation of resources across the Council.

We will build on our achievements from the previous Corporate Plan, which ran from 2012 to 2016, and look forward to delivering more over the next four years despite many challenges, including significant changes being faced by Local Government.

This Plan sets out, under a number of cross cutting themes, our focus for the next four years. We will continue to concentrate on the **economy, environment, sustainable communities**, and **the development of our own organisation** to deliver our objectives. Underpinning all of our activities is the wish to improve health and wellbeing, and quality of life, for our residents.

Like all councils, we have to manage with increasingly limited resources, while at the same time continuing to be ambitious for our area, our residents and businesses. This means we must focus our resources where there is most need, work with partners, and transform our services, to achieve our aims and those of the community.

Our annual State of the District report shows that the district has much to offer but, as with other areas across the country, we also face a number of key issues and challenges including:

- A fast growing but ageing population
- A poor performing economy with low Gross Value Added (GVA)
- Low skills and high youth unemployment
- Health inequalities and high levels of self-reported poor health
- Pockets of deprivation and child poverty
- Increasing crime levels
- An ageing housing stock
- Rural accessibility issues

The priorities outlined in this Plan will help to address these, and other, issues. The Plan identifies specific actions we will focus on, with partners, to achieve these priorities and we will update these actions each year.

We achieved the majority of our objectives and actions set out in the Corporate Plan 2012 – 2016, from the success of the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone on the former Pfizer site to increased housing growth across the district. Renewed developer confidence means a range of regeneration projects are now well underway including St. James in Dover Town Centre,

Whitfield Urban Expansion and Aylesham Garden Village. Further information on what we have achieved so far will be available as an appendix to the full Corporate Plan 2016-2020.

The Corporate Plan 2016-2020 is an evolving document and is available for consultation. There are a number of external unknowns that could have a significant impact in local government, including the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, Housing and Planning Bill and continued reform of local government finance. Therefore, we will review the priorities annually, taking into account all feedback received, and update the Plan as appropriate.

OUR VISION

Securing a prosperous future for the Dover district, which will be a place where people want to live, work, invest and visit.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2016-2020

	Priority Theme	We will, with our partners, focus on:
Improved Quality of Life	1. Thriving Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting new businesses and jobs, and supporting existing businesses in the district • Improving infrastructure to enable economic and housing growth • Raising aspirations and improving learning opportunities • Promoting the district as an area to invest in as well as a tourism destination • Housing growth across the district
	2. Clean, Green and Safe Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering an effective and value for money recycling and refuse collection service • Delivering good quality regulatory services (environmental and public protection) • Making the most of our natural and historic assets • Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour • Minimising the council's impact on the environment
	3. Healthier People and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting healthy lifestyles and behaviours • Improving access to affordable, decent housing • Supporting vulnerable members of our community and reducing health inequalities • Supporting stronger, more confident and diverse communities
	4. Smarter Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, value for money, services • Higher take-up of digital services • Engaging residents • Income generation

KEY OUTCOMES

By 2020, we want to see that:

People in the district benefit from a stronger and more prosperous economy

This would mean that people are increasingly active in the local economy and support local businesses, and our communities are sustainable with the appropriate infrastructure to support business growth and thriving town centres.

People in the district are healthier

This would mean that people and their families are empowered and informed to live healthily and lead independent lives, and our communities are stronger, cohesive and sustainable, with appropriate access to services for all.

People in the district are engaged and empowered to achieve their own potential

This would mean that people are active citizens in our society, equipped with the skills, qualifications and confidence needed to live and work, and that there are equal opportunities so people are supported and equally valued.

The Dover district is a great place to live, work and visit

This would mean that people take pride in the district, their communities, the heritage and natural environment, and our district is clean and safe with a good range of leisure, tourism and cultural activities.

PRIORITY ONE: THRIVING ECONOMY

We will, with our partners:

- Continue the district's regeneration programme to enhance and develop our economy, with the following as a priority focus:
 - St. James' Development / Dover Waterfront
 - Former Connaught Barracks site
 - Western Heights and Farthingloe
 - Whitfield Urban Expansion
 - Aylesham Garden Village
 - Betteshanger Sustainable Business Parks
 - White Cliffs Business Park Phases 2, 3 and 4
 - A new leisure centre for Dover (subject to viability assessment)
- Continue housing delivery programme including strategic allocations and other windfall opportunities and sites defined in the Land Allocation Local Plan
- Address the five-year land supply deficit and identify the inward investment and regeneration delivery actions needed to help ensure the most significant development schemes, once permitted, are implemented
- Develop a Dover Waterfront Masterplan to support Dover Harbour Board's Western Dock Revival project and the regeneration of the area and keep pace with the Port of Calais development
- Review our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to identify whether any sites, previously ruled out as being at risk from flooding, may now be suitable for development in order to boost the supply and delivery of housing
- Support and encourage the continuing success of Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, to attract new businesses, from all sectors, to relocate in the district

- Work with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Kent & Medway Economic Partnership Board, public sector agencies and the private sector to stimulate and support investment and business growth in the district
- Continue raising the district's profile through promotion of our 'Invest in Dover – the enterprise coast' branding
- Support development of improved connections within the district including access to North Deal from the A258 and the Bus Rapid Transport System and Cable Car in Dover.
- Seek to improve parking and access facilities within our town centres to support and promote the local economy and access to HS1
- 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, through an annual job fair
- Support delivery of the Coastal Communities Fund, at a regional and local level, to maximise the economic potential of our seaside towns
- Promote, support and enable transportation infrastructure across East Kent and the Dover district, with a particular focus on:
 - Solutions to Operation Stack and associated traffic congestion
 - Third Thames Crossing
 - Rail accessibility and Thanet Parkway
 - Dualling of the A2
- Continue to support improved digital connectivity (broadband and mobile) across the district
- Continue to support the White Cliffs Country Tourism Alliance, and work with partners to improve accommodation, attractions and events to attract tourists to the area and sustain the economy
- Work with the R&A to bring the Open Golf Championship back to the district, to raise the international profile of the district and associated economic and tourism benefits it will bring
- Develop new structures for the management and promotion of heritage assets to provide a more integrated approach to the tourism offer

PRIORITY TWO: CLEAN, GREEN AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We will, with our partners:

- Work to deliver a recycling and waste service that our customers are satisfied with and that we are proud of; keeping the amount of waste that is generated in the district low
- Provide a simple, effective and reliable street cleaning service that promotes a clean and green place to live
- Work together with partners and communities to deliver a range of community safety initiatives aimed at the reducing the levels, and impact, of crime and anti-social behaviour across the district
- Continue enforcement and educational activities to tackle enviro-crime such as litter and dog fouling
- Protect residents and visitors by maintaining standards of food safety
- Continue to minimise the council's own impact on the environment through a reduction in energy used and carbon emissions
- Maintain the average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating in council homes to a high level
- Increase the number of projects that directly involve local communities in improving local areas, parks and open spaces

PRIORITY THREE: HEALTHIER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

We will, with our partners:

- Continue to work with partners as part of the South Kent Coast Health and Wellbeing Board to improve the health outcomes for our residents
- Support the delivery of an Integrated Care Organisation, with a single commissioning structure and oversight of the entire health and wellbeing system for the South Kent Coast area
- Work to address the 'wider determinants of health' by, for example, improving housing and promoting healthy lifestyles and behaviours, including increasing participation in sport and leisure
- Continue to manage effective prevention through a range of different council services, such as licensing and environmental and public protection
- Protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees
- Work to reduce health inequalities, focussing on some of our more deprived neighbourhoods or particular target groups
- Develop proposals to deliver a new leisure centre for Dover (subject to viability assessment)
- Update the Housing Strategy with the aim of meeting local needs, increasing housing choice and improving the quality of existing housing within the context of national housing policy priorities
- Review the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme to make sure that the agencies involved in service delivery are working in an integrated way and delivering the most efficient service possible
- Increase the number of vulnerable households benefiting from Warm Homes and Energy Switch Initiatives to achieve affordable warmth through energy efficiency initiatives and improvements to the built environment in which our residents live
- Support those communities who are seeking to take control through using their Community Rights (for example Right to Bid, Right to Challenge, Right to Build and Right to Reclaim Land)
- Offer appropriate support to town and parish councils developing Neighbourhood Plans
- Support Ward Councillors in developing their Community Leadership role
- Target homes where no one has registered to vote to increase the number of people voting and having a say
- Continue to work with partners to mitigate the impacts of Government Welfare Reforms including Universal Credit
- Promote improved understanding of equality and diversity

PRIORITY FOUR: SMARTER COUNCIL

We will, with our partners:

- Continue to develop our Medium Term Financial Plan aligning our resources to our Corporate Plan priorities
- Keep tight control of spend, with robust management of our assets, procurement and income
- Continue to look for innovative ways to reduce our costs, including opportunities to share our resources and staff with other councils
- Focus on strategic 'spend and save' projects
- Maximise the use of technology and develop digital services as appropriate

- Improve the way we communicate with our residents, through traditional and digital media, and understand customer experiences to make it easier for them to access council services
- Explore opportunities to generate additional income and get the best return from the properties and land we own
- Explore opportunities to expand our property portfolio to increase our income from investments
- Learn from, and share best practice with, other public and private sector organisations
- Deliver an improved grounds maintenance service, when the existing contract ends in 2016
- Support and develop our workforce, so that the Council has the right staff with the right skills
- Continue to be transparent, open and accountable in our decisions and provision of information

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