



Portsmouth City Council

CORPORATE PLAN

2024–2026

Improving, protecting and celebrating Portsmouth

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the Corporate Plan for Portsmouth: 2024–2026

We are delighted to introduce this plan which sets out the City Council's mission and priorities for our extraordinary city and its residents for the next two years and to help achieve the city's vision for 2040.

The core of our plan is providing the essential services day in, day out that our residents rely on. The range and extent of these services, and the commitment of our staff and partners to deliver these, are remarkable.

The mission of our plan is ambitious and exciting: to champion and celebrate our city, improve the lives of our residents, and enhance and protect our environment.

We recognise that we face significant challenges to achieve our mission and deliver this plan. So we will need to work as 'One Council' effectively

and creatively, simplifying and transforming what we do and how we do so we can confront these challenges and be the most effective and efficient organisation that we can be.

We will also continue to develop our work with our partners and communities, with other organisations and businesses together with our residents, as working in collaboration with the city as a whole, we will achieve so much more.

We have much to look forward to over the next two years, and this plan provides a clear pathway for us to improve, protect, celebrate and champion our wonderful city.

Thank you to all our staff, Councillors and partners whose hard work and commitment will help deliver this plan for Portsmouth and its residents.



Cllr Steve Pitt
Leader of the council



Natalie Brahma-Pearl
Chief Executive

CITY VISION: SHARED VALUES, SHARED ASPIRATIONS

The Corporate Plan is informed by the City Vision, which sets out the aspirations the people of Portsmouth have for their city, how they want people to behave towards each other, and how it should feel to live here.

**PORTSMOUTH
PEOPLE VALUE
COLLABORATION,
COMMUNITY,
EQUALITY,
RESPECT, AND
INNOVATION.**

The City Vision sets out six clear aspirations, that in 2040 Portsmouth will be:

**A healthy and
happy city**



**A city of
lifelong
learning**



**A city rich in
culture and
creativity**



A green city



**A city with
a thriving
economy**



**A city with
easy travel**



TEAM PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth is a city that values collaboration and we are proud of the work we do in partnership with other organisations, with businesses and with residents and communities, shaping our core services and delivering transformational projects, plans and strategies together to make the aspirations of our City Vision a reality.

The Council works in partnership with a broad range of organisations, including neighbouring authorities, our contractors, NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Portsmouth Hospitals University Trust, Solent NHS Trust, Hampshire Constabulary, the Probation Service, Hampshire and IOW Fire and Rescue Service, the Royal Navy, University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth Football Club and City of Sanctuary.

The Council also works with organisations that bring together and represent important sectors in the city, including Shaping Portsmouth (representing businesses in the city), Portsmouth Creates (bringing together the creative and cultural sector), Portsmouth Education Partnership (bringing together schools and other partners involved in education) and HIVE Portsmouth (representing and supporting the city's voluntary and community sector).

We also work as partners on areas of activity that are wider than just Portsmouth too. Examples of this are our work in waste disposal, our regional transport arrangements and in the arrangements we have for shared service delivery with other local authorities. We have a significant portfolio of local authority managed homes in Havant Borough Council, and homes in other boroughs too following our acquisition of a number of properties from Clarion Housing Association.



OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

Our Council values were chosen following extensive consultation, including with residents, customers, councillors and staff. Our values reflect the values of the people of Portsmouth expressed through the City Vision, as well as what is important to our staff about the kind of organisation we want to be. The values are the foundation of our organisation, and underpin everything we do.

The Council values are:



RESPECT

Respect: we treat everyone with respect, considering the feelings, wellbeing, safety and rights of others



INTEGRITY

Integrity: we are accountable, can be trusted and take responsibility for our actions



COLLABORATION

Collaboration: we work together as a team and with our colleagues, residents and partners and communities to achieve more



INCLUSIVE

Inclusive: we recognise diversity, are open, fair and provide equal opportunity to all



PEOPLE-FOCUSED

People-focused: we put people first and ensure our customers are at the heart of everything we do.

OUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council is a big and complex organisation.

- we employ 5056 staff (including in local authority maintained schools)
- we serve a population of 208,000 people in the city
- our day to day running costs – what we call our revenue expenditure – amounts to around £667m a year
- our capital expenditure – on land, property and infrastructure – is around £309m
- expenditure in Adults and Children's Social Care represents about 50% of our expenditure that we can control

As a unitary authority, we provide the full range of local government services, and so our residents rely on us to:

- ensure older people and working age adults with care and support needs have the care they need and are supported to live independently
- ensure safe and fluid movement of traffic across Portsmouth's road network
- maintain our transport infrastructure, parks, open spaces and public buildings
- offer housing services
- support education, early years and children with special educational needs and disabilities
- keep children safe and families together where possible
- improve and protect the health and emotional wellbeing of residents
- encourage economic development
- provide planning services
- support culture, museums and libraries
- provide benefits and collect council tax and business rates
- collect their bins and offer recycling opportunities
- keep the city clean, tidy and safe

OUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In doing these things, we undertake a huge number of activities all the time as part of our “business as usual” – the work we have to do to keep the city running and delivering services. In 2023/4, we undertook a huge range of activity in delivering our core business, including (but not limited to):

Lead directorate

♥ Adult Social Care

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Children, Families and Education

📁 Corporate Services

☆ Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

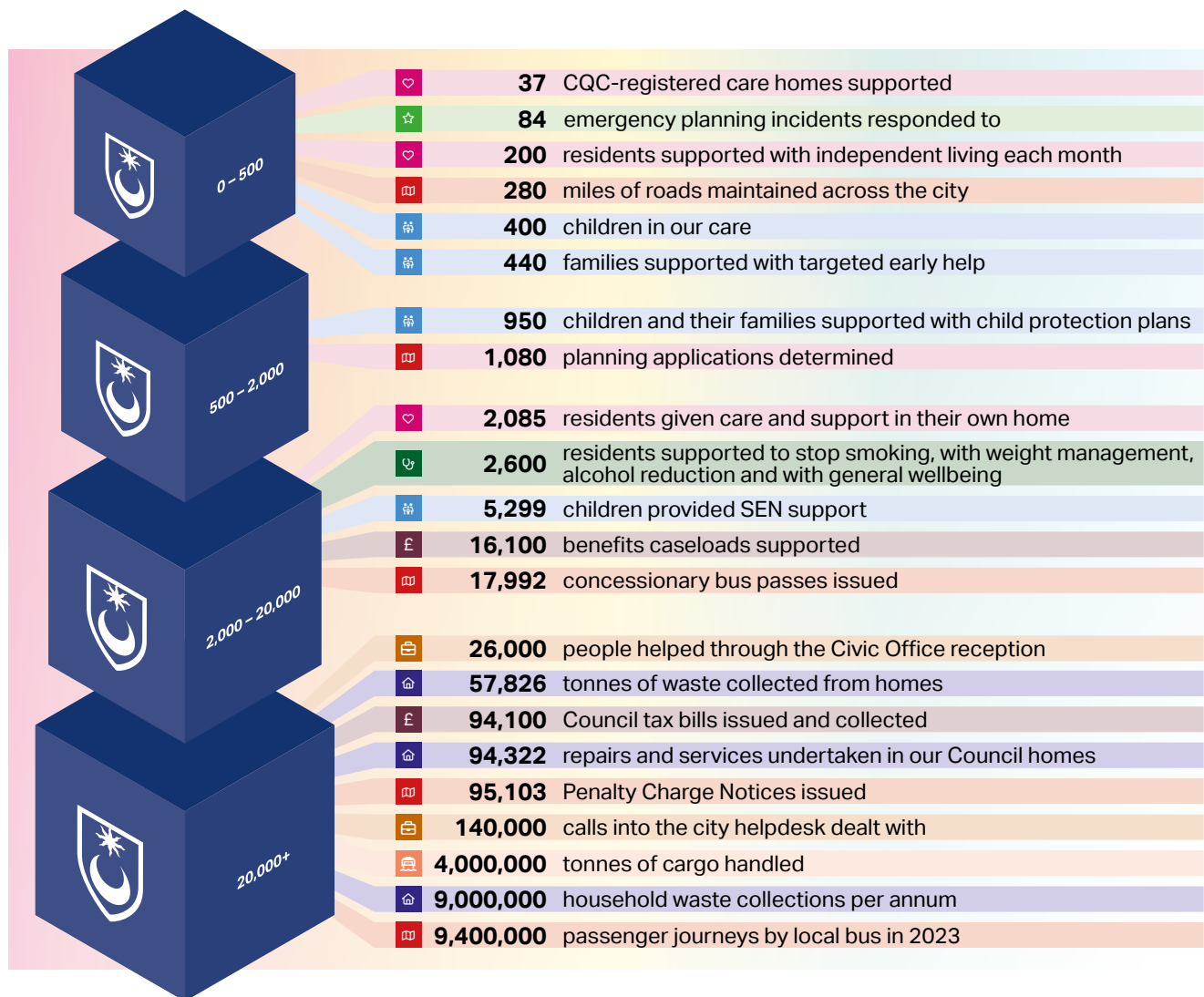
📖 Economy, Transport and Planning

£ Finance and Resources

🏠 Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building Services

🚢 Portsmouth International Port

🏥 Public Health



OUR CHALLENGES

Alongside the delivery of all our statutory responsibilities and functions, we have things which we will be prioritising in the short term to improve the way we work as an organisation, and to improve the way the city works and the experience of living in it.

We have some significant challenges which will be our priorities to focus on in 2024–2026:

Challenge



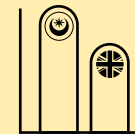
We are the second most densely populated local authority area in the UK outside of central London, with a population of 210,300 (as per the 2023 Mid-Year Estimate) residing within 15.5 square miles. There is a restricted land supply in which to provide more homes and employment space to support economic growth.

Challenge



We are ranked 59th most deprived out of 317 local authorities in England (where 1 is the most deprived), with 15% of the city's population experiencing income deprivation. Charles Dickens ward tends to be the most deprived ward in the city across all of the various domains. 22% of all children (aged 0–19) in the city are living in poverty (which is above the England average) and in some areas the rate is twice the national average (Charles Dickens ward).

Challenge



We are an employment hub for the region, but the unemployment rate in Portsmouth is higher than the UK average, and that of the surrounding area.

OUR CHALLENGES

Challenge



Despite being a university city, we have relatively few people with degree level skills; only 48.6% of residents against a rate of 70.2% in the south-east and 67.8% nationally. We also have a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications compared to the average for the south-east and the national rate.

Challenge



We have a unique natural environment, but challenges in protecting it, including some areas of poor air quality and some areas where there are concerns about bathing water quality.

Challenge



As an island city, we are particularly vulnerable to some of the impacts of climate change and therefore have a pressing need to develop mitigation strategies.

Challenge



Across a range of areas, health outcomes are poor, and figures from the Nuffield Trust showed that we have one of the highest ratios of patients to GP in the country; there have been significant falls in the number of dentists operating in the city, and closures of community pharmacies.

OUR MISSION FOR 2024–2026

Portsmouth is an extraordinary city and we need to work together effectively and creatively, simplifying and sharing so that we can confront these challenges, ensure that no one is left behind, and make sure that the city continues to thrive.

Our mission:

To work together with partners and communities to:



- ***champion and celebrate our city***



- ***improve the lives of our residents now and ensure they are prepared for the next stages of their lives***



- ***enhance our environment and protect it for the future***

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

To do this, we will:

- 1. Work with partners to make our streets, roads, homes and public spaces safer, cleaner and greener by:**
 - a. tackling envirocrime, including flytipping, littering, graffiti and other nuisances**
 - b. tackling anti-social behaviour**
 - c. ensuring robust regulatory services, including around housing standards**
 - d. delivering our ambitions for a people-centred connected travel network**
 - e. continuing to drive our strategy to reduce violent crime, including against women and girls**

CASE STUDY – SAFER STREETS

Our city should be a place where everyone feels safe, but we know that fear of harm and abuse has made some places and spaces feel less safe particularly for women and girls. That's why we need a continued focus on standing up to abuse and harassment, using the powers and influence that we have as a local authority to ensure opportunities for abuse to occur are reduced. Through programmes such as safer streets we are working to increase everyone's confidence to recognise and respond to instances of gender-based violence, harassment and abuse. We are working to help people identify situations and prevent them escalating on public transport, in public spaces, and community settings. Alongside this we continue to look for opportunities to design out these crimes, through better lighting, installing CCTV and with targeted projects to transform our public spaces, enabling residents to enjoy and use them safely.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

2. Ensure the city is a welcoming, vibrant and inclusive place in which to live, work and visit by:

- a. improving our key shopping areas and district centres, including supporting retailers who wish to develop a business improvement district
- b. improving our leisure infrastructure including the Bransbury Park leisure centre and Hilsea Lido
- c. Using the city centenary as a catalyst for cultural activity, collective experience and civic pride and as a platform for celebrating our heritage
- d. continuing to provide good quality and highly accessible libraries, museums, and leisure opportunities in the city, including providing safe and warm spaces
- e. ensuring that we make sure everything we do is reflective of and welcoming and accessible to the diverse populations in the city, including through our work as a Council of Sanctuary
- f. ensuring that the city is attractive to visitors and outside investors

CASE STUDY – BRANSBURY PARK LEISURE CENTRE

We're investing in Bransbury Park to create a new hub which will bring sports, swimming, and healthcare together.

The plans include a new leisure centre with a swimming pool and GP surgery, along with a relocated play area with brand new equipment. The much-loved miniature railway will be kept.

This modern and ecologically-sound project will mean that this popular green space can be enjoyed by local people for many years to come. It's all part of the Council's commitment to invest in sport across the city, totalling nearly £20 million since 2017.

The future use of the Eastney Pool site will be decided in consultation with the public after the Bransbury Park Leisure Centre build has started. There are currently no plans to dispose of the site.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

3. Make sure that when people need additional help to live their lives, it is there for them by:

- a. supporting children and families with early help
- b. ensuring better outcomes for children we look after and care experienced young people
- c. improving the delivery of support for children with special educational needs and their families, including improving the timeliness of education, health and care plans
- d. continuing to support integrated health and care services, including for mental health, so that people get the best support we can provide to enable them to stay well and independent
- e. developing extra care and supported living services in the city for our older people and working age adults with care and support needs
- f. supporting people to take control of their own health and wellbeing, for example, by tackling addictions or adopting healthier lifestyles
- g. providing support for people struggling with the cost of living
- h. continuing to provide high quality services as a social landlord, and bringing forward schemes to increase housing availability in the city, prioritising social and affordable homes (for example, Somers Orchard) and homes for people with additional needs; and reducing the use of temporary accommodation

CASE STUDY – COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

We provide a Community Connector Service to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst vulnerable adults by connecting people to existing community-based resources appropriate to their needs and interests. The idea is that this support will improve their quality of life and reduce the need for health and social care services.

We regularly gather feedback from clients on this service, which often leads to people feeling less isolated and more confident and supported. One client told us: *"It's a marvellous scheme. I know I can go to the Diversi-tea lounge group on my own. I enjoy it there. I really do. I ought to go there even if I feel I cannot participate because socially it's very nice. Everyone is kind and I feel appreciated there. To be accepted is hard for me, especially as an anxious person. I always wanted to hide in the corner, but I am surprised myself. Your support gave me a breakthrough! I did not feel anxious at all there, thank you for introducing me to the group. Sadly, I am now injured, and I rest a lot but once I get better, I have a place to go, a place to belong."*



OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

4. Protect and enhance the natural and built environment of the city by:

- a. ensuring we are resilient to the impacts of climate change, through our multi-million pound transformative sea defence programme and by developing nature-based solutions
- b. continuing to both lobby and work with partners to improve air and water quality and city biodiversity
- c. developing solutions to address waste reduction, increasing reuse and recycling and responsible waste disposal
- d. ensuring that the organisation is doing all it can to be environmentally responsible in its activity, including reducing carbon emissions in line with our Net Zero commitments
- e. completing the Local Plan
- f. beginning preparation for the end of the Highways PFI contract and future arrangements

CASE STUDY – COASTAL DEFENCES

As a waterfront city, we are particularly vulnerable to some of the impacts of coastal erosion, and the damage created by extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent. To help protect the city, millions of pounds are being invested by the Council and Environment Agency in coastal defence schemes.

Southsea Coastal Scheme

The Southsea Coastal Scheme is responsible for delivering new flood defences along 4.5km of seafront, from Old Portsmouth to Eastney. Their aim is to create new defences that embrace everything we all love about the seafront, whilst reducing the risk of flooding to over 8,000 homes and 700 businesses in Southsea for the next century.

North Portsea Coastal Scheme

The North Portsea Coastal Scheme covers 8.4km of coastline from Tipner through to Milton. Most of the area is low-lying and many of the current coastal defences are approaching the end of their effective lives. The new scheme is designed to increase the standard of protection reducing the risk of coastal flooding to one of the highest in the country, helping to protect 4,200 properties and 500 businesses in the area.



Photo credit - Marcin Jedrysiak Photography

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

5. Strengthen the city economy, creating jobs and opportunities for residents by:

- a. improving education outcomes in the city**
- b. creating a model for youth provision that helps young people have access to opportunities and to develop their skills and interests**
- c. using our social value policy as a way to create opportunities for people who might otherwise face barriers to employment and participation**
- d. working with key partners including the Naval Base and University to drive economic growth and major development in the city, including taking forward the Portsmouth International Port masterplan, the Freeport Area, City Centre North and Tipner**
- e. providing support that enables businesses to locate and grow in Portsmouth, and residents to get the skills they need to access the jobs created**

CASE STUDY – DEVELOPING TIPNER

We are working on future options for Tipner West and Horsea Island East.

Portsmouth was granted funding from the Government through the City Deal to explore how this area could be regenerated to create new employment opportunities in the marine and maritime sector as well as new homes for people in the city.

Seven guiding principles have been agreed by Portsmouth City Council to help shape the future options for the site. These options will have sustainability and nature at their heart and will prioritise the harbour's natural habitats and biodiversity.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2024–2026

6. Speak up for our city by:

- a. working effectively with our strategic partners in Team Portsmouth, including Hive Portsmouth, Shaping Portsmouth and Portsmouth Creates, to achieve wider city objectives
- b. advocating for the city's interests to the new Government, working with the Local Government Association and our city MPs to achieve fair funding, a devolution deal that reflects the city's importance in the region and to access additional funding where it supports the city's objectives
- c. ensuring Portsmouth people's health needs are recognised in the Integrated Care System, and ensuring smooth transition to the new community trusts
- d. continuing to advocate for improved primary care in Portsmouth, including GPs, dentists and community pharmacies and where possible partnering to bring provision forward
- e. continuing to lobby for a satisfactory resolution to the Border Control Post funding gap and future operating model
- f. promoting the many areas of best practice in the city to a wider audience and developing new areas of excellence, such as through the Health Determinants Research Council programme of work

CASE STUDY – HEALTH DETERMINANTS RESEARCH COLLABORATION (HDRC) PORTSMOUTH

HDRC is an exciting new programme, funded by the National Institute of Health and Care Research. From January 2025, it sees Portsmouth become one of 30 centres of excellence showcasing how the research can inform how we tackle health inequalities. Working with the University of Portsmouth and HIVE Portsmouth, we will understand what evidence we need to inform decisions, how we can share the knowledge we already have about what works for our residents, and how we support the Council, partner and communities to generate new insights.



OUR ORGANISATION

Delivering this ambitious programme of activity in the city means that we need to be in good shape as an organisation to achieve everything we need to.

These are challenging times for local government generally. Through an extended period of pressure on public finances, and the significant social and economic shocks of recent years, including the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council has shown great flexibility in the way that it has adapted to changing needs, delivery of services and ways of working.

The biggest share of the money that the local authority receives comes from government grants. Since 2011/12, the Council will have made £108m in savings (49% of controllable spend). Adult and Children's Social Care represent more than 50% of controllable spend, provide services to the most vulnerable, experience the greatest cost pressures and have historically received significant protection from savings. The rising costs of homelessness and supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities are

also creating significant pressures. Funding levels (for instance government funding, council tax and business rates) have not kept pace with the cost pressures arising from prolonged levels of inflation and the resulting "cost of living crisis".

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is the mechanism through which the organisation seeks to address these issues and has been developed to respond to these very challenging circumstances. The strategy has a strong regeneration and value for money focus with a presumption that capital investment will be targeted towards cost savings, income generation and economic growth.

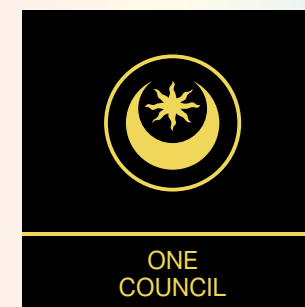
Going forward key risks for us include rising costs driven by demand-led services, supply chain issues and inflationary pressures which create challenges on the revenue budget and for new developments.

There is also an increasing dependency on key staff, and capacity of those staff to delivering increasingly complex briefs is a key risk to the organisation. There are wider workforce

pressures emerging, with challenges recruiting to posts across all areas of the Council.

However, we know where we are being effective, and are delivering good value for money. We know where improvements need to be made, and in most cases have a good understanding of how these can be delivered and a plan to deliver the improvements.

So that we can keep delivering for our city and its residents, and be a strong and successful organisation, we have a number of priorities for our own ways of working.



Working together to achieve more

OUR ORGANISATION

We will make sure we are an efficient and effective organisation, making the most of taxpayers' money to make improvements now and create resilience for the future by:

- a. maintaining preventative options to reduce demand on services and systems (for example, multi-disciplinary neurodiversity teams, Family Hubs, peer led support and reablement)**
- b. looking at processes to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible and implementing a digital strategy**
- c. looking at our assets, including office accommodation, to ensure value for money in how we are serving our community and ensuring they are safe and fit for purpose**
- d. developing a One Council programme to ensure we are working together effectively and living the values of the organisation**

CASE STUDY – DIGITAL STRATEGY

There is huge potential to consider how we rethink the delivery of services to residents and how we operate as an organisation, harnessing the digital opportunities that now exist. Digital skills and connectivity are vital to ensure our residents can access services, interact with friends and family, and compete for jobs. Our digital strategy will provide a clear vision and set of over-arching principles that guide how we will seek to maximise the benefits of the digital age to the benefit of all residents, especially those at risk of digital exclusion.

Within this we will be focusing on ensuring people can access our services in a way that works for them, using technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's operations, and harnessing digital technologies across the city. This will include encouraging the development of digital infrastructure and connectivity to support all of the priorities set out in the City Vision.



HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER

We work in a complex world with many influences on what we do, and how we do it.
In Portsmouth, we can summarise this as:

