



STRONGER TOGETHER

Working together to create a
stronger city we can all be proud of

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Strategic Plan
Vision, priorities and objectives, 2020-2024



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Foreword

Be clear where you want to go, then decide how you will get there. For the last four years, Stronger Together has provided the roadmap for the City Council, building on some great opportunities and ideas to start to make Stoke-on-Trent a city fit for the future. Working more closely with partners has been a golden thread of that journey, and one we continue to build on in this next stage of our vision to make Stoke-on-Trent a city we can all be proud of. The changes we all want to see can only be achieved together.

Some of those changes have become more apparent in recent years - we need to be more ambitious for our young people and their futures, and I have been clear that transforming outcomes for all our children will be our number one priority. Underpinning this has to also be a focus on continuing to grow our local economy. Our success in recent years has been in bringing more jobs, businesses and houses to the city, and we need to build on that strong progress.

I am incredibly proud to come from Stoke-on-Trent and know that many of our residents, communities and businesses feel the same. We live in a brilliant, vibrant and diverse city that has so much to offer. The national spotlight has fallen on us more in recent years, and our confidence has grown as a result. We have some challenges, but we also have many more opportunities, and I know that we are Stronger Together in addressing them. This is our vision of how we do that.

Councillor Abi Brown, Leader - Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Introduction



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Working together to create a stronger city we can all be proud of

The Stronger Together Strategic Plan 2020-24 sets out the strategic vision and priorities for Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the wider city. The strategic plan has been shaped by the political ambition of the City Council's leadership, as well as the values and aims of the organisation. As such, it is as much a corporate plan for the council's directorates and teams as it is a strategic blueprint for improving Stoke-on-Trent as a city.

The Stronger Together vision and priorities will also align with strategic financial planning through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This crucial alignment will enable us to aim to strike the right balance between investing in delivering the fabric to support our city's future growth and prosperity while ensuring that we continue to provide the services citizens need today.

A delivery roadmap will be developed to highlight strategically significant milestones and achievements that will be accomplished between now and 2024. All delivery plans and strategies will align with the Stronger Together vision and the roadmap to ensure that service delivery right across the organisation is focused on the same priorities and outcomes.



Our vision for our city

This strategic plan delivers a clear vision for the next four years. For our city and its residents to achieve their full potential, we need to focus on the outcomes that we want to change and how we are going to achieve this crucial transformation. This includes continuing to look for better ways to deliver our services, and considering whether some of the things we do might be better done by others. As a City Council, we will continue to work with local, regional and national partners to get the very best for our city, and to make it a city we can all be proud of.

Our young people are the future of the city; we need to ensure they have the best possible start in life as well as access to every opportunity open to them as they grow. We will continue to invest in children, delivering our improvement plan for children's social care, raising educational attainment levels and ensuring our schools enable all of our young people to achieve their potential. We are also focused on creating and sustaining a successful economy, leading on regeneration, investing in diversification of the housing market and creating the conditions for businesses to grow and thrive. This investment will drive employment growth, push wages up and increase prosperity for our residents and communities.

To achieve our vision and priorities and overcome the challenges facing the city, the City Council is committed to building on the progress that has been achieved over the last four years in terms of financial stability, innovation and commercialisation. In that time, Stronger Together has helped to transform Stoke-on-Trent into one of the fastest-growing local economies which is outstripping most other areas in terms of job creation. The Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone is among the most successful nationally; the Smithfield development is delivering high-quality office space, housing and hotel accommodation in the heart of our city; we have transformed adult social care services; our housing services have been recognised as the best in the country and we have dramatically reduced the city's skills gap.

The City Council has also undergone significant changes since Stronger Together was introduced. Commercial approaches to service delivery which would once have been viewed as extraordinary are now part of day-to-day business as the organisation strives to deliver greater financial stability and sustainability. New ways of working have already transformed our housing services and the provision of some adult social care services, and we are determined to develop more innovative approaches to ensure that we can maximise the benefits of transformation. The City Council is embracing technological innovation to improve the way we communicate with our customers and we will use the insights we gain to help shape future changes and ensure that we deliver responsive, joined-up services which are sufficiently outcome-focused to achieve our strategic priorities.

Strategic priorities and objectives

Sitting underneath the council's vision are five strategic priorities. Aligned to each priority are a number of strategic objectives that we will endeavour to deliver over the next four years.



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Priorities

Support vulnerable people in our communities to live their lives well

Enable our residents to fulfil their potential

Help businesses thrive and make more progress

Strategic Objectives 2020/24

- Transform outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in the city
- Help to protect vulnerable adults from neglect and harm
- Work with partners to tackle the causes and impacts of homelessness and rough sleeping
- Protect families from the harmful impacts of drug and alcohol misuse
- Address financial hardship and improve access to affordable financial services

- Improve education and skill levels for residents of all ages
- Protect and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Improve the quality and supply of housing in the city
- Enable our residents to secure and progress in sustainable employment
- Transform digital infrastructure to improve access to online services

- Foster entrepreneurship and local businesses
- Deliver a high quality transport network with connectivity and sustainable transport
- Work with local and national partners to improve employment, productivity and skills
- Prioritise the regeneration of derelict and vacant sites at strategic locations across the city
- Celebrate and promote our great city as a destination for business, investment and culture

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Businesses to make our city prosperous



Work with our communities to make them healthier, safer and more sustainable



An innovative and commercial council, providing effective leadership to help transform outcomes

Improve and support growth high-quality work that boosts and enables travel and enables partners to boost pay and redevelopment and brownfield strategic locations in and promote our a destination heritage and

- Improve the environmental sustainability of our towns and communities
- Work with residents and partners to make our communities safer, cleaner and healthier
- Reduce the numbers of empty properties to enable our town centres to thrive
- Transform community involvement in tackling issues which hold our city back
- Invest in communities to help build resilience and grow social capital

- Deliver more joined-up services to maximise efficiency and achieve improved outcomes
- Ensure the continued financial stability of the City Council
- Work with partners to devise innovative and collaborative approaches to local challenges
- Deliver a wide range of commercial services and invest to enable the city to prosper
- Improve the use of data in decision-making and service improvement

One Council, One Vision, One Team

Partnership working is at the heart of our Stronger Together vision and success will be dependent upon everyone playing their part and doing what they can to help make the vision a reality. We are determined to build on the momentum of change that we have achieved so far, but we know that we cannot deliver our vision and priorities on our own. It is more important than ever that we build and strengthen relationships with all of the stakeholders who are connected with Stoke-on-Trent in order to focus efforts on the challenges and opportunities that we need to address and to improve the outcomes that shape our communities and people's ability to fulfil their potential.



Ownership and accountability

- We will be accountable for our own actions and take decisions in an open and transparent manner, empowering people to take ownership in their communities
- We would like everyone to play their part by taking responsibility for their community to the best of their ability



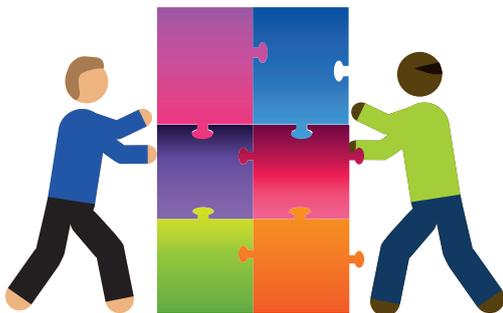
Ambition

- We will be ambitious for our towns and the city and make each contact with the council an opportunity to deliver the best possible outcome for our residents
- We would like everyone to share this ambition for the city



Respect

- We will put respect at the heart of how we work with colleagues and residents, valuing the contribution they make to the city, the towns within it and the communities that support it
- We would like everyone to contribute to their community and respect the contribution of others



Involvement

- We will work together with our residents, involving people in decisions, listen and take on new ideas
- We would like everyone to work with and support others, get involved and share their views to help us improve the way we do things

Working with others



- We will seek out opportunities to work with people and organisations to deliver the best outcomes for our residents and the city
- We would like those who have a contribution to make to the city to work with us to shape a positive future for our residents

Delivering Stronger Together

Strategic roadmap

A new element of the Stronger Together Strategic Plan is the development of a delivery roadmap outlining the most significant milestones and achievements that will be delivered each year until 2024. The roadmap will align with the Stronger Together priorities and objectives and be focused on improving outcomes.

Council finances

The City Council's budget – the Medium Term Financial Strategy – will be aligned with the vision and priorities of the Stronger Together Strategic Plan. This will provide a clear illustration of how the allocation of resources reflects the City Council's policy objectives and the key outcomes that we are committed to improving. This will ensure that decisions around the future allocation of resources support and enable the effective delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Annual Delivery Plans

The strategic plan sets out an over-arching vision for the changes and objectives which the City Council aims to achieve over the next four years. Annual delivery plans will provide a strategic link between the vision and priorities, the delivery roadmap, the financial strategy and the departmental business plans which shape day-to-day service delivery across the council's directorates and teams. This approach will help to translate the vision into actions and provide vital clarity about how all elements of the organisation are working as one council to transform outcomes for our residents.

Community Pledges

Building civic pride in our communities and city is an important theme of Stronger Together. We will work with residents and communities to enable and encourage them to help us celebrate Stoke-on-Trent by improving the local environment to make our city a more pleasant place to live and work. The City Council will be clearer about what it is able to do, and will explore approaches which can support and empower people and communities to do more to help themselves where possible.

Measuring success

Stronger Together is about where Stoke-on-Trent needs to get to as a city, and the route this transformative journey will take. This strategic plan describes the destination that we will arrive at by 2024 and will provide a realistic yet ambitious roadmap to take us there. Outcomes are at the centre of our vision and they will define our progress and provide the focus for our combined efforts over the next four years. The City Council will develop a revised suite of performance measures to complement the strategic plan. The strategic measures will provide vital clarity about where we are going as a council and a city. They will demonstrate to our residents, partners and other stakeholders that our city is overcoming its challenges, seizing new opportunities and on the way to becoming stronger than ever.



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