

EXECUTIVE'S PRIORITIES

1. The vision for the Council was clearly set out in the City Plan 2011 - 2014 which was recently published. The stated vision is that:

“We want to attract more jobs for local people, more investment in the city and provide high quality, low cost services that meet customer needs.”

2. This vision guides all that we intend to do and is the key factor which has underpinned the development of the budget for 2012/13 and future years, operating within the challenging financial environment in which we find ourselves.
3. In a tight financial climate, the main priorities for the city are to achieve sustained **economic growth** and **low cost, efficient, customer centred services** to benefit a local people and businesses in the city. The four key City challenges are:

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Stimulating higher levels of business start up
- Increasing rates of job growth, particularly in the private sector
- Stimulating additional inward investment
- Encouraging higher levels of employment and economic activity
- Tackling deprivation in specific areas of the city, including completing a successful Estate Regeneration programme.

2. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND SKILLS:

- Supporting local schools and colleges to improve and be excellent
- Increasing educational attainment and skills
- Increasing the proportion of young people who are in education, employment or training
- Improving life chances for children in care and care leavers.

3. WELL BEING:

- Safeguarding children and families
- Supporting vulnerable people and promoting long term independence
- Improving health and reducing health inequalities
- Reducing crime and anti social behaviour rates and improving public perception of crime
- Encouraging active citizenship, volunteering and personal responsibility.

4. A SUSTAINABLE, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT:

- Meeting the housing growth needs to support the economy
- Securing transport and infrastructure needs to support the economy
- Developing a high quality street scene
- Meeting our carbon reduction commitments

4. Residents have told us what is important to them: increasing job growth and levels of employment; reducing crime and anti social behaviour; keeping children safe; improving roads, pavements and street lighting and supporting vulnerable people.

We have looked at our performance and changes that may impact on the Council over the next three years. We know that we will not have the money to continue to do everything we have done so far and therefore, we have focused our seven priorities on the most important things that the Council can directly influence and which will address the four key challenges we face as a City. We will also be taking into consideration the analysis of the Index of Multiple Deprivation which identifies six geographical areas in the City with the highest levels of need. The priorities are:

- 1) More jobs for local people.
- 2) More local people who are well educated and skilled.
- 3) A better and safer place in which to live and invest.
- 4) Better protection for children and young people.
- 5) Support for the most vulnerable people and families.
- 6) Reducing health inequalities.
- 7) Reshaping the Council for the future.

5. The budget proposals are designed to support all of these priorities. These include maintaining:
 - Investment in highways,
 - Library provision across the City,
 - Provision of Sure Start services,
 - Parking charges at current reduced levels in key areas
 - Weekly bin collections and
 - Services in Children's Services and Learning where there will be no service reductions proposed.

More Jobs For Local People

6. Specifically with reference to supporting the creation of more jobs for local people, Southampton can look ahead to a period of major opportunity over the next 20 years which will bring between 10 – 20,000 additional jobs, more than 16,000 homes, significant growth in commercial space, a diverse and enhanced cultural experience and a new cruise terminal. Southampton will play a central role in helping the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure that the city and surrounding travel to work area is competitively positioned to attract and support jobs.
7. Physical developments worth over £500M are expected in the next five to ten years including developing the Royal Pier, Watermark West Quay, West Quay Site B and Woolston Centenary Quay. We will build on economic growth and Southampton's ideal local and national and international transport links. Investment to improve Southampton Central Station in partnership with South West Trains and Network Rail is taking place. £100M highways infrastructure investment over ten years.

8. Through a new partnership with Balfour Beatty and a 25 year street lighting PFI in partnership with Southern Electric Contracting, we are investing £28M with central government investment of £28m funding to replace street lighting across the city. In addition, the Cultural Quarter is expected to bring in £175M of private and public investment, generate around 2,000 jobs and bring in £21M additional spend from over one million new visitors to this area of the city by 2015. Sustained growth will create the potential for thousands of new local jobs, including 'green economy' jobs.