

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2022-2025

(Annual Refresh 2023)



OUR VISION

A stunning rural district on the path to carbon neutral, with vibrant local communities where businesses can grow, and where residents and visitors feel supported and fulfilled.

OUR MISSION

To support our communities by enabling a choice of quality housing to high sustainable standards, promoting growth and inward investment which protects the environment, and working with partners to maintain the outstanding quality of life available to our residents.

OUR PRIORITIES

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HOMES FOR ALL	THRIVING ECONOMY	SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES	FINANCIAL PRUDENCE	A CARED-FOR ENVIRONMENT

HOW WE WILL DELIVER

- Focus on our residents' needs
- Push for sustainable change across the District
- Work in partnership to benefit Chichester District
- Lobby for Chichester's interests both regionally and nationally
- Provide quality public services
- Make best use of our resources, including seeking grant funding
- Adopt modern and efficient working practices
- Use an evidence-based approach to develop our priorities and strategies

CHICHESTER DISTRICT IN NUMBERS

Population of 124,000	Chichester district covers 303 square miles	60,600 homes
7,700 businesses	Average house price £580,000 (Mean) £435,000 (Median)	Average Salary earned by residents of the district £33,500 (Mean) £27,500 (Median)
3.7 million bins emptied each year	8,200 reported criminal offences in 2022/23	63% of working age residents in employment
27% of the population aged 65 and over	67% of our district is located within the South Downs National Park	1,100 planning applications received in 2022/23

CHALLENGES FACING THE DISTRICT

- **Resource constraints** – This council has absorbed funding reductions of around 40% in cash terms in the last decade whilst still protecting frontline services for our residents. This includes identifying and delivering around £2m of efficiency savings in the past 3 years. A new Budget Review Group will be tasked with identifying further savings to balance the Council's budgets over the medium term and protect our core services.
- **Infrastructure, transport and connectivity** – Over-capacity leading to congestion on the A27 and other local roads, together with poor public transport provision in rural areas and a lack of safe walking and cycling routes, are all long term challenges that need to be addressed. Ensuring that there are health facilities and sufficient capacity in the local wastewater infrastructure will be essential to support both existing and new housing development. Additionally, average broadband speeds remain significantly lower than average, with 3.2% of premises having broadband speeds below the Universal Service Obligation compared to 1.8% nationally.
- **House Prices** – House prices across the District have grown strongly in recent years and are now 60% above the national average, or 16 times the median earnings for those living in the district. Consequently, young people and families are finding it harder to maintain or find homes in the district, often having to move out of the district to find cheaper housing. The local private rented sector is increasingly becoming unaffordable, with Office for National Statistics figures showing the median rent per property paid by tenants in the year to March 2023 being £1,050 per month, this was up by 10.5% compared to the year before.
- **Demographics** – Over a quarter (27.1%) of the resident population is aged over 65; far higher than the national average of 18.4%. Population projections predict this could rise to around 36% by 2043. The dependency ratio compares the number of people of working age with those who are 'economic dependants' (those aged 0-17 or 65+). Nationally, the dependency ratio is around 0.6, but Chichester's is 0.79, indicating that there are fewer working age people to support the higher number of 'economic dependants'.
- **Housing Supply** – 67% of the district is located within the South Downs National Park where additional environmental constraints are placed upon new development. This puts greater pressure for housing upon the neighbouring areas outside of the National Park.
- **Prosperity and Inequalities** – Chichester has traditionally been a prosperous place, but income and health inequalities do exist and those have only intensified and expanded as the country continues to experience a cost of living crisis. The Council has already introduced temporary support initiatives, but with no end in sight to the crisis our communities continue to experience hardship and may require extended support.

- **Climate emergency and biodiversity decline** – The national Climate Change Act includes a binding target to reach ‘net zero’ by 2050. Whilst local government can lead this change, the public has a huge role to play. This council has adopted its own Climate Change Action Plan but will need the support of central government to finance many of the necessary actions. Habitat loss and associated species decline have accelerated in recent years and Chichester harbour is identified as being in unfavourable and declining condition by Natural England. Existing partnership initiatives require greater coordination and investment to deliver significant habitat improvement.
- **Local Plan** Adopting a new Local Plan has proven to be a huge challenge for Chichester, mainly due to the issues we face with the roads, wastewater and water neutrality. Having now consulted with our communities we expect to submit the Plan to the Planning Inspector for independent examination in the coming months.

1. HOMES FOR ALL

A broad range of affordable and sustainable homes available for residents of all ages

Outcomes	Actions	Measures	
		Description	Target
1.1 Meet housing needs across the district	1.1a Ensure the right mix and tenure of homes are built	Adopt a new Local Plan	Winter 2024
	1.1b Improve standards in the private rented sector	Number of homes improved through the financial assistance policy	50 or more
	1.1c Work with Hyde to deliver their Hyde 2050 Strategy	Contribute to Partnership Working Agreement (PWA) objectives and monitor progress through quarterly group meetings	Quarterly
1.2 Prevent homelessness through early intervention and support	1.2a Work to prevent homelessness where we can	Minimise the number of placements into nightly paid accommodation	Less than 50 at any one time
	1.2b Deliver homes to refugees under the Local Authority Housing Fund	Number of homes delivered	21 or more
1.3 No-one sleeping rough	1.3a Provide support for our homeless and most vulnerable people	Minimise rough sleeping through long term partnership approaches that enable those at risk to get the support they need	3 or less (excludes entrenched)
1.4 More young people and families living in our district	1.4a Prioritise the provision of affordable housing in the redevelopment	Enable the delivery of 1,000 new affordable homes between 2019 and 2025	More than 167 per year delivered

2. THRIVING ECONOMY

Encourage new business investment and sustainable growth across the district

Outcomes	Actions	Measures	
		Description	Target
2.1 A stronger, greener, more sustainable economy	2.1a Support opportunities for sustainable business growth, regeneration, and quality employment throughout the district	Provide support to businesses in the sectors of renewable, retrofitting and the circular economy	10 business per year
		Annual increase in labour productivity compared to UK average (gross value added per hour worked)	Annual Increase
2.2 The regeneration of our City and the transformation of our high streets	2.2a Commission a Regeneration Strategy for the City	Approval of new Regeneration Strategy, including sites within the Southern Gateway, with subsequent milestones to follow	Summer 2024
	2.2b Support partners to deliver appropriate infrastructure projects	Active engagement with partners to support the ongoing rollout of digital infrastructure to the District	Ongoing
	2.2c Work with partners to develop and deliver 'Visions' for local areas	Engage with partners to allocate UKSPF and REPF funding to the delivery of local projects	Mar-25
2.3 An improved evening and night-time economy (ENTE) offer for all ages	2.3a Create a Chichester ENTE Working Group to drive forward the city after dark	Develop and adopt an ENTE Action Plan (subsequent milestones to follow)	Mar-24
2.4 A thriving tourism industry and cultural offer	2.4a Support the Great Sussex Way to promote the visitor offer that the district can provide	Increase unique visitor traffic to The Great Sussex Ways website from the 2022 baseline	Annual Increase
	2.4b Develop partnerships that coordinate the cultural offer throughout the district	Jointly deliver projects across the district through the Culture Spark initiative	5 events during 2024-25
	2.4c Work collaboratively to support a year-round programme of events, festivals and activities for residents and visitors	Enable the hosting of Feature Events within the district	5 per year
		Enable the hosting of Town and City Events and Markets within the district	5 distinct events per year

3. SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES

Support our residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives

Outcomes	Actions	Measures	
		Description	Target
3.1 Safe and supported communities	3.1a Deliver the targets set within the Community Safety business plan	Below average crime levels compared to national, regional and local comparator groups	Below Average
	3.1b Enable communities and the voluntary sector to access appropriate funding streams	Award discretionary grants in accordance with the grants policy	Annual
		Support the development of the local voluntary sector through the Council's core grants fund	Annual
	3.1c Use UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support communities and businesses	Allocate and spend £1.7m through the UKSPF Investment Plan	Mar-25
	3.1d Focus on the most disadvantaged areas, communities and groups	Provide 50% funding towards Community Wardens to work with the most disadvantaged communities in the district	Mar-26
	3.1e Support people with the cost of living crisis	Provide support and financial assistance via the Supporting You Team	Nov-24
		Continue to invest in our Council Tax Support Scheme	Annual
3.1f Support unemployed and under-employed residents into employment	Support our residents to become economically active through the ChooseWork programme	60 new clients per year	
3.2 Improve health and wellbeing	3.2a Use our parks and green space to encourage more active lifestyles	Invest in modern, safe play equipment that encourages usage and attracts visitors	Ongoing
	3.2b Work with our health partners to deliver shared priorities	Working with Everyone Active increase the number of visits to the leisure centres (baseline to be reset in 2022)	By 1% each year
	3.2c Identify and support opportunities to improve health and wellbeing	Deliver the key performance indicators and outcomes outlined in the wellbeing business plan	Annual Plan

4. FINANCIAL PRUDENCE

Manage the Council's finances prudently and effectively

Outcomes	Actions	Measures	
		Description	Target
4.1 Prudent use of the Council's resources	4.1a Have sound governance arrangements in place	Assessment of the Council's key financial principles and review of the 5 year medium term financial model	Annual
	4.1b Rigorously manage the Council's risks	Risks reviewed by Strategic Risk Group and Corporate Governance and Audit Committee	Biannual
	4.1c Maintain an investment strategy that supports the corporate objectives whilst protecting the resources invested	Prepare treasury, investment and capital strategies that comply with regulations and make best use of Council resources	Annual
	4.1d Invest in new commercial activities where it is appropriate and prudent to do so	Economic Development Panel to identify inward investment, regeneration, and new economic development projects in line with the Council's Investment Opportunities Protocol.	Ongoing
4.2 A balanced budget over the medium term	4.2a Create a Budget Review Group to ensure the revenue budget and capital programme remain balanced and sustainable over a rolling 5 year period	Maintain a balanced revenue position within the 5-year model period	Annual
	4.2b Require compensating savings before any new unfunded revenue expenditure is approved, including capital expenditure that has revenue consequences	Prepare budgets and spending plans that are balanced and affordable	Annual
4.3 Value for money through efficient and effective service delivery	4.3a Maintain a programme of reviews for our services to ensure they are delivered efficiently and effectively	Budget Review Group to commission and oversee reviews where appropriate	Mar-25

A CARED-FOR ENVIRONMENT

Protect our environment as we move towards a low-carbon future

Outcomes	Actions	Measures	
		Description	Target
5.1 The natural and built environment is sustainably protected and enhanced	5.1a Adopt a Local Plan with positive policies that reduce the impact of climate change and promote biodiversity through new development	Adopt a new Local Plan	Winter 2024
	5.1b Protect and enhance quality views and landscapes	Working with partners, identify and implement projects to enable habitat creation and restoration for Chichester harbour and other sensitive areas	2024-25 to 2026-27
	5.1c Minimise carbon emissions from new housing, existing housing and other development	Require new development to comply with the Environmental policies in the new Local Plan	Winter 2024
	5.1d Implement our Climate Change Action Plan	Reduce the council's carbon emissions from 2019 to 2025	10% per year
	5.1e Help the community minimise its carbon footprint and encourage the reduction of district wide carbon emissions	Support the district in reducing its carbon emissions from 2019 to 2025	10% per year
5.2 Waste is reduced, recycled, reused or disposed of responsibly	5.2a Support households to minimise the waste they produce and maximise their recycling	Work towards the achievement of a 65% recycling rate by 2030 (domestic and commercial) from the current baseline of 47%	49% by 2024
		Reduce the amount of residual waste per household, per year	1% per year
5.3 Improved condition of our harbours	5.3a Work with Coastal Partners to prepare an Investment and Adaptation Plan focused on delivering opportunities for habitat restoration of Chichester harbour	Obtain funding for the creation of the Investment and Adaptation plan between 2024-25 and 2026-27 (delivery from 2028 onwards)	Annual application