

Southend-on-Sea City Council

Executive Director (Strategy, Change & Governance)
To
Cabinet
On
26 July 2022

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**Agenda
Item No.**

Southend City Council's draft Corporate Plan 2022-2026

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor George
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the council's draft Corporate Plan for 2022-26 for agreement.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the draft Corporate Plan 2022-26 (**Appendix 1**) is agreed and responsibility for any final changes prior to publication be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

3. Background

3.1 Since 2018 the council has operated without a corporate plan, instead directed by the Southend 2050 Ambition, with the Council's contributions articulated through the Southend 2050 themes and Roadmap. This operating model has enabled the vision for Southend to be clearly articulated. However, Southend 2050 focuses on Southend as a place and community, rather than setting out how the council needs to operate and prioritise in order to deliver and contribute to the Ambition.

3.2 The intention of the Corporate Plan is to bridge the gap between our Southend 2050 Ambition and the day-to-day work delivered by the council. It is shaped by a number of influences which include: the administration's priorities; our statutory responsibilities; responses to inspections and audits; feedback from the Local Government Association Peer visit; and national policy change.

3.3 Our Corporate Plan provides a helpful narrative and sets the direction for the work we're doing, providing a place to knit all of the council's work together in a way that makes sense to everyone. Its aims are to:

- Provide clarity and direction in a 4-year business plan
- Ensure efficient use of resources

- Provide a way of measuring success
- Support effective decision making
- Coordinate activities
- Motivate and guide staff

4. Southend City Council Corporate Plan 2022-2026

- 4.1 Our corporate plan clearly articulates the council's focus for the next four years, between 2022 and 2026. It translates ambitions set out in Southend 2050, our long-term vision for Southend-on-Sea, into medium-term priorities. The corporate plan details for our employees and councillors how we will work with residents and partners to co-create our new city, deliver strategic priorities, and take Southend-on-Sea from strength to strength and how we will step up from a borough to a city council.

Our 4 corporate priorities are:

- **A strong and prosperous city** – *We will power economic and community recovery to help our communities thrive and make Southend-on-Sea a strong and prosperous city.*
 - **A city with a good quality of life** – *We will work hard to ensure people have a good quality of life.*
 - **A city rising to the climate change challenge** – *We will tackle climate change, become a national exemplar for flood and coastal erosion risk management, and make Southend-on-Sea a green city.*
 - **A city delivering genuinely affordable housing** – *We will deliver and maximise the supply of safe, well managed affordable housing.*
- 4.2 To achieve the priorities set out in the corporate plan we need to transform how we work. We must focus on transforming in areas that will have the greatest impact, unlocking the potential of our employees, and enable us to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents and communities. Areas in the council we need to see transformation are:

- **Delivering the right quality services** – The overall goals of customers need to be understood and there to be an alignment of a common customer-centric vision. We will listen to customers to understand their needs, enhance customer journeys and manage service delivery risks. We will design services from the point where a customer begins to try to achieve a goal, right through to the point when the goal has been completed and the best possible outcome is achieved.
- **How we work** – There is a need to develop modern working practices to maintain employee engagement, enable employees to maximise their performance, including our approach to hybrid working, and make sure those working from home don't suffer from increased levels of loneliness and mental distress. New technologies are making it easy to access information remotely, work from different locations, and provide a more joined up service for our customers. Adapting to a hybrid approach to work will improve the services to local people, reduce our carbon footprint, cut down on travel time and costs and ensure there are new experiences and face-to-face interactions for employees.

This will increase our attractiveness for talent attraction and help manage retention of existing employees. Progressing the review of the council's Constitution will ensure effective and efficient governance and enable better decision making.

- **Digital as an enabler** – Almost all transformation has a digital element to it. Our sustainable smart city and smart tourist city programmes will help us to develop a new way of working that supports everyone in the council to deliver their best work and achieve improved outcomes for residents and communities. Key to this is making the council a more accessible and inclusive place to work. Flexible working and the ability to be flexible when needed will allow us to adapt to meet new challenges and opportunities. Alongside this, collaborating and co-designing with others will enable us to understand and identify any prospects or barriers on the way, so we can make best use of our resources and time. We will develop services to be joined up so there is one single view of our customers and always accessible, to allow for ease of customer use. This will be supported by the Digital Strategy and the four elements that sit underneath it: Smart Tech, Smart Working, Smart Council and Smart City.
- 4.3 A performance management framework will sit alongside the corporate plan and within a wider governance framework. The structure beneath the Corporate Plan will include service plans and individual performance agreements to enable a clear golden thread from individuals right through to their contributions to the corporate plan and the Southend 2050 Ambition.
- 4.4 Our corporate plan is set in a financial context that is difficult. Like many other local authorities across the country, the council faces notable financial constraints and challenges. Our social care costs have risen significantly; there are national inflation costs; and without an increase in government funding to match the increases we will be faced with some hard choices to achieve financial sustainability and will have to work much smarter to deliver the same results.

5. Other Options

- 5.1 There is no requirement to have a Corporate Plan, but it is best practice and provides a helpful narrative to set the direction for the work, clearly articulating our priorities and contribution to the Southend 2050 Ambition.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 To ensure the Council has a robust strategic plan which clearly articulates the priorities for the organisation enabling efficient use of resources.

7. Corporate Implications

- 7.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map
The Corporate Plan articulates the council's contribution to the delivery of the Southend 2050 Ambition and how it will collaborate with partners.

7.2 Financial Implications

Resourcing the council's strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan will require tough choices and careful consideration over the next four years. Decisions will be underpinned by our Financial Sustainability Strategy (2022-

2032) and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23-2026/27, helping to target resources and effectively consider and manage a range of financial impacts.

7.3 Legal Implications

None.

7.4 People Implications

The Corporate Plan provides direction and sets the priorities for the council. Feedback from employees on the Southend 2050 refresh in 2021 highlighted the desire for a corporate plan.

7.5 Property Implications

None.

7.6 Consultation

The Corporate Plan has been informed by findings from the residents' perception survey undertaken in 2021 in addition to specific, consultation, engagement and co-production for associated strategies and plans.

7.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The council's Equality Objectives were updated in 2022 with a new approach to support our desire to be more effective and accountable on EDI matters. The approach includes an overarching Equalities Statement that sets a vision for the type of council we want to be. We will achieve the vision through a number of objectives, which cover four key topics: employees, access to services, partnership working and community cohesion. Under each topic we have identified a commitment which describes a specific and measurable piece of work, which when completed will help us on our journey to achieving our stated equalities vision. We will report on our progress against the commitments in future corporate plans.

7.8 Risk Assessment

Corporate risks will be identified and monitored alongside the priorities in the Corporate Plan through the Corporate Risk Register.

7.9 Value for Money

The council benchmarks its performance and spend against comparators to ensure it is providing value for money.

7.10 Community Safety Implications

Our priorities for reducing crime and disorder and protecting vulnerable people across Southend are set out in the Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2022-2025 and through the Community Safety Partnership.

7.11 Environmental Impact

The council is committed to becoming net zero carbon by 2030 to help meet the climate emergency, with this being a leading priority for the council. Priorities actions include: preventing waste, re-use and increase recycling; developing an active and sustainable travel network; enhance, promote and protect our natural environment; and undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management.

8. Background Papers

8.1 Southend 2050 Ambition and Roadmap

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Plan 2022-2026

CORPORATE PLAN 2022 2026

Working to
make lives
better



**Southend-on-Sea
City Council**

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Introduction



Our new city of Southend-on-Sea, which extends from Leigh-on-Sea to Shoeburyness, is a connected, ambitious, creative and diverse place to live, work and visit, providing a warm welcome to everyone. Our characterful, inspiring coastline is peppered with gems unique to us – from the iconic Southend Pier, the longest pleasure pier in the world, and the buoyant Adventure Island theme park to the historical Shoebury Garrison and 1,000-year-old fishing village of Old Leigh.

Our city radiates fresh ideas and new approaches, and we apply that approach to our work as a council. Our proud, guiding principle is to support our residents, communities and businesses to thrive and to deliver the very best public services we can for our community and millions of visitors who come here every year.

We must acknowledge that we will continue to face challenges, such as the cost of living

crisis, the local health, social and economic consequences of the pandemic and the inequality that exists across Southend-on-Sea. Within the city, we have neighbourhoods considered to be some of the most deprived areas nationally, whilst also having neighbourhoods ranked amongst some of the least deprived.

Like many other local authorities across the country, the council faces notable financial constraints. Our social care costs have risen significantly and without an increase in government funding to match the increases we will be faced with some hard choices to achieve financial sustainability and will have to work much smarter to deliver the same results.

Our corporate plan clearly articulates the council's focus for the next four years, between 2022 and 2026. It shows how we will step up from being a borough council to a city council. It also translates ambitions set out in Southend 2050, our long-term vision for Southend-on-Sea, into medium-term priorities. The corporate plan details for our employees and councillors how we will work with residents and partners to co-create our new city, deliver strategic priorities and take Southend-on-Sea from strength to strength.

Becoming a city gives us the opportunity to create something special. We can build on our great strengths – our location, our businesses, transport links, services and the rich diversity of our people and communities – and create

a more equal and inclusive Southend-on-Sea for current and future generations, where everyone who lives here has an equal chance to flourish.

We have listened to what is important to our residents through regular dialogue and engagement. We know that:

- our parks and open spaces have become much more important to residents following the pandemic.
- residents want crime and antisocial behaviour to be addressed and to feel safe and secure in all parts of the city at all times.
- the environment matters a great deal to residents and they are willing to take action to help achieve our net zero carbon ambition. This is not just the council's target; it is everyone's target.

We will continue to engage with the people and communities of Southend-on-Sea to understand their diverse experiences and what they want for their lives and their new city, and what that should mean for our direction as a council. We will use insight to shape council activities and plans.

A remarkable community spirit exists within Southend-on-Sea. The kindness and compassion of our residents and communities so powerfully displayed during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the aftermath of the tragic death of Sir David Amess in October 2021.

We will harness that community spirit as we continue to support each other.

We want to see Levelling Up benefit Southend-on-Sea and the wider area, and support residents to live longer and more fulfilling lives and gain from sustained rises in living standards and well-being. We also want to meet the aims of the health and social care white paper, which sets out measures to make integrated health and social care a universal reality for everyone across England regardless of their condition and location. We will work with our partners to enable integrated care and support arrangements and achieve improved health and social care outcomes for our residents. We will also do our bit to enable the roll-out of digital infrastructure in the city to ensure that growing internet demand from businesses and residents is met.

We continue to work alongside our neighbouring boroughs, local partnerships and central government. We will lead collaboratively alongside our communities and partners, and do so with innovation, ambition, openness and purpose, to build a bright future for everyone in our new city.

**Cllr Stephen George,
Leader of the Council, and
Andrew Lewis, Chief Executive,
Southend-on-Sea City Council**

A speech by HRH The Prince of Wales during an Official Council Meeting to mark Southend-on-Sea becoming a City

“In the aftermath of Sir David’s brutal murder, the people of Southend-on-Sea came together in a remarkable and inspiring way to bring good out of evil. In doing so, they demonstrated a deep truth: that what matters more than any name, whether of a person or a place, is the spirit. Today, Southend becomes a city. As we celebrate and honour that fact, we remember that it is always, and crucially, a community.” Read the full speech.



About our city

The map below shows how Southend-on-Sea is comprised of 17 wards, which are grouped into four localities:

West, West Central, East Central and East.



Population (2021 Census data)

182,700
residents

7,000+
(4.1%) growth of population since the last census in 2011, when it was 173,568.



12%
increase of older people aged 65 and over from 2011.



4.2%
increase of younger age groups from 2011.



4,336
residents per sq km in Southend-on-Sea in 2021, up from 4,167 per square kilometre in 2011.



3,000+
(4.9%) increase of households in Southend-on-Sea. Up from 74,678 in 2011 to 78,300 in 2021.



9
family centres



7 miles of coastline 8 Beaches and 5 Blue Flags



529.9

hectares of protected greenspace

30k+

total of all trees in addition to street



8

nature conservation areas

33

Parks



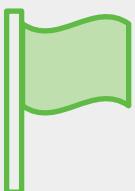
19

allotments



7

Green Flag awards



50+

sport facilities and pitches



15

conservation areas



Culture and tourism

Pleasure Pier

and Theme Park



150 historic buildings and structures



Purple Flag

accreditation for our evening and night-time economy



3

theatres (including one regional theatre)



2
nationally recognised art companies



5

Museums

Transport connections in the City



1 international airport



9 railway stations



21 bus routes

59.25km

(36.81 miles)
of cycle paths



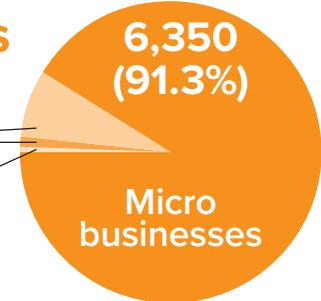
Careers, businesses and jobs

6,955 businesses
(Business Counts 2021)

510/7.3% Small businesses

75/1.1% Medium businesses

20/0.3% Large Businesses



48 commercial areas



20 business /
industrial estates

64,000
jobs in Southend-on-Sea
39,000 full-time and
25,000 part-time
(2020 figures)

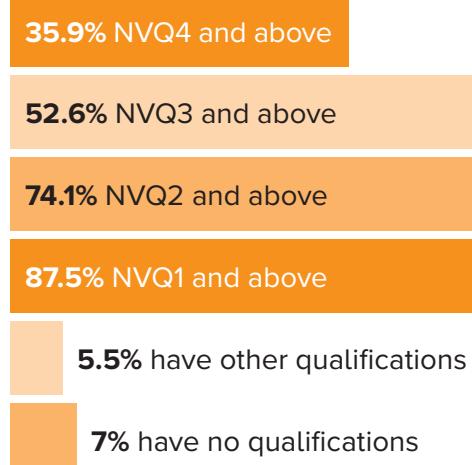
5,990
(5.4%)
unemployment
rate as of
Feb 2022



£ 664.80
resident full-time
weekly wage (by
place of residence,
2021 data)

£ 555.80
workplace weekly
wage (by place of
work, 2021 data)

Level of qualifications



Education

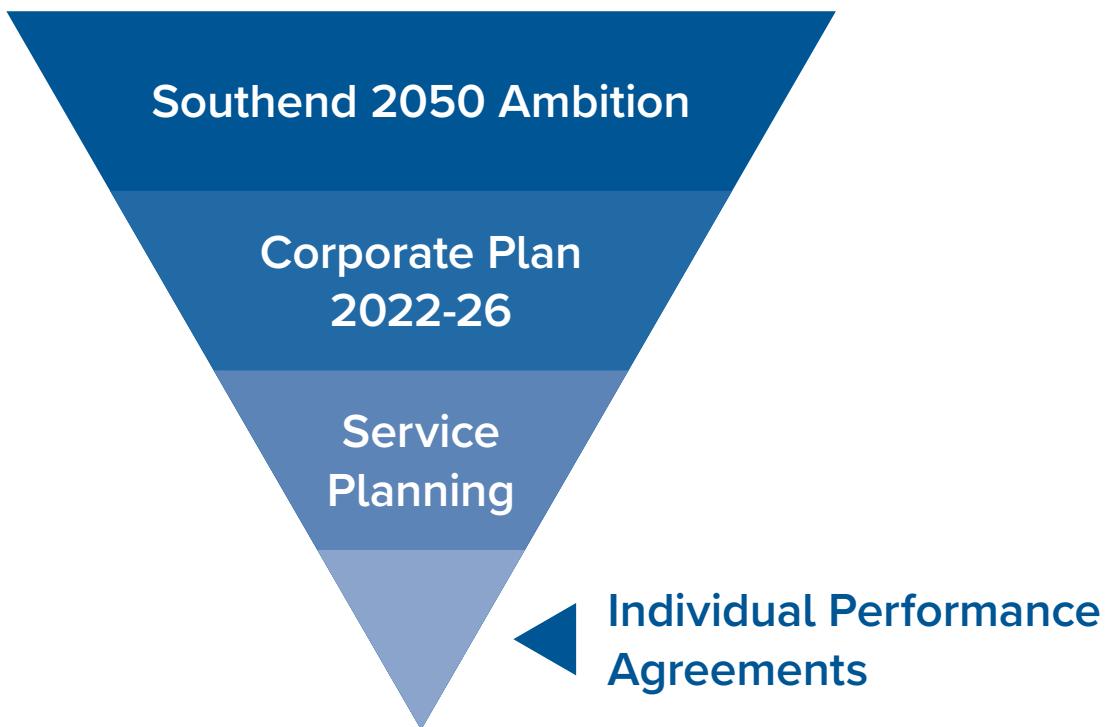
58 schools

2 colleges

1 university

Strategic framework

The council has a strategic framework (see diagram below) to help us make decisions, set strategy and manage performance. It includes the golden thread of documents that describe our long, medium and short-term priorities, and provides a clear line of sight between the Southend 2050 ambition, day to day service delivery and individual performance.



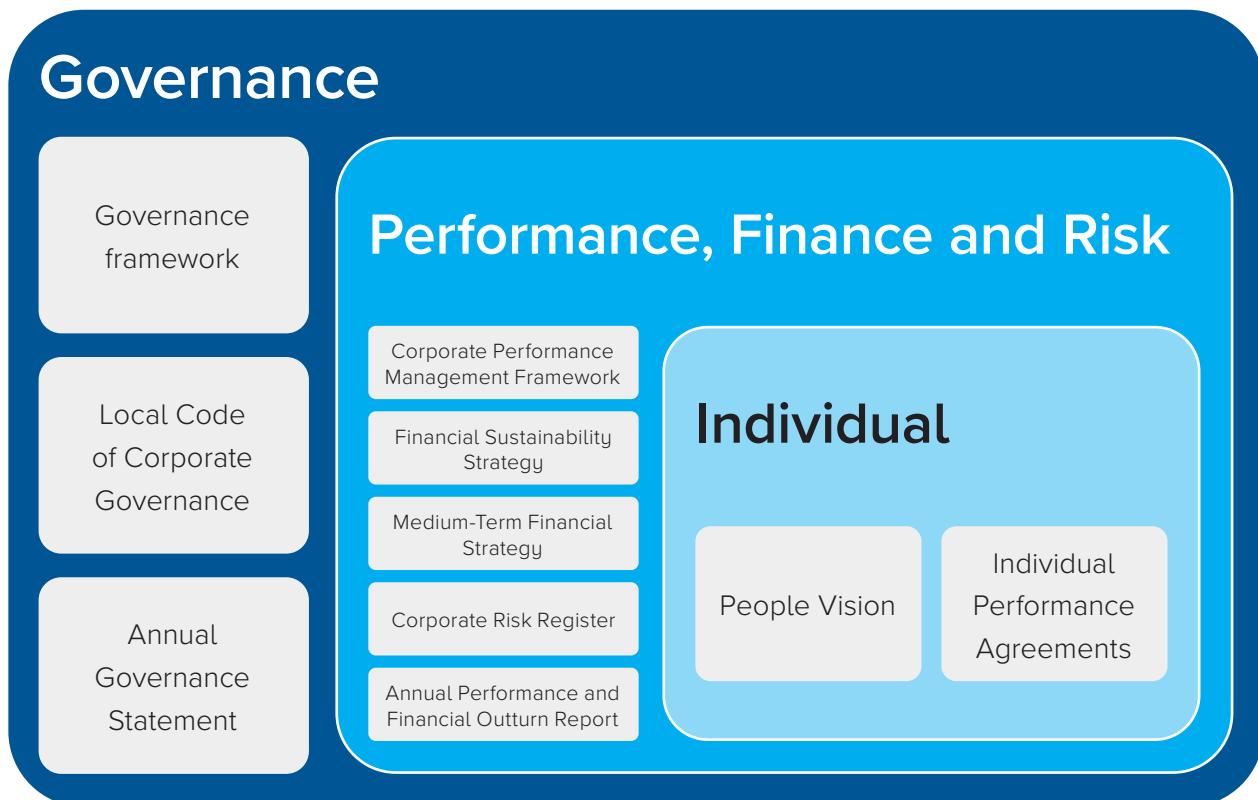
The top-line of the strategic framework is the Southend 2050 ambition, which provides a co-produced, long-term vision for Southend-on-Sea. The Southend 2050 ambition has five themes. These themes are shown in the diagram overleaf. The Southend 2050 ambition also needs to be set against the context of the council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019.

The Southend 2050 ambition is not something that can be achieved by the council alone.

We must work in partnership with our residents and communities, businesses and organisations to deliver it.

Sitting underneath the Southend 2050 ambition is the council's corporate plan. This plan translates the long-term Southend 2050 ambition into medium-term priorities for the council. The corporate plan will be turned into tangible activity in service plans coming in 2023. These service plans will set out in detail the activity of each service area within the council.

The diagram below sets out the council's governance, performance, finance and risk management, and individual performance agreements.



The **Governance Framework** allows the council to operate in accordance with the law and proper standards, and ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. It brings together an underlying set of values, legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.

Our **Financial Sustainability Strategy 2022 to 2032** and **Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27** underpin the priorities set out in the corporate plan. They support the achievement of desired outcomes in the corporate plan and will ensure the council remains financially resilient.

The corporate performance management framework details how the council's priorities will be managed and reviewed alongside our corporate risk, transformational projects and equality objectives. Individual performance goals will drive individual performance management and be governed by our

People Vision, to support the creation of a great employee experience linked to the strategic priorities of the council.

Our People Vision has been structured to reflect the employee life cycle and consists of eight core component parts. These eight component parts are:

- diversity and inclusion
- attracting and retaining the best talent
- reward
- wellbeing
- learning and development
- hybrid working/Work Smart
- visionary leadership
- empowering our people to perform

Within each component part are detailed plans setting out how we will achieve our vision and the core deliverables for the next four years, between 2022 and 2026.

Values and behaviours

Our values and behaviours represent our core principles and ethics for how we approach our work and collaborate as individuals, teams and one organisation. They underpin delivery of our People Vision and the priorities set out within this corporate plan.

Our values:

- Collaborative
- Honest
- Inclusive
- Proud

Our behaviours:

- Driving positive change
- Trust and respect
- Demonstrating strong leadership
- Acting with integrity and behaving responsively
- Building relationships to work well together

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The council's equalities statement and equality objectives support our desire to be more effective on equality, diversity and inclusion matters. They were written in 2022 following consultation with residents, council employees and representatives from groups and organisations who work with and support people with [protected characteristics](#).

Equalities statement:

Southend-on-Sea City Council recognises and values the benefits of diversity and inclusiveness in our city, where people from different backgrounds are valued and get on well together. We will work to bring equality, diversity and inclusion issues into sharper focus and seek out improvements to our services and work environment.

We are committed to supporting all Members and employees to feel they belong at the council and have opportunities to succeed. We will work with employees to identify and remove barriers to inclusivity and diversity.

The council will actively celebrate the value that a diversity of perspectives brings and will proactively seek opportunities to celebrate our differences as well as the common goals that connect and unify us all – together we are stronger.

As an inclusive local authority, we will seek opportunities to work with residents from all groups of protected characteristics to design, co-produce and deliver high quality services that work for all. Collaborative, partnership working is the way to achieve this.

Our equality objectives are:

We will achieve our equalities vision through our equality objectives.

- **Our employees** – To create an inclusive and collaborative working environment that is representative of our communities
- **Access to services** – To provide support in accessing services for all, accommodating diverse needs, and promoting inclusion at all levels, including a developed digital literacy offer
- **Cohesive community** – To raise awareness of the richness in diversity, by celebrating our communities' differences and what unites us
- **Partnership working** – To seek opportunities to co-produce, co-design and to bring lived experience into policy making, strategy development and implementation/service delivery

Under each objective is a commitment which describes a specific and measurable piece of work, which when completed will help us on our journey to achieving our equalities vision.

Our corporate priorities and change programme

We have identified four overarching priorities that as a council we want to achieve for the city. Under each priority there are a number of areas of action and more detail about what we will do.

Our council priorities are:

A city that is strong and prosperous

We will support economic recovery, enhance the city's role as a place for prosperity and opportunity, and safeguard business clusters, including those focussed around the city and district centres and London Southend Airport. We will deliver on regeneration projects to support jobs, growth and opportunity, improve the skills base of the city's workforce and build a more inclusive local economy. We will build strong communities, wellbeing and resilience and create a city that is safe for all.

We will power economic and community recovery to help our communities thrive and make Southend-on-Sea a strong and prosperous city.

A city with a good quality of life

We will create better life opportunities for our children and young people, and work collaboratively with adults to enable them to live safe, well and independently in the community, connected to the people and things they love. We will also support children and adults who look after a family member, partner or friend who would struggle to cope without their support.

We will work hard to ensure people have a good quality of life.

A city rising to the climate change challenge

We declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, consolidating carbon reduction and climate mitigation and adaptation activity across the council. We will continue our evidence-based approach and use our resources wisely to ensure strategies and projects maximise carbon reduction and climate mitigation and adaptation. We will also implement measures to address the risks of natural flooding and coastal erosion.

We will tackle climate change, become a national exemplar for flood and coastal erosion risk management, and make Southend-on-Sea a green city.

A city delivering genuinely affordable housing

We know there is a pressing need for locally affordable housing in the city, and to increase the environmental sustainability of homes. Rented housing in the private and social sector must be safe and well managed, with tenant's voices listened to and repairs and maintenance carried out in a timely way. Those at risk of homelessness must be supported and where homelessness occurs, this should be brief and non-recurrent.

We will deliver and maximise the supply of safe, well managed affordable housing

Change programme

To achieve the priorities set out in the corporate plan we need to transform how we work. We must focus on changing in areas that will have the greatest impact, unlock the potential of our employees, and enable us to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents and communities. Areas in the council we need to see change are:

- **Delivering the right quality services –**

The overall goals of customers need to be understood and there to be an alignment of a common customer-centric vision. We will listen to customers to understand their needs, enhance customer journeys and manage service delivery risks. We will design services from the point where a customer begins to try to achieve a goal, right through to the point when the goal has been completed and the best possible outcome is achieved.

- **How we work –** There is a need to develop

modern working practices to maintain employee engagement and enable people to maximise their performance. This includes developing our approach to hybrid working and making sure those working from home don't suffer from increased levels of loneliness and mental distress. New technologies are making it easy to access information remotely, work from different locations, and provide a more joined up service for our customers. Adapting to a hybrid approach to work will improve the services to local people, reduce our carbon footprint, cut down on travel time and costs and ensure there are new experiences and face-to-face interactions for employees. This will increase our attractiveness for talent attraction and help manage retention of existing employees. Progressing the review of the council's Constitution will ensure effective and efficient governance for councillors and council officers and enable better decision making.

- **Digital as an enabler –** Almost all

transformation has a digital element to it. Our sustainable smart city and smart tourist city programmes will help us to develop a new way of working that supports everyone in the council to deliver their best work and achieve improved outcomes for residents and communities. Key to this is making the council a more accessible and inclusive place to work. Flexible working and the ability to be flexible when needed will allow us to adapt to meet new challenges and opportunities. Alongside this, collaborating and co-designing with others will enable us to understand and identify any prospects or barriers on the way, so we can make best use of our resources. We will develop services to be joined up so there is one single view of our customers and always accessible, to allow for ease of customer use. This will be supported by the Digital Strategy and the four elements that sit underneath it: Smart Tech, Smart Working, Smart Council and Smart City.

Effective programme management is key to the delivery of transformation programmes. We must continue to flex our approach to ensure the council meets its strategic objectives and effectively responds to the changing operating environment. This work is already underway, but with our corporate plan we have extended the scope and accelerated the pace of change. The need for effective management of demand and customer expectations requires robust monitoring and management of quality, performance and outcomes alongside coherent and co-ordinated programmes of work projects.

A key element of our change programme will be in strengthening alignment and governance across our project and programme portfolios. Creating consistency of understanding around direction, overall spend, outcomes and value for money.

Financial sustainability

We will continue to strive to ensure the council remains financially stable and resilient for the future. This has never been more challenging. Like most local authorities across the country, we face tough financial challenges whilst also experiencing major increases in demand for our services. We are also in a cost-of-living crisis, with escalating numbers of residents in Southend-on-Sea experiencing financial hardship and climate crisis.

Resourcing our strategic priorities will require tough choices and careful consideration over the next four years. Decisions will be underpinned by our Financial Sustainability Strategy 2022 to 2032 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27, helping to target resources and effectively consider and manage a range of financial impacts. Both strategies have been comprehensively updated to reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide a clear financial framework for the organisation and will support the delivery of our priorities, including local regeneration ambitions, facilitating more effective joined-up health and social care services as set out in the Government's Integration White Paper, whilst navigating the challenges and impact of a pandemic, climate change, a cost-of-living crisis, and an unprecedented increase in demand for advice and support from local residents and businesses.

Despite the challenges, the council is determined to build on the solid financial foundation we have worked so hard to create locally. We will maintain robust financial planning, scrutinise budgets closely, be prudent in managing risks and always strive to deliver better value for money for local people. We will continue to embed our 'Getting to Know Your Business' programme and have a commercial mindset when thinking about our assets. We will ensure that our financial strategy continues to align with Government funding and aim to mobilise all our limited resources to deliver priorities that will make a tangible, positive difference for our residents, businesses and visitors.

Our priorities

A city that is strong and prosperous

We will:

- support economic regeneration and business development
- use our spending power wisely
- bid for funding opportunities and attract inward investment
- sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion
- deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan
- enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer
- support community recovery
- improve community safety

Support economic regeneration and business development

We will progress a programme of culture-led regeneration projects to support economic recovery, enhance Southend-on-Sea's important sub-regional role as a place for economic prosperity and opportunity, and safeguard key business clusters, including those focussed round the city and district centres and London Southend Airport , while avoiding bringing noise and air pollution.

Regeneration projects to be delivered over the next three to five years include:

- activating the Victoria Centre development and taking forward plans to ensure its long-term business sustainability.
- the Seaway Leisure project
- redevelopment at Roots Hall and a relocated stadium for Southend United Football Club at Fossetts Farm
- The Launch Pad innovation hub at Airport Business Park Southend
- facilitating growth of London Southend Airport In partnership with Rochford District Council and other stakeholders, to realise its potential as a zero carbon regional transport hub, providing significant new employment opportunities

We will be innovative and proactive in helping our businesses, organisations and communities recover from the impact of the pandemic, encouraging the city's strong entrepreneurial spirit. We will enable transition to a sustainable economy by supporting low carbon growth and encouraging businesses to reduce waste and pollution.

The council will play a leading role to ensure the local employment and skills system improves residents' skills and employment prospects and helps businesses with their recruitment needs:

- **Skills** – We will work to improve the skills base of the city's workforce and build a more inclusive local economy. The Southend Adult Community College has an important role in delivering community learning to improve our digital offer and attract more businesses to the area.
- **Jobs** – We will deliver on major regeneration projects to support jobs, growth and opportunity. We will support our key employment sectors, including health and care, finance and business hospitality, retail and tourism, and support employment growth sectors, such as digital, cultural and creative, healthcare technology, advanced manufacturing and engineering, and the green and blue economy, to create local opportunities. As a Kickstart Gateway, we will help local employers get funding to create jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit.
- **Inclusion** – We will work with businesses, developers and our suppliers to ensure equal access to well-paid and secure jobs with prospects. We will also support women, young people, disabled people and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to achieve their full potential.

We are well positioned as a city to maximise opportunities from regional partnerships, such as the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA), Thames Estuary Growth Board and South East Local Enterprise Partnership. In our ASELA partnership, we are working to create a [new technical university in south Essex](#). This new university will focus on degrees, degree-level apprenticeships and short course CPD in highly vocational subjects. We are also working on plans to develop the [South Essex Estuary Park](#). The Park will be a single regional parkland system, with multiple benefits including flood risk management

and climate change mitigation, featuring a continuous and accessible coastal path from Tilbury Fort to Shoeburyness.

We will build and maintain links with Thames Freeport, an economic zone connecting Ford's world-class Dagenham engine plant to the global ports at London Gateway and Tilbury, so residents can take advantage of new jobs and skills created at Freeport.

Use our spending power wisely

We will use the council's spending power to support economic growth and regeneration. We have big investment stakes in housing and jobs within the city and we are a Living Wage employer. We will maximise benefits from our spending power by mainstreaming social value in all procurements. Social value will create new jobs and apprenticeships, ensure local businesses are part of large contract supply chains as well as deliver environmental sustainability and community outcomes. Where possible, we will buy goods and services locally and we will require suppliers to pay their staff at least the Living Wage.

Bid for funding opportunities and attract inward investment

We will use our now status as a city to change the conversation about Southend-on-Sea as a place to invest and do business. We want to see businesses thrive and grow and Southend-on-Sea become an attractive and safe location for investors. We will welcome new opportunities and investment in the area. We will make sound judgements about where investment comes from. It must be green and reflect our equality, diversity and inclusion aspirations.

We will be ready with programmes and projects in order to bid for funding that supports employment and skills, connectivity, economic recovery and growth, and culture-led regeneration. This will include bidding for the Government's Digital Growth Grant and Levelling Up Fund.

A central pillar of the Government's Levelling Up agenda is the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). We will prepare investment plans for the UKSPF and Multiply, which is the first priority of the Fund, and seek to ensure the outcomes they target will have positive impacts in Southend-on-Sea. Under the UKSPF, all areas of the UK will receive a multi-year conditional allocation via a funding formula. The Fund is focused on investing in community and place, supporting local business and people and skills. Multiply funding will help to improve adult numeracy skills.

Sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion

We will invest in our places to unlock the city's economic potential and make sure that Southend-on-Sea is a place where businesses want to be. Connectivity across Southend-on-Sea needs to be improved to attract business growth and inward investment and cater for growing digital needs. We will complete the city's £30 million full fibre upgrade, in partnership with CityFibre, to provide access to gigabit broadband, and do our bit to make sure that the digital infrastructure is in place to support increasing internet traffic.

We will encourage businesses and residents to use superfast broadband, 4G, 5G, Low Power networks and wifi for business, working-from-home and education. We know that the cost of getting fibre to the door can be prohibitive. We will explore opportunities to enable connectivity for our residents. Digital inclusion

offers a sustainable way to support people out of poverty and is a critical driver for our sustainable smart city.

Deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan

We will put our new City Masterplan in place, reimagining the city centre for future generations. We will work with our partners to implement the plan, recognising that the vibrancy of the High Street is often seen as a barometer for the vitality of a place and therefore it is a shared priority.

We are rethinking our approach to all our shopping centres, minimising reliance on retail only spaces. With our partners we will create mixed-use, well connected high streets with featuring retail, residential, heritage, cultural, entertainment, public, green and residential spaces. We will ensure heritage assets and their setting are conserved and enhanced so they continue to make a full contribution to the character of Southend-on-Sea. We will improve access to all parts of our city for people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities. We will also create a safer city centre for all.

Enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer

Southend-on-Sea is an aspiring smart and green tourist city, a city which needs to balance the needs of residents, and visitors and the environment. We will recover and grow our visitor economy sustainably, promoting Southend-on-Sea as a place to visit and stay for local visitors and for those from further afield. Our tourism strategy 'Destination Southend' sets out clear priorities and actions for the council to work in partnership with the tourism business community to enhance the offer and develop opportunities to increase the



value of the visitor economy – extending the season and building on staycation – and grow green tourism.

Southend-on-Sea's world-famous pier requires continued investment from the council and its visitor experience will continue to grow, building on recent record numbers of visitors. We also want to make the most of our natural environment. Managing our open spaces and award-winning beaches will help spread the value of tourism across the whole city area and events will be developed to support this wider opportunity.

We are investing in our cultural offering, including improvements to the Cliffs Pavilion, public spaces and other cultural assets to ensure that residents and visitors can enjoy high quality experiences in Southend-on-Sea. The recently co-produced 'Culture Vision' sets out our aspirations to work with partners in the cultural sector and grass roots organisations to help demonstrate the real power of culture.

Our libraries, museums and galleries will all contribute to support community needs and play an important role in the public health agenda, both for physical and mental wellbeing. Our leisure offer will continue to adapt to meet the changing needs of residents.

We will promote and enhance the city's tourism, cultural and leisure offer to ensure wide participation and benefit our residents, businesses and visitors.

Support community recovery

Southend-on-Sea is a place of diverse and many different cultures. We will continue to develop relationships with our diverse communities and partners, including those that represent groups with protected characteristics. We will help build strong communities, wellbeing and resilience and secure the best possible outcomes for our residents.

Priority areas for community recovery include:

- **Tackling poverty and hardship**

We will develop and implement a tackling poverty strategy to address the inequalities in our city and make life fairer for those affected by poverty and the cost of living and the consequences of living in debt. We will co-produce the strategy with residents and work together to find sustainable solutions across the four-year lifespan of the corporate plan and beyond.

- **Reduce health inequalities**

We will take a place-based approach for reducing health inequalities, including mental and physical health inequalities, and life expectancy inequality across Southend-on-Sea.

- **Service provision** - We will continue to work with health and voluntary sector partners to tackle service inequality in the city, including making sure services are accessible to vulnerable people.

- **Food Environment Policy** - We will need to increase our collaboration in reducing the growing burden of obesity, which has an enormous impact on health and well-being outcomes. The COVID pandemic has seen a change in how people access food, especially less

healthy food, with a growing industry for fast food delivery. Additionally, the rising cost of living is significantly impacting on people's access to food and we are seeing more dependency on food banks. We will need to be bold in how we effect sustainable change in our food environment and people's relationship with food, to have a balanced approach in our local plan and policies on how we promote access to healthier food and reduce wastage, improve the provision and access to relevant information, advice and guidance on healthier eating, reduce food poverty and insecurity and boost the economic recovery.

- **Physical activity** - We want our residents to have physically active lifestyles, to move more and make use of our parks, open spaces and coastline. We will encourage them to do so through varied lifestyle improvement and wellbeing activities and making walking and cycling more convenient and accessible.
- **Healthy places** – We are committed to making Southend-on-Sea a healthier place to live and are already delivering when it comes to tackling air quality through actions set out in our Air Quality Action Plan. We will keep working to reduce levels of air pollution in the city and meet national air quality objectives.
- **Social isolation**

We will support initiatives that enable residents working with other residents to address digital exclusion and break down intergenerational barriers. Community builders, who are people who encourage others to get involved with their neighbourhood or with a common need or interest, will continue to have hundreds of conversations per month with residents, businesses and groups, identifying local community connectors, ideas and

resources. They will support events and spaces connecting people with each other to reduce social isolation and create momentum to take community action. We will also continue to develop the Southend Livewell directory, which highlights local groups and projects that can be accessed to form new friendships, learn new skills and make a positive difference locally.

- **Understanding and improving our communication with vulnerable residents**

We will work with the Trauma Alliance to ensure that all staff dealing with vulnerable people within the authority, statutory and the voluntary sectors are trained to be trauma informed and have on going membership to a community of practice. This will improve our residents experience when accessing front line services and improve relationship building and trust.

- **Strengthening our community, faith and voluntary sector**

We will:

- support the direction of any additional identified funding towards the Community Investment Board, which is managed and delivered by volunteers and gives the community control on what is funded
- re-procure the Voluntary Sector Infrastructure organisation to include a strong volunteer support and brokerage offer, to connect volunteers with local volunteering opportunities
- support community engagement projects that will help to create a stronger, more resilient voluntary, faith and community sector in Southend-on-Sea
- continue to work with individuals and organisations from a strengths-based perspective and celebrate achievements
- build on the relationships and contacts with communities fostered during

the pandemic. For example: [Good Neighbours scheme](#), the [Westborough Alleys project](#) and the [Community Connectors project](#) run by the council and SAVS

Improve community safety

Our priorities for reducing crime and disorder and protecting vulnerable people across Southend-on-Sea are set out in the Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2022 to 2025. The strategy has been developed by the Southend Community Safety Partnership Board, which comprises of statutory and non-statutory partners, including Essex Police. The Community Safety Partnership's priorities are based upon an assessment of crime and disorder issues across the city and reflect community views and insight. The priorities are:

- Safe and Confident Communities
- Violence Against Women and Girls
- Hate Crime
- Knife Enabled Serious Violence

We will implement community safety measures to create a safe and secure city for residents and visitors of all ages. The Community Safety Patrol Team, CCTV equipment and town link radio system are all central to this. We will continue to take action against individuals that commit anti-social behaviours.

We will work collaboratively with partners to prevent and reduce sexual harm on the night time economy, including understanding the specific needs of women who sell sex on the street. The Street Prostitution Strategy 2022 to 2023 will protect and improve the quality of life of sex workers and make sure residents feel safe in areas of the city where street prostitution happens.

The council will work with its partners to make sure the Southend Domestic Abuse Strategy meets the requirements in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 for local authorities. The new strategy aims to address the local response to domestic abuse more generally, not just the support to victims within 'safe' accommodation.

We will look to provide safe community spaces for children and young people and continue to develop the 'See The Signs' campaign to educate residents and communities on county lines drug gangs and child exploitation.

Delivery strategies and plans

The list below shows relevant delivery strategies and plans for this priority area.

- Economic Growth Strategy 2017 to 2022
- City Centre Strategy and Investment Plan
- Social Value Policy
- Tourism Strategy 'Destination Southend'
- Culture Vision
- Tackling Poverty Strategy 2023 to 2026
- Essential Living Fund Policy 2013
- Food Environment Policy
- Air Quality Action Plan 2022 to 2025
- Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2022 to 2025
- Street Prostitution Strategy 2022 to 2023
- Domestic Abuse Implementation Strategy 2021
- Southend, Essex and Thurrock Exploitation Strategy 2019 to 2024

Our priorities

A city with a good quality of life

We will:

- Achieve our vision of a city where all children achieve success
- ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities
- enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life
- enable people to age well, live well and care well
- ensure that health and care services meet the needs of all
- ensure services are diverse, sustainable and high quality, including those who pay for their own care

Achieve our vision of a city where all children achieve success

We will continue to improve the experience of children, young people and families have when in contact with children's services by focusing on delivering against our improvement targets. This work will be delivered in collaboration with children, young people, families, and with our employees.

Part of our vision of a city where all children achieve success is increasing the influence of children, young people and communities in planning and decision making. We will provide co-production opportunities in all areas of planning and decision making in the council.

Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities

Working as a member of the Southend Safeguarding Children's Partnership we will maintain a focus on safeguarding all children and young people. We will provide the right support for children and their families at the earliest opportunity, through specialist and statutory interventions. This is to ensure the welfare and safety of vulnerable children and young people.

Children, young people and families will receive the support needed that improves their resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. They will have access to co-ordinated Early Help in accordance with need as soon as difficulties are identified. We will work with our partners to ensure they have the best possible emotional health and wellbeing outcomes.

Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life

We will work in partnership with early year providers and partners to ensure a coordinated and integrated delivery of services to give young children the best start in life and support their transition to school.

We will work with schools and other partners to make sure that every young person in the city has access to the opportunities they need to thrive in life, including an excellent education. We will seek to eliminate disparities in educational achievement.

We will:

- offer support and challenge all schools and trusts in Southend-on-Sea to be Ofsted Good or Outstanding
- continue the improvements with special educational needs and disability (SEND) so that by the time the next Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection comes about, we will be judged as 'Good' or the equivalent
- implement changes to statutory attendance and entitlement so pupils can attend the most appropriate setting, and are safe and well

We will support schools and settings to become even more inclusive, and to deliver outcomes for pupils (and their families) who have additional needs to enable them to thrive in their mainstream setting alongside their peers.

Enable people to age well, live well and care well

The council will work with residents to enable them to live safe, well and independently in the community, connected to the people and things they love. We will achieve this by:

- listening to people and focusing on their strengths
- transforming care and support to ensure that there are flexible options that enable independence
- getting the best value from the Southend-on-Sea pound for the people we support

Delivering this vision will mean people in the city:

- can easily access information and advice that connects them to support that helps prevent, reduce, delay the need for care and support
- can lead the discussion where they might need more formal assessment
- are supported to live well and longer in their community with choice and control
- have a good experience of the care and support they receive
- have a smooth transition into adult services with a focus on their potential and living independently

Embedding a strength and asset-based approach

A strength and asset-based approach will view individuals holistically and explore their abilities and circumstances, in a solution focused way. Individuals will be encouraged to identify the goals they want to achieve and work towards attaining these goals to empower the individual. Reablement, active recovery and tools for independent living will be central to this approach.

Transforming care and support

The council's overall direction for adult social care is built on three core strategies named '['Ageing Well'](#)', '['Caring Well'](#)', and '['Living Well'](#)', setting out priorities over the next five years. The three strategies were co-designed with people who use services and their friends and families:

- The '**'Ageing Well'**' strategy focuses on supporting the needs of people as they get older. It aims to provide 'a life, not just a service' and support people be in control of their own lives and care, to enable independence.
- The '**'Living Well'**' strategy looks at the needs and wellbeing of adults of working age with additional needs such as physical, sensory, learning difficulties, mental health challenges and autism. Best practice has shown our residents living with these challenges would benefit from a person-centred approach to care, which supports them to live independently and be involved within their local community.
- Our '**'Caring Well'**' strategy focuses on the needs of unpaid carers, sometimes called 'hidden carers', which can be children or adults that find themselves in a position caring for a family member, partner or friend. These carers play a significant role in preventing the need for a more formal care provision, and the health and social care system relies on this unpaid support.

We have annual action plans to move forward the delivery of each strategy and take us to where we want to be by 2027. Partnership groups have been formed to manage the development, delivery, and monitoring of the yearly action plans for each strategy. These will build on the work of the previous year and in reaction to emerging needs and trends.

All action plans contain a desire to further develop co-production and ensure links across services and other department plans and strategies to reduce duplication and make efficient use of available resources.

Ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all

In September 2021, the Government set out its [new plan for adult social care reform in England](#). This included a lifetime cap on the amount anyone in England will need to spend on their personal care, alongside a more generous means-test for local authority financial support. In December 2021 the Government published a white paper, [People at the Heart of Care](#), outlining a 10-year vision that puts personalised care and support at the heart of adult social care, ensuring people: have the choice, control and support they need to live independent lives; can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support; and find adult social care fair and accessible.

We will work with our health and social care partners to make navigating health and social care services seamless for our residents and reduce the factors that exacerbate health inequality in the city.

Health and social care integration

The Government's Health and Care Act received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022. The Act introduces significant reforms to the delivery of health and care services in England. As part of the measures, every part of England will be covered by an integrated care system, bringing together NHS, local government and other partners to collectively plan health and care services to meet the needs of the local population. The Mid Southeast Essex Integrated Care System is made up of two parts:

- the Integrated Care Board is responsible for commissioning a range of services and will have legal duties, including reducing inequalities, improving quality of provision, maintain patient choice and promoting integration.
- the Integrated Care Partnership will create a local integrated care strategy, involving people who live in Southend-on-Sea, with a focus on influencing the wider determinants of health and broader socio-economic development.

Our partnership working ambitions are grounded within our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Locality Strategy and Southeast Essex Alliance place plan. We recognise there are system challenges relating to demand, capacity in care provision and discharge out of hospital, which we will address through short and long term mitigation plans, particularly in employee recruitment and retention schemes and investing in the care market. We are working with health partners to develop place-based provision and approaches. This will provide opportunities for joined up initiatives to reduce care needs, manage increasing demand and complexities, improve discharge flow out of hospital and ensure people can remain living independently for as long as possible at home.

Care Quality Commission local system inspection readiness

In May 2022, Parliament officially granted the Care Quality Commission (CQC) powers to review health and social care local systems. At the core of this new approach will be the CQC new single assessment framework, against which they will assess providers, integrated care systems and local authorities. This framework will set out what they expect good care to look like in terms of what a person should experience when navigating the health and social care sector and assessing care.

From April 2023, the inclusion of a duty for the CQC to assess local authorities' delivery of social care services will begin. The new single assessment framework will include five key lines of enquiry – Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well Led. It will draw on "I" statements used in Think Local Act Personal "Making it Real" framework, to ensure personalised, culturally appropriate care.

In CQC inspection readiness we are developing our self-assessment against the framework and will bring to life the real experiences of people who use services, their families and carers, ensuring that they are the central focus.



Ensure services are diverse, sustainable and high quality, including those who pay for their own care

As a condition of the Government's published white paper, [People at the Heart of Care](#), we will complete a fair cost of care exercise with home care and care home providers, to arrive at a shared understanding of the local cost of providing care.

Market Position Statement

A market position statement has been produced by the council following market research and engagement with people who use or run care services, our partners and market stakeholders. The market position statement summarises supply and demand in Southend-on-Sea and highlights business opportunities in the area.

Delivery strategies and plans

The list below shows relevant delivery strategies and plans for this priority area.

- Southend Early Help Partnership Strategy 2021 to 2024
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy
- School Performance Strategy 2019 to 2023
- Ageing Well 2022 to 2023
- Living Well 2022 to 2023
- Caring Well 2022 to 2023
- Southend Essex Thurrock Dementia Strategy 2022 to 2026
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2024
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Locality Strategy 2018
- Southend-on-Sea Market Position Statement

A city rising to the climate change challenge

We will:

- become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030
- prevent waste, re-use and increase recycling
- develop an active and sustainable travel network
- enhance, promote and protect our natural environment
- undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management

Become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030

Transition to a zero carbon Southend-on-Sea will help us to meet the climate emergency, support our economic and community recovery and create opportunities for new high skilled jobs and industry.

We know the carbon footprint of our city – developed through the council's work with Project REMeDY. This is a part-government funded project led by the council with a consortium of partners, including technical and industry experts and academics, working to bring affordable low carbon heating to residents and businesses in Southend-on-Sea.

Measuring our carbon footprint is an important step in our evidence-based approach to achieving our ambitious net zero target. It shows the scale of the challenge and will shape our plans and priorities. The largest sources of carbon emissions in Southend-on-Sea are residential energy, commercial energy and road transport.

Other work in progress includes:

- geographic information system mapping of residential and commercial emissions
- carbon tool for updating and reporting on emissions reduction
- detailed modelling of pathway to net zero for a selection of building archetypes

Based on all this information we are developing a Net Zero strategy, to be launched in 2022/23. We will demonstrate strong local leadership and take a strategic approach to climate change. We will reduce emissions across our own estate, including South Essex Homes properties, and identify how we can reach the council's net zero carbon target via transport and procurement.

We are also reframing our Green City Action Plan. The plan will help the council to build climate resilience across Southend-on-Sea, take a proactive approach to urban greening and create and improve public open spaces.

Our new [Southend-on-Sea City Local Plan](#) will set out site options and policies for new jobs, housing, services, green spaces and supporting infrastructure.

We will continue to build solid partnerships with a range of organisations to achieve a clear pathway for our city to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. Businesses, stakeholders and residents made clear their commitment to minimising the impacts of climate change during the development of Southend 2050, resulting in the green city ambition.

Reduce waste, re-use and increase recycling

The Government's [Environment Act](#) became Law in November 2021. It contains a variety of targets, plans and policies for improving our natural environment that will affect the council. The Act will mean major changes to waste and recycling services in the city over the next few years. Proposed changes include:

- extended producer responsibility to make producers pay for 100% of cost of disposal of products
- a Deposit Return Scheme for single use drinks containers
- charges for single use plastics
- greater consistency in recycling collections in England

We are procuring recycling and waste collection and treatment solutions for the city that meet these changes, as well as our environmental, sustainability and social value ambitions. Importantly, these solutions will be aligned to the needs of our residents and local environment.

We will encourage people to prevent waste, promote re-use and recycling behaviour, and incorporate a carbon reduction approach. We are committed to driving resources up the waste hierarchy to become a sustainable city for businesses, residents and visitors. We will do this through outreach and engagement activities.

The [PlastiCity project](#) is laying the foundation for the development of a circular economy in Southend-on-Sea. The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended. In practice, it implies reducing waste to a minimum. As part of our circular economy approach, we are developing strategies and solutions to reduce plastic consumption and increase plastic recycling rates across the city's businesses and schools. In addition, we are identifying and mapping circular activities in Southend-on-Sea, including business activities. The main focus is on plastics, but we are also looking at other materials and activities, such as waste reduction, repair and re-use schemes.

Develop an active and sustainable travel network

To achieve our ambition of reaching net zero by 2030 and increase mobility and accessibility for all residents in the city, we will improve public transport, make travel easier, enable healthy living and active travel, and keep people and goods moving. The Local Transport Plan 4 (2023 to 2040) sets out the council's plans, policies and programmes on transport and transport infrastructure.

We will improve bus services and work with local bus companies to make those improvements. Bus service improvements in the Southend-on-Sea Bus Service Improvement Plan (2022 to 2027) will be delivered through the Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership Plan (2022 to 2027).

We will make active travel modes such as walking and cycling more convenient and accessible for everyone in the city and make single occupancy car use less attractive.

We will:

- improve our cycle network
- progress implementation of school streets and low traffic neighbourhoods
- promote ways of travelling by bus, train, bike, e-bike and on foot
- introduce demand management measures for the transport network
- decarbonise the transport network by reducing the need to travel, increasing sustainable modal split, increasing electric vehicle charging points, investigating the development of hydrogen fuel cell infrastructure and making use of new technologies

Promoting low-carbon vehicles, by rolling out electric vehicle charging infrastructure and investigating developing hydrogen fuelling infrastructure, is a priority action for the council. We will continue to support meeting the needs of electric vehicle charging, recognising that the electricity network and street furniture infrastructure does not currently allow for the level of ambition of the council. In addition to this, air quality, embodied carbon and congestion issues remain. The council is taking an evidence-based approach to the delivery and implementation of electric vehicles across the city that aligns with the objectives of Local Transport Plan 4 (2023-2040) and the climate change programme.

Our corporate transport priorities will be supported by the following strategies and plans:

- the council's Air Quality Action Plan sets out our actions for improving air quality in the city
- London Southend Airport preparing for hydrogen powered aircraft
- the Association of South Essex Local Authorities' [transport vision](#)
- the Thames Estuary's [The Green Blue action plan](#)

- Transport East's [transport strategy](#)
- the Government's [Levelling up white paper](#) and [transport decarbonisation plan](#)

We will continue to deliver on our ambitious programme of investment in improving our pavements and highways. We will also effectively manage parking needs from residents, shoppers, businesses and their workforces, visitors and airport passengers, to support the quality of residents' street scene and local environment, and growth of our high streets, tourism sector and London Southend Airport.

Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment

We will invest in enhancing, promoting and protecting our natural environment, preserving it for future generations. This will include:

- developing a 10-year vision for our parks and green spaces, identifying areas of greatest need for investment, including infrastructure, biodiversity, children's play, sports facilities and creating opportunities for volunteering
- delivering our strategies on managing our trees, as well as improving opportunities for pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, in line with the Government's [National Pollinator Strategy](#)
- creating new partnerships and strengthening existing ones in delivering our green vision for the city
- adopting a green infrastructure approach to green space planning, acknowledging the multiple benefits green spaces provide for our environment, economy, health and well-being and communities
- protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of our natural environment, including seeking opportunities to re-wild in many of our green spaces

- procuring street cleaning services to support us in protecting our natural environment.
- encouraging residents to join a growing street champion volunteer base, empowering communities to improve their local natural and built spaces
- launching communications and engagement campaigns with multiple audiences, using nudge theory, with a call to action to preserve and respect our environment
- working with partners to increase the number of Green Flag Parks in the city

Undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management

We will invest in protecting and nurturing our coastline, which continues to be our much loved and best used asset. We will also connect communities with water assets and environmental issues.

The council will work with the Environment Agency, who are responsible for sampling the seawater during the bathing season, which runs between May and September. We will provide information to the public about bathing water quality and alert people if there is a risk to bathers.

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the council is designated as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and has a duty to take the lead in the management of local flood risk in the area. The Act confers powers on the LLFA to enforce flood management policies in the city for riparian owners. As a LLFA, we will:

- manage local flood risk, defined as flooding from surface water runoff, tide lock, ordinary watercourses and groundwater
- maintain a register of the assets or features that increase flood risk
- approve and adopt sustainable drainage systems

- investigate significant flooding incidents and publish results of these reports
- authorise consent to works on ordinary watercourses

Our key plan is the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, which specifies:

- our objectives for managing local flood risk
- measures to achieve our objectives
- the costs and benefits of implementing measures, how they will be funded and maintained in the future

We are also a Risk Management Authority under the Coastal Protection Act (1949) and have permissive powers (not duties) to manage seven miles of coastline. We are responsible for leading on coastal erosion risk management activities, including monitoring coastal change and repairing and building new coastal erosion defences. Our Southend-on-Sea Shoreline Strategy (2019) provides a long-term, holistic framework for managing the risk of coastal change in Southend-on-Sea. A priority scoring tool will be used to aid the prioritisation of asset maintenance across the Southend-on-Sea coastal frontage.

Areas of action for flood and coastal risk management work include:

- the council led [Catchment to Coast Partnership Project](#), part of the Environment Agency's [National Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme](#) to demonstrate how practical actions can improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion.
- using an Integrated Urban Drainage Model to look at the hydraulic catchment area of Eastwood Brook as a whole, working with Essex, Castle Point and Rochford councils as project partners.
- the Leigh Port infrastructure project, which will see the construction of a new quay wall frontage, improvements to site access,

dredging of the area beside the quay wall and channel, and resurfacing of the wharf to make the port a safe place to work and visit. This work is funded by an award from the Government's Levelling Up Fund.

- the Marine Parade public realm project to incorporate a modern and safe by design streetscape with integrated art elements and sustainable drainage features, green infrastructure and hostile vehicle mitigation measures.
- the East Beach coastal defence refurbishment scheme.
- refurbishment of the groyne field along Southend-on-Sea's coastal frontage.
- the [Sustainable and Resilient Coastal Cities \(SARCC\) pilot](#), which will pilot a series of nature-based solutions to be integrated into existing engineered coastal assets. Works will range from dune restoration, installation of vertipools and green gabion baskets.

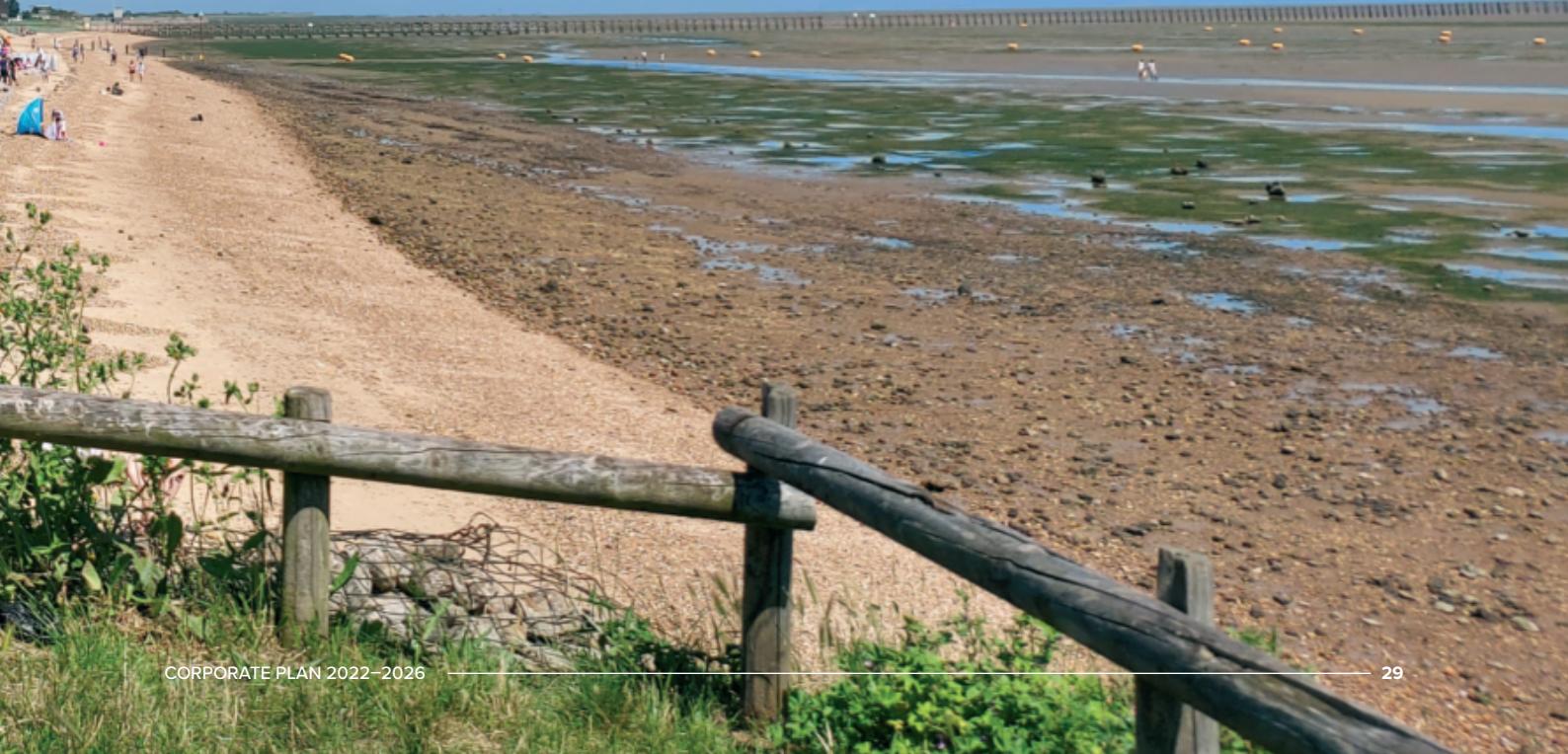
We will work in partnership with all relevant risk management authorities, including the Environment Agency and Anglian Water, on flood and coastal erosion risk management issues, such as discharge of sewage from storm overflows.

The council's Shoreline Strategy, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and sustainable drainage systems policy all link to the Southend-on-Sea Local Plan.

Delivery strategies and plans

The list below shows relevant delivery strategies and plans for this priority area.

- Net Zero Strategy
- Green City Action Plan 2022
- Local Transport Plan 4 2023 to 2040
- Southend-on-Sea Bus Service Improvement Plan 2022 to 2027
- Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership Plan 2022 to 2027
- Parking Strategy
- Local Flood Management Strategy
- Southend-on-Sea Shoreline Strategy 2019



A city delivering genuinely affordable housing

We will:

- address local housing need
- prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes
- make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, aiming for functional zero homelessness
- maximise environmental sustainability of homes
- ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance
- reduce the number of empty homes
- deliver the Local Plan

Address local housing need

Our housing priorities are to:

- prioritise the supply of safe, locally affordable homes
- ensure regeneration and growth creates inclusive, healthy places to live and thrive
- encourage good quality housing design, management and maintenance
- support people to live independently in their own homes and avoid homelessness

- make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent

These priorities, which are set out in our [Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 – 2028](#), underpin how we will respond to evolving housing challenges, major projects and Government initiatives.

Prioritise the supply and quality of safe, locally affordable homes

We recognise a range of housing types are needed to meet different types of housing needs. We will:

- continue to build and acquire new council housing, developing on the successes of the Housing Revenue Account Land Review project and the Acquisitions Programme.
- ensure registered providers prioritise the delivery of locally affordable homes in line with council priorities.
- work with our partners to progress the Better Queensway project and create a new neighbourhood at Porters Place, providing high quality homes well connected to the city centre.
- support wider sections of our community to access the housing market, including key workers.

Make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, with functional zero homelessness

We will improve outcomes for people approaching us as at risk of homelessness. Where people approach us as homeless, we will seek to make the experience as brief as possible and put the right housing and support in place so that they don't have to encounter homelessness multiple times. We will aim for 'functional zero' homelessness, which is making sure that the services and support in our city match demand. So even if someone is homeless, they will still have somewhere safe and warm to sleep, whilst longer-term, settled arrangements are made as soon as possible.

The council's successful bid for a three-year Rough Sleeper Initiative grant fund, partnership work and our core homelessness powers and duties will all play a role in the delivery of our aim of functional zero homelessness.

Maximise environmental sustainability of homes

We will maximise environmental sustainability in local housing, and make sure there is a high standard of energy efficient and net zero homes across the city's housing stock. We will do this by:

- improving the safety, comfort and sustainability of existing council housing
- engaging and involving residents and developers more about improving the environmentally sustainability of homes
- embedding environmental sustainability standards that are more stringent than building regulations into the local plan



- requiring development to be low or zero carbon, more resilient to climate change and adequately mitigating flood risk
- encouraging residents to access energy efficiency grants and discounts
- investigating the potential for local heat networks
- showcasing outstanding examples of energy efficient and net zero homes

Ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance

We will ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance in social housing and the private rented sector.

We will continue to roll-out the Selective Licensing Scheme in designated areas of the city to improve the private rented sector.

All inadequate housing in the private rented sector will be identified and action taken by the council to encourage and, where appropriate, force landlords to meet legal standards and local requirements. This includes houses of multiple occupancies. We will use the full range of engagement and enforcement tools at our disposal to do this.

Wherever possible, we will support owner-occupiers to make sure their homes meet

minimum standards, both in terms of their condition and energy efficiency. We will identify and implement IT systems to facilitate improvements in the licensing of dwellings and to allow us to carry out inspections more efficiently

Reduce the number of empty homes

We are strongly committed to reducing the number of empty homes, facilitating and assisting the creation of good quality and affordable homes in the city and to making best use of existing housing stock.

Working in partnership with empty property owners, residents and partner agencies is integral to the successful delivery of this priority. We will work with owners early on to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period and use legislative tools to bring long-term empty homes back into use in a timely and effective manner. We will support older residents to ‘right size’ their housing as a means of improving their quality of life, which will link to our improved later life living offer.

The steps we will take to reduce the number of empty homes in the city, maximise the re-use of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes are set out in detail in our [Empty Homes Strategy 2021–2026](#).

Deliver the Local Plan

We will deliver a Southend-on-Sea Local Plan shaped by the needs of our communities. We will make sure the following ambitions set out in the plan are achieved:

- ensure the right development in the right places
- reduce spatial inequalities
- improve health and wellbeing
- continue to protect the natural and heritage assets we cherish

We will consult on the Preferred Approach version of the Local Plan in 2022/23. Following this, we will prepare a final version of the document for comment and subsequent examination. The adoption of a Local Plan will provide clear priorities for action in the short, medium and long term to address the challenge of climate change, provision of homes, jobs and infrastructure, and the transition to a low carbon Southend-on-Sea.

We will raise the quality of development and secure higher environmental building standards, including the development of design codes co-produced with the community. We will require development to be zero and low carbon and more resilient to climate change, taking into account evidence on flood risk and coastal change, biodiversity, heritage and so on.

The Local Plan will focus development in accessible locations to support active travel and make the most effective use of brownfield land. We will improve access to green space, promoting new and improved green infrastructure in areas where this is lacking.

Delivery strategies and plans

The list below shows relevant delivery strategies and plans for this priority area.

- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 to 2028
- Empty Homes Strategy 2021 to 2026
- Allocations Policy 2021
- Selective Licensing Scheme
- Southend-on-Sea Local Plan

How the plan will be delivered

To deliver this ambitious corporate plan we need to build on our strengths and the lessons learned during the pandemic, reflect on our areas of development, and transform as a council. As a major employer and leader in the city, we must become an outstanding and inclusive organisation that all councillors, employees and residents can be proud of.

- **A clear set of priorities** – This plan sets out a clear and ambitious set of priorities, which provide a sense of purpose for every council employee and are collectively owned by the organisation's leadership at political and officer level. All departments in the council will deliver on or enable one or more of these priorities to be delivered.
- **Outcome-based approach** – We are committed to achieving changes for the better for the people and communities of Southend-on-Sea. We will make better use of insight gained from analysing data and information, effectively engage with our residents and communities and deliver the right services to achieve desired outcomes.
- **Measure and monitor our progress** – We will measure and monitor our progress in delivering our priorities, and flex our resources and approach accordingly. Our new Performance Management Framework will drive the what and the how of measuring success. Our performance monitoring is aligned with our financial reporting and risk management. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are aligned to each of our Corporate Priorities, reporting to our Cabinet and Corporate Management Team. All council employees will have performance and development conversations, connecting them to the delivery of our outcomes.
- **Challenging inequality** – We will challenge inequality, to make sure Southend-on-Sea is a city that works for everyone. Inequalities cannot continue to hold people back in our city and prevent them from reaching their full potential. We will act to remove barriers that people face.

- **Employee and member development –** Our councillors and employees are our greatest assets. Together our councillors and employees combine the essential skills, experience and knowledge to manage and lead our council. A core component of our People Vision is to build a collaborative learning culture that embeds personal growth, ensuring the right skill sets and behaviours to build mutual trust and respect are at the heart of the working relationship between councillors and officers. We will be clear to our present and future employees what our employment proposition is, how they will be supported to perform their roles well and progress their careers. We will build a more inclusive working environment, support underrepresented groups at senior levels and eliminate discrimination. The council's Constitution will be reviewed to enable better decision making by councillors and council employees.
- **Empowering our communities and residents –** We will continue to engage and empower our communities and residents through co-design and co-production, where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. We will further develop our online engagement platform ‘Your Say Southend’, develop

a consistent approach for working with communities and residents, and reach out to voices seldom heard. We will involve residents in the design and delivery of services and help increase the capacity for communities to come together to enhance their environment. Understanding lived experiences is crucial to co-producing local solutions. We will build trust and relationships with residents and communities, work jointly on challenges, provide support and training, and where possible, share power and resources.

- **Working in partnership –** We will continue to work alongside our neighbouring boroughs, local partnerships, central government and MPs. We will lead collaboratively alongside our communities and partners, and do so with innovation, ambition, openness and purpose, to build a bright future for everyone in our new city. We will work jointly with our partners in the Mid Southeast Essex Integrated Care System. This includes the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership. We will continue to explore the potential for joint working and additional powers that could bring in south Essex and wider work across pan Essex with the Association of South Essex Local Authorities.

Get involved

It is essential that the voice of communities and partners are reflected in our plans for our new city. We maintain a number of different, accessible channels of engagement, such as face to face meetings and workshops, telephone, email and our [website](#).

[Contact your Councillor](#) to find out how you can share your ideas or concerns. You can ask if they hold surgeries in their ward. Your councillor represents public interest as well as individuals living within your ward, including you. They have regular contact with the public through council meetings, telephone calls or surgeries. Surgeries provide an opportunity for any ward resident to go and talk their councillor face to face.

[Your Say Southend](#) will help you find and participate in discussions and consultations that are ongoing in Southend-on Sea. Have ‘your say’ and take the opportunity to feedback, share your ideas and influence decisions that matter to you.

If you are interested to get involved on a practical level check out Livewell Southend and the Community Directory run by the Southend Association of Voluntary Services. You can find hundreds of active groups and projects which might need help and resources to continue to make our city a better place for everyone.

If you are a young person and want to influence the work of the council, please contact Youthvoice@southend.gov.uk



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Translations of this document in alternative languages are also available upon request.



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