

Folkestone Town Council

CORPORATE PLAN 2020 – 2025

Folkestone Town Council's Corporate Plan aims to give residents a clear understanding of what the Council does and how it intends to deliver its objectives.



Executive Summary



The aim of this Corporate Plan is to give the residents of Folkestone a clear understanding of what the Council does and how it intends to deliver its objectives. The plan sets out what the Council intends to focus on over set period.

Folkestone Town Council is committed to improving and enhancing the Town of Folkestone in an environmentally sustainable manner, having regard to the identified needs and wishes of all sections of the community.

The Town Council will examine in detail its responsibilities, review them and set a viable and achievable development plan for the future. The Town Council will continue to strive to make significant improvements within the local community by working closely or in partnership with other organisations. These organisations are key contributors and represent the diversity of the local community and include voluntary, business and public sectors.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Table of Figures	4
1 Foreword	5
2 Overview of Folkestone Town Council.....	6
3 Functions and Service Responsibilities of Folkestone Town Council	7
4 Folkestone Town Council's Vision	11
5 Town Council's Corporate Priorities and Key Objectives.....	12
6. Corporate Priorities.....	14
6.1 Corporate Priority One - Creating a Better Environment for Folkestone	14
6.3 Corporate Priority Three - Transport and Accessibility	18
6.4 Corporate Priority Four - Housing Needs and Planning	19
6.5 Corporate Priority Five - Learning Skills and Development	21
6.6 Corporate Priority Six - Business, Retail, Town Centre and Community	23
6.7 Corporate Priority Seven - Tourism and Visitors to the Town Hall	29
6.8 Corporate Priority Eight - Healthy Communities / Sports / Open Spaces / Leisure & Culture	32
6.9 Corporate Priority Nine – Improve the Corporate Management and Efficiency of the Town Council	35
7. Performance Measures, Service Planning and Monitoring Arrangements.....	38
8. How to Comment on this Document and Contact the Council	43

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - Ward Boundary Map	6
Figure 2 - Council Structure	9
Figure 3 - Staffing Structure	10





1 Foreword

Welcome to Folkestone Town Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25, which supersedes the Town Plan 2017-20. This plan has been developed following a review of the Town Plan, to provide an overview of Council's plans to improve the quality of life for all residents, businesses and visitors to Folkestone, as well as developing and underpinning its identity. It outlines the Town Council's mission, vision, purpose, objectives and values with targets and key performance indicators to help Council assess progress against objectives set. The Plan states the aims, objectives and aspirations of the Town Council over a three-year period.

The last few years have been both challenging and difficult, managing cuts in public services whilst retaining those essential to the quality of life and developing the Town Hall and new museum. However, Council has made the conscious decision to take over the services valued by residents from other authorities wherever possible; and since re-opening the Town Hall it has become a one-stop shop for resident's enquiries with over 30% being for higher tier authorities.

Folkestone Town Council works for and on behalf of the community it serves, and this document contains an overview of the Council's aims and aspirations as the most local tier of government because Council believes that some government services can be delivered much more effectively and efficiently at town level and therefore the range of services being provided by the Town Council continues to be developed.

Council is funded by the residents through what is known as a precept of the council tax charge and by generating income through services delivered. The 2020/21 precept is £873,950 which equates to a charge of £60.50p per band D household per annum (£1.16p per week).

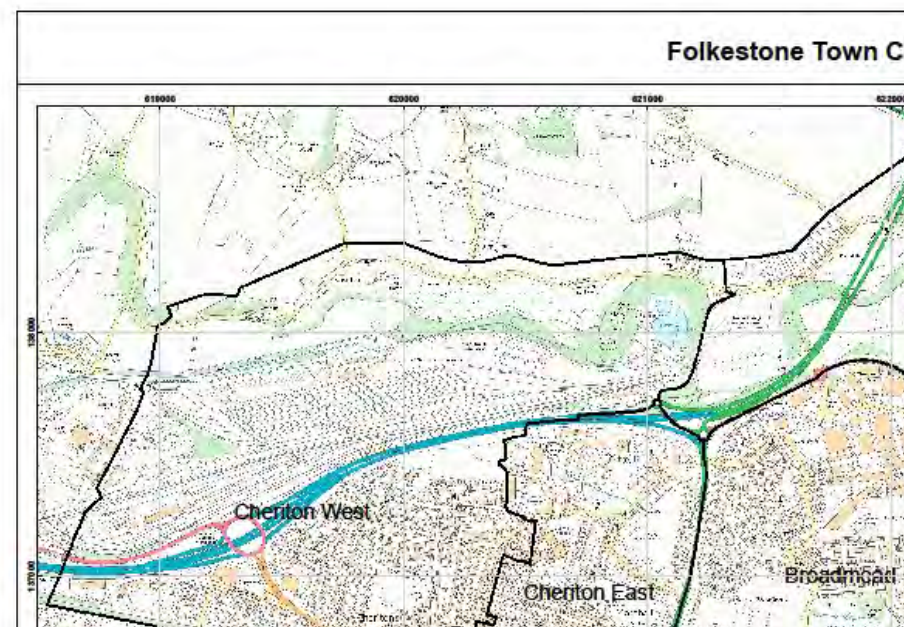
2 Overview of Folkestone Town Council

2.1 Folkestone Town Council was established in 2004 following a Referendum of the town’s people in May 2003 and the subsequent approval of the Secretary of State, although Folkestone had been a Borough Council up until 1974. Since its creation some 13 years ago the Council has developed into one of the largest town councils in the country. It is also recognised as a ‘Quality GOLD Council’ under the nationally recognised scheme that demonstrates that the organisation is at the forefront of best practice, is managed effectively and has an elected mandate.

2.2 The Council comprises eighteen members that are democratically elected every four years to seven wards:

Figure 1 - Ward Boundary Map

Broadmead Ward	2 Council Members
Central Ward	4 Council Members
Cheriton East Ward	1 Council Member
Cheriton West Ward	3 Council Members
East Folkestone Ward	4 Council Members
Harbour Ward	3 Council Members
Harvey West Ward	1 Council Member





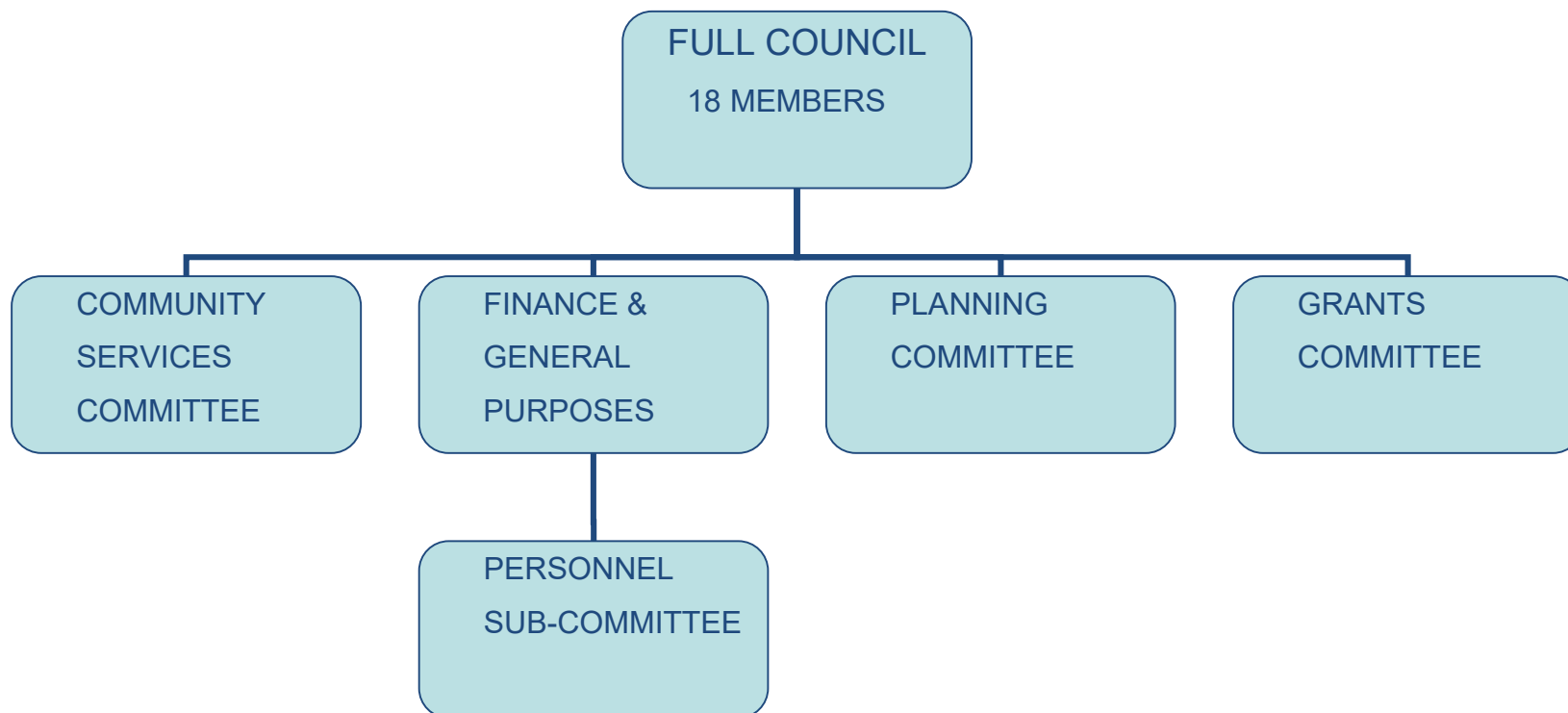
3 Functions and Service Responsibilities of Folkestone Town Council

Financial & Democratic Services	Community Support	Environmental & Grounds
Mayoral & Councillor Support	Visitor Information	Allotments
Committee Administration	Community Events	Litter and Bins
Civic Events	Christmas Lights and Festivities	Folkestone in Bloom
Council Finances and Audits	Town Centre Regeneration	Trees
Personnel	Youth Facilities	Street Furniture
Community Grants	Heritage Preservation	Climate Change
Town Twinning		



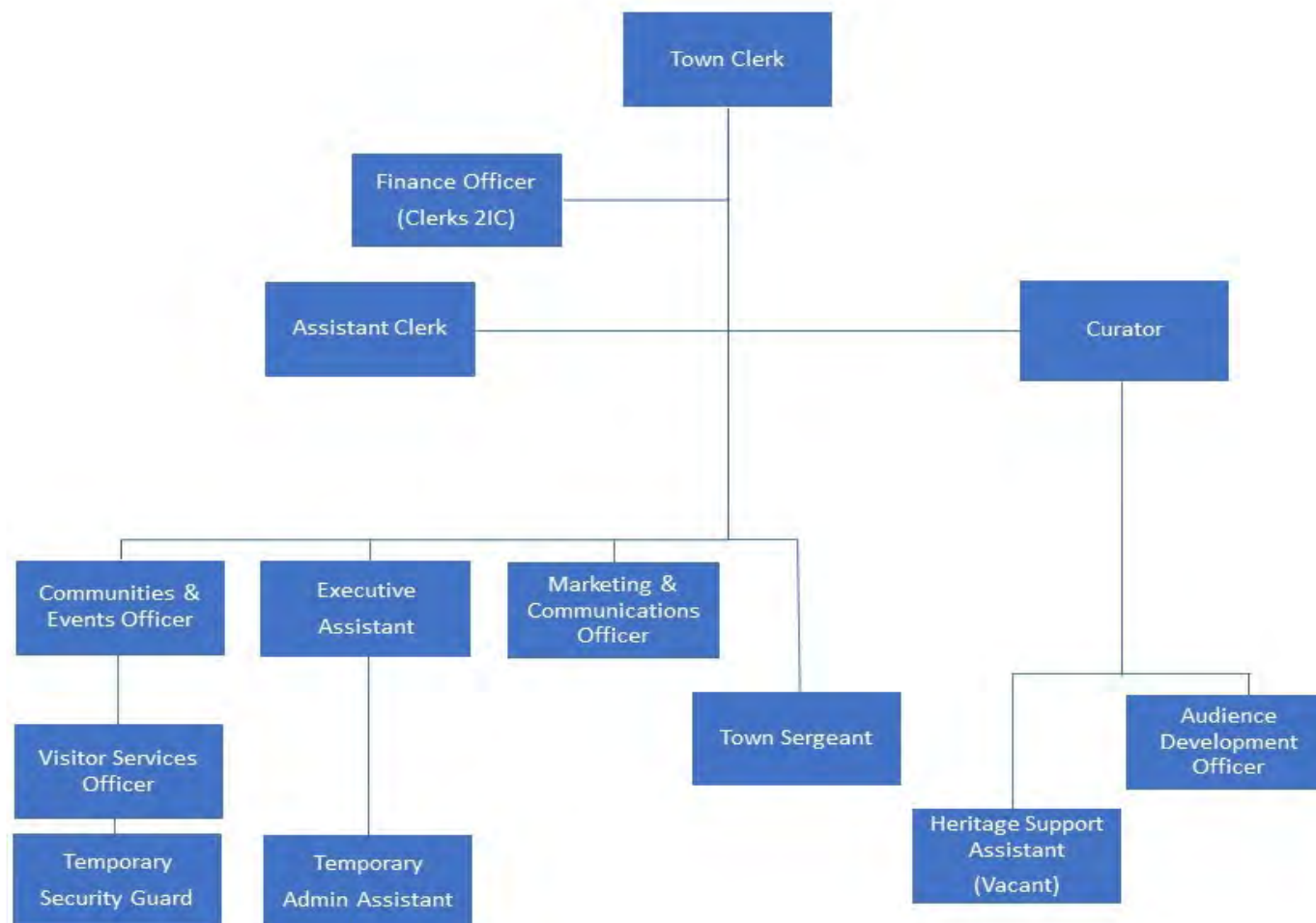
The Town Council is a corporate body that makes decisions via committees that have delegated authority in line with adopted Standing Orders and through delegation of authority to the Town Clerk (please see the Council's website at www.folkestone-tc.gov.uk for further details). The Council itself is chaired by the Town Mayor who typically serves one year of office and is elected from the Council itself. The Council has four main Committees that govern the strategic direction and much of the day to day business of the Council, the Finance & General Purposes (supported by the Personnel Sub-committee), Community Services, Planning and Grants.

Figure 2 - Council Structure



Supporting the Council is an officer structure that is employed to deliver Council services under the directorship of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk is the statutory Proper Officer, Responsible Financial Officer and Head of the Paid Service and is accountable for ensuring that all Council's decisions are lawful. A copy of the Council's departmental service and functions as well as Committee and staffing structures are included within this document.

Figure 3 - Staffing Structure





4 Folkestone Town Council's Vision

The Council's Vision

“To work together with all sectors of the community to promote the social, environmental and economic well-being of the people of Folkestone so that it is an even better place to live, work and visit.”

The Council's Mission Statement

“To revitalise our town of Folkestone, restore civic pride and regenerate a community spirit.”

The Council's Values

- To work to the highest standards of integrity, transparency and openness to deliver services to the best of our abilities.
- To work in partnership with other organisations to improve services and deliver value for money for the Folkestone council taxpayers.
- To be an advocate and campaigning voice for the people of Folkestone.

5 Town Council's Corporate Priorities and Key Objectives

In endeavouring to promote civic pride, improve the quality of life and help to make Folkestone a vibrant community for its residents, Folkestone Town Council currently delivers a range of different functions and services.

The following pages outline the range of actions which Folkestone Town Council will pursue over the lifespan of this document.

The Town Council aims to deliver its vision by:

- Creating a better environment for Folkestone.
- Representing residents, businesses and community groups on issues facing the town.
- Preserving and enhancing the history and identity of the town.
- Improving services targeted to all community sectors in the town.
- Contributing to the regeneration of the town.





The Town Council aims to support its mission by:

- Continuing to improve the appearance and quality of the environment in which we live.
- Encouraging a greater participation in the governance of our town by all sectors of society.
- Working in partnership with Shepway District Council, Kent County Council and other organisations to improve the public services in the town.
- Working in partnership with the business and leisure communities to improve the experience of our visitors and thereby encourage the growth of tourism.
- Supporting the work of community groups and voluntary organisations with grant aid and co-ordinating their activities to improve the social fabric of our community.
- Working in partnership with Shepway District Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the town and encouraging the socially excluded back into the fold.



6. Corporate Priorities

Folkestone Town Council has set the following Corporate Priorities to continuously improve its efficiency.

6.1 Corporate Priority One - Creating a Better Environment for Folkestone

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Ensure street furniture is well maintained and where possible painted in town colours.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	A well-maintained common identity.
Work with others to maintain and improve the appearance of the town.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	A welcoming environment.
In areas where there is a high percentage of take away restaurants to work with the owners to ensure that surrounding streets are regularly patrolled, and extraneous litter is collected.	Planning	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Street Cleansing



Improve the street scene by investing in flowers, trees & plants around the Town.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer / Tree WG	On-going	Floral Folkestone
Progress the 5 goals of the Fairtrade campaign and support the steering group to gain new support.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer	2020	Sustainability Respect for the Environment
The Council currently has an eco-friendly civic car and will continue to improve upon this with even lower emissions and greener technology if possible.	Finance & General Purposes	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	2021	Green Issues
Consider the environmental impact of all decisions and commit to becoming carbon-neutral by 2030 and ban single use plastics across in the Town Hall.	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	Green Issues
Use recycled paper and minimise paper use as a matter of course.	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	Green Issues



Council will continue to reduce its paper and postage use by sending documents by email and amalgamated mailings.	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	Green Issues
---	---------	------------	----------	--------------



6.2 Corporate Priority Two – Crime and Community Safety

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Provide a public realm CCTV system that is monitored and recorded on a 24/7 basis.	Community Services	Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	Community Safety
The Council will work in partnership with other bodies, including the Police and Community Safety Officers, to improve the safety and well-being of the citizens of FOLKESTONE.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	Community Safety
Offer support where appropriate to anti-crime initiatives.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	Community Safety



6.3 Corporate Priority Three - Transport and Accessibility

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Encourage cycling through the green bike scheme.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer	2020	Healthy Communities
Police approved speed watch equipment will continue to be used to help ensure that speed limits are respected and observed.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	Community Safety
Consult with residents and FHDC to improve parking services and offer more free parking.	Planning	Chairman / Town Clerk	2020	Car Parking



6.4 Corporate Priority Four - Housing Needs and Planning

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Partnership working with those seeking to improve the fabric of the town will be pursued as a vital part of the regeneration of FOLKESTONE .	Planning	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	This is an ongoing situation which it is hoped will eventually result in FOLKESTONE becoming a desirable location attracting both business and residents.
Empower the delivery of the 10-year economic plan as FCCT lead.	FCCT	Mayor / Town Clerk	On-going	Regeneration
Through the Council's statutory consultee status, engage fully in all consultative planning processes relating to developments and licensing applications that impact upon	Planning	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Planning Application Statutory Consultation



the town.				
Where appropriate the Town Council will seek Section 106 and CIL agreements for new developments to encourage planning gain as a method of benefiting the community.	Planning	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Planning Application Statutory Consultation



6.5 Corporate Priority Five - Learning Skills and Development

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Ensure adequate resources are available to deliver Council's aspirations.	Personnel Sub	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Governance & Accountability
Allow employees to develop their full potential through training.	Personnel Sub	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Personal Development
Members will also be offered training opportunities to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in serving the people of FOLKESTONE .	Personnel Sub	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Personal Development
The Council aims to be open and accountable in its actions and welcomes the public to attend and ask questions at Council meetings. A wide	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	Governance & Accountability Openness & Transparency



range of correspondence is available at the Town Hall or online at www.folkestone-tc.gov.uk				Communications Quality Status
---	--	--	--	--------------------------------------



6.6 Corporate Priority Six - Business, Retail, Town Centre and Community

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
A quarterly newsletter, the Folkestone Community Magazine, is produced to keep the town's people informed of the activities of the Council. Through advertising this publication is cost neutral.	Council	Chairman / Town Clerk / Executive Assistant	On-going	Communications
The Town Council has a duty to keep the Town Hall Clock in good working order. Owners of other public clocks are encouraged to ensure the upkeep of them.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Town Sergeant	On-going	Clocks
The Town Mayor assisted by the Deputy Town Mayor will	Council	Mayor / Town Clerk / Assistant Clerk	On-going	Civic Pride



endeavour to attend and/or host a wide variety of functions held by local groups, at all times upholding the dignity of the office. The Mayor will represent the town in meetings and civic functions both nationally and internationally should the need arise.				
The Town Council will organise and promote civic functions to commemorate and celebrate the key events and people associated with our town. All such events will seek to engage the whole community and highlight FOLKESTONE'S unique heritage.	Council	Mayor / Town Clerk / Assistant Clerk	On-going	Civic Pride
Council and committee	Council	Town Clerk / Executive	On-going	Openness &



meetings are open to the public and advertised in advance. Agendas and all papers are available in advance via our website or at the Town Hall.		Assistant		Transparency Communications
Council is committed to supplying quality Christmas lighting for FOLKESTONE . The Town Council has made financial provision for the maintenance, installation and take down of Christmas lighting and hosting Annual Christmas Festivities and will continue to do so in the future.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer / Christmas WG	On-going	Christmas Lighting and Festivities
Council will encourage further discussions with FHDC & KCC in respect of devolution of services and transfer of assets.	Council	FHDC/FTC Partnership / Town Clerk	On-going	Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity Lands, Leas Lift, Bandstand & Amphitheatre, Folkestone Market,



				Sandgate Road & Guildhall Street lighting column banner arms, Town Centre barrier contract, Beach Huts, Public Toilets, and Car Parks.
A policy of Grant Aid to local organisations has been developed and will be enhanced and upgraded so that it continues to be of great help to the organisations that give so much to the town. The grant application process will be continually monitored to ensure a fair and simple process, to encourage the widest number of applications. Grant application forms are available on request from the	Grants	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Grant Aid



<p>Council offices and are available to download from our website. We will offer support to groups in the process of making such applications and promote the grant scheme regularly via social media. As a part of application process, applicants will be asked to consider the environmental impact of their bid and how they will acknowledge Council's support.</p>				
<p>The Town Hall provides the people of FOLKESTONE an accessible community hub which promotes heritage, education, art, regeneration and tourism whilst complementing its civic</p>	<p>Community Services</p>	<p>Chairman / Town Clerk / Curator / Museum WG</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Council Administration Visitor Services Heritage Preservation</p>



functions and office space. The Council is also committed to keeping a cinema within the Town Hall.				
The Town Council endeavours to support hospitality and shelters that are available to the homeless in FOLKESTONE throughout the coldest period of winter.	Grants	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Homeless Shelters



6.7 Corporate Priority Seven - Tourism and Visitors to the Town Hall

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Tourism is a major resource in the regeneration the town. The Council will provide an accessible visitor information point and dedicated area where visitors can seek and be provided with information on attractions and accommodation across the District. The Council will work, where possible with other bodies, on the development of local tourist information leaflets, signage in the town and display boards. The council will provide and	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer / Visitor Services Officer	On-going	Visitor Services



<p>update the official tourism website</p> <p>www.visitfolkestone.co.uk</p> <p>Volunteers will be trained to support the visitor information area. Information will be accessible on the phone, by mail, in the Town Hall and on the website.</p>				
<p>Council will endeavour to support the opening of the Leas Lift.</p>	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Visitor Services Heritage Preservation Transport & Accessibility
<p>Financial support for public events will be continued through grant aid. Advertising will be used to increase visitors to the town during these events via Council's websites and social media.</p>	Grants	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Community Events
<p>To support the twinning link with Etaples-Sur-Mer and the</p>	Finance & General	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Closer friendship ties



friendship link with Mechinagar, Nepal.	Purposes			
The establishment of contacts with the youth of FOLKESTONE with a view to engaging them in constructive dialogue on their ongoing needs and desires will be undertaken.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Assistant Clerk / Community Events Officer / Curator	On-going	Youth Facilities



6.8 Corporate Priority Eight - Healthy Communities / Sports / Open Spaces / Leisure & Culture

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
The Council will work with others to help to make available to the community as many leisure, sport and cultural opportunities as possible.	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	Leisure, Parks and Sporting Facilities
We will actively promote allotment holding and welcome the large demand. We will seek to provide the best possible facilities in a cost neutral manner, consult regularly with allotment holders. If possible, we will seek to find new land that is suitable to be turned into	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Allotments Manager	On-going	Allotments



allotments to add to our sites at Tile Kiln Lane and Park Farm Road.				
<p>The Council has created a museum in the Town Hall that provides an excellent and unique service for local families, schools and visitors. The new museum is a vibrant and an engaging community resource providing fun and educational opportunities. Through partnership working and by hosting exhibitions in the gallery, Council will ensure there is a positive and vibrant heritage and arts scene in FOLKESTONE. Through exhibitions, interpretation and activities local people have access to</p>	Community Services	Chairman / Town Clerk / Curator / Museum WG	On-going	Heritage Preservation Civic Pride



<p>their wonderful heritage which will evoke a sense of pride and belonging. The museum is promoted via a website and social media www.folkestonemuseum.co.uk</p>				
<p>Council is committed to ensuring its memorials are maintained to a high standard and they continue to be part of the Act of Remembrance.</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>Mayor / Town Clerk / Assistant Clerk</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Civic Pride Heritage Preservation</p>
<p>The Council will continue to support the many sports facilities in FOLKESTONE and promote youth involvement by hosting annual Kwik Cricket and Councillors Cup tournaments.</p>	<p>Community Services</p>	<p>Chairman / Town Clerk / Community & Events Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Leisure, Parks and Sporting Facilities.</p>
<p>Grants will be available for community art projects.</p>	<p>Grants</p>	<p>Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Arts</p>



6.9 Corporate Priority Nine – Improve the Corporate Management and Efficiency of the Town Council

Action	Council Committee	Lead Member, Officer & Working Group	Timescale	Comments
Maintain a General Reserve of 10-15% of precept.	Finance & General Purposes	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	As recommended by auditors.
Maintain the principles and re-qualify as a “Quality Gold” Council.	Council	Town Clerk	2020	Be at the forefront of Best Practice.
Maintain computerised systems to record all HR, contacts, issues & accidents.	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	To support GDPR compliance.
Develop KPIs and SMART objectives to help improve efficiency.	Council	Town Clerk	On-going	Governance & Accountability
Continue to improve budget forecasts and further develop Capital Reserves.	Finance & General Purposes	Chairman / Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Governance & Accountability



To continue to achieve an unqualified external Audit result.	Finance & General Purposes	Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Governance & Accountability
Maintain "Power of General Competence"	Council	Town Clerk	2019	Power to do anything that individuals generally may do.
Review staffing structure to ensure sufficient resource to deliver corporate priorities.	Personnel Sub	Chairman / Town Clerk	2018	This action combined with others will help ensure Council has the capacity and competency to fulfil a range of services as it continues to grow.
Review Council owned property and Asset Register.	Finance & General Purposes	Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Governance & Accountability
Encourage bacs or card payments for Council paid services.	Finance & General Purposes	Town Clerk / Finance Officer	On-going	Governance & Accountability
Encourage training for Councillors & Officers	Council Personnel Sub	Mayor / Chairman / Town Clerk	On-going	To ensure staff are equipped to fulfil their



				role and councillors can represent the needs of their peers.
Promote community service awards to local people who make a real difference to the community.	Council	Citizenship Awards Panel / Mayor / Town Clerk / Assistant Clerk	On-going	Civic Pride

7. Performance Measures, Service Planning and Monitoring Arrangements



To effectively monitor how Folkestone Town Council is performing in relation to its priority objectives and targets, a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) are being developed.

KPIs are reviewed, monitored, developed and improved upon and the intention is to continue to review the relevance of the KPIs and to further develop them in the coming years.

A Quality Performance Report will be submitted to the appropriate committees on a regular basis, so that the Committees can track and monitor performance, making recommendations for improvements accordingly.



Council Committee	Key Performance Indicator	Baseline Figure
Council	D1 – Annual number of public attending Council meetings.	Council: 50 Committees: 50
Council	D2 – Councillor attendance at meetings delivering local democracy.	Council: 80% Committees: 80%
Council	D3 – Councillor absences without apologies	Less than 5/141 Less than 10/258
Council	D4 – Councillor apologies	Less than 20/141 Less than 40/258
Council	D5 – Number of Code of Conduct complaints.	Less than 5
Council	D6 – Number of Mayoral engagements per annum.	300
Council	D7 – Number of Civic Events held annually.	15
Council	D8 – Press Releases and Community Magazine Articles.	PR 14 CM 55
Council	D9 – Number of visitors to the Town Hall per annum.	10000



Council	D10 – Number of Freedom of Information requests received per annum.	5
Council	D11 – Annual hits on Council's websites.	FTC 15,000 FM 5,000
Council	D12 – Annual Facebook Likes.	FTC 500 FM 1,000
Council	D13 – Annual Twitter Followers.	FTC 1,700 FM 400
Council	D14 – Number of volunteer hours helping to deliver democratic services per annum.	250
Council	D15 - Number of higher tier authority enquiries handled by the Council officers per annum.	30%
Finance & General Purposes	F1 – Total revenue income, excluding precept and HEART income.	£40,000 5% of precept
Finance & General Purposes	F2 – Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days.	95%
Finance & General Purposes	F3 – Percentage of increased income from income generating services.	2.5%
Finance & General Purposes	F4 – Total anticipated end of year general reserve.	£120,000



Personnel-Sub	HR1 – Average percentage of employee sick days per annum.	5%
Grants	G1 - Number of Town Grant Applications approved per annum.	12
Grants	G2 - Number of Town Grant applications from new organisations per annum.	10%
Grants	G3 - Number of Ward Grant Applications approved per annum.	70
Community Services	C1 – Number of Community Events held annually.	2
Community Services	C2 – Number of Youth Events held annually.	2
Community Services	C3 – Number of volunteer hours per annum helping to deliver visitor services.	250
Community Services	M1 - Number of bookings of the Temporary Exhibition Room per annum.	4
Community Services	M2 – Number of volunteer hours per annum helping to deliver museum services	500
Community Services	M3 - Number of school visits per annum.	12



Community Services	M4 - Number of paid bookings of the Education Room per annum.	12
Community Services	A1 – Percentage of vacant allotments per annum.	0%
Community Services	A2 – Number of allotment inspections undertaken per annum.	6
Community Services	A3 – Number of allotment maintenance letters sent per annum.	40

8. How to Comment on this Document and Contact the Council

Folkestone Town Council would very much appreciate your views on the content of this plan as well as any comments, queries or complaints regarding the services provided by the Council.

Folkestone Town Council also welcomes suggestions from all sections of the community regarding further service development or on other issues that are important to the Town that the Council may be able to have an impact on.

If you do wish to comment, or for specific help and advice on matters concerning the Council, please contact the Town Clerk:

Telephone: 01303 257946

Email: jennifer.childs@folkestone-tc.gov.uk

Write to: Folkestone Town Council
Town Hall
1-2 Guildhall Street
Folkestone
Kent
CT20 1DY



