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Burnley Borough Council's Strategic Plan

Update February 2024

Contents

BURNLEY COUNCIL'S VISION FOR OUR BOROUGH:	3
BURNLEY COUNCIL SERVICES	5
WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE DURING 2023 AND BEYOND?	6
PEOPLE - CREATING FLOURISHING, HEALTHY AND CONFIDENT COMMUNITIES	6
PLACES: MAKING THE BOROUGH A PLACE OF CHOICE	8
PROSPERITY – PROMOTING TRANSFORMATIONAL ECONOMIC CHANGE FOR BURNLEY	11
PERFORMANCE- ENSURING A CONTINUOUS FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE	14

Burnley Council's vision for our 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

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. 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 plan is structured around the themes of People, Places, Prosperity and Performance.

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.

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 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 six 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.
- Around 1650 residents contact our customer service team every week.
- We manage a welfare benefits caseload of around 18,000.
- 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, 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 550 planning applications each year and aim to ensure that new development in Burnley is built to high design standard. We also protect the heritage of the town through conservation areas management and listed building protection and take enforcement action to protect the quality of life of Burnley residents against unauthorised building activity.
- 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.

What do we want to achieve during 2024 and beyond?

People - creating flourishing, healthy and confident communities.

What are the challenges and opportunities?

Reducing health inequality is a significant challenge for 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.

We have a role to play in preventing ill health and promoting wellbeing. 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 particularly our partnership with Burnley Leisure, are all key components of the wider public health system. 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.

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

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
PE1- We will continue to work with partners to make the borough a place of aspiration and pride. This will include supporting efforts to increase education attainment and skills development.	Chief Executive Leader	Develop a new strategy for the Borough setting out the Council’s vision for a more prosperous, greener and inclusive place, within the wider Lancashire context	Q1
		Community show case event delivered	Q3
		Deliver Summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme	Q3
		Supporting the formation of the new academy for Burnley’s high schools.	Q4

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
PE2- We will continue to develop the leisure and cultural offer in partnership with Burnley Leisure.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Health, Culture and Wellbeing	Endorse Cultural Framework and Outdoor Town plans	Q1
		Gym equipment refurbishment complete	Q2
		Increase in cultural activity at the Mechanics and growth in cultural economy	Q4
PE3- We will continue to work with partners to provide necessary support systems to reduce homelessness and to end rough sleeping in the borough.	Head of Housing and Development Control Executive Member for Housing and Development Control	Add an additional 6 units to the Council's stock of temporary accommodation	Q4
		Improve access to alternative sources of temporary accommodation	Q4
		Keep under review the Council's homelessness prevention services and maximise the number of households where homelessness is prevented	Q4
		Effectively relieve homelessness when it occurs and work with households to secure sustainable housing solutions	Q4
PE4- We will continue to work on the wider determinants of poor health. This will include reducing food insecurity and responding to the cost-of-living crisis with practical support. We will work closely with the Integrated Care Board and ensure that the Borough Council plays an active role on the proposed placed based partnerships.	Head of Policy and Engagement Executive Health, Culture and Wellbeing	To work with the Integrated Care Board to develop projects in relation to the wider determinants of health inequalities especially around housing condition/respiratory disease and the prevention of slips, trips and falls.	Q1
		To continue to work with Burnley Together and other partners to increase the number of people accessing Down Town by listening to customers and tailoring services to their needs.	Q4
		To continue to deliver the Holiday Activities and Food programme	Q4

Places: making the Borough a place of choice

Resident feedback tells us that maintaining the cleanliness is a priority with reducing 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 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. Indeed, park use increased significantly during lockdown. 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 Council recognises that we are facing a climate change emergency that threatens our future. The Council will deliver reductions in single use plastic, bring forward de-carbonisation measures and will enable the uptake of electric vehicles and will provide financial support to help green businesses and shops.

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
PL1- We will implement a range of initiatives to maintain a clean, safe, attractive, and environmentally friendly borough. This will include community engagement, enforcement and cleansing in 'hotspot' areas.	Head of Streetscene Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services	Extend the current waste and cleansing contract, then prepare for implementation of the Govt's simpler recycling reforms including planning a full procurement of a new contract	Q4
		Develop and select option for an East Lancs Waste Transfer site.	Q2
		Review ASB delivery and performance across the Council and work with partners	Q3
		Implement a programme of multi-agency interventions to increase resident engagement and address ward issues within 2 hotspot areas.	Q4
PL2- We will improve the management and condition of rented accommodation in the private and social sectors and enforce	Head of Housing and Development Control Executive Member for Housing and Development Control	Delivering a consultation exercise on renewing the selective licensing designations that end in November 2024	Q3
		Delivering a comprehensive and robust enforcement service that deals with disrepair in both the private and social housing sectors	Q4

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
standards in a robust way.		Increase the number of accredited landlords and managing agents	Q4
		Ensure all larger HMOs meet the Council's standard and are licensed	Q4
		To present a report to members detailing the results of the BRE stock modelling exercise with proposed initiatives to address the poorest housing conditions.	Q1
PL3- We will work with partners to improve quality and choice in the borough's housing stock, and reduce the blight of empty properties	Head of Housing and Development Control Executive Member for Housing and Development	Deliver the empty homes programme in 2024/25	Q4
		Work with Housing Association partners to progress a development programme of affordable housing throughout the borough	Q4
		Continue to build on the success of the Home Improvement Agency and deliver a comprehensive programme of household grants	Q4
		Increase the reach of the Handyperson Service	Q4
PL4- We will implement our 2015-25 Green Space Strategy.	Head of Green Spaces and Amenities Executive Health, Culture and Wellbeing	Refurbish play areas at Underley St, Barden Gardens, Sheddon Grove and Holcomb Drive	Q4
		Refurbish Multi Use Games Areas at Abel Street, Park Rd Padiham and Underley Street	Q4
		Progress the PPOSS and complete improvements to Lockyer Ave playing pitches.	Q3
		Adopt new Public Space Protection Orders as replacement for the old park byelaws and adopt partnership agreement with Police for tackling off-road motorcycle nuisance	Q3
		Towneley Masterplan produced	Q4

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
PL5- We will implement our Climate Change Strategy.	Head of Housing and Development Control Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Growth	Produce an updated and revised Climate Change Strategy Action Plan	Q3
		Produce an updated Carbon Budget for the Council's business operations	Q4
		Achieve silver status for carbon literacy training of the Council's employees	Q4
		Continue to work with partners across the borough to share best practice and collaborate on projects where possible	Q4
PL6- We will invest in our heritage assets for the benefit of this, and future, generations.	Director of Resources Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management	Complete restoration of Towneley Hall	Q4

Prosperity – promoting transformational economic change for Burnley.

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 and visitor numbers are resilient. The council, in partnership with other key organisations, has developed a Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan setting out opportunities to diversify the leisure offer. The Council has progressed key projects including “Pioneer Place” and “Town 2 Turf” to deliver the masterplan.

The development and growth of UCLAN over the next three 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. The Council has also supported the expansion of Burnley College through a loan.

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 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.

We will work alongside partners to form a Town Board which will invest £20 million of Government funds in a new “Long-Term Plan” for Burnley.

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
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	Develop a new strategy for the Borough setting out the Council's vision for a more prosperous, greener and inclusive place, within the wider Lancashire context.	Q4
PR2- We will proactively support the borough's businesses to innovate and expand and make the borough a natural choice for business relocation.	Director of Economy and Development Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Growth	Deliver UKSPF Business Support Programmes and work with partners to identify successor programs.	Q4
		Deliver Burnley Business Week.	Q3
		Continue to promote the borough as an investment location in partnership with Burnley Bondholders.	Q4
PR3- We will deliver the Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan, and strategic projects in Padiham Town Centre.	Director of Economy and Development Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Growth	Deliver LUF 1 projects, including completion Newtown Mill and T2T and complete GRIP 4 on Manchester Road Station.	Q3 and Q4
		Work with partners to form a Town Board and a Town Plan to unlock £20m of Long-Term Plan for Town funding.	Q2
		Submit a Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Bid focussed on Burnley Conservation Area.	Q3
		Work with EA to deliver the Padiham FRMS and with Homes England to secure a long-term use for the former Baxi Site.	Q4
PR4- We will implement the Local	Director of Economy and Development	Complete Annual Monitoring Report.	Q3

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
Plan, delivering new housing, employment sites, and infrastructure.	Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Growth	Work with developers and homes England to develop strategies to bring forward Brownfield housing sites.	Q4
		Subject to consultation and Secretary of State approve complete the making on an Article 4 direction on HMOs in September 2024.	Q3
PR5- We will support UCLan’s expansion, transforming Burnley into a University Town, supporting higher level skills and business innovation.	Chief Executive Council Leader	Complete New Town Mill by June 2024.	Q1
		Deliver the UKSPF Business Innovation Programme, in partnership with UCLAN by March 2025.	Q4
		Work with UCLAN to engage the wider community in the UCLAN campus.	Q4
PR6- We will work with partners to ensure that residents are able and ready to participate in the workforce.	Director of Economy and Development Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Growth	Deliver a borough wide Careers Event in October 20204 in partnership with all the Burnley High Schools.	Q2
		To work with the Integrated Care Board on preparing a funding bid for the Governments “Workwell” programme and if successful delivery of the programme	Q1
		Work with partners to apply for Phase 2 funding of the Youth Futures Fund to implement the findings from Phase 1 and if successful delivery of the programme	Q1
		Deliver a programme of interventions funded by UKSPF targeting groups furthest from the labour market by March 2025	Q4

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

The longer-term effect of the pandemic and cost of living on the economy, and consequently on the UK's public finances and the council's income, remains significant risk, as do wider inflationary pressures and energy price rises.

The Council has a duty to deliver value for money for taxpayers. New service delivery models may be required to achieve efficiencies. If services must be reduced, the Council will be clear about the process that has been followed in reaching these decisions.

The Council will continuously improve service delivery and will adapt to the needs of its customers.

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
PF1- We will manage our contract with Liberata robustly, so it delivers value for money and good services.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management	KPIs reported and any performance issues addressed	Q1
		KPIs reported and any performance issues addressed	Q2
		KPIs reported and any performance issues addressed	Q3
		KPIs reported and 2-year extension decision made	Q4
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.	Director of Resources Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management	Prepare a suite of budget monitoring and treasury management reports to update Members on progress against approved budgets.	Q1
		Prepare a suite of budget monitoring and treasury management reports to update Members on progress against approved budgets.	Q2
		Prepare a suite of budget monitoring and treasury management reports to update Members on progress against approved budgets.	Q3
		Prepare a Medium-Term Financial Strategy and associated budget reports to achieve a balanced revenue budget for the coming financial year for approval.	Q4

What do we commit to?	Lead	Milestones	Milestone date
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	Building control digital transformation project complete	Q3
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.	Chief Operating Officer Executive Member for Resources and Performance Management	Performance management and reporting framework reviewed	Q1
		Corporate governance reviewed	Q2
		Peer review action plan developed	Q3
		Talent management programme delivered	Q4