

| Report of | Meeting | Date |
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| Leader of the Conservative Group/Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group | Council | 20 Nov 2018 |

CONSERVATIVE GROUP ALTERNATIVE CORPORATE STRATEGY 2018/19

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 2018/19 to 2020/21.

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 five key themes: health and wellbeing; retail, leisure and tourism; education; business; and housing. The themes are supported by 22 projects identified for delivery in year 1.

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| Confidential report Please bold as appropriate | Yes | No |
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

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| 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 Borough has changed significantly, moving away from a traditional market town and becoming a commuter town with surrounding villages and a popular market. Our strategy is to ensure we build on how the town and villages have developed and how these will adapt to future changes to create a borough in which people can start well, live well and age well.
 - We intend to ensure that through our investments and projects we attract higher paid jobs to the borough and ensure that through continuing education linked to business need we offer people a better future within the borough. 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 and commercial units can be developed whilst protecting our greenbelt.
 - We will work to ensure a wider range of housing options are available including developing new social housing and that they are future proofed as far as practically possible.
 - We will seek to generate sustainable income streams with low risk investment but high returns.
7. Initial action towards delivering our strategy will include feasibility and assessment work to inform the sustainable development of the strategy in future years including but not limited to; 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 throughout the entire Borough.
8. The strategy is guided by five key themes and 22 projects to support delivery in year one. The themes, projects and descriptions are set out below:

THEMES

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| Health and Wellbeing | Making Chorley Borough a place where people 'start well, live well and age well' |
| Retail, Leisure and Tourism | Making Chorley Borough a better place to visit, shop |
| Education | Making Chorley Borough a better place to educate and be educated |
| Business | Making Chorley Borough a better place to do business |
| Housing | Making Chorley Borough a better place to live |

| THEMES | Health and Wellbeing | Retail, Leisure and Tourism | Education | Business | Housing |
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| KEY PROJECTS | Create an additional Digital Inclusion Officer Post targetted at our Rural and Parish areas | Establish a Visitor & Tourism Manager post | Undertake a needs analysis of educational requirements in Chorley Borough | Undertake a borough-wide land usage assessment | 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 an independent retail grants scheme focusing on local and artisan retailers throughout the Borough | Partner with local business and education providers to develop a further education offer based in Chorley | Appoint an Inward Investment Business Growth Officer | Establish a strategic housing delivery board with local stakeholders, housing providers and developers |
| | Develop targetted wellbeing schemes for all genrations from child through to older adult | Deliver a programme of sustainable improvements to the Chorley Markets | | Develop and deliver a Chorley apprenticeship scheme, in partnership with established further education providers and employers | Review options to accelerate alternative housing delivery across the borough with a focus on the development of new build social housing |
| | Establish a Community Partnerships Unit with a Community Projects Leader | Improve the look and feel of the town centre streetscene | | | Undertake initial feasibility work to improve borough wide connectivity |
| | Establish a strategy and fund to revitilise and re-engage young people with outdoor recreation and activities | <p>Improve the borough-wide leisure offer for young people by creating an Outreach from our Youth Zone</p> <p>Carry out a feasibility study for developing a Borough wide accessible sports village</p> | | Undertake a survey to identify which type of buisness operate within the Borough and where they are | Develop a student accomodation offer in and around the town centre, in partnership with local universities |

Project descriptions

| Project | Description | Timescale |
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| Health and Wellbeing | | |
| <p>Create an additional Digital Inclusion Officer post targeted at our Rural and Parish areas</p> | <p>An additional Digital Inclusion Officer post will be created to focus on working in rural and parish areas. In addition the scope of the digital inclusion work will also be broadened to include convenience and lifestyle technology such as contactless payment and smart media and investigate opportunities for incorporating this technology into council services where possible.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |
| <p>Establish a community connectivity and inclusion fund</p> | <p>Establish a social inclusion grant fund to be administered by the Health and Wellbeing team in response to applications from sheltered housing providers, organisations or local groups delivering targeted work to address social isolation across the borough</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |
| <p>Develop targeted wellbeing schemes for all generations from children through to older adults</p> | <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 first 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> | <p>Year 1 of 2 year project</p> |
| <p>Establish a Community Partnerships Unit with a Community Projects Leader</p> | <p>The Community Projects Leader would head up a new Community Partnership Unit within the Health and Wellbeing team to improve project delivery and support community working. 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.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |

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| <p>Establish a strategy and fund to revitalise and re-engage young people with outdoor recreation and activities</p> | <p>This project will see a prioritisation of improvements to open space and outdoor recreational areas in our town, parishes and rural areas through the creation of a new fund specifically to support the wider outdoor activities over and above that of the traditional play area.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |
| <p>Retail, Leisure and Tourism</p> | | |
| <p>Establish a Visitor and Tourism Manager post</p> | <p>A specific tourism development post will be established to review the current approach to marketing and tourism and to identify how we can better promote Chorley Borough to new visitors. Activity will focus on highlighting the Boroughs existing assets and cultural heritage to develop a bespoke and distinct tourist offer with a focussed approach to actively encourage visitors to our rural and parish areas. This could include a heritage trail, local history exhibitions, designated walking, hiking and cycling routes and improved connectivity between local points of interest to boost both town and rural economies.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |
| <p>Establish and deliver an independent retail grants scheme focusing on local producers and artisan retailers throughout the Borough</p> | <p>Establish and promote the Chorley 'Independent Retail Fund' to support activity to attract a wider range of unique shops both into Chorley Town Centre as part of a more diverse and vibrant offer and also to rural and parish areas.</p> <p>This investment will provide a targeted grant scheme to incentivise new independent businesses to set up throughout the Borough or to grow existing independent businesses, and also encourage the creation of local independent/artisan trader networks.</p> | <p>Year 1 of 2 year programme</p> |
| <p>Deliver a programme of sustainable improvements to the Chorley Markets</p> | <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> <p>Improvements will maximise the market contribution to both the daytime and</p> | <p>Year 1 of 2 year project</p> |

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| | 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 generate a full, up to date Town Centre Masterplan, following open consultation with key stakeholders, local businesses, traders, residents and visitors.</p> <p>It would then look to undertake an extensive redevelopment of the town centre street scene, together with other investment projects will re-establish Chorley as a unique retail destination. The development will build on the town's heritage to re-profile the retail and leisure offers including significant physical changes to key shopping streets.</p> | Year 1 of 5 year programme |
| Improve the borough wide leisure offer for young people by creating an outreach from the Youth Zone | Working with the Youth Zone, young people across the borough and existing Council services, this project would create an outreach services for young people in rural areas of the borough. The aim being to provide events and activities for them in their local areas as well as through the Youth Zone facility in the town centre. | Year 1 of 2 year project |
| Carry out a feasibility study for developing a Borough wide accessible sports village | A lot has changed since previous reviews into sports villages were carried out. This project will review and refresh previous studies into developing a sports village in the Borough, accessible for all in the Borough. Consideration will be given to facilities such as a stadium, athletics track, sports hall, all weather training facilities, health/education facilities and FA and RFU standard pitches. This should include identification of potential sites, demand/needs assessment, engagement with local sports clubs, schools and other potential users and usage models and full financial appraisal. | Year 1 |
| Education | | |
| Undertake a needs analysis of educational requirements in Chorley Borough | To further investigate Chorley's local need following the 2018 report issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency which predicts that an extra 79,000 primary places will be needed across England in the next three years, and an additional 87,000 places needed in secondary schools. This project would be to commission / undertake a piece of work to understand education need and projected demand (school places, further education 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 | Year 1 |

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| | <p>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.</p> | |
| Partner with local business and education providers to develop a further education offer based in Chorley | <p>This project aims to establish further education provision in Chorley for our young people, so they do not have to travel outside of the borough for education after GCSE. In year 1 this will involve partnering with local business and education providers to develop a proposed operating model and business case, together with identifying potential sites.</p> | Year 1 |
| 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 |
| Appoint an Inward Investment Business Growth Officer and deliver an enhanced grants scheme | <p>Appoint an Inward Investment Business Growth Officer with the expertise to lead the delivery of activity to increase investment in Chorley Borough 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, and new businesses.</p> <p>Activity will be supplemented by a review and refresh of the business support grants function to attract key inward investment targets.</p> | Year 1 |
| Develop and deliver a Chorley Apprenticeship Scheme, in partnership with established further education providers and employers | <p>Following the government's announcement to extend the amount of the apprenticeship levy that employers can use in their supply chains from 10% to 25%, we would work with local SMEs in large supply chains to bring more of that funding and opportunity into Chorley.</p> <p>This initiative would challenge local businesses to pledge a target number of new apprenticeship places over the next two years.</p> | Year 1 of 2 year initiative |

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| | <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> | |
| Development of a new strategic commercial site | <p>The aim of this project is to develop a new commercial and industrial development within the borough and for the Council to actively encourage new business into the area that will complement the existing ones.</p> <p>In year one this project will be progressed through undertaking a survey to identify which type of businesses operate within the Borough and where they are located which will influence the location of the new site.</p> | Year 1 |
| Housing | | |
| Develop an action plan and programme of work to establish Lifetime Homes Standards in Chorley | <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> | Year 1 |
| Establish a strategic housing delivery board with local stakeholders, housing providers and developers | <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> | Year 1 |
| Review options to accelerate alternative housing delivery | <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> | Year 1 |

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| <p>across the borough with a focus on the development of new build social housing</p> | <p>It will explore options for new models of housing development including the potential for the Council to build its own social housing 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>Undertake initial feasibility work to improve borough wide connectivity</p> | <p>This work will review connectivity of the borough and its wider functional economic area 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, Transport for Greater Manchester, relevant train operating companies and land owners.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |
| <p>In partnership with local universities, develop a student accomodation offer in and around the town centre</p> | <p>Student accommodation is in high demand all over the country, and many universities are now looking beyond their immediate area for student housing provision. Many private companies have entered the market and provide student accommodation at a high standard and a high price. Chorley's excellent transport links to the main cities around the North West mean that the town centre could be a viable location for students attending universities anywhere between Lancaster and Manchester. This project would investigate potential town centre sites, undertake a financial feasibility assessment and work with a range of universities and high education providers to understand the level of needs and requirements. If successful this project could create new jobs, support the town centre retail and evening economy and vibrancy as well as being a guaranteed income stream for the Council.</p> | <p>Year 1</p> |

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

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

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

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

10. The proposals outlined in this paper will be brought into the Alternative Budget to be proposed to Full Council on 26 February 2019.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

11. No comment.

CLLR ALAN CULLENS
LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

CLLR MARTIN BOARDMAN
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

There are no background papers to this report.