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Burnley Borough Council's Strategic Plan

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Burnley Council's vision 10 year vision for the borough:

Burnley and Padiham will be places where families choose to live because of our clean, safe neighbourhoods, beautiful parks and unspoilt countryside. Businesses will choose to invest in our borough because of our skilled workforce, our diverse, competitive, modern economy and a supportive council.

Our values:

One Burnley –Leading the Way

One Council –Working Together

One Team –Ambitious for Burnley

- T -Together
- E -Enterprising
- A - Ambitious
- M -Meeting Customer Need

Burnley Council: adapting to change

Burnley Council has always adapted to meet the changing needs of the borough and to deliver the best possible service within the budget available.

The Council's services will continue to change in the years ahead.

The budget challenge is immense. There is considerable uncertainty in the budget outlook; the Council's prudent Medium-Term Financial Strategy shows that we need to plan for a possible budget gap of between £3.8 and £5.8 million over the next three financial years.

This adds to the pressure on the Council to make savings and find ways of raising income to protect priority services that help make the borough a cleaner, greener, safer and more prosperous place to live.

In recent years, the Council has successfully lobbied for additional investment in Burnley and will continue to press the case for the borough at the highest levels of Government. However, if the Council is to continue delivering quality services that meet the needs of the borough, then further change is inevitable if the Council is to remain financially viable. Lower priority services may have to be reduced or stopped, and charges may increase for discretionary services.

Our strategic plan ensures that we do not take a "salami-slicing" approach to budget cuts. With a clear vision for the borough's future, the Council will stay focussed on what really matters and will seek innovative ways of resourcing those priorities.

Examples of how we will achieve value for tax payers include rationalisation of our estate and generating extra revenue through new homes being built across the borough.

We are a confident, positive organisation, and together with our partners, we have a strong track record of delivering positive outcomes for the people of Burnley and Padiham.

Our guiding principles

In leading the transformation of the Council, the Executive and Management Team have worked to the following principles:

- Burnley Council is pragmatic. The Council is not ideologically committed to a specific model of local government organisation. This means that the Council is open minded about how to achieve savings. It will pursue joint working arrangements, or seek to outsource services to the private sector, where there is a clear business case.
- A business case for change must take into account the impact on the local economy, as well as the cost and benefits in terms of service quality and efficiency gains. It will implement changes following appropriate consultation with residents and employees.

Who is this document for?

The strategy is prepared to help Elected Members and officers execute the Council's business in a well-planned and effective manner. While it is primarily for an internal audience, it is also a public document. Local residents and businesses can use this document to stay informed about the Council's plans for the Borough. The Council's Executive members report progress against the strategic commitments at Full Council meetings.

What is the purpose of the Strategic Plan?

1. The Strategic Plan describes how the Council will make its vision for the Borough reality.
2. The Strategic Plan unifies the Council's service units, and is used to articulate common purpose.
3. Strategic analysis helps anticipate and prepare for change. The strategic planning process helps the Council audit internal capacity, informing decisions about resource allocation (staff, budgets, technology, equipment, and premises).
4. Finally, the Strategic Plan encourages dialogue amongst different service units in the Council. This in turn should lead to more joined up working as council officers identify points of connection at the level of outcome, output, process or input.

The strategic plan does not cover every service delivered by the Council. The emphasis is on planning for major change and challenges, and defining priority actions linked to corporate objectives. But an overriding concern of the Council is to protect core services. Though budget pressures could mean changes to how we provide services, the Council will continue to provide good quality frontline services that are a priority for local residents. An overview of these services is set out below.

Burnley Council Services

- We collect rubbish, recyclable or non-recyclable, from every household and clean every street.
- We own and manage the historic Towneley Hall that attracts tens of thousands of visitors every year.
- We manage over 550 hectares of parks and green spaces including five Green Flag Parks.
- In partnership with Burnley Leisure, we fund three quality leisure facilities (St Peter's, Padiham and the Prairie), and the Mechanics theatre which attracts top names in comedy, music and the arts.
- We work with businesses to support job creation, business growth, and inward investment.
- We prosecute those who commit environmental crime in the borough.
- We support victims of antisocial behaviour and work with the police to take action against anti-social behaviour.
- We deal with around 3,000 calls and 500 visitors every week at our contact centre.
- We award benefit to around 10,500 households a year and assess over 66,000 changes in circumstances.
- We provide a quality advice and enforcement service for vulnerable households and individuals and work to tackle homelessness.
- We provide public protection services: we conduct food safety checks on food establishments; we carry out health and safety inspections of warehouses and retail premises; we license pubs and clubs and taxis; we investigate environmental pollution complaints about noise, smoke and private water supplies; and we provide CCTV monitoring.
- We work with the police and community organisations to help foster stronger community relations.
- We process around 500 planning applications per annum and aim to ensure that new development in Burnley is built to high design standard. We also protect the historical heritage of the town through the management of conservation areas and listed building protection, and take enforcement action to protect the quality of life of Burnley residents against unauthorised building activity.
- We conduct local land searches for buyers of land or property.
- We plan and deliver major regeneration projects, in partnership with the private sector.
- We manage car parks so parking in Burnley is easy.
- We ensure that taxpayers' money is spent prudently and that the Council allocates resources within its means by providing a professional treasury management and audit service.
- We make sure local citizens have a democratic voice, through proper and effective management of elections.

Strategic Plan 2019- what did we achieve?

Places

- The regeneration of neighbourhoods continued. For example, our partners Calico invested significantly in the regeneration of brownfield sites in Padiham.
- We targeted 80 long term empty properties for bringing back into use, through our Empty Homes programme.
- Our play area improvement programme included improvements to the play areas at Towneley and at Faraday Street, Whittlefield. A new wheeled sports area at Hargher Clough opened. Thompson Park received a Green Flag award.
- We completed the demolition of the old cinema block at Burnley Market Hall.
- We successfully applied to the Government to designate Trinity, Queensgate with Duke Bar, Gannow and Daneshouse & Stoneyholme as selective licensing areas, supporting our efforts to drive up management standards in the private rented sector.
- In order to improve recycling rates and street cleanliness, we introduced new recycling containers, tailored to neighbourhoods and the amount of space they have available for recycling storage.

Prosperity

- Construction on the 136 bed Student Accommodation Scheme on Sandygate got underway, ready for occupation in academic year 2020/21. The completion of this scheme will be a significant step forward in achieving the aim of attracting 4000 students by 2025 and for the longer-term development of the Weavers Triangle area.
- We helped establish a Business Improvement District in Burnley Town Centre. The BID is expected to generate up to £1m of investment between 2020 and 2025.
- The council's inward investment service and business support programmes delivered some excellent outcomes. At the end of December 2019 more than £19m of private sector investment has been levered in with 182 new jobs having been created and 117 jobs safeguarded. Key investments included the new £13m Crow Wood hotel facility, formally opened in December creating 54 jobs, and Velocity Composite's 10,000 sq. ft expansion at AMS Business Park

People

- We helped support efforts to raise aspiration among the borough's young people. Nearly 600 primary school pupils graduated from the Children's University, and the Career's Hub, which supports the borough's secondary schools to provide quality careers advice, was recognised as excellent.
- Our successful partnership with Burnley Leisure continues. Investment in new gym equipment helped drive membership numbers to a new high.

Performance

- We completed our accommodation strategy. By rationalising our estate we will generate efficiency savings and also improve ways of working in the council.
- We introduced a new IT system for planning, housing, land charges and environmental health, replacing two legacy systems. The system offers improvements in customer self-service as well as process efficiencies in the back office.
- Our employee survey results showed that 73% of staff are satisfied with their job overall (69% in 2017). Higher morale translates to better customer service.

What do we want to achieve during 2020 and beyond?

Much of what the Council has or plans to achieve, involves working in partnership. The [Sustainable Community Strategy](#) sets out the vision for the Borough that is shared by statutory agencies, local businesses and the third sector. It includes a list of long term commitments which will help us achieve a cleaner, greener, safer and more prosperous Borough in the future.

The Community Strategy describes the Borough's challenges, its assets and opportunities. The following section of this document sets out the Council's role in meeting those challenges, exploiting the assets and the opportunities that exist in the Borough. It is structured around the themes of **People, Places, Prosperity**, in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy. A fourth theme, **Performance**, sets out the Council's organisational development goals.

This structure helps:

- breakdown departmental silos, so that Service Units are encouraged to think collaboratively about how to achieve corporate objectives;
- ensure that the Council focuses on a balanced range of priorities, so that interventions are mutually supportive. For example, the Council wants to encourage business growth so that local people have access to good, well-paid jobs (an objective under the *prosperity* theme). But to achieve this we must make sure that educational attainment improves (an objective under the *people* theme) and that, also, the environment for doing business is good thanks to clean streets and safe neighbourhoods (an action under the *places* theme);
- design services around the needs of citizens and businesses that we serve, rather than around the structure of the Council.

People - creating flourishing, healthy and confident communities

What are the challenges and opportunities?

Increasing educational attainment and skills is the top priority for the borough. The Council will continue to work with partners in the education sector to help maintain the focus on this.

Health inequality is a significant factor in Burnley. For example, alcohol related hospital admissions, the number of incapacity benefit claimants for poor mental health, and deaths from smoking are all higher than the national average. Levels of worklessness due to ill health are also high. As a district council, we are well positioned to influence and deliver many measures that can help prevent ill health, both through our key functions and our enabling role. Our quality parks and green spaces are a “Natural Health Service,” and our housing services, environmental health function, our role in improving community safety, and in particular our partnership with Burnley Leisure, are all key. Perhaps our biggest long-term contribution to preventing ill health is our commitment to help grow the local economy. Poverty is a significant cause of poor health, so we want to help more local people into secure, decently paid jobs, as described in the prosperity theme of this strategy.

What do we commit to?	Lead
PE1- We will work with partners to make the borough a place of aspiration, including supporting efforts to increase education attainment and skills development, and improve residents' health.	Chief Executive Leader
PE2- We will continue to develop the leisure and cultural offer in partnership with Burnley Leisure.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Housing and Leisure

Places: making the Borough a place of choice

What are the challenges and opportunities?

Resident feedback tells us that maintaining the cleanliness is a priority; tackling dog fouling is a key local concern.

Compared with the Lancashire average, a higher proportionate of residents live in private rented accommodation. Unfortunately, not all of this accommodation is managed to a good standard, with some neighbourhoods blighted by incidents of antisocial behaviour, long term empty properties or properties that are unfit for habitation.

We are proud to maintain a significantly higher than average proportion of greenspace per head of population. Evidence suggests that access to parks and nature has major health benefits, as well as making the living environment attractive. Our parks are therefore a key asset in making the borough a good place to live and work. In addition, the Council has an obligation as a community leader to play a part in reducing harmful carbon emissions and responding to climate change.

The borough also has a significant number of cultural and sporting assets; the Mechanics, Towneley Hall, modern leisure centres and well attended community sport and other events.

The Council recognises that we are facing a climate change emergency which threatens all of us and our future. The Council will encourage reductions in single use plastic, de-carbonisation, promoting the use of electric vehicles and encouraging green businesses and shops. We will improve re-cycling arrangements so that it's easier for people to re-cycle more.

What do we commit to?	Lead
PL1- We will implement a range of initiatives to maintain a clean, safe, attractive and environmentally friendly borough. This will include a focus on reducing dog fouling.	Head of Streetscene Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services
PL2- We will improve the management and condition of rented accommodation.	Head of Housing and Development Control Executive Member for Housing and Leisure
PL3- We will work with partners to improve quality and choice in the borough's housing stock.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Housing and Leisure
PL4- We will implement our 2015-25 Green Space Strategy.	Head of Green Spaces and Amenities Executive Member for Housing and Leisure
PL5- We will prepare and deliver a new Climate Emergency Strategy.	Head of Housing and Development Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services

Prosperity – promoting transformational economic change for Burnley

What are the challenges and opportunities?

The Burnley economy has shown strong growth over the last decade. Manufacturing businesses still make up a significant part of the local economy, with key strengths in aerospace and automotive. In response to global challenges the sector has adapted new technologies, delivering higher value products and processes, which in turn bring wealth to the local area. At the same time, the economy has diversified, with growth in the digi-tech and logistics and distribution sectors.

With a retail catchment area of 300,000 people, Burnley is a major retail and service centre in Pennine Lancashire. The town centre has benefitted from significant investment in public realm, attracting new occupiers including Primark. The council, in partnership with other key organisations, has developed a Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan setting out opportunities to diversify the leisure offer, introduce town centre living. The Council will progress key projects including “Pioneer Place”, to deliver the masterplan.

The development and growth of UCLAN over the next five years will have a transformational impact on the town. The Council and UCLAN will work in partnership with the business community to delivery higher level skills and degree level apprenticeships as well as leverage the expertise of the University and other funding streams to support business innovation, business scale up and new business starts.

By promoting Burnley as an investment opportunity, and by improving travel connections and kick starting development to attract investors, the Council is dedicated to getting the most out of Burnley’s key assets: its rural setting, its proximity to the regional growth hub of Manchester, the economic development potential of Burnley’s land and its education and skills infrastructure. The new Local Plan will act as the key supporting framework for encouraging employment and housing investment, with the aim of maintaining the recent trend of private sector job growth and growing the borough’s skilled workforce.

The Council is ambitious for Burnley. The devolution of powers from central government is an opportunity for the borough. To ensure that Burnley punches above its weight and gets a fair deal, the Council’s Executive and Management Team will make sure that the business case for Burnley is heard at sub-regional, regional and national decision making levels.

The Council will also prioritise its spending towards businesses within our local economic area and will encourage partners in the local public sector to do the same.

What do we commit to?	Lead
PR1- We will contribute to the strategic direction of local, sub-regional and regional partnerships, and will position the borough for economic development investment.	Chief Executive Council Leader
PR2- We will proactively support the borough's businesses to innovate and expand, and make the borough a natural choice for business relocation.	Strategic Head of Economy and Growth Executive Member for Economy and Growth
PR3- We will deliver the Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan, and strategic projects in Padiham Town Centre.	Strategic Head of Economy and Growth Executive Member for Economy and Growth
PR4- We will implement the Local Plan, delivering new housing, employment sites, and infrastructure.	Strategic Head of Economy and Growth Executive Member for Economy and Growth
PR5- We will support UCLan's expansion, transforming Burnley into a University Town	Chief Executive Council Leader
PR6- We will aim to localise public sector spend as far as possible.	Head of Legal and Democratic Services Executive Member for Resources and Performance

Performance- ensuring a continuous focus on improvement in all aspects of the Council's performance

The Council always has a duty to ensure that tax payers get value for money, and the current era of austerity means that services cannot continue to be delivered in the same way as in the past. New service delivery models will be required to achieve efficiencies. If services have to be cut the Council will be clear about the process that has been followed in reaching these decisions.

In September 2018, the Council was told it “should be proud of its achievements” following a review of its services and plans for the borough by an independent peer review team. The Council will continuously improve how it delivers services, and will adapt to the needs of its customers. The Council will also make sure that it continues to live within its means.

The Council wants local residents to see that local government is improving their lives. We will conduct a review of the governance of the council. In addition, cross party working groups will investigate issues that matter to everyone.

What do we commit to?	Lead
PF1- We will continue the successful partnership with Liberata.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management
PF2- We will adopt a Medium Term Financial Strategy that will put the Council on a sustainable financial footing. This strategy will set the framework for preparing annual budgets, ensuring the annual budget strategy is set within the context of the longer-term outlook.	Head of Finance and Property Management Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management
PF3- We will develop our digital strategy, so that more residents transact with us online and we will continue to deliver services more efficiently.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services
PF4- We will deliver our Organisational Development strategy, ensuring we plan for the structures and capabilities that the organisation needs, and empowering our workforce to deliver the objectives of the Strategic Plan.	Head of People and Development Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management
PF5- We will undertake a review of the council's governance structure.	Head of Legal and Democracy Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management
PF6- We will set up cross party working groups to investigate issues that matter to everyone in our borough.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services