

Chesterfield Borough Council Plan (2015-2019)

Summary

Our vision: Putting our communities first

Our priority: to make Chesterfield a thriving borough. To deliver this, we will focus on four objectives:

1. To make sure that local people benefit from growth in Chesterfield Borough
2. To continue delivering regeneration projects that will make Chesterfield Borough a better place
3. To develop our great town centre
4. To improve access to technology that meets the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors

Our priority: to improve the quality of life for local people. To deliver this, we will focus on four objectives:

5. To increase the supply and quality of housing in Chesterfield Borough to meet current and future needs
6. To increase the quality of public space for which the council has responsibility through targeted improvement programmes
7. To improve the health and well-being of people in Chesterfield Borough
8. To reduce inequality and support the more vulnerable members of our communities

Our priority: to provide value for money services. To deliver this, we will focus on a single objective:

9. To become financially self-sufficient by 2020, so we can continue to deliver the services our communities need.

Our values:

- Customer focused – delivering great customer service, meeting customer needs.
- Can do – striving to make a difference by adopting a positive attitude.
- One council, one team –proud of what we do, working together for the greater good.
- Honesty and respect – embracing diversity and treating everyone fairly.

1. Introduction

This plan describes the priorities for Chesterfield Borough Council over the next four years. We have chosen a four year period as it gives us time to properly plan ahead, without trying to speculate about what our communities will need and expect in the distant future. It does not cover in detail everything that we do as a council (this will be covered by our service plans on an annual basis). Instead it features the activities where we will be focusing our efforts and where we want to see a real shift over those four years.

In putting the plan together, we have been guided by our simple vision:

Putting our communities first

As a council, we are here to serve and support our communities. Those communities include our residents and tenants, our businesses, our visitors, our students and our voluntary groups. It is these communities that make Chesterfield Borough a great place to live, work and visit. And it is these communities that we seek to put first as a council in all that we do.

This vision shows through in the recent work we have done on behalf of our communities, from transforming the historic Market Hall to securing five prestigious Green Flag awards for our parks, from attracting nationally recognised productions to our cultural venues to investing £52 million to achieve the Decent Homes Standard for all council homes. Our commitment to this vision has led to rising levels of resident and tenant satisfaction with our services. It is evident in the many ways in which we regularly engage with our communities about those services.

The plan should be read alongside other key plans for the borough, in particular our Local Plan: Core Strategy (2011-2031) which sets out proposals for the development and use of land in Chesterfield Borough.

2. Context

Our achievements

There is a great deal to be proud of as we look back on the work delivered by the council and its partners in the last few years. We have taken important steps to secure **the future of Chesterfield Borough**, getting the green light from the Planning Inspectorate for our Local Plan: Core Strategy which sets out how land across the borough will be used over the next 20 years. This includes a number of major regeneration schemes, such as Chesterfield Waterside and Peak Resort. We have played an active role in partnership working with other councils in order to bring additional benefits to Chesterfield Borough, for example securing the devolution of powers and funding from Whitehall as a member of the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority and the local enterprise partnership for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

The council has continued to provide services that **improve the environment we live in**. Four of our parks (Queen's Park, Holmebrook Valley Park, Poolsbrook Country Park and the Crematorium Grounds) have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award. Standards of cleanliness have improved across the borough and many of our parks have benefitted from refurbishment and improved play facilities, including a £1.3m project at Eastwood Park. Our historic Market Hall received a £4m redevelopment and a conservation area has been established for Chatsworth Road.

By embracing growth and attracting investment to Chesterfield Borough, we have been **improving the economy and employment prospects** for our communities. £2.2m of Regional Growth Fund money has been awarded to local businesses and £100m of support provided to attract new businesses to the Markham Vale Enterprise Zone. The Destination Chesterfield partnership has put the town on the map and its 160 business champions promote Chesterfield Borough as a great place to do business.

The council has taken further steps to **provide great leisure and cultural facilities**. The new £11.25m Queen's Park Sports Centre provides high quality accessible facilities, as well as a base for Chesterfield College students. We have invested in the Pomegranate Theatre and the Winding Wheel, upgrading our cultural venues to bring larger and more varied shows to Chesterfield and attracting £495,000 in Arts Council England funding. We have seen our visitor numbers increase, with over three million a year now bringing £140 million into our economy each year.

As the landlord for almost 9,500 homes, we pride ourselves on **providing a responsive housing service**. We made a £32m investment in our housing stock to bring all our council homes up to the Decent Homes Standard. Our £3m Parkside Housing Scheme provides high quality homes for older people and new affordable housing has recently been completed at Chesterfield Waterside. The council has also invested in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme to help local people make their first step on the property ladder.

The council has delivered these achievements despite a reduction to the funding it receives from central government. We have therefore worked hard to **become more efficient**, investing in a programme of transformation that is improving how we use our offices and depots, how our staff deliver our services and how our customers are able to access our services.

Chesterfield Borough in 2016

Every year we publish a 'State of the Borough' report, which includes a wide range of facts and figures about the borough that we use to help shape the services we provide. The latest report shows that the population of the borough has increased by 5,000 in the ten years between 2001-2011, with 3,400 more households forming in the same period. The proportion of those households that are privately renting has doubled in this time, from 6.2% to 12.4%, reflecting a national shift away from owner occupation. Our population has become more diverse and there are over 900 households with no residents for whom English is their main language.

Our State of the Borough report shows that there remain some particular **challenges** for the council and the communities it serves. The levels of skills and qualifications of our residents remain below the county and national averages. Whilst unemployment has fallen, it remains above the national average and there remain particular issues for younger people and those who are long-term unemployed. There are significant variations in the health of those in the borough, with life expectancy in the most deprived areas 10 years lower for men and 7.6 years lower for women when compared with the least deprived areas. Almost a fifth of our year 6 children are classed as obese and alcohol related hospital admissions, smoking related deaths and adult obesity remain key concerns. The borough contains a number of areas that rank among the 10% most deprived in the country and about 3,900 children live in poverty.

Looking to the future

In planning for the next four years, the council is preparing for changes that will affect us and many other councils across the country. We know that the amount of funding we receive from central government will continue to reduce, falling to almost nothing by the end of the period covered by the plan. Therefore we will need to continue to find savings, as well as looking at other ways to bring in income to fund the services we provide. We will need to work even more closely with partners, building on sharing services and joining up with others to have a greater presence and take on more powers that currently sit in Whitehall.

We know that reforms underway to the welfare system will continue to have an impact on our communities and that we will need to continue to respond through our housing and support services. We know that the population will continue to change, with an increasing proportion of older people with different expectations and service needs. We know that as technology develops, many of our residents, visitors and businesses will expect to engage with our services in different ways and will look for improved access to technology in our towns, villages and business centres.

Our plan sets out how we will be responding to these challenges and we know that doing so will also require some changes to how we work and development in the skills of our staff. Thankfully we already have a highly skilled and committed workforce and a strong record of developing our teams to ensure they provide the quality services our communities expect and deserve.

3. Our priorities: to make Chesterfield a thriving borough

Chesterfield Borough is already successful in attracting businesses and visitors, bringing income and jobs that benefit our communities. The council has played a lead role in driving growth and regeneration, working closely with the business community and partners in other public sector organisations. We have a diverse and appealing offer for those living and working here and this continues to support a strong visitor economy. However, in an increasingly competitive country and in a global economy, it is vital that Chesterfield Borough continues to thrive. We also need to keep pace with the demands and expectations of those that live, work and visit our Borough and take a long-term view of what needs to be in place to sustain growth in the future.

To deliver this priority, we have set out four key objectives where the council will focus its efforts over the next few years:

1. To make sure that local people benefit from growth in Chesterfield Borough

As we continue to attract businesses and visitors to Chesterfield Borough, it is important that local people are able to benefit from the growth. We will support new and existing businesses, and work with our partners to make sure that local people have the right skills to take the job and training opportunities that are created. As well as supporting our existing businesses to grow, we want to continue attracting new investors and encouraging new businesses to start up.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|---|--|--|
| Agree local labour clauses in 100% of new eligible major developments and fill at least half of the jobs locally where those clauses are in place | <p>Local labour clauses have been agreed in 100% of eligible major developments during 2015/16.</p> <p>We developed a local employment and skills plan to maximise job opportunities at the new Peak Resort.</p> | <p>We will have achieved labour clauses in 100% of eligible major developments during 2016/17.</p> <p>We will continue to work with Peak Resort and other developing businesses to maximise employment opportunities for local people. The development will provide 1,300 jobs when it opens, and hundreds more during the construction phase and hundreds of ongoing opportunities.</p> |
| Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training by 75% | We launched with Chesterfield College and other partners, our plans for Chesterfield to be an Apprentice Town. | We will work with Sheffield City Region to facilitate business access to apprenticeships and workforce training via the Skills Bank programme to further |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | At baseline date (January 2015) there were 475 young unemployed people, a rate of 5.6% (national average 3.1%). The latest figures (October 15) put the number of young unemployed people in Chesterfield Borough at 230 or 2.7% (national 2.1%). This represents a decrease of 52%, significantly ahead of the decrease seen nationally (22%). | reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training. |
| increase year on year the number of businesses in Chesterfield Borough | <p>We brought dedicated business support advisers into Chesterfield Borough as part of the Sheffield City Region and D2N2 Growth Hubs to help businesses to survive and thrive.</p> <p>In 2015 (October) there were 3190 businesses in Chesterfield. This compares to 2910 businesses in 2014, a year on year increase of 280 or 9.6%. This was ahead of the increase seen nationally which was 8.4%.</p> | We will have Implemented a growth strategy and action plan to achieve planned sustainable growth within the borough and continue to increase business numbers. |

2. To continue delivering regeneration projects that will make Chesterfield Borough a better place

The council has been leading work across Chesterfield Borough to bring forward sites to create more jobs, housing and growth in the area. We will continue to drive this activity, maintaining momentum on sites where work is underway and building a pipeline of activity for the future.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve by during 2016/17 |
|--|--|---|
| Create 7,500 sq metres of commercial floorspace and 300 homes at Chesterfield Waterside. | <p>We put in place the canal infrastructure at Chesterfield Waterside to unlock further development.</p> <p>Pre-application discussions have been held with developers and scope agreed for 300 rented apartments, a hotel and 7,500</p> | We will have started work on the infrastructure to the first phase of Waterside Basin Square enabling the development of the Basin Square and Station Approach character areas. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>sqm commercial floorspace in the Basin Square character area.</p> <p>Pre-application discussions have also been held with a potential developer for the Station Approach character area.</p> | |
| <p>Start on site with the regeneration of the Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor and ensure that local benefits are maximised as plans develop for the proposed HS2 maintenance depot.</p> | <p>We developed a funded delivery plan for the regeneration of the Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor.</p> <p>During the year, pre-application meetings have been held with landowners, including detailed design and masterplan reviews.</p> <p>Agreement has been secured with Derbyshire County Council regarding the transport modelling and evidence required.</p> <p>Discussions have also taken place with Derbyshire County Council regarding school provision.</p> <p>The Homes and Community Agency have been approached for support to deliver key infrastructure and engage with HS2 to scope regeneration benefits for the project.</p> <p>Confirmation of the open space/sports requirements has been secured from CBC Leisure Services.</p> <p>A project board, has been established to oversee the progress.</p> | <p>We will be implementing the delivery plan for the regeneration of the Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor. This will enable the site to be regenerated over a 10 – 15 year period. The development will include up to 2000 houses and 30,000 sqm of new employment land, a new Local Centre accessible to existing residents in the surrounding area and improvements to the River and Canal environments.</p> |
| <p>Increase the occupancy at the Markham Vale Enterprise Zone.</p> | <p>There have been significant achievements in increasing occupancy during 2015/16 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of a 100,000 sq. ft. manufacturing and distribution building with offices has been completed | <p>Major works on opening up the northern part of Markham Vale are underway and will facilitate up to 1 million sq. ft. of development land. We will work with partners to attract new, relocating and expanding businesses.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>and is now operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 50,000 sq. ft. factory unit is also fully operational • A 40,000 sq. ft. unit has been completed and occupied • Construction of a 479,285 sq. ft. distribution centre which includes 13,500 sq.ft of offices and also a security gatehouse, has started. The new development will create 400 new jobs when fully operational. | |
|--|---|--|

3. To develop our great town centre

A vibrant town centre is important for the whole of the Chesterfield area, as it will drive and support our plans for growth. It brings economic benefits and rightly remains a source of pride for our residents. Recent years have shown how challenging it can be to maintain a busy and thriving town centre and it is important we continue to shift and adapt our offer, whilst preserving what is best from our proud history and tradition.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|--|---|---|
| Extend the town centre offer for our residents and visitors and increase satisfaction levels with the council's cultural venues. | <p>We adopted the revised masterplan for the town centre, setting the scene for future development.</p> <p>We have continued to develop the cultural programme at our venues including satellite broadcasts. The programming has been extremely successful and well received by repeat and new customers. In the 2015/16 over 95% of our customers were satisfied with the Pomegranate Theatre and Winding Wheel.</p> | <p>We will have developed an implementation plan for the town centre with a strong focus on town centre management.</p> <p>We will also refresh the town centre events programme to maximise footfall and ensure that Chesterfield's parking facilities meet customer expectations.</p> <p>We will be exploring alternative delivery models for cultural services to ensure quality and sustainability.</p> |
| Sustain town centre occupancy levels at 90% or higher and increase occupancy | We commissioned a feasibility study of Chesterfield's open market, which developed a series of options to make the market a | We will be working with the market traders and other stakeholders to agree a programme of improvement for |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>levels at the outdoor market, reaching 90% by the end of the period.</p> | <p>more attractive location for both traders and shoppers.</p> <p>Monthly Artisan markets have been established.</p> <p>Our land and property service has been working hard to promote town centre commercial properties. Town Centre occupancy rates are currently at 92%.</p> | <p>the outdoor market to be delivered during the course of this plan.</p> <p>We will continue to promote the town centre as an excellent place for business.</p> |
| <p>Increase the value of the visitor economy by at least 5%, bringing in an additional £7m per annum.</p> | <p>We have worked with the Peak District Destination Management Organisation to increase visitor numbers to Chesterfield.</p> <p>We enabled a varied programme of events and festivals throughout the year, including negotiation of a new commercial five year deal with Derbyshire County Cricket Club to secure the future of the annual Chesterfield Festival of Cricket.</p> | <p>We will work private and public sector partners to develop the infrastructure to facilitate the delivery of Peak Resort. Once completed the resort will bring thousands of extra visitors to our borough, improving Chesterfield's tourism offer, with the knock-on benefits that this gives to our local shops and facilities.</p> |
| <p>Begin work on a mixed employment, leisure and residential scheme in the northern part of the town centre, complementing an appropriate re-use of the former Co-op building.</p> | <p>Developers have submitted a planning application for a leisure based development on Elder Way. The development is likely to include a 89 bedroom hotel on the upper floor, six family restaurants, of between 2,929 sq ft and 3,796 sq ft in size, on the ground floor and a 16,000 sq ft health and fitness area in the basement.</p> | <p>We will continue to work with private and public sector partners to secure the redevelopment of the Co-Operative building in the town centre and are assisting with securing tenants.</p> |

4. To improve access to technology that meets the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors

Our expectations regarding technology have shifted massively over the last ten years. If we wish to continue attracting businesses to locate here and people to visit, it is important that our business parks and our town and district shopping centres reflect these shifting expectations. By increasing our investment in technology, we will also make sure that our residents have greater opportunities to access modern and responsive council services, and our staff are suitably equipped to provide this.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|---|--|---|
| Significantly enhance internet connectivity at key locations, including business centres and new housing schemes. | We delivered the latest digital connectivity to tenants at our innovation centres and provided wi-fi access in several council buildings. | We will continue to improve digital connectivity within our business and leisure and cultural venues to prepare for future needs and aspirations. |
| Create a digital hub in Chesterfield, including a wi-fi network across the town centre. | We developed a digital inclusion strategy, to increase skills, access and connectivity among our communities. | We will be developing the delivery mechanism for the priority actions from the Chesterfield Digital Strategy and associated action plans. This will facilitate town centre wifi and hubs across the Borough. |
| Increase user satisfaction with on-line council services year on year. | Satisfaction with the current council website fell from 51.6% in 2014 to 45.1% in 2015. The most frequent reason given for dissatisfaction was the fact the council website couldn't be viewed on mobile phones and tablets easily. | We are launching our new website which will be accessible on a variety of devices including mobile phones and tablets. The website will focus on improving user experience with significant improvements in navigation and service access. |
| Make all appropriate council services available on-line | During 2015/16 work has been carried out to create a new website which will enable the public to report more issues online, including providing a much better experience for people wanting to access services via smartphones and tablets. This is going live in spring 2016. | We will be switching to a new website that will provide our customers with improved access to our services. We will complete reviews of all our key transactional services to identify where it is possible, cost effective and customer focused to move services online. This will be ongoing during the remaining years of the council plan. |

4. Our priorities: to improve the quality of life for local people

Satisfaction with services provided by the council is rising and many of our residents enjoy a good quality of life. We continue to provide a clean, safe and green environment and increase the range of leisure services available. More housing is being built to meet the needs of our communities and as the landlord for over a fifth of the homes in Chesterfield Borough; we have recently ensured all of those houses are of a decent standard. However, we know that our communities still look to the council to bring further improvements and to provide for people and places that do not currently enjoy the standards they need and expect.

To deliver this priority, we have set out four key objectives where the council will focus its efforts over the next few years:

1. To increase the supply and quality of housing in Chesterfield Borough to meet current and future needs

We know that access to decent housing is vital for the quality of life and well-being of communities. We will continue to work to support our existing residents and plan for future growth by providing the right housing offer across Chesterfield Borough. This needs to be housing that meets the changing pattern of the lives and aspirations of our residents, housing that is affordable and housing that will attract people coming into the new jobs created in the area.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Increase overall housing supply, bringing 1520 new homes into Chesterfield Borough, of which up to 30% on appropriate sites will be affordable.</p> | <p>Planning applications for new housing have increased during 2015/16, although they have not yet returned to pre-recession levels.</p> <p>Affordable housing delivery continues to be problematic due to low sales values impacting on viability and uncertainty arising from proposed measures in the Housing and Planning Bill.</p> <p>The council has worked with Kier Asset Management on masterplans/planning briefs for the disposal of sites at Linacre and Ashgate Road for 300 plus new homes and engaged in pre-application discussions for sites amounting to over 2000 new dwellings.</p> | <p>We will publish a new Local Plan for growth in the Borough.</p> <p>We will launch the Community Infrastructure Levy to help meet the infrastructure needs and priorities necessary for the sustainable development of Chesterfield.</p> <p>Preparation of a new Local Plan which will include a revised housing target is advancing, with a draft plan expected in summer 2016.</p> <p>An Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document will be produced in 2016 to simplify the mechanisms for securing new affordable housing.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Begin directly building new housing by making use of surplus council land.</p> | <p>We procured consultancy advice on the setting up of a company to enable the Council to build houses for sale and rent. Discussions have also taken place with the Homes and Communities Agency on different models and approaches.</p> | <p>We will agree a strategic approach to allow the Council to build its own housing for sale and rent and developed a plan for site delivery.</p> |
| <p>Maintain the quality of homes across all tenures and maximise further investment in home energy improvements to deliver affordable warmth for our residents.</p> | <p>We have invested £32 million in our council housing stock, maintaining the Decent Homes Standard in all properties. This has included over £7 million on home energy improvements including, external wall, loft and cavity wall insulation and new heating systems.</p> <p>We completed and fully let the new supported housing scheme at Parkside.</p> <p>In the private sector we have delivered £200,000 of assistance to vulnerable homeowners to carry out essential repairs to their home by providing them with an interest free loan.</p> | <p>We will be investing a further £29million in our Council Housing Stock to ensure that it continues to meet the Decent Homes Standard and delivers affordable warmth for our tenants.</p> <p>We will have delivered a further £200,000 of assistance to vulnerable homeowners through the provision of an interest free loan</p> |
| <p>Improve the quality and management of privately owned properties through investigation, assistance and active regulation where necessary.</p> | <p>We have responded to the release of new legislation relating to the licensing of private landlords and private properties with a view to making changes to existing and implementing new policies and procedures in 2016/17. In addition we have carried out an initial assessment of the number of long term empty properties within the Borough and prioritised them for appropriate action.</p> | <p>We will introduce a new affordable warmth strategy reflecting and strengthening partnership working with local authority energy partnership, health and social care and private property owners and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>We will complete an option appraisal and make recommendations to members with regard to the possible implementation of selective licensing.</p> <p>We will introduce a new Empty Homes Strategy – reflecting new legislative opportunities and in view of financial incentives currently available from central</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <p>government.</p> <p>We will review our Private Sector Housing Strategy in light of recent changes in enforcement legislation and changes to benefits regulation and social care legislation.</p> |
|--|--|--|

2. To increase the quality of public space for which the council has responsibility through targeted improvement programmes

The council is able to make a significant difference to the quality of people's lives through the way it maintains and improves the estates, buildings and open spaces it owns and manages. Working with communities, it will continue to deliver a rolling programme of improvements that make places across the borough cleaner, safer and greener. We will do this by investing our own resources and attracting additional funding, as well as looking for alternative uses and/or owners for those assets and spaces that are no longer serving communities well.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|---|---|--|
| Deliver the estate regeneration programmes at Barrow Hill. | The detailed design work for the Barrow Hill environmental improvements has been completed and a planning application submitted. The works are due to start onsite in spring 2016. | We will have made extensive progress on delivering estate regeneration programme at Barrow Hill and explored options for investment in other areas. |
| Improve resident satisfaction with our parks and open spaces. | <p>We opened the new £350,000 sports pavilion at Eastwood Park.</p> <p>We refurbished childrens' play areas at Circular Road, Belmont Drive, Spital Lane, Edinburgh Road and Harehill Road.</p> <p>We developed a masterplan for King George V park and supported the King George V Bowls Club with a successful external funding bid to fund floodlighting, green side shelters and a roof for their new pavilion.</p> | <p>We will have developed and submitted a funding bid to the BIG Lottery for King George V Playing Fields.</p> <p>We will be seeking funding to implement the Stand Road Bowls Pavilion project and for a children's play area at Langer Lane.</p> <p>We will have adopted a masterplan for improving Staveley Memorial Gardens.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>We supported Stand Road Bowls Club with a funding bid to Sport England for a new pavilion.</p> <p>Spring bulbs were planted with the community across a range of sites including 14,000 daffodils on the Holme Hall estate.</p> | <p>The parks improvement programme will continue with a refurbished Thirlmere Road Play area and the development of plans for improvements in Hollingwood.</p> |
| <p>Increase tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live to 85% or above.</p> | <p>The vast majority of our tenants (82%) are extremely satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.</p> <p>Our extensive improvement housing programme has helped us to achieve extremely high satisfaction rates for our services as a landlord (88%).</p> | <p>We will continue with our extensive housing improvement programme, improve tenant engagement and progress the environmental improvement scheme at Barrow Hill.</p> |
| <p>Increase the number of Green Flag awards for our parks to 6</p> | <p>We currently have five parks and open spaces with Green flag awards – Queen’s Park, Eastwood Park, Holmebrook Valley Park, Poolsbrook Country Park and the Crematorium grounds.</p> | <p>We aim to retain the five Green Flags for Queen’s Park, Eastwood Park, Holmebrook Valley Park, Poolsbrook Country Park and the Crematorium.</p> <p>In the next 12 months we will complete a Management Plan as the first step to enable Stand Road Park to achieve Green Flag status by 2020.</p> |
| <p>Invest in improvements at a further 5 parks and children’s play areas in a rolling programme, funded by releasing assets that no longer serve communities well.</p> | <p>Improvements have been made to Circular Road play area. Work has been undertaken to prioritise other schemes.</p> | <p>We will continue to identify parks where improvements are required and where there is potential to release assets to fund improvements. We are also working with Friends Groups to develop plans and consider alternative funding sources.</p> |

3. To improve the health and well-being of people in Chesterfield Borough

The life expectancy of Chesterfield Borough residents varies significantly between areas, being 10 years lower for men and almost 8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas

compared to the least deprived. We will continue to work with our partners to improve all aspects of health, especially those such as obesity, alcohol abuse and self-harm, where our residents are currently less healthy than the national average. We know that a whole range of factors have an impact on people's health and the objectives we have set to bring additional jobs and better housing will lead to health improvements. As a council, we can also focus on increasing participation in leisure activities through the services we provide and working closely with partners who provide a wider range of services to tackle some of the underlying reasons for poor health.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Increase participation in sport and physical activity at facilities provided by the council and promote healthy lifestyles via the Active Derbyshire partnership.</p> | <p>We opened the new £11.25m Queen's Park Sports Centre and have increased membership rates to over ? across our two leisure centres.</p> <p>We provided a new outdoor gym at Langerfield.</p> <p>We supported a range of high profile sporting events including the Chesterfield Marathon as well as supporting neighbourhood level activities such as walking for health groups and targeted exercise groups.</p> | <p>We will be developing a Health and Well-being strategy and action plan that focuses on community level initiatives and improvements.</p> |
| <p>Increase the use of our parks and open spaces by delivering a varied programme of events and increasing participation in voluntary activities by 5% each year.</p> | <p>Our varied events programme has been extremely popular during 2015/16. The programme includes a variety of activities for children and families, volunteering opportunities, concerts, walking and jogging groups etc. Over 20,000 people attended events and activities at Queen's Park and over 9,000 at Eastwood Park.</p> | <p>We will have organised and promoted a wide range of events and activities at our parks with opportunities for the whole community.</p> <p>We will have developed plans for an off-road Mountain Bike centre at Pools Brook Country Park to increase park usage for this activity.</p> |
| <p>Work with our partners to reduce the gap in health outcomes between the most and least deprived parts of the</p> | <p>We have worked in partnership to establish a Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing partnership and developed a locality plan to improve health outcomes for our communities.</p> | <p>We will work with our partners to deliver the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Locality Plan and launch the Healthy Workplaces initiative at Chesterfield Borough Council.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| borough, as measured through the annual health profile. | In 2015/16 we became a member of the Healthy Communities network and will be working with authorities across the UK to tackle health inequalities. | We will be developing the evidence base and process for designating a Public Space Protection Order for Chesterfield Town Centre to reduce problem drinking and the use of psychoactive substances. |
| Build capacity in our communities to allow groups to take on the management of facilities currently run by the council. | During 2015/16 with partner agencies we have run a number of training courses to advise and assist groups to develop and strengthen their governance arrangements, to attract new members and volunteers and to attract secure funding. | We will be exploring with our communities the potential for community asset transfer for several Council assets including Hasland Village Hall and a number of community rooms. |
| Work with partners to develop and expand the support given to tenants and residents to enable them to live independently. | <p>A new structure for the Neighbourhoods Team was approved in July 2015 which increased the number of tenancy sustainment officers from 3 to 6. It expected that the new structure will be fully operational by April 2016.</p> <p>A new structure will be presented to Cabinet in February 2016 for the Careline and Support Service which if it is approved will increase the resources to address social isolation and raise awareness and the take-up of the services delivered for older people in the community.</p> | <p>A reduction in the number of tenancies breaking down.</p> <p>Improved tenant participation activities and events to improve service delivery and encourage further take up of services.</p> |

4. To reduce inequality and support the more vulnerable members of our communities

We will build on the support that we have already provided to those members of our communities most in need and work with our partners to make sure our collective resources are used effectively to support vulnerable people across Chesterfield Borough. We will particularly address social exclusion through improving access to financial support, making sure our residents know where to go for additional help and bringing agencies together to target help where it can have most impact.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Maintain our commitment to working in partnership with community and voluntary groups in order to increase awareness, satisfaction and take-up of programmes offering financial advice and support to individuals and families.</p> | <p>We have continued to support key community and voluntary sector organisations to provide financial inclusion services. We have service level agreements in place with key advice agencies including the Citizens Advice Bureau, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre and Derbyshire Law Centre. The £266,160 funding package is aimed at providing a range of community legal services, employment, sickness, debt and benefits advice.</p> <p>With a range of partners we have delivered four intensive support and advice projects in key areas – St. Helens, Grangewood, Holemehall and Middlecroft. Bespoke housing, financial, health, benefits, employment and legal advice and support has been offered within a community setting. Over 600 households have had access to this scheme during 2015/16.</p> | <p>We will be reviewing and re-prioritising our community and voluntary sector funding to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our diverse communities.</p> <p>To have reviewed our Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy and support to reduce inequality, enhance community cohesion and ensure that factors such as deprivation and health inequalities are fully integrated into decision making processes and policy development</p> <p>We will be extending our partnership financial inclusion project into four more key areas. This will increase access to financial inclusion, health and well-being and housing advice for a further 600 households.</p> |
| <p>Develop a more targeted approach to the funding used by the council and its partners so that the most vulnerable people in our communities receive effective, joined-up support.</p> | <p>We have worked with key partners within the community and voluntary sector to ensure that advice services are meeting the needs of our diverse communities. This includes providing 27.5 hours generalist advice services per week, 50 weeks per year with casework services including for those in greatest need. Supporting at least 3000 people with sickness, benefits and employment advice and assisted over 900 people with legal enquiries.</p> <p>We introduced an assessment process for an applicant's ability to manage and maintain a tenancy before allocating council housing and provided support to</p> | <p>We will be reviewing and re-prioritising our community and voluntary sector funding to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our diverse communities.</p> <p>We have made a commitment to pay all our staff a living wage by April 2016 and will be encouraging other employees to adopt a similar approach.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | those not yet able to sustain a tenancy | |
| Provide and expand our homelessness support and prevention services in partnership with Bolsover and North East Derbyshire councils. | <p>Work began on the joint Homelessness Strategy. Through the Derbyshire Wide Homelessness Group.</p> <p>We provided increased support for homeless people through additional housing advice workers and a dedicated 'No Second Night Out' worker</p> <p>We worked with Action Housing on the conversion of Parkhouse Lodge at Highfield Road to provide a Platform for Life scheme. This fits with the Ambition Housing Project hosted by North East Derbyshire District Housing but which covers Chesterfield, Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and Derbyshire Dales. Ambition Housing is funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government single homelessness funding round from last year.</p> | The joint North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy will be launched in April 2016. This will build on the partnership work already in place across the three authorities and provide a strong platform for accessing external funding for further prevention activities. |

3. Our priorities: to provide value for money services

The council has a strong record in delivering good value for money services. In recent years it has been able to find the savings necessary to balance its budget, whilst still providing a wide range of services with which our communities are increasingly satisfied. It has improved the efficiency of running services and continues to operate to high standards of governance and accountability. It looks to make effective use of the assets that it owns and to develop opportunities for bringing in income in order to fund the services our communities need. However, the financial challenges are growing and we see more and more councils looking to transform into very different types of organisation. Chesterfield Borough Council also needs to change and has been looking at new approaches in response to these financial challenges.

Our focus in delivering this priority will be:

- 1. To become financially self-sufficient by 2020, so we can continue to deliver the services our communities need.**

This means that we will need to fill the gap that is left as central government funding (currently around £4.4m per year) reduces to almost zero by the end of this plan period. It is only by prioritising 'balancing the books' that we will be able to continue to serve our communities and deliver the services they need and expect from us.

To do this, we will continue to look at how we provide services more efficiently and make savings. We will develop those areas where we could generate more income from our services and assets. And we will need to consider whether the council should continue to provide all of the services it does at present, or whether some might be better provided in partnership with others. Doing these things will mean changing the nature of the council and how it works. Continuing to operate as we do now will not be sufficient given the scale of the financial challenges that face us. It will mean that we need to build on the existing skills of our staff and take some considered risks.

We made significant progress towards our aims during 2015/16 and have highlighted what we aim to achieve during 2016/17.

| Aim | Progress during 2015/16 | What we aim to achieve during 2016/17 |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Ensure the council has a balanced budget each year, making up the reduction in central government grant through savings and increased income.</p> | <p>We reviewed and strengthened our Great Place: Great Service transformation programme. The business case has been completed providing re-assurance over payback periods and longer term savings (500K per annum by 2020) to contribute towards achieving a balanced budget.</p> <p>£450,000 of revenue savings have been generated during 2015/16 as a results of transformation activity outside the GPGS scope, this relates to service reviews, procurement reviews and general changes in the way we deliver our services. In addition there has been along with over £650,000 of Capital income from the sale of buildings which has been enabled by transformational activity.</p> <p>We undertook a range of challenge sessions with our services to identify further areas for efficiency, savings and maximising income.</p> <p>All of this activity enabled us to</p> | <p>We will complete the Town Hall restack which includes freeing up space within the town hall for income generation.</p> <p>We will have developed a new operating model for the council so that we are prepared to meet future challenges.</p> <p>Developing a project management office which will increase the effectiveness and co-ordination of project management and allow us to prioritise resources for maximum benefit.</p> <p>Achieve a balanced budget for 2016/17 and a revised four year plan for financial stability.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | balance the budget for 2015/16 and develop a four year plan. | |
| Develop a five year plan for the use our surplus land assets, investing in opportunities that will bring sustained revenue to the council to use for delivering services. | The Corporate Asset Management plan has been revised to ensure sustainability and maximum benefit for the Council and our communities. | We will be commenced delivery of a revised Asset Management plan, ensuring efficient and effective use of resources to improve income generation. |
| Take a more commercial approach where appropriate, including developing new services and selling existing services to new customers. | A Trading Board has been established and governance arrangements drafted to allow for adequate planning and scrutiny of all potential trading activity being developed during the life of this plan and beyond. | Increased commercial trading to secure a profit to reinvest in council services. |
| Improve the technology that supports our service delivery and increase the skills and capacity of our staff to work in a more commercial manner. | <p>Flexible working laptops issued to 110 staff during 2015/16 to enable agile working.</p> <p>The new Council Intranet has been launched to improve internal communication and collaborative working.</p> <p>We rolled out on-line bookings for our cultural and leisure facilities to maximise income generation opportunities.</p> <p>A new Housing system went live in 2015/2016 which has improved the way that housing repairs are managed and jobs are allocated between different teams. A mobile app allows staff to work in an agile way by receiving jobs on a tablet and updating data on the move.</p> | <p>Our agile working activity will continue with tablet/laptop devices being trailed in key frontline services. This will reduce processing time and travel so more time can be spent on service delivery.</p> <p>The council website will be improved to make it easier for residents and businesses to report issues, carry out transactions and to find relevant information they need about our services or the area.</p> <p>The crematorium will launch a new online booking system for funeral directors, which will improve service access and free up staff time for improved service delivery.</p> <p>Planning service improvements via the council's website will allow residents, developers and consultees to submit information online. The system integrates</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | | with the council's existing planning system and provides document management features that allow the whole life cycle of a planning application to be managed in a seamless way. An enterprise dashboard will also be included in the roll-out, which allows the council's planning officers to allocate work easily within the team, improving the way that case work is managed. The dashboard also provides a sophisticated reporting function so that useful management data can be extracted for analysis. |
| Increase the % of citizens who feel we provide value for money services. | Despite extreme financial challenges being faced by the Council. We continue to ensure our services meet the needs of our communities and offer value for money. The latest resident satisfaction information (Are You Being Served Survey 2015) indicates that residents believing the Council provides value for money has increased from 55% to 60% since the last survey in 2013. Satisfaction with the Council overall is extremely high at 77%. | <p>We will continue to review our services to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of our communities and offer good value for money.</p> <p>We are launching our new website which will be accessible on a variety of devices including mobile phones and tablets. The website will focus on improving user experience with significant improvements in navigation and service access.</p> |

How we will work

The council has four values that describe how we want to work to achieve our vision.

We are **customer focused**: delivering great customer service, meeting customer needs. We regularly carry out satisfaction surveys to find out what our communities and residents think of the services we provide. We engage with our residents, tenants, visitors and businesses through a wide range of groups, forums and on-line, seeking their views on our services and how we can improve them. We look to deal promptly and effectively with complaints and always welcome comments and compliments.

We take a **can do** approach: striving to make a difference by adopting a positive attitude. Our staff come up with and deliver solutions to problems and regularly go the extra mile to ensure our communities are well served. We take a 'public sector first' approach to service delivery, believing in the benefits to our communities that come from a public service ethos. We contribute actively to partnerships with other organisations within Chesterfield Borough and

beyond our boundaries. We manage our suppliers and contractors fairly but robustly to make sure we are getting the best from the public money we spend.

We act as **one council, one team**: proud of what we do, working together for the greater good. The council has recently restructured, moving away from rigid departments to encourage teams to work more closely together. We value regular and open engagement with all staff and carry out regular surveys to find out how we can improve as an employer. We invest in the development of our staff, regularly attracting additional funding for training. We promote a commercial outlook within our teams, to make sure we secure value for money and look for opportunities to generate additional income that we can then invest in service delivery.

We believe in **honesty and respect**: embracing diversity and treating everyone fairly. The council has a strong record of going well beyond its statutory equality duties and regularly works with partners to host and promote events throughout the borough that celebrate diversity. Our staff and elected members work well together and individuals are able to express their views openly within their teams and at wider meetings and events.

Our annual employee survey provides a valuable source of feedback on how well we are doing in light of these values. We are committed to taking action in response to the survey each year, working with our staff to improve satisfaction scores and increase employee engagement.

Get in touch

Whether you are a member of staff, a resident, work in a local business or for one of our partner organisations, we welcome your views about this plan. You may want to contribute to its delivery, find out more about what we do or suggest activities that you feel are missing.

If so, please contact us at:

Visit us in person

Customer Service Centre
85 New Square
Chesterfield S40 1SN

Opening hours

8.30am to 5pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
10am to 5pm on Wednesday
8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday
9am to midday on Saturdays for payments only

Call us

You can telephone us on 01246 345 345 or you can text 07960 910 264.

Website and Social Media

Website – www.chesterfield.gov.uk

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ChesterfieldBoroughCouncil>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/chesterfieldbc>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7EjAgwra2iKCwC0YKf7Niw>