



Corporate Strategy

2020 - 2024



Message from the Mayor

During my second term as your Elected Mayor, I want to continue to deliver on my manifesto commitments and ensure the expectations, ambitions and needs of our community are met.

As I write this introduction to our Corporate Strategy, I can only reflect on the very challenging impacts that the Covid 19 virus has brought to almost every facet of our lives.

This strategy takes into account the changes we have had to make as a council to get through the pandemic and ensure our services are fit for the future.

We have had to adapt to new ways of working by using digital technology. This has enabled us to continue to deliver essential services and at the same time support the most vulnerable in our communities promoting health, inclusivity and wellbeing for all our residents.

Our budget pressures have become ever more challenging owing to the long term impacts of austerity, and unplanned for demands on our finances as a result of the pandemic.

However, we are determined, through the Corporate Strategy, to work successfully with our partners, secure service delivery and support the ambitions of our residents to meet our primary aim of making Copeland a better place to live, work and visit.

This strategy is a blueprint for a truly exciting and productive journey that will help create the Copeland we all want to see and I commend it to you.

Mike Starkie
Elected Mayor of Copeland





Message from the Chief Executive

The Corporate Strategy is commended to you with a great sense of pride and focus. This document has been written, and, rewritten with an ever changing set of challenges and concerns about what the future looks like and what the impact of Covid, Brexit and Local Government Reform will have on us as individuals, as communities, our health, and our economy.

Whilst there is uncertainty at this moment, the Council has set out long-term plans for Copeland's economic future through our 2040 Economic Vision and Nuclear Prospectus which detail how we will adapt and develop as a place and as a collective, this Corporate Strategy pinpoints where we as a council will focus.

Our role, function, and ability to deliver at the local level has never been more demonstrable. The team at Copeland Borough Council has performed with commitment, dedication and determination, and will continue to do so. However, with increasing demands upon us, and diminishing resources finding the balance is part of the challenge. We have a close relationship with our communities and we will continue to work very hard, as a team to meet both needs and expectation.

In producing this Strategy we continue to modernise as a council, be ambitious about not only key service delivery but also in our role as a partner and use our wider influence.

The events of 2020 have not limited our ambition, but reinforced the need for us to make a path through the next few years, show local leadership and give our workforce and communities confidence in who we are, what we do, and what we will do for the duration of this Council and this excellent strategy.

Pat Graham

Pat Graham
Chief Executive



community / economy / environment / business / partnerships

Let's make Copeland a better place to live, work and visit.

Our three ambitions will ensure that Copeland's economy, community and environment reflect the aspirations and prosperity of our area.

Our two enabling factors of being business-minded and partnership working, will enable us to deliver our ambitions.



Our core values of integrity, respect and courage underpin all that we do.

Our vision for Copeland is to be:

- A globally recognised place of innovation and opportunity
- A major clean energy hub for the UK
- A sustainable place with a resilient economy that supports thriving communities.





Achievements

Over the past four years we focused on our strategic ambitions of Town Centre Regeneration, Healthy and Inclusive Communities, Embedding a Commercial Culture and Strengthening our Operations.

We are very proud of our achievements and will continue to build on our successes as we focus on our strategic themes of Economy, Community and Environment over the next four years. Some of our key achievements:

Pride of Place Awarded 100 building improvements grants to revitalise town centres.	Regeneration Projects Helped secure £10m for regeneration projects across Copeland.	Social Inclusion Secured funding and supported delivery partners to reduce social, financial and digital exclusion.	In 2019/20: 1218 environmental health complaints were investigated. 331 food premises were inspected. 1185 families were supported through bereavement. £13.36 million was awarded in housing benefit. 444 planning applications were determined. 546 households were supported through potential homelessness. 107 people were helped to leave abusive homes 47 of these were men and women, 60 were children. 2.2 million bins, bags and boxes were collected. 9,202 tonnes of waste was sent to be recycled. 33,600 homes were provided with regular waste collection services.
Reduced empty homes Brought 120 long-term empty properties back into use.	Work and Skills Enabled 140 residents to access training and employment through our Work and Skills Partnership.	Increased recycling Our kerbside service made regular collections from over 31,000 homes last year.	
Tackled nuisance behaviour Supported a multi-agency approach to reduce nuisance and anti-social behaviour through the Copeland Hub.	<i>Making Copeland, a better place to live, work and visit</i>	Domestic Abuse Support Provided vital support to residents affected by domestic abuse.	
Future Opportunities Group Used partnership working and influence to secure sustainable economic growth across the borough.	Pest Control Launched our Pest Control Service for domestic and businesses premises.	Shop Local campaign Stimulated growth and helped local businesses in the recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic.	
Covid 19 support Provided 275 food bags and 159 care bags and handled 1700 calls.	Tourism Held a Tourism Summit and secured funding for a Tourism Information Point and large-scale Coastal Regeneration Programme.	Expanded Bereavement Services Improvements to the site and services at Distington Hall.	



Challenges and Opportunities

Whilst there is much to celebrate across our communities, there exists a disparity of wealth in Copeland. There are those that have and those that most definitely do not have.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has exacerbated the multiple problems already faced by some and created newly vulnerable groups.

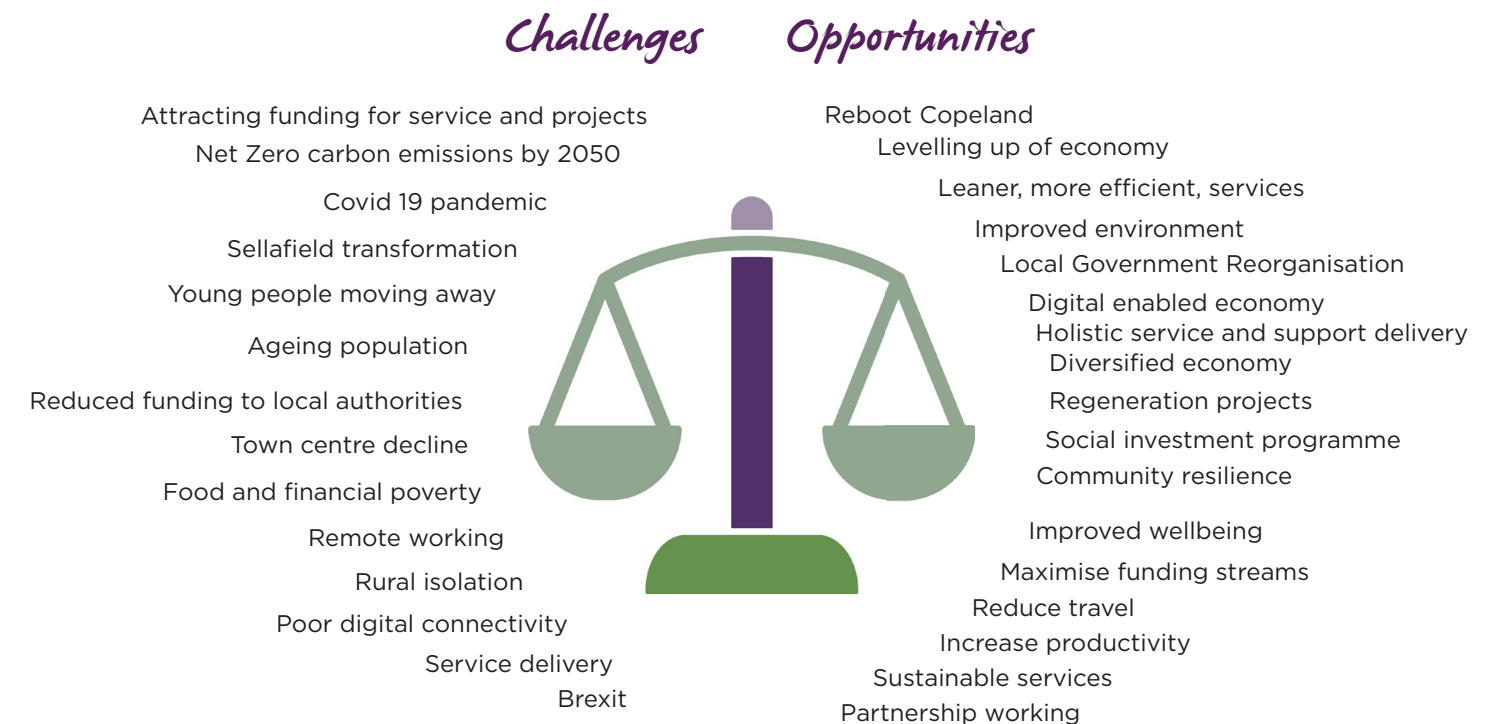
At the time of writing this strategy, we are faced with many challenges: the full impact of Covid 19 is still to be seen; our principle employer, Sellafield, is transforming as it moves away from reprocessing, and our organisation, along with many others, is adjusting to new ways of agile working against a backdrop of financial uncertainty.

However where there are challenges there are opportunities and we are absolutely focused on bringing about positive and long-lasting change in Copeland.

To do this we will continue to explore commercial opportunities and take a business-minded approach to our operations in order to provide services of the highest possible quality and best value for our residents.

Beyond this, we will continue to work with partners to secure a sustainable economy and support for the most vulnerable.

Local Government Reorganisation across Cumbria will offer opportunities for efficiencies and improvements in service provision.



Community



Ambition 1 - Let's ensure our communities can thrive

Copeland has long had a strong tradition of community support and this was clearly demonstrated during the Covid 19 pandemic, with individuals and groups of volunteers coming together to help each other and look after the most vulnerable. The Council's strengths in leadership and partnership working came to the fore at this time, providing care and support for our residents and communities and planning for recovery.

Within the borough there is a 'Tale of Two Copelands' – the 'haves and have nots'. Nationally high salaries enjoyed predominantly by nuclear industry workers mask underlying issues of poorer standards of health and education, lower household incomes, and higher levels of benefits-dependency concentrated in pockets of deprivation. In addition, those on low incomes have been disproportionately affected by the health and economic impacts of Covid 19.

We are passionate in our aim to have truly healthy, resilient and inclusive communities where residents of all ages and abilities, including the most vulnerable, can thrive. This is key in our work towards successful local government reorganisation.

Through this strategy our focus will be:

- Enabling residents to have equal access to opportunities, services and the support they require to participate fully in society and thrive throughout their lives.
- Building on the experience, skills and knowledge learned during the Covid 19 pandemic to ensure our communities are truly inclusive and resilient.
- Working with partners to drive social mobility by supporting the development of first-class health and education services in Copeland, including work and skills programmes and local apprenticeship schemes.
- Working in partnership through our Social Inclusion Programme to improve outcomes for those disadvantaged by social, financial and digital exclusion, debt, food and fuel poverty, mental health issues, domestic abuse, limited social and family support, and drug and alcohol abuse.
- Supporting residents to develop and maintain more active lifestyles and make the most of our beautiful open spaces for exercise and recreation as a key building block for improving health and wellbeing and avoiding poor health in the future.
- Building on success and strong leadership in the reduction of homelessness and empty homes through established partnership working.
- Acknowledging and supporting the important role that voluntary organisations have in our communities.
- Encouraging and enabling small, local groups to support their communities and build on the volunteer base successfully developed during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Economy



Ambition 2 - Let's maximise our opportunities for growth

Throughout 2020, the mobilisation of community groups and volunteers in partnership with business, industry, third sector and local government to meet the immediate needs the most vulnerable has challenged us to rethink and reimagine the role of business and the individual in the relationship between public health, economic wellbeing and place.

Community Wealth Building, the new economic model set out in the Copeland Vision 2040, aims to create distributive flows of wealth, with public and private spending, land and property, finance and employment practices all contributing to a generative economy, in which investment flows back into places and benefits people and communities.

Through this strategy our focus will be:

- Lobbying for improvement in digital connectivity, which was shown to be so crucial during the pandemic for operating businesses and maintaining council services.
- Developing a Nuclear Prospectus for West Cumbria, promoting West Cumbria as the Centre of Nuclear Excellence, seeking national recognition of the assets and skills that are unique to this area and the required investment to generate wealth and prosperity.
- Working in partnership to maximise funding streams and economic opportunities.
- Developing tourism, leisure and the arts in Copeland as key contributors to the economy.
- Working collaboratively and through strong leadership to deliver efficient public services, capitalising on the skills, capability and professionalism of our workforce.
- Attracting business and investment to keep our talented young people in Copeland.
- Taking a leadership role in the development of the Industrial Solutions Hub, making Copeland a prime location for business and enterprise.
- Working together to secure public and private investment into our town centres, reinventing our high streets to deliver new opportunities capitalising on the experience economy.
- Ensuring that we are in a position to take advantage of all opportunities and challenges presented as the UK leaves the European Union.
- Encouraging residents to 'shop local' and support Copeland traders and businesses.
- Working in partnership with industry, supply chain and community groups on the Reboot programme

Environment



Ambition 3 - Let's protect and enhance our environment

Copeland is set within the Lake District National Park, a beautiful coastline and a World Heritage site.

We have a duty to protect this unique environment as custodians on behalf of future generations whilst ensuring that it can support communities and provide jobs and a secure, sustainable economy.

The Council has produced a new Climate and Environment Policy and published a Climate Position Statement which demonstrate our absolute commitment to caring for our environment.

Copeland Council is engaged with the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership working towards Cumbria's Net Zero target under the Joint Public Health Strategy for Cumbria. This partnership has received £2.5m of lottery funding for a decarbonisation programme for Cumbria, from which we will benefit in Copeland

The Council is a significant contributor to the Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus, which is centred around the vision of a Cumbria Clean Energy Park, the trailblazer for the UK's decarbonised energy system.

Through this strategy our focus will be:

- Promoting our Climate and Environment policy and action plan, which sets out our ambitions and responsibilities as leaders in the community, to help our residents, businesses and visitors to adopt sustainable ways to live, work and visit Copeland.
- Protecting and promoting our stunning, renowned environment and our rich heritage.
- Initiating woodland creation and encouraging our communities to care for their environment.
- Developing all our towns and villages as healthy places to live, work and visit.
- Embracing digital technology to minimise travel, thus reducing our carbon footprint.
- Continuing to increase recycling rates and reduce waste sent to landfill.
- Creation and maintenance of cycle ways and recreational routes along the Lake District Coast and the England Coastal Path.
- Encourage 'greener' travel to work – walking, cycling, car sharing and using public transport where possible.
- Working with partners on flood management and prevention measures.
- Promoting affordable warmth and energy efficiency schemes, which not only benefit the environment but help address fuel poverty through reduced energy consumption.

Business and Partnerships



Let's be a modern and progressive organisation with a business culture

With the reduction in funding from central Government, the Council is required to adopt a more business-minded approach to the delivery of our services.

To meet the ambitions laid out in this strategy, we must ensure we are financially secure and sustainable.

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has increased demand on our services while reducing our commercial income streams and we have had to adapt to new agile ways of working and interacting with our customers.

Through this strategy, we aim to continue to grow the commercial arm of our operations, improve our processes and generate cost savings where we can.

We will drive the development of our own workforce and benchmark our performance against best practice in public and private sectors.

Through this strategy our focus will be:

- The financial sustainability of the Council.
- Digital accessibility and quality of our services.
- Workforce development and welfare.
- IT investment to support agile working whilst ensuring cyber security.

Let's work collaboratively to maximise effect



Our ambitions are far reaching and we cannot achieve them on our own.

We will explore ways of working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to ensure greater efficiencies. We will continue to work in partnership to secure skills, resources and funding to deliver essential services and support for our residents.

- Supporting delivery partners, voluntary sector and grass-roots organisations through our Social Inclusion Programme.
- Exploring options to work with other authorities to maintain and operate lean, efficient public services.
- Work with our MP to influence government decisions.
- Utilising key partnerships to grow economic, environmental and social benefits for the borough.



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