our area
our council
our services

Falkirk Council Corporate Plan 2017-2022
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The purpose of this Corporate Plan is to set out what the Council and our services will seek to achieve for our area and communities over the coming five years.

As a five year plan, it is strategic in nature, highlighting core priorities and outcomes and the significant change and transformation the Council expects to achieve in that timescale. How that change will be achieved will be contained within the service plans that underpin this plan.

The Corporate Plan sets out our priorities, the joined up way we will deliver on these and the way we will manage the delivery of services so as to meet the needs and expectations of our communities within the shrinking resources we have at our disposal. We will make sure that we plan the services we deliver to reflect needs, resources and aspirations.

The Corporate Plan balances the things the Council must address and deliver e.g. legislatively and organisationally, with the aspirations and commitments for our citizens and communities.

This plan is an articulation of a clear set of strategic priorities for the whole Council as one body.
The priorities identified and set out in this plan cover a variety of areas:
- Addressing the issues we know are facing our community – in our community leadership and place shaping role;
- Doing the things we need to do to transform the Council – in our response to best value i.e. becoming customer focused, performance orientated, efficient and effective;
- Delivering or ensuring the delivery of the services which need to be delivered – those which are expected by our communities, whether these are statutory or otherwise.

The plan recognises the context within which we are delivering services and the key strategies that underpin its delivery, e.g. medium term financial, workforce and technology strategies. This new plan also gives us the opportunity to embed new ways of working that will improve services and communities, e.g. locality planning, co-production etc.

“The Corporate Plan sets out our priorities, the joined up way we will deliver on these and the way we will manage the delivery of service.”

The Corporate Plan
What the Council is going to be and deliver over five years:

Our Area
Priorities and Outcomes
- SOLD
- Political Priorities
- The area we want to be

Our Services
Operational Services
- The services we continue to deliver within budget that are valued and co-produced

Our Council
Council of the Future
- Transformation of how we deliver our services and how we engage with citizens and communities
Our Area

The Area
We Need To Be
The vision for our area has given the Council and our partners a real focus to change the area for the better over the last 15 years. Over that time the area has grown significantly, with more people living in the area, more people visiting the area and more people in the area in work.

The Council is ambitious for our area and aspires to improve the lives of all its citizens. We know that our area has incredible potential - as do our communities and citizens. We will continue our focus on growth while making sure everyone has the opportunity to benefit from this.

We will support the most vulnerable in our area and make sure that we provide support and assistance where it is needed most. Our ambition is for everyone, but as a Council we have a particular responsibility for those who are disadvantaged or excluded.

The plan guides what we will do as a Council for the next five years. This is a period of significant change with further public sector reform, different expectations of how services should be delivered alongside further significant reductions in budgets. As such, we must balance aspiration and ambition with our ability to achieve.

**The Council will be focused on improving the lives of our citizens and communities.**

**Our commitment is to:**

- Be focused on our citizens and communities and understand their needs and expectations.
- Work with partners to provide excellent services that meet people’s needs.
- Be ambitious for our area and in particular for the children in our area.
- Ensure all our Services work together to deliver on our priorities and recognise that we are one Council with clear priorities and ambitions.
- Work with partners including the 3rd sector, private sector and other key stakeholders to focus on the needs and expectations of our citizens.
- Be innovative, responsive and trusted.
- Seek to actively engage people in our area so that they can influence what, how and to whom we deliver our services and achieve our priorities.
- Modernise and be flexible in all that we do.
- Ensure our resources are targeted and used to meet our priorities.

‘‘ the Council will be focused on improving the lives of our citizens and communities ‘’
Our Priorities

The Council’s priorities are:

People
- Raising aspiration and ambition
- Reducing the impact of poverty on children and their families

Place
- Growing our economy
- Improving the neighbourhoods we live in
- Promoting vibrant town centres

Partnership
- Working with communities to deliver better services
- Empowering and enabling people to be self-reliant
- Promoting stronger, more self-reliant communities.

We will achieve these priorities by focusing on the following.

People

We will be ambitious and aspirational for all of our people and communities. We will do this by:
- Focussing on children and young people
  We will reduce the impact of poverty on children and young people. We will do this by:
  - Reducing the cost of the school day
  - Tackling food poverty and
  - Tackling the stigma of poverty

We will reduce the impact of poverty on families. We will do this by:
- Increasing household income
- Prioritising disadvantaged communities when it comes to designing and delivering services
- Improving access to services for the most vulnerable within our area
- Defining basic standards of living
Place

We will grow our economy.

We will do this by:
- Increasing inward investment
- Increasing the number of well paid jobs in our area

We will improve the neighbourhoods and estates our citizens live in.

We will do this by:
- Investing and improving our housing and estates
- Increasing affordable housing provision across our area
- Enhancing customer focused service provision

We will promote vibrant town centres. We will do this by:
- Thinking differently about what our town centres can be
- Promoting town centres as places to live, socialise and participate.
- Expanding our approach to safer streets

Partnership

We will work with communities to help them thrive by delivering services differently.

We will do this by:
- Developing a common approach to co-production that redefines then redesigns the services we deliver
- Delivering locality planning supported by neighbourhood / village / town community action plans, developed and delivered with local communities
- Giving a voice to our diverse communities
- Celebrating the diversity of those who live, work and visit the area

We will empower and enable people to be self reliant. We will do this by:
- Supporting opportunities for groups and individuals to be empowered
- Building and developing skills and experiences

We will promote stronger, more self-reliant communities. We will do this by:
- Supporting stronger, more self-reliant people and communities
- Providing opportunities to meet self identified needs
- Working with the 3rd sector.
Outcomes

Our services will work towards improving the outcomes for our citizens and communities. Each of these outcomes accords with our commitment to our strategic outcomes and local improvement plan.

The outcomes are the things we will want to achieve and continue to deliver on along with partners. Outcomes recognise that there are things the Council will seek to do as a core part of business but other things that our partners and indeed communities will play more of a part of in the future.

• Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live
• We will grow our economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment
• Our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults
• Our population will be healthier
• People will live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities
• Our area will be a safer place to live.

Our contribution to these outcomes will be taken forward through our corporate and partnership strategies and service plans including:

• ‘Inspiring Active Lives’
• Integration Joint Board – Strategic Delivery Plan
• Integrated Children’s Service Plan
• Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report

Our contribution to these will be monitored through regular reporting to the Council or our Community Planning Partnership.

Each outcome has a partnership delivery plan which will be reviewed by the Community Planning Partnership. Services’ contributions to these outcomes will be set out in service plans.

Over the life of this plan we will look to identify communities that are not achieving what we would expect. We will work with these communities to improve those outcomes through a process of locality planning and community action plans.
Our Council

The Council We Want to Be
Council of the Future is a new, radical change programme being launched across the Council. The landscape for public service delivery is changing fast. The Council needs to adapt to this and, with our partners and communities, we need to build and sustain new critical skills for running modern public services.

Council of the Future will deliver a programme of change over the next five years and a range of projects covering all aspects of the Council’s work is being developed to support this.

Council of the Future is Falkirk Council’s response to the challenges facing local government. It is a radical programme of change which will transform the organisation over the next five years.

The Council needs to modernise, change the way we work and change the way we work with communities.

We aspire to be innovative, responsive, trusted and ambitious. We will achieve this by engaging with our communities and employees, listening to what they say and acting on their feedback, using data to understand our customers and using technology to modernise our services.

**One Council**

Working together as one Council with a clear purpose and vision.

This will include reviewing our strategic planning, our culture, our business support and ensuring our employees have the skills they need to deliver what our citizens and communities need and value.

**Enabled and Empowered Communities**

Supporting communities, listening to their views and improving their quality of life.

We will look over five years to change the way we work with communities and the services we deliver to make sure that they meet needs and achieve the outcomes we want within cost we can afford.

**Digital and Modern**

Using technology to modernise the way we work.

We will use technology to fundamentally change what and how we deliver our services and change with communities. We will support those who need support to do this so that we don’t further exclude those who can’t access our services at the moment.

**Data**

Using data to plan and manage our services.

The information we have must be used to support the delivery of our services and to the benefit of our citizens. This means being clear about what information we hold and using that appropriately and safely.
Our Services

The Services We Need To Be

In five years time the Council and the services we deliver will be very different. We anticipate having to save approximately £80m over that period, nearly 1/4 of our available spend. To achieve this scale of change, we must radically reform/reconfigure all that we do. This recognises that in some instances we will stop delivering some services.

We will put in place a challenging programme of review and reform that will encompass all our functions and spend over the next five years. This programme will seek to radically change what we do so that we can achieve our priorities, while at the same time making sure we are delivering effective, efficient services that our citizens and customers value at a cost the Council can afford.

The principles we will apply to reviewing each function will include:

- What are we delivering and why?
- Why do we deliver these in the way we do?
- What is the cost of delivery, i.e. £, assets, people etc.?
- How can these be delivered with a ¼ less resource?
- How do those costs compare with other providers?
- Who are we delivering those services to and do they value them?
- What outcomes are those services achieving and are they good enough?
- What is our plan for improving these?

We will also:

- Eliminate duplication
- Promote self-service as the first choice for delivery
- Know what our customers value
- Understand the impact of what we do and what we potentially won’t do
- Work with citizens, communities and the third sector to promote further engagement in local delivery.

We will apply the principles of best value to all activities and every service the Council delivers.
“efficient services that our citizens and customers value”
Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council continues to face significant budgetary challenges, with the five years of this plan no exception. The Council framework for planning and managing its resources covers the five financial years 2018/19 to 2022/23. A wide range of materials, notably relating to demographics and economies, were drawn on to produce annual financial projections five years forward. Scenario planning was also used so that for each of these years there is a base, or most likely outcome, together with outsider positions reflecting the most pessimistic and optimistic projections. The most likely budget gaps are presented in the bar chart below:

It is important to appreciate that some variables used in projecting the above budget gaps are much more significant than others. This is particularly the case for revenue grant, pay awards and demographics. Moreover, these figures can only be best estimates, reflecting, for example, that revenue grant representing 80% of the Council’s net financial resources is currently only announced in December for the immediate following financial year.

The budget gaps presented above represent only one part of the medium term financial strategy. We also consider how these gaps between projected expenditure and resources will be bridged.

The revenue budget will be guided by a number of options including reducing, redesigning and removing some services.
Workforce Strategy

As a Council, we are ambitious for our area. As an employer, we are equally ambitious for our workforce. The Council will look, feel and be a different organisation over the next few years. This will be through the actions we take to respond to our budget strategy, as well as changes we make to deliver on our Council of the Future change programme. We have a wealth of experience and skills across our workforce to help deliver our vision for change. As an employer, we will be innovative, responsive and trusted. We will achieve this by engaging with our employees, listening to what they say, and acting on their feedback, using data to understand our customers and using digital technology to modernise our services.
Our employees will be expected to focus on our commitments as a Council to:

- Be focused on our customers and communities;
- Work with partners to provide excellent services that first and foremost meet people’s needs;
- Be ambitious for our area and in particular for the children of our area;
- Work together across services to deliver on our priorities and ambitions;
- Work with partners including the 3rd sector, private sector and other key stakeholders to focus on needs and expectations of our citizens.
- Encourage and deliver innovation;
- Seek to deliver on our priorities;
- Modernise and be flexible in the way they work and the way they deliver services, using the vast range of data we hold;
- Ensure resources are appropriately targeted and used to meet priorities.

As an employer we will:

- Pay the living wage, even when budgets are difficult;
- Have a modern and competitive range of terms and conditions;
- Ensure employees have access to good quality pension schemes;
- Put in place a number of flexible and voluntary benefits packages for employees to access;
- Have employment policies and procedures which are easy to understand and comply with legislation as a minimum;
- Enable access to good quality training and development for all of our employees;
- Take care of our employees through a range of health, safety and well-being support;
- Provide increased opportunities for employees to work mobile and flexibly.

All services and divisions have their own workforce plans that reflect their contribution to this plan and recognise the importance of a skilled, motivated and valued workforce.

The next five years will be challenging for our employees as they respond to significant change. We will have fewer employees providing different services in different ways. This change is being driven by reducing budgets, changes in technology and most importantly changing expectations of communities and customers.

We will support our workforce to lead, deliver and respond to the challenges the Council and our communities face over the next five years and beyond.
Digital and Technology

Over the coming five years we will be taking forward 3 key elements of a digital strategy.

These are:
- Leadership
- Services redesigned to maximise use of digital, improve customer services and reduce costs
- Rock solid technology – up to date/secure

The vision for Falkirk is that all services are focused on how they can use technology to improve access to services, communicate and engage with citizens more effectively and reduce costs. The organisation’s core purpose is to deliver public services that meet the needs of our communities so essentially this is a customer strategy, enabled by technology and supported by a range of complementary skills, including IT, business analysis, data analytics, marketing and digital communications.

Digital is a critical enabler for any transformation agenda and the benefits to our customers and the Council itself are significant.

By delivering on digital the following outcomes will be achieved:
- Citizens will choose to use digital to find information, engage with the Council, access services and self-serve – and they will trust it
- Services will be transformed to include digital delivery based on data analytics and new services will be digital by default
- Savings will be realised through more efficient processes, channel shift and a reduction in legacy systems and associated costs
- Internal transactions are digital
- Business benefits will be achieved by using social media

The key benefits to the Council and our communities are:
- Services will be more efficient, responsive and standardised
- Overly bureaucratic processes that underpin services will be reviewed and streamlined
- Decisions on service delivery will be based on sound evidence from our customers
- There will be more flexibility to customers and communities in the way they engage with the Council
- Our workforce will be more mobile, flexible and able to serve our customers timeously in their communities and therefore less reliance on physical buildings
In terms of digital leadership, we need our leaders to be clear about how services will be delivered in the future and make sure they are putting in place the transformational projects that will deliver that change. In addition they need to make sure employees are digitally skilled to understand and use technology to deliver the best services we can in response to customer needs and also to take advantage of opportunities technology gives us to understand what those needs are.

Our strategy will reflect the national strategy in that it is agile, flexible and able to respond quickly to changing circumstances and needs. Our move towards a digital Council is not just about service delivery but about how we engage with all our communities. As we reduce our physical presence in communities, we need to find different ways to engage with citizens not only to deliver services to them but also to address issues that are important to them and their communities. Our move to a digital Council must recognise this change in engagement and communications.

The only way we can be a digital Council is if we have a rock solid foundation to deliver on. This means:

- Investing in our technology, networks and people
- Leading by example
- Exploring innovative technologies
- Maximising our technology resources
- Reducing duplication
- Managing information
- Managing risk.
Delivering

We need to now make sure we deliver on our priorities and outcomes, transform the way the Council works and reform our services. This means moving beyond planning into delivery. We must maintain a sense of urgency to achieve the change and transformation our communities and citizens need and deserve.

We will support, empower and encourage our services, partners and employees to focus on the communities and citizens within our area. Our focus through this significant transformation will be on what we can achieve, the services we will continue to deliver and not just on what we can no longer do.

Citizens and communities have changed and we need to reflect that in what we do and the way we do it, while not leaving those more vulnerable behind.

Our corporate and service planning, underpinned by robust and challenging scrutiny and performance management will make sure that the vision and priorities set out in this plan drive that change deliver improved outcomes.

We will review and report on the actions we are taking to achieve our priorities annually.