

**Subject:** State of the District  
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**Lead Member/  
Portfolio Holder:** Councillor C Saint

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## Summary

As part of the consultation process, consideration of the State of the District needs to be assessed by the Council. This report summarises the events of the past year along with an outline of future proposals.

## Recommendation

**That the State of the Stratford-on-Avon District is noted and that the issues raised are considered as part of the budget-making process for 2018/19.**

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## 1 Background/Information

- 1.1 Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council will debate the State of the District at the Council Meeting in the Autumn.
- 1.2 The Constitution states that the Leader will decide the form of the debate.
- 1.3 The results of the debate will be: -
  - i) disseminated as widely as possible within the community and to agencies and organisations in the area;
  - ii) considered by the Leader in proposing the Budget and Policy Framework to the Council for 2018/19; and
  - iii) considered in the shaping of the Council's community policies.

## 2 2017 Approach

- 2.1 There has been no specific consultation with the public in the preparation of this year's State of the District report, as two years ago this approach led to only two responses. Results from the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Residents' Survey 2017 have been utilised, completed by 1906 residents.

## 3 Current State of the District

- 3.1 Various reports from different sources had concluded that: -
  - The estimated population for Stratford District in mid-2016 was 122,300. 19% of the population are aged up to 17; there are 56% in the 18 to 64 age group and 25% 65 and over. The projected population for Stratford-on-Avon in 2039 is projected to be 13,020

higher, which represents an increase of 10.8% from 2014 to 2039. Those aged 85+ is expected to rise by 176% or 7,394 in number. The number in the 16 to 64 year old category is expected to fall by 3,896 or a 5.5% drop. The projected population of Warwickshire in 2039 is expected to be 12.1% higher. Stratford-on-Avon District currently has the highest level of dependency and will continue to do so into the future. It is projected that there will be 98.2 dependents per 100 adults of working age by 2037, compared with the 2014 ratio of 67.9.

- According to the Valuation Office list, there were 57,345 households in the District, as of 1 April 2017.
- In 2015, 12.2% of households in Warwickshire were in fuel poverty, with the figure for Stratford-on-Avon of 13.6%. This figure is in the top 40 for all local authorities in England. Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income High Costs indicator, which considers a household to be fuel-poor if:-
  - they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level);
  - were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
- In Stratford-on-Avon District in 2013, 8.0% of children were living in poverty compared to 10.0% in 2010; by contrast in 2013 in Warwickshire 12.2% of children were living in poverty and in England in 2013 the figure was 18%. A child is considered to live in poverty if they live in a household with an income below 60% of the UK's median income.
- Recorded crime rates in the Stratford-on-Avon District in 2016/17 were 53.8 per 1,000 population for all total recorded crimes. This compares to 67.6 in Warwickshire. In Stratford-on-Avon in 2016/17, domestic burglary offences was at a rate of 5.9 per 1,000 head of population (Warwickshire 7.4), vehicle crime 5.8 per 1,000 head of population (Warwickshire 7.5), and violent crime with or without injury, 14.0 per 1,000 households (Warwickshire 19.5).
- The median house price in Stratford District is £290,000 against a county average of £225,995 at the end of 2016. This is in the top 25% least affordable places outside of London. The cheapest 10% of homes in the area has increased by £58,000 to £226,995 in the last year, the highest in Warwickshire.
- With reference to housing affordability, the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings reflects housing affordability, (25% of all house prices are below the lower quartile, likewise, and lower quartile earnings are those of the lowest paid 25%). In 2016, the lower quartile property price was on average 7.69 times the lower quartile annual wage for a full-time employee working in Warwickshire; but significantly, the ratio for the Stratford-on-Avon District in 2016 was 9.16. This is the highest figure in the West Midlands alongside Malvern Hills DC area. The figure for 1997 for the Stratford-on-Avon District was 5.52.

- Educational attainment in Stratford-on-Avon is higher than the national average. For Key Stage 2 in 2016, 61.4% of pupils achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths against a county average of 57.5%. For Key Stage 4 and those achieving the new measure in 2016 of Attainment 8, the average score in SDC was 54.3 against a county average of 52.2 and an England average was 50.1. For Progress 8, the score in SDC was 0.14, for the County 0.02 and England -0.03.

3.2 The Office for National Statistics *nomis* (*official labour market statistics*) *Labour Market Profile Stratford-on-Avon District* and the Stratford-on-Avon Economic Overview Summary 2017 concluded that:-

- Earnings by residence (2016) showed that the median earnings (gross weekly pay) for employees working full-time in Stratford-on-Avon were £568.70 which is above average. For the West Midlands, the figure was £507.80, and for Great Britain, £541.00.
- In 2016, male full-time workers in the district earned £639.90 per week gross, whilst female full-time workers earned £513.10 per week gross.
- Labour supply employment and unemployment data from April 2016 to March 2017, shows that there were 61,800 economically active people in Stratford-on-Avon, 82.6% of those aged 16 to 64, compared to 75.6% in the West Midlands and 78.0% in Great Britain.
- In the year to September 2016, the working age employment rate in Stratford was 81.3%, up 1.9 percentage points on the year before and 7.6 percentage points above the national average. Stratford is the only place in Warwickshire to have seen an improvement in its employment rate in the past year and it now has the highest employment rate in the county. The increase is equivalent to 1,200 more people in work since 2015.
- Of those economically-active and in employment, 48,900 are employees; and 10,600 are self-employed (Male 6,700/Female 3,900);
- 12,200 people, aged 16 to 64, were recorded in Stratford-on-Avon as in economic inactivity (April 2016 to March 2017), which represented 17.4% of that age band. The percentage for the West Midlands was 24.4%, and for Great Britain, 22.0%. Of the 12,200, 11,000 do not want a job.
- 2,300 extra 16-24 year olds are in employment, up from 6,100 in 2015. The employment rate for this demographic has, therefore, risen to 74.8% (up from 66.0%) and is the highest in Warwickshire and is much higher than the UK average (53.3%).
- The district employs the highest number of people in Local Economic Partnership (LEP) key priority sectors (41%), but they also have the largest proportion of the working population in low-paid sectors (34%).

- 47% of residents work in Stratford district; lower self-containment than Nuneaton and Warwick. The strongest out-commuting flows to Warwick (13%), Birmingham (5%) and Coventry (4%), plus Solihull. The positive net in-commuting flow (2,815) driven by commuters from Worcestershire. There are strong in-commuting flows from Warwick, Redditch and Wychavon.
- The total number of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants in August 2017 for Stratford-on-Avon District was 580, of which 310 were male and 270 were female. This represents 0.8% of the population; it was 280 people or 0.4% twelve months ago.
- 305 Job Seekers Allowance claimants in August 2017 were aged 25 to 49 years, 170 were aged 50 to 64 years and 95 were aged 18 to 24.
- The unemployment rate for those economically-active was 2.7% in March 2017 (1700 people), compared with a West Midlands figure of 5.4% and a Great Britain level of 4.7%.
- In terms of qualifications, as at December 2016, Stratford District showed 45.4% of residents with a NVQ4 qualification or higher, a rise of 7 points on five years ago. 4.0% were without qualifications, 8 percentage points less than eight years ago. Stratford District is the third most highly qualified area in the West Midlands, behind Malvern Hills and Stafford.

3.3 In terms of the business community, data from the *Inter Departmental Business Register 2016*, the *ONS Business Register & Employment Survey 2015* and the *Stratford-on-Avon Economic Overview summary 2017* concluded that:-

- In 2016, the number of businesses in the District stood at 8,000 enterprises (smallest combination of legal units generally based on VAT &/or PAYE records which has a certain degree of autonomy within an Enterprise Group) and 8,860 local units (an individual site, for example a factory or shop, in an enterprise is called a local unit). The business density ratio of 66 per 1,000 population is the highest density in the county and 50% higher than Warwickshire's average.
- The proportion of full-time and part-time jobs in the District is 70/30.
- The largest occupational sector is "Science, research, engineering and technology professionals". However, the fastest growing sectors are business and public service associate professionals and design and development engineers making up the top three.
- 21.2% of the District population as at March 2017 are employed in associate professional & technical occupations (13.1% West Midlands), with 20.3% classified as professional occupations (17.2% West Midlands). 13.7% are employed as managers, directors and senior officials (10.1% West Midlands).

3.4 The *Health Profile 2017* of Stratford-on-Avon as produced by *Public Health England* had concluded that:-

- The health of people in Stratford-on-Avon is generally better than the England average. Stratford-on-Avon is one of the 20% least deprived

districts/unitary authorities in England, however about 10% (1,900) of children live in low income families.

- Life expectancy is 4.7 years lower for women and for men 2.7 years in the most deprived areas of Stratford-on-Avon than in the least deprived areas.
- In Year 6 for 2015-16, 14.4% (152) of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England and compared with 2010-11, 15.8% (184 children) a marginally lower figure. For 2013-2015, 63.7% of adults are classified as overweight or obese, slightly lower than the England average of 64.8%.
- The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital stays for 2015/16 is 568 per 100,000 population. This represents 743 stays per year. The rate of self-harm hospital stays is 170 per 100,000 population. This represents 183 stays per year.
- Levels of GCSE attainment and teenage pregnancy are better than the England average in Stratford district.
- The rate of people killed and seriously injured on roads is worse than average, 77.4 per 100,000 population for 2013-15, against an England average of 38.5.
- For the district, rates of sexually transmitted infections and TB are better than average. Rates of statutory homelessness, violent crime, long term unemployment, early deaths from cardiovascular diseases and early deaths from cancer are better than average.
- Priorities in Stratford-on-Avon include tackling lifestyle behaviours, mental health and wellbeing, and ageing well.

3.5 The *Stratford-on-Avon District Council Residents' Survey 2017* undertaken from March to May 2017 with 1,906 responses concluded that:

- Residents were asked to say what were the five most important things making somewhere a good place to live. The top five in the District were the level of crime (57%); health services (also 57%); access to the countryside (44%); clean streets (38%) and education provision (35%). Compared with 2014, access to the countryside (+7%) has become more important to residents, alongside a 4 percentage point increase for parks and open spaces and the level of pollution. There was a decline in importance compared with the 2014 figures for shopping facilities, road/pavement repairs and public transport (all around the 5% mark).
- Residents were asked to think about their local area and indicate up to five things that most need improving. The top five improvements were the level of traffic congestion (50%); road and pavement repairs (45%); activities for teenagers (32%); public transport (32%) and affordable decent housing (29%). Compared with 2014, improvements wanted in the level of pollution increased by 3%. The largest declines in the need for improvement were for sports and

leisure facilities (-5%), job prospects (-4%) and for activities for teenagers (-4%).

- 93% of those surveyed are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, representing an increase of three points from 2014.
- Over three quarters (77%) of respondents felt very or fairly strongly that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood. This result is the first rise in the last four surveys.
- 77% of respondents tend to agree / definitely agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This represents a rise of four percentage points on 2014. 13% tend to disagree or definitely disagree with the statement.
- A new question in the 2017 survey asked about respondents views on the state of the economy in their local area. Just under a quarter (23%) felt it was really thriving, 56% on the way up, 19% not doing well and 2% really struggling.
- 37% agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. This represents an increase of 4 points on 2014.
- Over six in ten respondents (63%) disagree or definitely disagree that they can influence development in their area, as opposed to 15% in agreement (2 points lower than 2014).
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of residents feel satisfied that Stratford DC keeps public land clear of litter and refuse, the same score as 2014.
- Exactly nine in ten residents (90%) feel very or fairly satisfied with the refuse collection provided by SDC, which is the same as in the previous survey. However the very satisfied part of this figure has risen from 48% to 56%.
- Exactly eight out of ten of those surveyed claimed to be satisfied with the doorstep recycling provided by SDC: a 2 percentage point fall from 2014. However the very satisfied figure had gone up from 40% to 45%.
- 56% of respondents feel satisfied with the sports / leisure facilities provided by SDC. This result is 9 points up on 2014.
- 73% of residents feel satisfied with the parks and open spaces provided by SDC, 5 percentage points up on 2014 and back to the 2012 level.
- 64% of those surveyed were satisfied with the play areas provided by SDC, up 9 percentage points from the previous survey.
- 41% of respondents were satisfied with car parking provided by SDC, down three percentage points from 2014 and three in ten expressed dissatisfaction, down by 3 percentage points.

- 34% of those surveyed were satisfied with the public toilets provided by SDC, this is down 9 percentage points on 2014. 31% were dissatisfied, up by 5 percentage points from 2014.
- Over six in ten (63%) of residents were very or fairly satisfied with the grass cutting services provided or supported by SDC, this is a single point increase on 2014.
- 31% stated that they were very or fairly satisfied with the way SDC process planning applications, a 2 point drop on the previous survey.
- 44% stated that they were very or fairly dissatisfied with the way SDC develops planning policies, a slight drop of 3 points on 2014.
- 26% of respondents were satisfied with SDC's housing services, a decrease of 3 percentage points from the previous survey. 27% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with housing services, up 10 percentage points from 2014.
- Over three quarters (77%) of respondents are fairly or very satisfied with the way Stratford District Council runs things. This represents an increase of 1 percentage point in 2014 and 16 points from the 61% recorded in 2012.
- Just over half of respondents (51%) tend to agree or strongly agree that Stratford District Council provides value for money, this represents a 1 percentage point increase on 2014 and 16 points on 2012.
- Seven in ten of respondents tend to agree a great deal or to some extent that Stratford District Council is making the local area a better place to live, up 4 points from the previous survey.
- Two thirds of respondents (65%) tend to agree a great deal or to some extent that Stratford District Council is working to make the area safer, down one percentage point from the previous survey.
- 65% of residents tend to agree a great deal or to some extent that Stratford District Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener, representing a fall of 2 percentage points on 2014, and its lowest level across all four surveys.
- 61% of those surveyed did not at all agree/not very much agree that Stratford District Council involved residents when making decisions; this is down 3 percentage points from the previous survey.
- 58% of respondents did not at all agree or not very much agree that Stratford District Council acts on the concerns of local residents, down 7 percentage points from the previous survey.
- 63% stated that they trust the Council a fair amount or a great deal compared to 8% who said not at all. Trust is up 8 percentage points on 2014.
- 64% of residents stated that they felt fairly well informed, or very well informed overall about SDC keeping its residents informed about the services and benefits it provides, up 5 points on 2014.

- 15% of those surveyed stated that they give unpaid help to group(s), club(s) or organisation(s) at least once a week, representing a 4 percentage point decrease from the 19% who did likewise in 2012. Over half (52%) of respondents claimed not to have given any unpaid help at all over the last 12 months, a rise of 5 percentage on the 47% who did not do so in 2012.
- Asked how safe or unsafe they felt after dark in their local area, exactly three-quarters of respondents said they felt either fairly or very safe, representing a 5 percentage point increase from the 70% recorded in 2014. 13% of residents felt unsafe, down 3 percentage points from 2014. Asked how safe or unsafe they felt during the day in their local area, 96% of residents felt safe, and this has remained constant over the last four surveys.
- Residents feel the biggest problems in terms of anti-social behaviour are "dog fouling" (45%), "cars parked inconveniently, dangerously or illegally" (40%), and "fly tipping" (25%).
- Three-quarters of those surveyed had not experienced any incidents of anti-social behaviour in their local area in the past twelve months. 17% had experienced something but not reported it and 8% experienced it and had reported it to the Police or SDC. These figures are exactly the same as those recorded in 2014.
- Asked whether they had contacted SDC with a complaint or complaints in the last 12 months, 8% of respondents confirmed that they had, this is 3 points lower than 2014.
- 76% of residents were fairly or very satisfied with the service they received the last time they made contact with the Council, up 5 percentage points on the last survey.
- When asked how they rate their internet connectivity, 25% said it was not fast enough and 31% of residents stated that it was ok but could be faster. Combined this was 3 percentage points down on 2014.

3.6 Other ways of understanding the community that the Council employs includes Parish and Neighbourhood Plans and crime and health data analysis. These data sources have influenced the Council's plans. In the last twelve months, consultation exercises have taken place on areas such as the Strategic Review and housing. The Council, to promote consultation exercises, use social media, like *Twitter* and *Facebook* to reach different parts of the community.

#### **4 Achievements/Key Events during 2016/17**

4.1 The Spending Review 2015 identified that the funding which is being made available by central government to help fund local authorities was to be reduced. In December 2015, the Council through the Local Government Finance Settlement was notified how much support would be available for each of the following four years. The headlines from the settlement were as follows: -

- Revenue support grant to cease in 2018/19;

- New Rural Services Delivery Grant;
  - Modest increases in business rate income assumed.
- 4.2 The revenue support grant has historically been the route by which resources are distributed to local authorities. This grant has reduced since 2010, however, in 2013/14; the Council was still receiving £3.9m per annum of funding in this area. The last year of funding will see the Council receive £111k in 2018/19 with no grant at all in following years.
- 4.3 In addition to the reductions in central government support, a consultation exercise was also undertaken which proposed significant reductions in the allocations to authorities to incentive house building. The Council had been receiving c£3m pa of support through this route in 2016/17; however this is predicted to reduce to around £2m pa by 2019/20.
- 4.4 The Medium-Term Financial Plan which was approved by Council in February incorporated these reductions in funding. At this same meeting the Council the initial findings from the Strategic Review helped influence the budget for 2017/18 and beyond, these incorporated the introduction of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and a reorganisation of the Environmental Health service. The main findings from the Strategic Review are being reported to this meeting, and will help influence the future direction of the Council.
- 4.5 Five work streams have been established to undertake this review detailed as follows:-

***Work Stream 1 – Future Vision of Service Provision***

This work stream would review the Council's current service provision, contrast this against strategy documents such as the Corporate Strategy and manifesto commitments before making recommendations on the future direction of the Council. The results of this exercise would be subject to consultation with public/business and full Council.

***Work Stream 2 – Cost Comparison and Benchmarking***

When the Council is clear about the mix of future services, this review will be undertaken to ensure that the Council is providing these services in the most cost efficient method. A review of the internal/support costs is being undertaken through CIPFA, with also a review of the cost of providing both internal and external services.

***Work Stream 3 – Ways of Working***

A complete objective review of how services are delivered, including in-house provision, contracted-out services, working in partnership and establishment of Council-owned companies. This will build upon successes for the Council and the lessons learnt from recent experiences with Cherwell and South Northamptonshire Councils.

***Work Stream 4 – Income Generation and Asset Review***

In order to support the cost of delivering services, a review into options for recovering costs and ensuring the assets that the Council owns provide commercial returns.

***Work Stream 5 – Strategic and Policy Issues***

This overarching work stream would cover national issues which are affecting the Council such as welfare reform, employment issues and local taxation strategies. Final recommendations are expected in this

area which will have significant implications on the funding of the Council and therefore the mix of services which are sustainable.

- 4.6 In the budget for 2017/18, the Council, increased Council Tax by 2%, this was lower than the level of increase expected by government. Given the reductions in direct support the Council is becoming more reliant upon local taxation through both Council tax and business rates.
- 4.7 The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 4.8 The Council also has a duty under the *Local Government Act 1999* to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.9 The Annual Government Statement identifies the framework that comprises the systems, processes, culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic priorities and to consider whether those priorities have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.
- 4.10 This is the third year of the Council's current Corporate Strategy. The Council should be rightly proud of the achievements of the previous strategy and is now concentrating on the actions agreed in February to ensure the delivery of the new key objectives continues.
- 4.11 The roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, along with the delegations from The Cabinet and the Council are set out in the Constitution. In addition, there are member role profiles and an officer/member protocol that sets out the respective responsibilities and relationships of officers and members. The Constitution is kept under regular review, overseen by the Audit and Standards Committee and the document is fully reviewed every three years. A revised Leaders Statement has been developed which summarises all of the executive delegations which are currently in place.
- 4.12 A risk management framework is reviewed annually which is supported by the County Council. The provision of such advice is now built into the service level agreement for audit services. Operational risks form part of the service plans and high level risks are identified in the strategic risk register which is periodically reviewed by the Management Team.
- 4.13 The Council has received a number of accolades from April 2016 to March 2017, showing it to be a high-performing Council. Achievements include the following: -
  - Bancroft Gardens earns 2016 TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence;
  - SDC's leisure contractor, Everyone Active, wins Operator of the Year, for the fourth time;
  - SDC receives best ever Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) rating – the overall satisfaction score for all council services was 79.1%;
  - SDC awarded Disability Confident Employer status;
  - SDC Dementia friendly organisation;

- SDC are currently 7<sup>th</sup> out of all waste collection authorities for recycling and composting. 2016/17 has seen a further improvement in performance with a recycling rate of 61.3% which may improve our position when the league table is produced later in 2017.

4.14 Other notable things achieved included: -

- New Management structure for SDC;
- SDC launch new anti-fraud app for smartphones – Stratford-on-Avon Fraud Reporter;
- Venture House, the District Council's new state-of-the-art business centre opened in April 2016 with an official opening in July 2016;
- SDC welcomed civic dignitaries from Fuzhou City in China to explore economic and cultural links;
- Shakespeare's 400th Celebrations;
- SDC adopts Long Compton Development Plan – the first to be made in the District after holding first Referendum;
- Warwickshire hosts the Aviva Women's Cycle with Stage 2 finishing in Stratford-upon-Avon;
- SDC receive £200,000 from Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) to contribute towards supporting the redevelopment of the Priory Square site in Studley;
- SDC's leisure contractor, Everyone Active, invest over £250,000 to refurbish the fitness suites at Stratford and Shipston;
- SDC approves Core Strategy document – the planning blueprint for sustainable future development in the District up to 2031;
- Core Strategy adoption safeguards Wellesbourne Airfield for the retention and enhancement of aviation activity on site;
- Stratford River Festival;
- National Playday event at Stratford Recreation Ground;
- SDC and others visit Fuzhou City in China to see the plans to produce a development in China reflecting the works of Miguel Cerrantes, William Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu, contemporary playwrights;
- Digital Inclusion Grants awarded to seven voluntary and community organisations;
- SDC joins the West Midlands Combined Authority as a non-constituent member;
- Took part in #OurDay a local government tweetathon – posting 120 tweets;
- SDC welcome the first two Syrian refugee families under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement (VPR) Programme;
- Hodgson Green Children's Trim Trail wins £12,000 grant in Tesco's Bags of help Initiative;

- SDC supports Small Business Saturday.

## 5 Key Issues and Targets – 2016/17

5.1 The second year of the Council's new Corporate Strategy has been completed:

### 5.1.1 *Objective 1 – A flourishing local economy*

- To positively embrace the Local Enterprise Partnership to influence its plans, priorities and impact upon our District and maximise the use of national funding opportunities such as the City Deal and Regional Growth Fund to boost business opportunities in our area.
- Work with our partners to ensure that new development provides the necessary schools and transport infrastructure for local residents, especially the working population.
- Maximise the benefit of the local tourism industry including support for the local Destination Management Organisation, *Shakespeare's England*.
- To support further development of the Broadband infrastructure across our District which will assist businesses with the connections they require.

#### *Progress 2016/17:*

- *Influencing Local Enterprise Partnership to secure growth bids for the area was achieved. The Growth Hub engaged with 316 businesses and assisted a further 99.*
- *Work completed on new Shakespeare's England website to be launched early 2017/18.*
- *Implementation of BDUK Contract 2 - Phase 2 has been achieved with Parts 1 and 2 due for completion in 2019.*

### 5.1.2 *Objective 2 – People and their Environment*

- Facilitate the delivery of housing targets including working with developers to identify suitable land and locations for developments and ensuring 35% affordable housing provision.
- Embrace the landscape and environmental protection provided by our Core Strategy when considering new development.
- Promote Health and Wellbeing including playing an active role in the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Ensure the Crime & Disorder reduction strategy actions are delivered.
- Minimise the amount of waste going into landfill.
- Identify long term solutions to particular sites throughout the District which are detrimental to the local community.

### ***Progress 2016/17:***

- Overall CSI – Customer satisfaction Index with Council Services – has achieved the highest customer satisfaction score since monitoring began in 2002.
- 263 new affordable homes were enabled in the District.
- Core Strategy was adopted in June 2016.
- Following adoption of the Core Strategy, Reviews of the implementation of the Landscape and Environmental issues and the Green Belt have taken place and all planning decisions are now made in accordance with all provisions of the Core Strategy including all landscape and environmental policies. All planning appeal decisions are reviewed to assess correct application of these policies.
- The Planning Service exceeded national planning performance targets for the speed of decisions making in all categories:
  - Major applications: 100% (national target 60%)
  - Minor applications: 96.3% (national target 65%)
  - Other applications: 89.2% (national target 80%)
- The Council continues to participate in the Health and Wellbeing Board. Action Plan presented to the Board in September 2016.
- Implementation of the Action Plans for Violence, Anti-Social Behaviour and Rural Crime are on target. Achievements for Year 2 include; Busy Nights Calendar to target partner and volunteer resources to key dates and hotspots; Re-launch of 'Bardwatch' Pub; Retail Watch Scheme and promotion of the 'Going Out, Staying Safe' campaign; Re-launch of the street begging campaign; partnership working resulted in 89% of high risk Anti-Social Behaviour victims reducing their risk within 6 months; funding secured from Police and Crime Commissioner for the Rural Crime Coordinator post for 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- The Council continues to be represented at the South Warwickshire Waste Partnership.
- SDC are currently 7<sup>th</sup> out of all waste collection authorities for recycling and composting. 2016/17 has seen a further improvement in performance with a recycling rate of 61.3% which may improve our position when the league table is published late 2017.

#### ***5.1.3 Objective 3 – Responsible Community Leadership***

- Seek opportunities to work with our partners to achieve benefits for our residents. Expand our programme of sharing services with other Councils.
- Supporting vulnerable people especially those becoming homeless, those adjusting to benefit changes and those needing supported accommodation.
- Work with our partners to improve the District's infrastructure

including broadband, transportation, education, utilities and emergency services.

- Identify opportunities to improve access to local services, especially for those in remote communities.
- Speak up for residents locally and nationally so that local communities are in a better position to help themselves.

***Progress 2016/17:***

- *Implementation of new Financial Management System.*
- *Programme for the development of infrastructure needs for the District has been developed and presented to Cabinet. This includes a list of 'shovel ready' project proposals.*
- *Customer Access Terminals - all current sites operational. A Review of the effectiveness of the CATs will take place in early 2017/18 before further sites are rolled out.*
- *Increased representation at regional District Council Network (DCN) events.*

5.2 As reported earlier, one of the major challenges for the Council is its long- term financial sustainability when faced with reductions in Government support. The Council is currently a member of the *Coventry and Warwickshire Business Rate Pool* which should provide additional financial resilience to the Council. The Council is actively considering an invitation from government to participate in a 100% scheme. The Council has implemented a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme during 2017/18 and will be reviewing this before determining the position for 2018/19.

5.3 It is inevitable that during the next few years, further reductions in costs will need to be delivered. The Council will continue to work with its partners in exploring opportunities for shared services, along with exploring alternative service delivery models.

5.4 At the meeting of Council in July 2016 the Core Strategy for 2011-2031 was adopted. The strategy allows for a housing requirement needed to provide a balance with economic growth indicates a need for 14,480 new homes over the plan period (2011-2031), an average of 724 homes per year. This is a significant achievement for the Council and follows many years of effort and 'moving goal-posts' to reach this point. The working in relation to the Core Strategy is not yet completed additional Supplementary Planning Documents are required in the following areas: -

- Long Marston Airfield;
- Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone; and
- Development Requirements.

5.5 In addition, the following items will need to be considered by Council: -

- Local Development Scheme;
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment;
- Authority Annual Monitoring Report;
- Reserve Housing Development Sites Policy;

- Community Infrastructure Levy Policy adoption (awaiting Planning Inspector report);
  - Annual Housing Implementation Strategy;
  - Tenancy Strategy; and
  - Development requirements SPD
- 5.6 In May the Council was confirmed as a Non Constituent Member (NCM) of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The Council has been warmly welcomed into this group and is helping to influence the future direction of and focus of the Combined Authority. We are working closely with the Mayor to ensure that the interests of the Council and fellow NCMs are taken in to account.
- 5.7 With reducing budgets, priorities will have to be decided and the Council will have to remain resolute about those, targeting areas of highest need. The actions are set out within the overall Council Plan as agreed high-level actions.
- 5.8 There will be continued support and development of the Council's overview and scrutiny function and this will be maintained through training and development and by focusing the work of the Committees on areas which will assist the Council in achieving its overall objectives.
- 5.9 The Council will continue to work closely with the District's communities, enhancing their engagement and opportunities for involvement in Council decision-making. The Council's Community Engagement Plan covers the period 2015-19.

## **6 Options available to the Council**

- 6.1 To debate the analysis of the past events and comment on the future proposals.

## **7 Evidence Base**

- 7.1 The evidence base is formulated from surveys undertaken in the past twelve months, plus insight from various sources. The evidence base for this can be found in the Appendix.

## **8 Members' Comments**

- 8.1 Comments from the Leader of the Council are contained within this report.

## **9 Implications of the Proposal**

### ***9.1 Legal/Human Rights Implications***

- 9.1.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

### ***9.2 Financial***

- 9.2.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

### ***9.3 Environmental***

- 9.3.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

### ***9.4 Corporate Strategy***

- 9.4.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

### ***9.5 Analysis of the effects on Equality***

- 9.5.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

**10 Risk Assessment**

- 10.1 The evidence provided in this report, either through customer insight or public opinion, must be taken into account in the decision-making processes, when setting the budget and formulating strategy/policies.

**11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The report outlines the past year's actions and future proposals for 2017/18.

Councillor Chris Saint  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

## **APPENDIX:**

**THE EVIDENCE BASE SOURCES FOR THE DATA IN THE REPORT INCLUDES:-**

**The Office for National Statistics nomis (official labour market statistics) Labour Market Profile Stratford-on-Avon**

*<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1048.aspx>*

**Warwickshire County Council - Stratford-on-Avon District Economic Overview Summary 2017**

**Inter Departmental Business Register 2016, and the ONS Business Register & Employment Survey 2015**

**Health Profile 2017 of Stratford-on-Avon - Public Health England**

*<http://fingertipsreports.phe.org.uk/health-profiles/2017/e07000221.pdf>*

**Stratford-on-Avon District Council Residents' Survey 2017**