

Report of	Meeting	Date
Leader of the Conservative Group/Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group	Council	21 Nov 2017

CONSERVATIVE GROUP ALTERNATIVE CORPORATE STRATEGY 2017/18

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present the Conservative Group's proposed Corporate Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the strategy is noted in debating the development and approval of the Council Corporate Strategy for 2017/18 to 2019/20.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The report sets out the Conservative Group's proposed Corporate Strategy. The strategy responds to the changing demographic of Chorley and sets out key principles and a plan to create a borough where people can start well, live well and age well.
- The strategy is guided by six key themes: health and wellbeing; town centre and retail; education; business; tourism and leisure; and housing. The themes are supported by 18 projects identified for delivery in year 1.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	✓
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

INTRODUCTION

6. Over recent years, the demographic of Chorley has changed from being a traditional market town to being a commuter town and villages with a market. Our strategy is to ensure we build on how the town and villages have developed and create a borough in which people can start well, live well and age well.
 - We intend to ensure that we attract higher paid jobs to the town and ensure that through continuing education linked to business need we offer people a better future within the town. For those working outside the borough we will work to ensure access is improved.
 - We will attract new businesses to the town by identifying areas on which industrial units can be developed whilst protecting the greenbelt.
 - We will work to ensure a wider range of housing options are available and that they are future proofed as far as possible.
 - We will improve the offer from our successful markets and improve the look and feel of our town centre in order to attract more visitors for retail, cultural and tourist related visits.
7. Initial action towards delivering the strategy will include feasibility and assessment work to inform the sustainable development of the strategy in future years including: a land usage assessment; feasibility study to consider widening the attraction of the borough to future proof the town and our villages; and a needs analysis of educational requirements in Chorley.
8. The strategy is guided by six key themes and 18 projects to support delivery in year 1. The themes, projects and descriptions are set out below:

THEMES

Health and wellbeing	Making Chorley a place where people 'start well, live well and age well'
Town centre and retail	Making Chorley a better place to shop
Education	Making Chorley a better place to be educated
Business	Making Chorley a better place to do business
Tourism and leisure	Making Chorley a better place to enjoy and visit
Housing	Making Chorley a better place to live

Conservative Group Corporate Strategy 2017

THEMES	Health and wellbeing	Town centre and retail	Education	Business	Tourism and leisure	Housing
KEY PROJECTS	Create an additional Digital Inclusion Officer Post	Reinvigorate Chorley's retail offer	Undertake a needs analysis of educational requirements in Chorley	Undertake a borough-wide land usage assessment	Establish a Tourism Manager post	Develop an action plan and programme of work to establish Lifetime Homes Standards in Chorley
	Establish a community connectivity and inclusion fund	Establish and deliver independent retail grants		Appoint an Inward Investment Officer	Improve the borough-wide leisure offer for young people	Establish a strategic housing delivery board with local stakeholders, housing providers and developers
	Develop targeted wellbeing schemes	Deliver a programme of improvements to the Chorley Markets		Develop and deliver a Chorley apprenticeship scheme		Review options to accelerate alternative housing delivery across the borough
	Establish a community projects lead	Improve the look and feel of the town centre streetscene				Undertake initial feasibility work to improve borough wide connectivity

Project descriptions

Project	Description	Timescale	Budget
Health and wellbeing			
Create an additional Digital Inclusion Officer Post	An additional Digital Inclusion officer post will be appointed to widen the scope of the Councils digital inclusion agenda to include convenience and lifestyle technology such as contactless payment and smart media. The post will also support incorporating this technology into council services where possible. Focus will be given to work with Parish Council's to deliver in rural areas.	Year 1	£40k
Establish a community connectivity and inclusion fund	Establish a social inclusion grant fund to be administered by the Health and Wellbeing team in response to applications from organisations or local groups delivering targeted work to address social isolation across the borough.	Year 1	£20k
Develop targeted wellbeing schemes	<p>Develop schemes to improve the health and wellbeing of key target groups using existing community and council assets to build skills and strengthen personal resilience.</p> <p>Following an options appraisal to establish available assets, land and funding, the project will look to develop an initiative that builds on the concept of community gardens and 'Men in Sheds' by using practical skills to increase social interaction, informal learning and environmental contribution.</p>	Year 1 of 2 year project	£20k plus contributions
Establish a community projects lead	The community projects lead would work within the Health and Wellbeing team to improve project delivery. This role would coordinate neighbourhood and community priorities and project delivery across both the council and with local stakeholder groups such as parish council's and the third sector to ensure the best use of available resources and sources of funding.	Year 1	Existing resources

Town centre and retail			
Reinvigorate Chorley's retail offer	<p>This project will reinvigorate Chorley's retail offer with a more unique and diverse range of independent shops to provide an appealing alternative to the recognised high street chains available in the wider geographical area.</p> <p>Targeted business development and promotion activity will work towards attracting a wider variety of traders and independent retailers to the borough, increasing the quality of the current retail environment with more lifestyle outlets and specialist shops.</p> <p>This improved retail offer will see Chorley targeting a higher value market segment of residents who may otherwise travel out of the borough and new visitors looking for a different type of retail experience.</p>	Year 1 of 2 year project	£10k
Establish and deliver independent retail grants	<p>Establish and promote the Chorley 'Independent Retail Fund' to support activity to attract a wider range of unique shops into Chorley Town Centre as part of a more diverse and vibrant offer.</p> <p>This investment will provide a targeted grant scheme to incentivise new independent businesses to set up in Chorley or to grow existing independent businesses, and also encourage the creation of local independent/artisan trader networks.</p>	Year 1 of 2 year programme	£25k
Deliver a programme of improvements to the Chorley Markets	<p>Deliver improvements to the existing Chorley Markets to make the most of Chorley's strong market tradition and heritage as part of developing a more unique and vibrant retail and leisure experience.</p> <p>A programme of improvements will trial the introduction of new and alternative market features and formats including increasing the number of outdoor market days, summer evening markets, artisan markets and food court style layout. Further improvements would consider physical enhancements to the market setting including a semi-permanent purpose built outdoor space.</p>	Year 1 of 2 year project	£100k

	Improvements will maximise the market contribution to both the daytime and evening economy, encouraging people to stay longer and spend more in Chorley town centre.		
Improve the look and feel of the town centre streetscene	<p>This project will undertake an extensive redevelopment of the town centre streetscene to establish Chorley as a unique retail destination. The development will build on the town's heritage to re-profile the retail and leisure offer including significant physical changes to key shopping streets.</p> <p>A full masterplan will be developed and implemented including a programme of consultation with key forums and traders.</p>	Year 1 of 5 year programme	£1million+
Education			
Undertake a needs analysis of educational requirements in Chorley	<p>This project would be to commission/ undertake a piece of work to understand education need and projected demand (school places, sixth form provision and skills provision) within Chorley. This work would then be used as an evidence base to be presented back to Lancashire County Council to be used in their consideration and planning of school places across the borough. Taking into account the special needs of our villages and rural areas.</p> <p>The assessment would also consider alternative models of school place provision including free schools and sixth form provision by local business.</p>	Year 1	£25k
Business			
Undertake a borough wide land usage assessment	<p>Commission an assessment of land usage across the borough in order to properly define land and increase that available for commercial usage.</p> <p>This work will form part of the partial review of the core strategy linked to the economic land review and will identify land suitable for commercial usage, linking to the development of industrial/commercial centres across the borough.</p>	Year 1	£25k

<p>Appoint an Inward Investment Officer</p>	<p>Appoint an Inward Investment Officer with the expertise to lead the delivery of activity to increase investment in Chorley linked to regional and national economic growth schemes such as the Northern Powerhouse agenda and City Deal programme.</p> <p>The Inward Investment Officer will work collaboratively with regional and national stakeholders (including central government departments) to raise the profile of Chorley, develop networks and secure inward investment.</p> <p>Activity will be supplemented by a review and refresh of the business support grants function to attract key inward investment targets.</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>£100k plus grants</p>
<p>Develop and deliver a Chorley apprenticeship scheme</p>	<p>This initiative would challenge local businesses to pledge a target number of new apprenticeship places over the next two years.</p> <p>This project will establish a scheme to work alongside the Apprenticeship Levy Fund for SME's and provide grants to supplement employers' allowance of £15,000 per apprentice to encourage local take up of the scheme.</p> <p>The grants will incentivise local organisations with 'top up' funding to support apprenticeships within their business and ensure that any barriers to take up for organisations are removed.</p> <p>Increased take up of apprenticeships will support better opportunities for young people, a broader range of options on leaving school or college and help companies thrive in Chorley.</p>	<p>Year 1 of 2 year initiative</p>	<p>£100k</p>
<p>Tourism and Leisure</p>			
<p>Establish a Tourism Manager post</p>	<p>A specific tourism development post will be established to review the current approach to marketing and tourism to identify how we can better promote Chorley to new visitors. Activity will focus on highlighting Chorley's existing assets and cultural heritage to develop a bespoke and distinct tourist offer. This could include a heritage trail, local history exhibition and improved connectivity between local points of interest, for example, the town centre and Astley Hall.</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>£50k</p>

<p>Improve the borough wide leisure offer for young people</p>	<p>A two year project to undertake in-depth consultation and engagement with young people from across the borough to understand their leisure needs, priorities, preferences and accessibility, in light of reducing county wide provision. This intelligence would shape the design and delivery model for future services.</p> <p>Year 2 would start to implement a programme of solutions, learning from examples of best practise such as the popular youth provision in Mawdesley and Croston, to be led by the council's Health and Wellbeing team.</p>	<p>Year 1 of 2 year project</p>	<p>£40k</p>
<p>Housing</p>			
<p>Develop an action plan and programme of work to establish Lifetime Homes Standards in Chorley</p>	<p>Lifetime Homes Standards apply 16 key design principles to create adaptable, flexible housing stock to increase the variety of housing available and support people to live independently for longer.</p> <p>This project will form a task group with local developers and housing providers to define an action plan for applying Lifetime Homes Standards in Chorley over the next 5-10 years.</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>
<p>Establish a strategic housing delivery board with local stakeholders, housing providers and developers</p>	<p>This project will establish a strategic partnership with key local stakeholders, housing providers and developers to agree actions to deliver priorities for housing development in Chorley. This will enable the Council to shape and influence local policy and development through a partnership approach.</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>
<p>Review options to accelerate alternative housing delivery across the borough</p>	<p>Alongside work to review housing and planning policy, this project will look at ways to accelerate housing delivery and take more control of the local market.</p> <p>It will explore options for new models of housing development including the potential for the Council to build its own houses to Lifetime Homes Standard and use of alternative build methods, such as modular housing. The first phase of the project would undertake a feasibility assessment and options appraisal.</p> <p>The second phase would develop an action plan and implement activity to progress viable options</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>

Undertake initial feasibility work to improve borough wide connectivity	<p>This work will review connectivity of the borough both in terms of residents and also with a view to future economic growth aspirations.</p> <p>Action in year one will consider rail connectivity including the provision of sufficient parking at the borough's main railway stations to support those who commute to work. This will include resident consultation and engagement with key stakeholders including Network Rail and land owners.</p>	Year 1	£5-10k
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IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

9. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

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There are no background papers to this report.