

Maidstone Borough Council's

# Strategic Plan

## 2015-2020



# Foreword from the Leader, Councillor Fran Wilson



The Strategic Plan has been updated for 2018-19. As a result the plans and strategies created and adopted over the last year will be implemented and delivered over the next two years of the plan and beyond.

Despite a reduction in funding I am pleased to report that we do have a balanced budget. In addition we have been successful in gaining additional funding for the borough as part of a Business Rates Retention pilot for Kent and Medway. This one-off sum of money will be used to deliver sustainable projects to achieve our top three priorities in 2018 – 19.

Our primary focus in 2018/2019 are targeted toward our core priorities:

- A Home for Everyone
- Providing a Safe, Clean and Green environment
- Regenerating the Town Centre

Our overarching vision for residents is to continue to provide a pleasant and safe environment for everyone to enjoy.

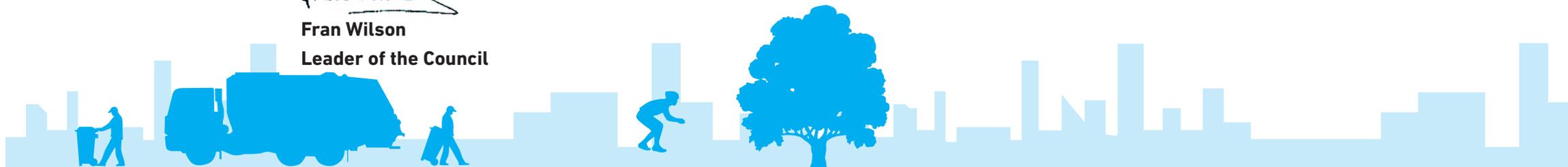
All residents have the right to live in a home of a good standard and maintain a healthy lifestyle and our borough should offer a rich and diverse environment, with a successful economy and a number of reliable transport networks.

Our residents have identified 'safe and clean' as their top priority. In support of this we will be:

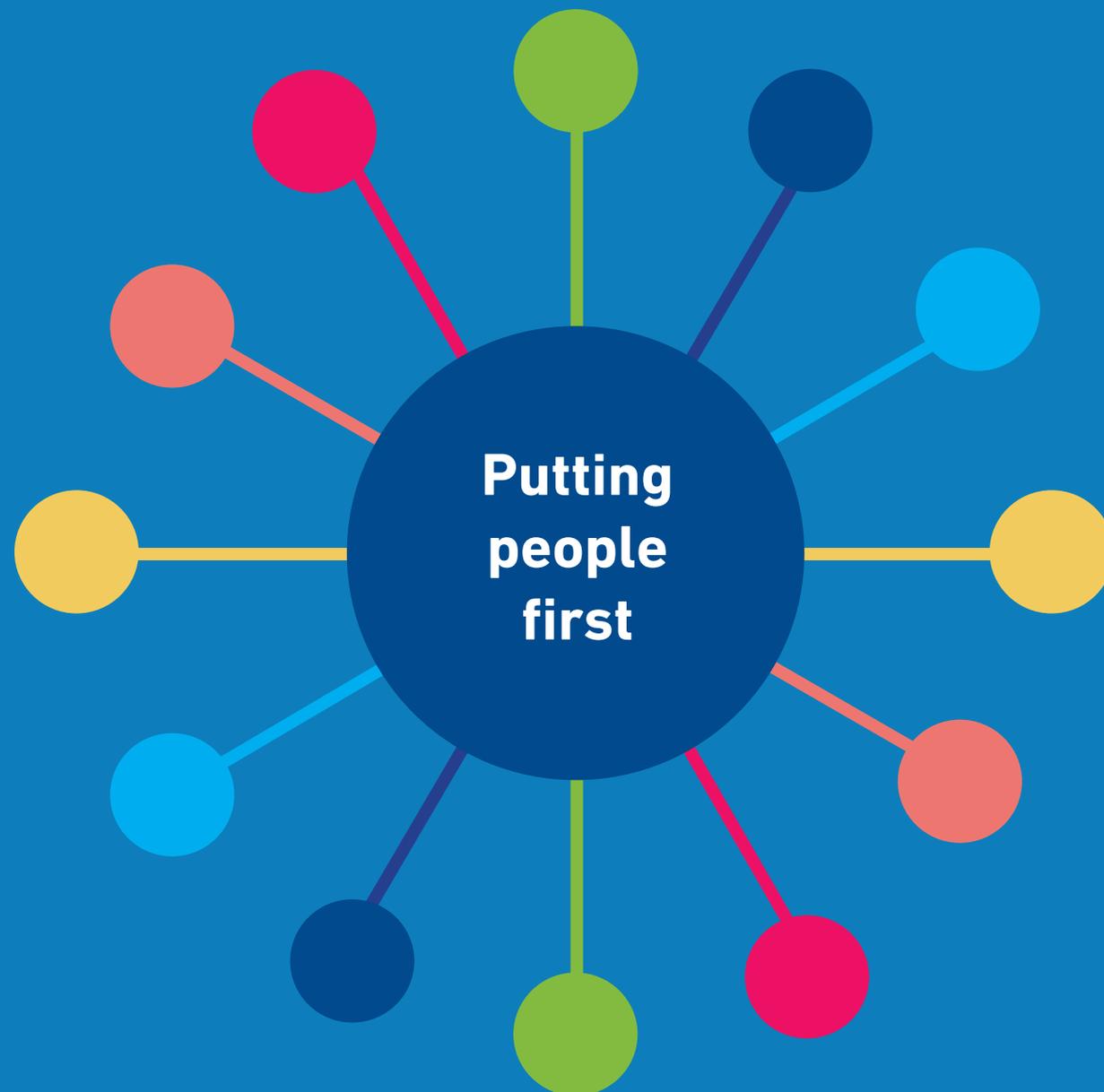
- Refreshing our Biodiversity Action Plan in 2018-19
- Delivering our Parks and Open Spaces Strategy
- Continuing our work to ensure the borough maintains and improves our green spaces
- Adopting and delivering an Air Quality Development Plan Document

Moving forward we will be working hard to ensure we look after our rural and urban landscapes with robust planning policies and supporting plans such as the biodiversity action plan. This will ensure our environment is protected for future generations.

**Fran Wilson**  
Leader of the Council

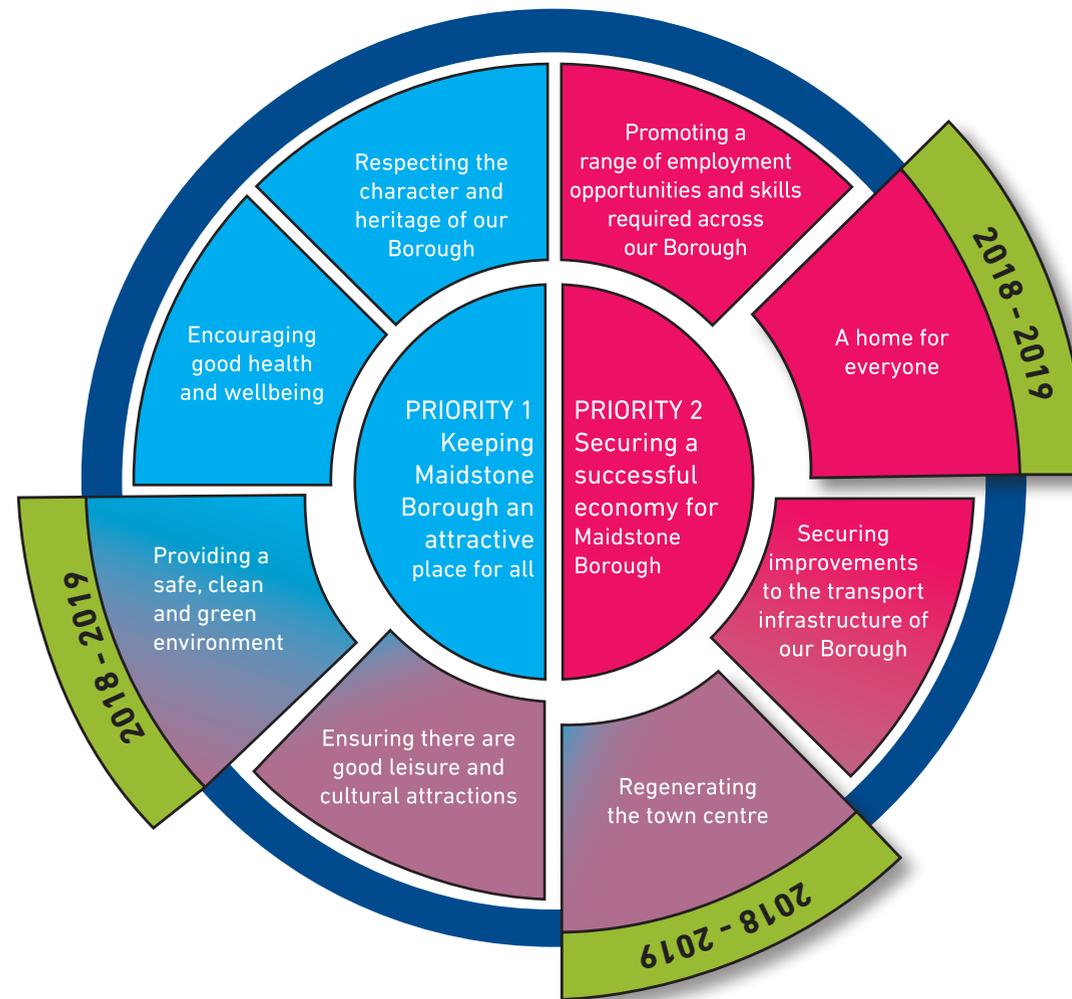


# Our Mission



# Our Vision

That our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks.



## Providing a Safe, Clean and Green Environment

Maidstone Borough Council is committed to creating an attractive environment which is safe, clean and green. Our borough does not experience high levels of crime and through the Community Safety Partnership, we aim to protect the most vulnerable people in our community.

We value our environment and we want to ensure our urban and rural landscapes are protected. We act proactively to keep our Borough clean and our recycling levels have reached 49.9%. Maidstone has areas of poor air quality due to high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide associated with road traffic and has designated the urban area of the borough as an Air Quality Management Zone.

### **We want:**

People to feel safe in the borough and experience an attractive, clean and safe environment.

### **We will commit to:**

- Investing to improve street infrastructure and the efficiency of cleansing services in accordance with our medium term financial strategy
- Delivering the Waste and Recycling Strategy
- Delivering the Community Safety Plan 2018
- Delivering the Low Emissions Strategy
- Adopting and Delivering an Air Quality DPD
- Delivering the Biodiversity Action Plan

## Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing

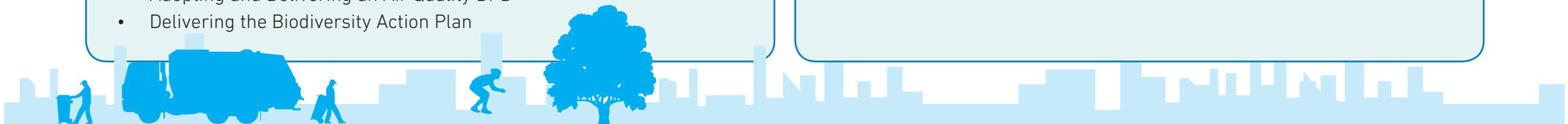
Deprivation in the borough is lower than average, however 14.8% of children (under 16 years old) in Maidstone live in poverty. There is a difference in life expectancy of men and women; women are expected to live 3 years longer than men and there is a 11 year gap between the ward with the highest life expectancy and the one with the lowest life expectancy

### **We want:**

- To address the social determinants of health through our role in services like Housing, Environmental Health and Community Development and our provider role in terms of leisure activities
- To improve health outcomes for residents and reduce health inequality

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering our Housing Strategy
- Delivering our Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
- Delivering our Parks and Open spaces 10 year strategic plan



## Respecting the Character and Heritage of our Borough

Maidstone is a largely rural borough with high quality landscapes, countryside and urban green spaces and associated rich bio-diversity. Our borough has many attractive and protected buildings and we want these to remain in place for future generations. Our focus on economic prosperity embraces the need to protect and enhance these features so that the borough remains a great place to live, work and visit.

### We want:

- Thriving and resilient urban and rural communities
- To continue to listen to our communities
- To continue to respect our heritage and natural environment
- To continue to devolve services where we can and work with Kent County Council to do the same

### We will commit to:

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
- Delivering our Parks and Open Spaces 10 year strategic plan
- Delivering and honouring our Parish Charter
- Working with our Parishes and Communities on the design of their neighbourhoods
- Delivering the Biodiversity Action Plan

## Ensuring there are Good Leisure and Cultural Attractions

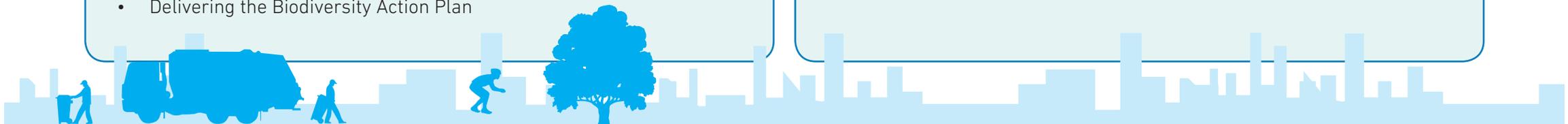
There is always something to see or do in our borough reflecting the wide variety of venues, facilities and good quality public spaces. This not only enhances quality of life for Maidstone residents but also contributes significantly to the local economy. Our population is increasing at the highest rate in Kent. We are also growing as a destination for visitors and so our leisure and culture offer has continued importance for those living in and visiting the borough.

### We want:

Maidstone to have a leisure and cultural offer which attracts visitors and meets the needs of our residents.

### We will commit to:

- Delivering the Destination Management Plan
- Delivering the Festival and Events Strategy
- Delivering the Museum's 20 year plan
- Delivering the Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan



## Regenerating the Town Centre

Maidstone has a thriving town centre benefiting from its role as the county town and has a diverse mix of residential, business, retail, cultural uses and public services. The changing economic environment has created challenges and the need for further investment in the town centre to meet the expectations of residents, businesses and visitors.

### **We want:**

To ensure we have a thriving and attractive town centre that values our heritage and is fit for the future.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Housing and Regeneration Strategy
- Delivering the Destination Management Plan
- Delivering Phase 3 of the Public Realm

## Securing Improvements to the Transport Infrastructure for our Borough

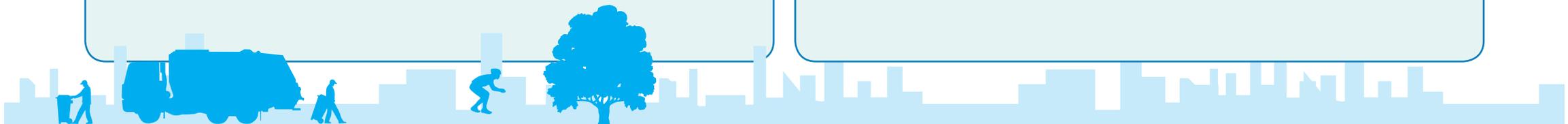
Maidstone is strategically situated between London and the channel ports and is serviced by two motorway networks, the M20 and the M2, with rail connections to central London. We do however recognise that travelling in and around the borough by car during peak periods can be difficult due to congestion. The bus transport network serving Maidstone town is relatively strong whilst rural transport presents distinct challenges

### **We want:**

A sustainable transport network that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Integrated Transport Strategy
- Delivering the Walking and Cycling Strategy



## A Home for Everyone

The supply of new affordable housing within the borough has been greater than in neighbouring authorities, although still less than historical levels. 303 new affordable homes were built in the borough in 2016/17. 13% of Maidstone households live in socially rented accommodation which is comparable to the rest of Kent.

### **We want:**

To have enough homes to meet our residents' long term needs, to include homes for affordable rent and affordable home ownership. These must be economically sustainable for all our residents.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan
- Delivering the Housing Strategy
- Delivering the Temporary Accommodation Strategy

## Range of Employment Skills and Opportunities Across the Borough

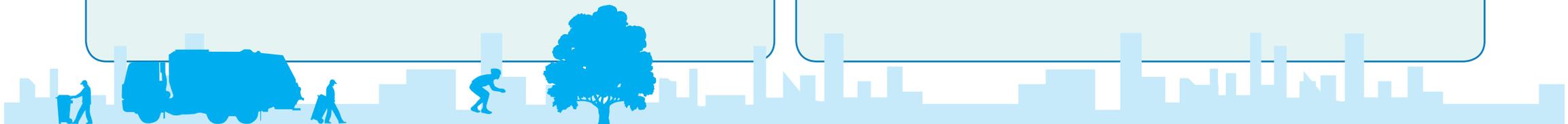
There were 77,500 people employed in the Maidstone economy in 2016/17 with a high proportion in the public sector, reflecting the town's status as Kent's County Town and administrative capital. There were 7,195 registered businesses in Maidstone in 2017.

### **We want:**

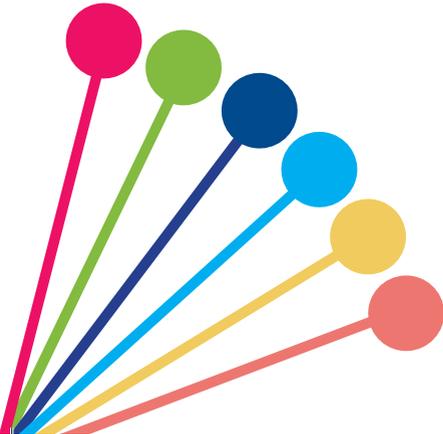
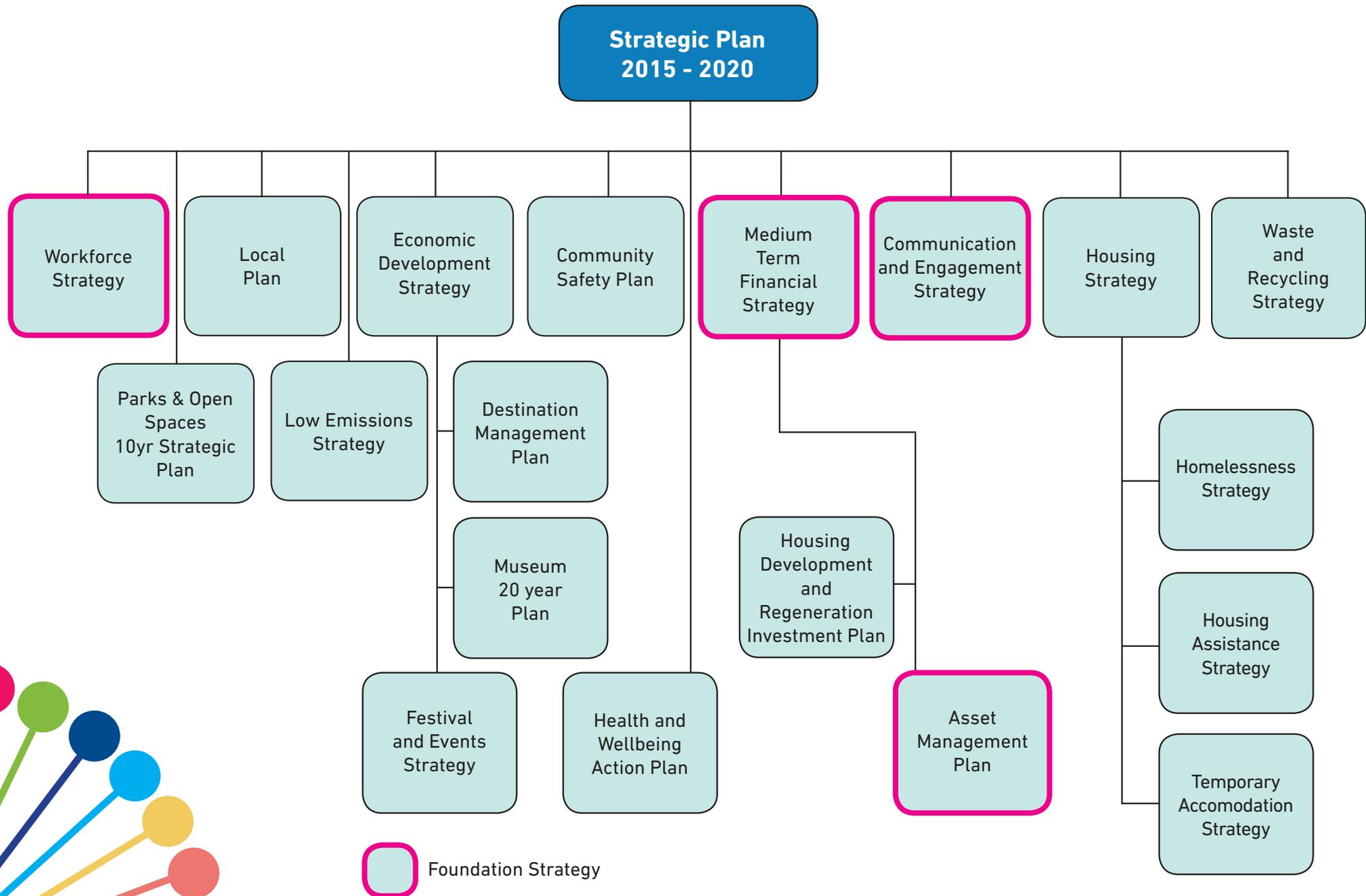
To meet the skills needs of our residents and employers, supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering our Economic Development Strategy
- Working with businesses to support them to grow and develop



# Strategy Map



# Our Values

## Services

Everything we do impacts on our customers, both internal and external. We will listen to and understand their needs, then take action to provide the right service in a positive and professional manner.



## Teamwork

Working together to achieve our objectives and goals in a way that utilises the talents and creativity of everyone in our organisation.



## Responsibility

We work in an environment that encourages us to take ownership for our actions. Making the right choices and decisions that lead to a satisfactory outcome for all.



## Integrity

We have the courage to act on our convictions to build trust and honesty. We work with our partners and customers to create a feeling of openness and transparency in everything we do.

## Value

Taking care and weighing up our options, aiming to get the maximum effect for every penny of public money we spend.



## Equality

Valuing our differences and understanding how they can contribute to a better working environment and services that are fair and easy to access

