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Shaping Worcestershire's Future

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Our plan for Worcestershire
2017 - 2022 (PROPOSED FINAL VERSION)

Foreword by the Leader of Worcestershire County Council: Simon Geraghty

Worcestershire is one of Britain's best kept secrets! Home to over half a million people, covering 672 square miles, with a diverse mix of vibrant urban areas and idyllic rural communities and one of England's historic Cathedral Cities at its heart. Stretching from the edge of Birmingham in the north, to Gloucestershire in the south, Worcestershire really is a hidden gem in the Midlands.

Our **Environment** is one of the county's key features. 85% of the county is rural providing easy access to the countryside with stunning scenery, streams and rivers that complement the landscape and an array of natural fauna and flora. Our country parks, open spaces and woodlands provide great walking and cycling opportunities, helping to sustain good **Health and Well Being**.

Yet it is also one of the fastest growing local economies in the country; the county is truly **Open for Business** with many renowned and successful companies, great education (with 9 out of every 10 schools rated good or outstanding) and improving transport links and digital connectivity (with over 90% superfast broadband coverage) to regional, national and global markets.

Record investment is being delivered into road, rail and digital infrastructure and economic "game changing" sites are on course to provide employment land where it is most needed. 16,000 apprenticeships have been delivered between 2012 - 2015 and the county has low unemployment and fewer young people not in education, employment or training.

Worcestershire provides a great quality of life for **Children and Families**. So why do we need to change?



The County Council supports some of the most vulnerable people in society, has responsibility for visible public services like maintaining roads and pavements, street lighting, household waste sites, libraries and country parks to name but a few. We currently oversee around £900m of public expenditure per year – which includes funding for schools and capital investment – and receive around 70% of your overall Council Tax bill. Around 60% of our net revenue budget is spent on social care services for vulnerable children and adults. People are living longer but with more complex

needs, and we have more children who need our care. We want to meet resident and business expectations around the quality of roads and pavements we provide as well as investing in priority projects. Therefore it's vital we have a forward looking plan for the place and the people we serve.

Our refreshed Corporate Plan "**Shaping Worcestershire's Future**", with our four key priorities, will help guide the work of the Council and our relationship with individuals, families, communities and partners over the next five years. We will work proactively with partners, both within the county and externally, to achieve the aims set out. We will increasingly work together, to act and speak as "One Worcestershire", as an outward facing and self-confident county that plays an active role in the Midlands and beyond.



We will seek to deliver excellent value for your money and be driven by those things that you say are most important to you

In everything we do we will seek to deliver excellent value for your money and be driven by those things that you say are most important to you. In order to achieve this we will focus on outcomes and seek those best placed to deliver. We won't seek to do everything ourselves – our role will be to define what needs to be done and work with the people that can make that happen.

Our role is changing to improving Worcestershire as a place and helping people find the solutions they require to the problems they face. We will always be there for the most vulnerable in society that need us most. This refreshed five year Corporate Plan sets out the vision, and the changing relationship of the Council with individuals, families and communities in order to achieve the outcomes that we all want to see.

I look forward to working with you to turn these aspirations into reality on the ground.

Simon Geraghty
Leader, Worcestershire County Council



We will always be there for the most vulnerable in society that need us most

This plan moves the Council towards becoming financially self-sufficient, making the link between a strong and successful economy producing the income, through Council Tax and Business Rates, to sustain the services and investments we all want to see. Growing our income base and making the most of our assets is equally as important as continuing to find efficiencies as we rely less on central government funding and free up resources to support the priorities.

It encourages individuals, families and communities to do more for themselves - where possible - making informed choices and planning for the future, leading to greater self-reliance rather than dependence. Our role as an “enabling authority” is to help and support this to flourish, share best practice and celebrate successes. This in turn allows the Council and our partners to focus our limited resources on those that need our help the most, sustain the services - like maintaining roads and pavements - that are most valued by the public and allows us to invest in projects that will grow the economy.

Championing...

Open for Business

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Working In Partnership with:



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership



Herefordshire
& Worcestershire
Chamber of Commerce

Priority: Open for Business

Vision and Objectives

Worcestershire has **one of the fastest growing local economies in the country**. Being “Open for Business” remains the key priority for the Council. This is vital if both individuals and businesses are to achieve their full potential and if Worcestershire is going to continue to prosper.

A successful and growing local economy will generate wealth for residents and businesses, and this growth will increase Council income, enabling us to invest more in those areas that our residents and businesses tell us are most important to them.

Promote a World Class Worcestershire – support and play our part in delivering the economic vision

We have worked closely as part of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) to develop a 10 year **Strategic Economic Plan** which sets out our ambitions through to 2025. We aim to boost the economic value (Gross Value Added – GVA) of the county by around a third (£2.9bn), **create 25,000 extra jobs and build 21,500 new homes by 2025**. We have spoken to more than 1,200 local businesses, which make up over 50% of the private sector workforce in Worcestershire, so we know what support and help is needed to achieve our ambition.

We will promote and support businesses in the county or those relocating to Worcestershire and strive towards becoming an entrepreneurial county that encourages businesses (both large and small) to innovate, push the boundaries and trial new concepts and ideas.

WORCESTERSHIRE'S ECONOMY PERFORMANCE:



1ST STRONGEST GROWTH IN HIGHER LEVEL WORKFORCE SKILLS

OF ALL LEP AREAS NATIONALLY BETWEEN 2010 - 2014



2ND HIGHEST GROWTH IN PRODUCTIVITY

OF ALL LEP AREAS NATIONALLY BETWEEN 2009 - 2014



3RD HIGHEST GROWTH IN PROSPERITY

OF ALL LEP AREAS NATIONALLY BETWEEN 2010 - 2014

We will seek to:

- Support the growth of existing businesses
- Provide direct support, particularly to start-ups, to help them survive and then grow
- Improve skill levels in the county and support the development of a skilled workforce
- Attract inward investment into the county
- Act in a business friendly way

Deliver a connected county - locally, nationally and globally

Our **continued investment in Worcestershire's transport and digital infrastructure** is essential to provide businesses with improved access to markets and to support economic growth.

Transport infrastructure investment will be targeted to unlock the potential of key employment and housing development sites across the county.

Reducing journey times across the county and beyond is a key ambition, with investment focusing on improving access to national and global markets and enhancing connectivity between key economic centres. Our priorities for investment include:

- **Worcestershire Parkway Rail Station**, to improve access and reduce journey times to Bristol, Birmingham and London and in due course provide links with HS2 at Birmingham
- Completing the dualling of the **Southern Link Road (A4440)** from the M5 across the River Severn to the Powick roundabout
- Increasing capacity and reducing congestion on the **A38 in Bromsgrove**

We will continue to invest in Worcestershire's digital infrastructure. We recognise the importance of mobile connectivity, superfast broadband and wireless connectivity in delivering economic growth and increasing productivity. We will explore opportunities for improving access to real-time information to deliver enhanced experiences, for example, using your mobile phone to access information to optimise bus, rail and car journeys.

As an excellent commissioning-based authority and one of the largest employers in the county, we will always encourage the use of the local supply chain and consider the impact of our decisions on the local economy.

Deliver “Game Changer” employment sites and locations

The Worcestershire “Game Changer Programme” is a flagship initiative. Working with key partners and the private sector we are developing schemes across the county that will deliver employment sites with a significant economic impact. Current game changer sites include:

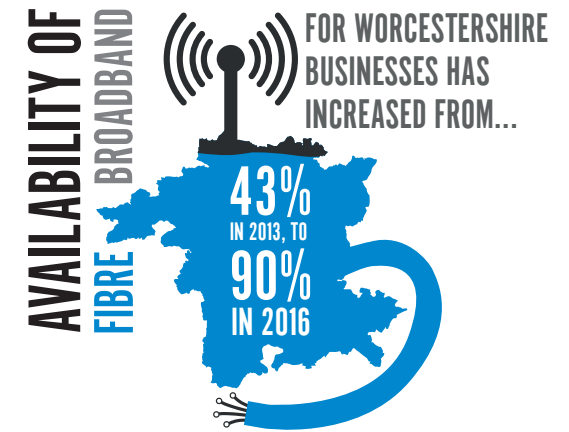
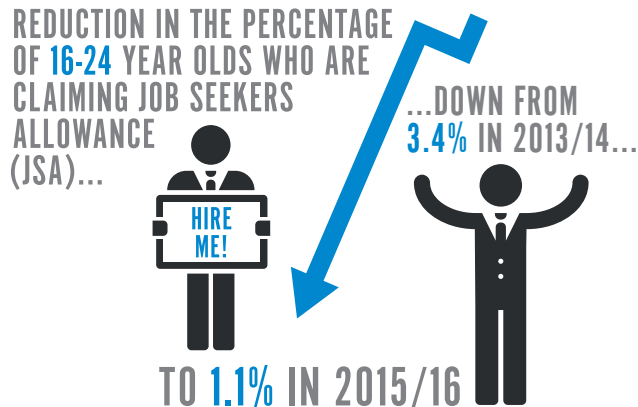
- Worcester Growth Corridor
- Malvern Hills Science Park
- South Kidderminster Enterprise Park
- Redditch Eastern Gateway

We will continue to support partners and the private sector with the identification and delivery of sites that provide major opportunities to attract market-led investment, and create employment opportunities in Worcestershire. For example, Blackmore Park in Malvern and the Food Enterprise Zone as part of the Evesham Vale Park development.

We will also seek to create and sustain **high quality city and town centre spaces** offering a wide range of opportunities for living, working and recreation. Our programme of town centre improvements in Kidderminster, Redditch, Droitwich, Worcester and Bromsgrove will be extended to include other locations, increasing the opportunities for further private sector investment and employment growth.

Create a World Class Workforce

Creating better paid jobs in Worcestershire is a key Council objective. We will achieve this by increasing the volume of higher-skilled employment opportunities and by improving the skill levels of the county's workforce. We want to see an increase in the average salary levels of Worcestershire-based jobs.



Our ambition is for all children and young people in Worcestershire to contribute to, and benefit from, increased prosperity in the county. We will champion work experience and apprenticeship schemes, supporting both young people and employers to increase the number of opportunities in our key economic sectors.

How will we judge progress?

- An increase in the number of jobs in our key economic sectors
- Increased Gross Value Added (GVA) of Worcestershire's economy
- Reduced journey times to key economic centres
- Increased productivity of Worcestershire's economy
- An increase in the average salary for Worcestershire-based jobs
- Improving coverage and take-up rates of superfast broadband

Supporting...

Children and Families



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Working In Partnership with:



Priority: Children and Families

Vision and Objectives

We are focused on improving outcomes for all children, young people and families in Worcestershire. Our ambition is to see more children and young people **achieving their full potential in education** and being fully prepared to live happy, healthy, independent and prosperous adult lives.

Keeping children and young people safe is a key priority for this Council and its partners. When the only safe option, for those vulnerable children and young people most at risk, is to come into our care, we will focus our efforts on providing a positive care experience in order for them to thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

Children and young people achieving their full potential in education

Our services are designed to give children and young people the best possible start in life.

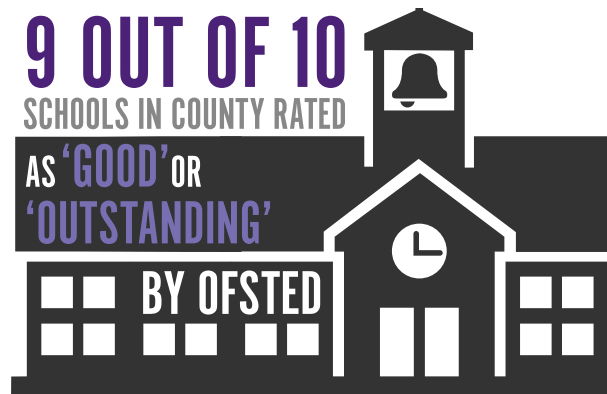
Whilst the landscape of education provision continues to evolve at a national level, (e.g. the formation of academies or free schools), we are focused on ensuring it delivers positive outcomes and attainment for our children and young people.



We will continue to play an essential role in managing and coordinating the school system across the county and ensuring education provision remains fit for purpose. We will:

- strive to ensure Worcestershire schools **provide high quality education** for all children and young people (Ofsted rated “good” or “outstanding”)
- **provide adequate capacity** by creating the right number of school places to respond to parental preference
- **support successful schools to expand** in an appropriate form, to meet housing growth
- support our children and young people in **achieving good attainment and realising their potential**
- continue to lobby central government to **ensure fairer funding** for our Worcestershire schools

We recognise that performance at Key Stage 4 in Worcestershire is good especially when compared with the regional and national average performance. However, we will not become complacent and will seek further improvement, but a key focus for us will be on improving performance at Key Stage 2.





We will also focus our efforts on **improving outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners** including care leavers and create a culture of lifelong learning by working closely with partners, communities and learners to sustain good access to learning resources and experiences.

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More young people moving successfully into employment

We will actively encourage young people to prepare for their adult life by focusing on helping them to reach their full potential in education and to progress into employment. We will promote the importance of gaining employment and the positive impact this has on their future health and well-being.

In addition to schools, we will seek to **connect education and training providers, colleges and the university with local businesses** so they work together to prepare all young people for the world of work. Children and young people will have access to the right information, advice and guidance about the career options available to them.

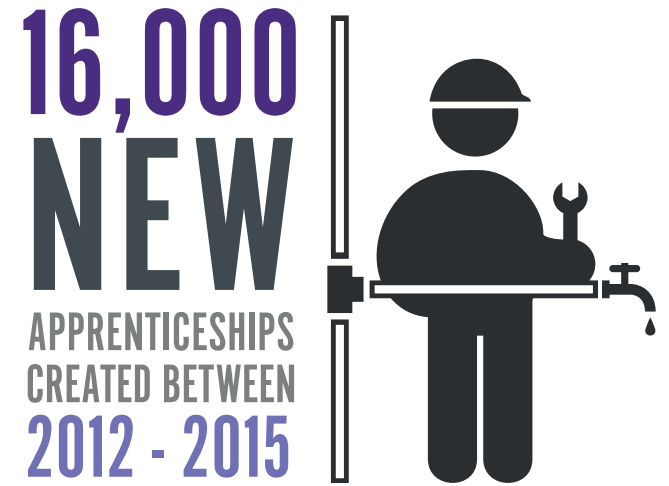
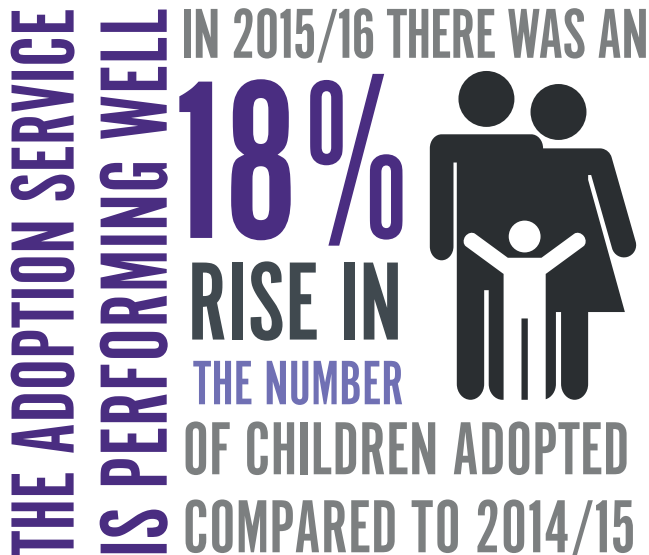
We are also committed to the development of a University Technical College (UTC) in Worcestershire,

recognising the important role this can play in supporting our Open for Business ambitions to create a better skilled workforce in key value-added economic sectors; and promoting the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) sector skills to improve young people's prospects of future employability.

Safeguarding at the heart of everything we do

Keeping children and young people safe is a key priority for this Council and for our partners.

We are fully committed to child protection and will do everything we can to keep children safe and stable; and wherever possible promote these principles within their own family to minimise the intervention needed. When the only safe option for those vulnerable children and young people most at risk is to come into care, we will focus our efforts on providing a **positive care experience** for them, and improving their life chances.



We will focus our efforts on ensuring they have the right placement and will progress their long term care plan as soon as possible in order for them to thrive and achieve their maximum potential. We will shape, develop and support our workforce to ensure that we meet this challenge.

How will we judge progress?

- Improve educational attainment
- School place planning – increase first choice success rate and ensure adequate capacity to meet growth
- Reduce the amount of time that children spend in our care
- Improving the outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners including care leavers
- The number of schools rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding

Protecting...

The Environment



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Working In Partnership with:



Priority: The Environment

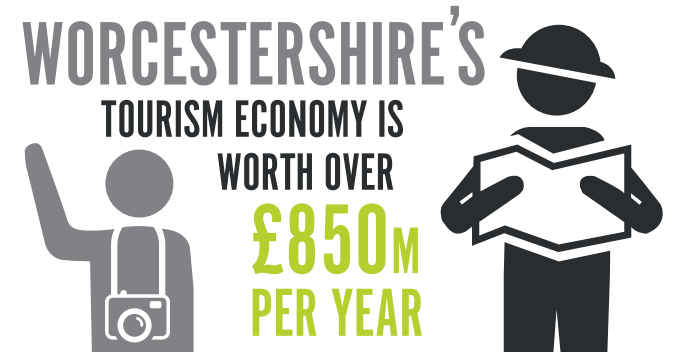
Vision and Objectives

Our environment is one of the county's key features, providing easy access to the countryside and a wealth of stunning scenery. Our country parks, open spaces and woodlands provide great walking and cycling opportunities which support our health and well-being vision.

Worcestershire is a diverse county with fantastic examples of a historic and natural environment, which contributes to the unique character of the county.

The quality of the environment, and the recreational, cultural and heritage offer - which includes the distinction of being Elgar's county - is crucial to the success of Worcestershire's tourism economy. It also provides an attractive place to invest in a new business or to grow an existing one.

A **sustainable environment is important** for people's wellbeing, the economy and for the natural environment.



Being a responsible custodian of the county's environment

We recognise Worcestershire's natural and built environment as a key asset and will continue to promote the county as a great place to live, work and visit.

We will seek to maximise our environmental assets to help to deliver sustainable economic growth whilst enhancing the quality of life in the county.

Our riverside locations provide attractive leisure spaces, whilst also enhancing active lifestyles. Over 5,600 hectares of public recreational space is available across the county, managed by the Council and partners, which includes country parks, green spaces and picnic sites. There are approximately 64km of canals that are available for boating – alongside which there are towpaths for walking, running and cycling. The Council also manages over 4,600km of public rights of way, made up of footpaths, bridleways and byways.

As one of the largest employers in the county, we will encourage and monitor **responsible environmental performance** by our suppliers and contractors.



We will continue to champion the use of appropriate renewable energies, with a focus on energy efficient schemes that make a positive contribution to the environment.

Working with partner agencies we will raise awareness and promote bio-diversity and deliver good land management for pollinators across the county, recognising the importance of the agricultural sector to our rural economy. We will also champion the use of green infrastructure in future development.

Commitment to improve our transport networks and deliver resilient infrastructure

We are committed to **improving our roads and pavements**, recognising that they are a high priority for our residents and businesses. We will strive for top quartile performance in the quality of our roads and pavements, understanding their importance in supporting our Open for Business and Health and Well-Being objectives. This will build on the good work done to date and further demonstrate our commitment to being a responsive Council.

We also want to **improve journey times** through greater use and access to technology, for example, focusing on smarter traffic signalling systems, tackling key congestion pinch-points across the county, and exploring opportunities for increasing access to real-time information to enable people to optimise their journey.



In addition to our investment in roads, we will seek opportunities to enhance travel choice including enhancing walking and cycling routes, particularly where this is not to the detriment of the motorist. Rail travel is a key part of our transport strategy. Improvements at Worcester Foregate and Malvern Link stations, the new Bromsgrove rail station, and our plans to deliver the Worcestershire Parkway station clearly demonstrate our **commitment to our railways**.

We recognise the importance of buses in public transport choice, with a focus on encouraging a market for more commercially operated services, with community transport solutions filling gaps where possible.

We know that flooding is a major issue for residents and businesses, particularly for those that live in the areas most affected. We will continue to **minimise the impact of flooding** on our transport network and reduce the frequency of closures related to flooding so that people are able to get out and about and continue with their daily lives. We will also seek to increase the number of homes and businesses protected by investment in effective flood prevention and mitigation measures.

Minimising waste

We are predicting an increase in the demand for waste disposal services over the next 5 years, in part

due to the significant number of new homes planned across the county.

Our ability to manage this demand efficiently and cost-effectively is crucial to sustaining the quality of our environment. Our focus is to try and minimise the amount of waste being generated despite the economic and housing growth across the county.

We will encourage residents to reduce, re-use, recycle and compost more. We will also promote the concept of waste being a resource from which as much value as possible should be recovered. Alongside this, we will continue to work with central government and the food industry to reduce food waste and packaging.

We are **committed to sending less waste to landfill** due to the detrimental impacts on the environment. A key part of our strategy to achieving this is through delivery of the county's Energy from Waste plant, in Hartlebury, which opens in 2017.

How will we judge progress?

- Minimising the amount of waste produced
- Improving the condition of our roads and pavements
- Reducing journey times and improving access to real-time journey information
- Maintaining access to quality recreational green-space across the county
- An increase in additional number of homes / businesses protected from flooding



Promoting...

Health and Well-being



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Working In Partnership with:



Priority: Health and Well-Being

Vision and Objectives

It is our priority, working with partners, to ensure Worcestershire residents are healthier, live longer, have a better quality of life and **remain independent** for as long as possible.

We will work together with partners and communities to enable Worcestershire residents to **make responsible choices** when planning their lives to achieve the best possible outcomes. We will enable individuals to become or remain independent, self-reliant and an integrated part of their local communities.

Promoting healthy and active lifestyles

Health and well-being is influenced by a range of factors over the course of people's lives. They are related to people's surroundings and communities as well as their own behaviours. Collectively, these factors have a much greater impact on health and well-being than health and social care services.

Adopting a healthy and active lifestyle is a personal responsibility which starts with individuals making responsible choices as part of their general life planning. As individuals (where we have the capacity to do so) we should be proactive about improving our



OVER 10,000
DEMENCIA FRIENDS TRAINED
ACROSS THE COUNTY TO
RAISE AWARENESS AND HELP

CREATE DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

own health rather than expecting others to decide and provide services on our behalf to fix the effects of unhealthy lifestyles.

Individuals and families have a responsibility for their own life planning, from ensuring the best possible start in life, through education and providing a safe and stable environment for children and young people to thrive, through to championing the benefits of prosperity and employment. This responsibility continues into planning for life after work and into retirement.

Being inactive is a major cause of ill health throughout life - including heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. The negative health impact of being inactive is both avoidable and in some cases reversible.

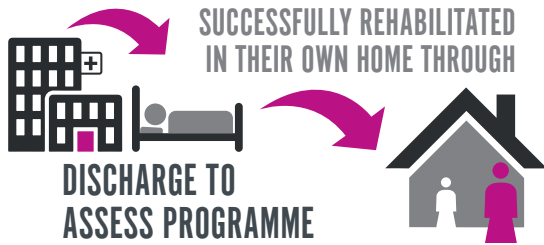
Wherever possible we will **enable individuals and families to take responsibility and improve their own health and well-being** by improving access to information, advice and guidance so that responsible choices are made, leading to improved outcomes and healthier lives.

Our natural environment, green spaces and areas of outstanding natural beauty - including riverside locations and canal networks with towpaths - offer numerous walking, cycling and recreational options across the county and will be promoted as providing accessible opportunities for better health.

SINCE 2014,
308 ADDITIONAL
UNITS OF EXTRA
CARE ACCOMMODATION

HAVE BEEN CREATED
ENABLING MORE PEOPLE
TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY
FOR LONGER

577 PEOPLE IN 2015/16



We will also continue to support and promote the “Worcestershire Works Well” initiative which supports businesses to improve the health and well-being of their employees. Improved health and well-being has been shown repeatedly to improve profitability and productivity of businesses.

Enabling vulnerable people to live as independently and safely as possible with the support of their families, friends and communities

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Our focus for Adult Social Care is to keep people with care and support needs and those that support them as independent as possible, and to enable them to have as much choice as possible about how they live their lives.

As a Council, this may mean we provide care services but it will also involve us **ensuring that there are good quality care providers locally**, recognising our market-shaping responsibilities for Worcestershire residents.

We are keen to see **people supported in their own communities**, and will seek to increase the number of people in supported living arrangements or extra care arrangements, which provide all the benefits of independent living in an owned or rented home but with flexible home care support available on site, if and when required.

We will invest in supported living accommodation units and the provision of extra care housing for older people recognising the improved outcomes they deliver to those people with care and support needs, enabling them to maintain their independence and avoid the use of institutional care provision, as much as possible.

We recognise that carers play a vital role in society and we will continue to support them by working closely with the Worcestershire Carers’ Association. We will ensure that good quality, accessible information and advice is readily available through our website “Your Life Your Choice”, which was visited by more than 25,000 visitors in 2015/16.

We will work with health service leaders at both a strategic and operational level to **support the NHS reform** in developing new care models which will enable more people to receive treatment and support closer to home, recognising that some of the challenges being faced are just too vast to be tackled by single organisations in isolation, and instead would be better and more effectively solved in partnership.

We recognise that people are better supported where NHS and social care staff work closely together and we will continue to develop health and care services on this basis, focusing on service delivery and



partnerships to avoid historical constraints around organisational boundaries.

Continue to work with partners to make sure all health and social care services are evidence based, effective, and good value for money

We are committed to working with partners in realising our ambition to improve the health and social care system in Worcestershire and to make it work more effectively and efficiently for residents.

We will **ensure social care and public health work closely with the health economy** and other local government services, as well as third sector organisations and local communities.

We will draw on the evidence of what works best when developing strategies and plans for action, prioritising evidence-based prevention. We will ensure that services and resources are measured for effectiveness to improve the quality and value for money of health and social care and to make sure that prevention is embedded in care planning.

How will we judge progress?

- Increase in healthy life expectancy
- Increase in the number of active residents (30 mins exercise per day)
- Increase in the number of people aged 65 or more living independently for longer
- Minimising the number of people who need to go into permanent residential / nursing placements



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What Does This Mean: For You, Your Family, Communities, and the Council?

We have an ambitious vision to improve the county as a place to live, work, visit and invest in. We aim to help people achieve their full potential and live healthy, happy, prosperous and independent lives for as long as possible.

Through working with our communities and by helping people who can, to do more for themselves and for their communities, we will **unlock a greater level of community capacity**.

We recognise the important roles played by Parish, Town and District Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in supporting local communities to come together and do things for themselves; taking control of improving the quality of life in the places where they live.

By working with our communities we will enable self-reliance, resilience and unlock a greater level of community capacity to sustain those things that we all wish to see continue, but which the public sector alone can't do.

However, it is important to stress that **we will always be there for the most vulnerable people in our society who need us most**.

For You, Your Family and Communities

In the same way the Council needs to embrace change, so do our individuals, families and communities.

The ability to grow community capacity and **enable individuals, families and communities to do more for themselves** is vital if we are to realise the aspirations for Worcestershire outlined in this plan.

There are already some great successes across the county which demonstrate the power of local communities working together to meet local needs. "Act Local in Worcestershire" has seen local communities shaping and remodelling local services. We have acted as the enabler and have empowered communities to effect change and to make things happen in local areas. Examples are many and include the ownership of local youth service provision, support for local initiatives through the Councillor Divisional Fund, developing locally-led community libraries that reflect local need and the Parish Lengthsman Scheme.

We aim to **inspire communities and individuals to get involved** by sharing examples of the great work already happening across Worcestershire, and by signposting to sources of help, information and advice. It is estimated that there are more than 120,000 hours of volunteering in Worcestershire every year. With a growing active older population and a willingness amongst many people of all ages to do something for their community, this presents further opportunities for us to **build on the success of the excellent voluntary and community work** already in place across the county.

Working In Partnership with:

| | |
|---|---|
|  Bromsgrove District Council www.bromsgrove.gov.uk |  Malvern Hills District Council www.malvern hills.gov.uk |
|  |  |
|  WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL good services, good value |  Wyre Forest District Council |
|  HEREFORD & WORCESTER HWFR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE |  |



Individuals and communities will be enabled to take more ownership and responsibility for their own needs, to be proactive and to access those services and resources readily available to them. They will be able to work with organisations and commissioners to co-produce services and resources as appropriate, supporting more vulnerable members of the community to maintain good health and develop strong social connections. By planning for the future, individuals and communities will only access limited, high cost services, when it is necessary for them to do so.

For the Council

As a Council we are constantly looking to improve the way we achieve better outcomes and **positively shape Worcestershire's future** whilst at the same time delivering better value for your money.

Pages 3
We will continue to shape our decisions around those areas that our residents and businesses tell us are most important to them.

We will seek to innovate further and **look for new and more efficient and effective ways of doing things**. We are keen to create an environment within the Council and with partners, where we can push boundaries and try out new concepts, ideas and different ways of working. This will require a willingness to accept some things won't always work perfectly first time but we will use the learning gained to adjust and refine our approach.

We need to effectively manage change, innovate, and become more flexible and responsive in our approach to change. We need to be more agile in our decision-making and accelerate implementation. A key focus of the Council, in fact part of its DNA moving forward, will be to proactively **develop successful strategies to better manage demand for services**. We recognise that success will hinge on taking a holistic approach to avoid displacing demand across partners.

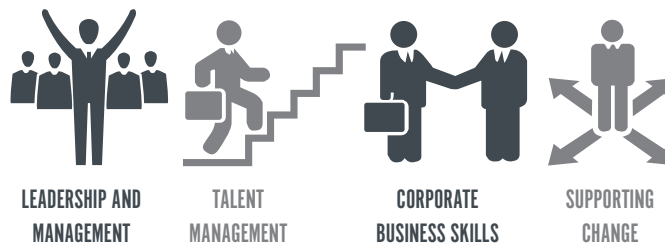
We will continue to forge partnerships within the private, public and voluntary sectors, with the aspiration of **cultivating a "One Worcestershire" approach**. When considered as a single workforce, "One Worcestershire" (i.e. the public sector – WCC directly employed and commissioned services, schools and academies, District Councils, Police, NHS, and Fire and Rescue services) employs over 27,000 people. This presents significant opportunities to join up and deliver together on our priorities for the benefit of the county.

Looking forward, we are seeking to lead public sector commissioning activities together with public sector partners to realise savings and maximise income generation opportunities. In doing so, we will always **encourage the use of the local economy**.

As we continue to change, commissioning skills will remain a key focus area. However, we will also develop our skills to effectively manage demand on our high cost services, including how we approach and measure the impact of prevention.

We have a great workforce, committed to achieving better outcomes for our residents and businesses. Our test in coming years will be the extent to which we can adapt and flex to an increasingly demanding and changing environment whilst still remaining **focused on the needs of our residents and businesses**.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



At the start of 2017, the Council directly employed over 2,500 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, excluding those staff who work in schools. Salaries account for about one third of all council revenue spend and so it is critical that not only do we have a highly skilled and agile workforce but we continue to reduce bureaucracy and management overheads.

By 2022, we still expect to be one of the biggest employers in the county. However, by then we would anticipate that many more roles will be shared with other organisations, making most use of the Worcestershire pound and moving further to a "One Worcestershire" approach to public services across the county. This will require major **investment in skills** as well as changes to the way roles are recruited and approaches to career planning. This work began during 2016 with our Investing in the Future workforce development programme.

We will also deliver against Central Government's "English Apprenticeships" initiative which seeks to up-skill the nation's workforce and increase national productivity. We will need to do our part and support local partners and businesses to deliver on the national aspiration to achieve 3 million new apprenticeship starts in 2020, with work underway to **deliver additional new apprenticeship opportunities** from 2017.

SINCE 2010 WE HAVE
SPOKEN TO
AND SURVEYED
MORE THAN **55,000** PEOPLE
ABOUT OUR
SERVICES



Technology will continue to play a major part in everyone's lives, and for the Council, will continue to form a major part of how we work and **deliver services as a Digital Council**. The rollout of 4G, superfast broadband and other emerging technologies will offer the Council great opportunities to develop services and intelligence about how residents use services. Intelligent use of data will form a major part of how the Council will improve the lives for the residents of Worcestershire.

By combining data from different sources we will create more opportunities for improving efficiency, effectiveness and the outcomes for our services in real time. This will play a major part in the Council's strategy for prevention across the social care and health system through **better understanding and forecasting of demand**.

We aim to continue to invest in the Councillors' Divisional Fund, enabling local community solutions to meet local needs. Already, this scheme has been used to good effect by councillors.

Local Councillors will act as leaders for their communities and catalysts for change, supporting communities and individuals to become more self-sufficient, resilient and empowered.

Councillors are local champions for their communities and by providing local knowledge and intelligence can influence and inform policy and decision-making.

We will support Councillors to fulfil their policy development, scrutiny and community leadership roles. Similarly our workforce will be geared up to work with and support Councillors too.

We have developed a strong track record for consulting and engaging with residents, businesses, partners and stakeholders, to identify our priorities.

We have spoken to and surveyed more than 55,000 people since 2010. Our Residents Viewpoint Panel consists of over 5,000 volunteers and in 2016 alone, Councillors and senior officers talked to more than 1,000 residents at public roadshows held across the county.

We engage with residents every day on social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. The Worcestershire County Council website is visited by around 130,000 users a month and we will drive other innovative ways to engage residents, businesses and service users.

We now have more opportunities than ever before to communicate the outcomes we deliver, to better explain the services that Worcestershire County Council provides and to build effective relationships with residents, businesses, partners and staff.

Our Finances

We will move further away from reliance on Central Government funding and become more **focused on how we generate our income locally**, seeking to control our own destiny.

We have developed a strong track record of robust financial management, delivering over £100m worth

of budget reductions since 2010/11, whilst at the same time meeting demographic pressures and investing in new projects and priorities.

There is a financial imperative for us to continue to plan over the medium term, particularly as demand for our services in Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Waste Management increase. We have also been consistent in the requirement to achieve additional income, deliver efficiencies or make savings with a further £70 - 80m required by 2022, based on current plans.

However, despite this challenge, we have committed approximately £430m investment of capital funding since 2015, to deliver a number of significant benefits for the residents and businesses of Worcestershire including:

- County-wide rollout programme for superfast broadband
- Energy from Waste Plant
- Game Changer economic development sites
- Flood Alleviation projects across the county
- Driving Home programme to improve local roads

To date, working with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, we have also been successful in bidding for and winning in excess of £57m in central government capital funding through the Local Growth Deal, from 2015/16, to support and deliver initiatives such as:

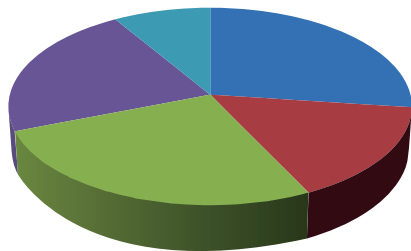
- Worcester Six Business Park enabling works (highways and services infrastructure)
- Hoobrook Link Road in Kidderminster
- Southern Link Road (A4440) dualling improvements
- Worcestershire Parkway Rail station

By 2022, the Council will be largely self-sufficient. We will move further away from reliance on Central Government funding and become more focused on how we generate our income locally, seeking to control our own destiny. Self-sufficiency will support our **focus on how we better use substantial assets of the Public Sector in Worcestershire** to shape the services and improve our county.

We will continue to deliver efficient and effective services from our better use of property across the Council and through our public and private sector partners. Our pioneering property estate joint venture, Place Partnership Ltd, will save money, integrate services and improve service user and customer experiences. This may also be pivotal in identifying the potential for future business growth.

Resources we currently oversee
 Worcestershire County Council -
 Total Gross & Capital Expenditure (2016/17)

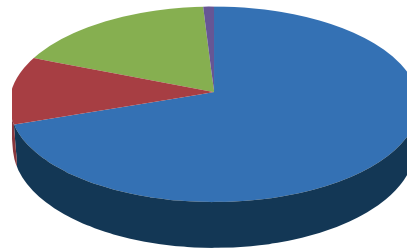
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- Adult Social Care & Health £248m
- Supporting vulnerable children, Education place planning, libraries and museums £144m
- Schools funding £242m
- Highways and planning, transport and household waste £203m
- Support services, debt financing and pensions £80m

Total: £917m

Where we get our income from
 Worcestershire County Council -
 Net Revenue Funding (2016/17)



- Council Tax £225m
- Government Revenue Support Grant £36m
- Business Rates £58m
- Collection Fund Surplus £3m

Total: £322m

These changes are amongst the most significant changes in recent times to how local services are funded. The changes provide both a set of opportunities as well as risks as central government aims to fully **localise the income from business rates**.

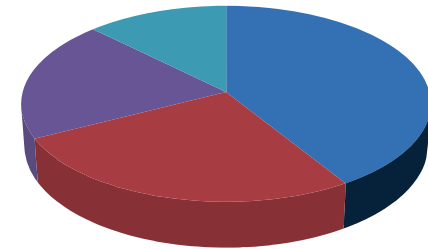
What this does not mean is that all business rates raised currently in Worcestershire will remain in Worcestershire, as some element of redistribution will still be required across the country. However, it does mean for the first time, we have an opportunity to directly link improvements and changes in services to locally generated income from residents (council tax) and businesses (business rates).



Whilst the financial context in which we operate continues to be challenging, we will still have significant spending power as a Local Authority and we remain absolutely committed to securing maximum value for your money.

By the end of this plan, **we will remain a significant player in the public sector, and one of the largest employers in the county**, overseeing around £800m of public expenditure - including schools funding and capital funding - per year.

What we spend your money on
 Worcestershire County Council -
 Net Revenue Expenditure (2016/17)



- Adult Social Care & Health £133m
- Supporting vulnerable children, Education place planning, libraries and museums £85m
- Highways and planning, transport and household waste £64m
- Support services, debt financing and pensions £40m

Total: £322m

How to: Get in Touch

You can contact Worcestershire County Council in the following ways:



Online by visiting our website:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk



Telephoning:
01905 763763



On the move by accessing our smartphone friendly website



Following us on twitter:
twitter.com/worcsc to get emergency alerts, updates and changes to services



Joining us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/YourWorcestershire



Copies of the plan can be downloaded from our website at:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/corporateplan



This document can be made available in other languages (including British Sign Language) and alternative formats (large print, audio tape, computer disk and Braille) on request from the Consumer Relations Unit on telephone number **01905 766368**.

To the best of our knowledge all information was correct at the time of publication: **November 2016**.

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk



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county council