

LEIGH-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

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# STRATEGIC PLAN



2023 - 2028

TOWN CLERK | HELEN SYMMONS

# FOREWORD

This document provides an outline of the discussions that have taken place within the Council from January to October 2022 in shaping a strategic plan for the period of 2023 to 2028.

A new Council will be appointed in May 2023, and this Strategic Plan will help to drive our short and long-term goals and to inform our budget-setting and expenditure.

It clearly explains to Councillors, staff, residents, businesses and our partners exactly what the Council intends to achieve over the next five years.

The plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that progress is being made.

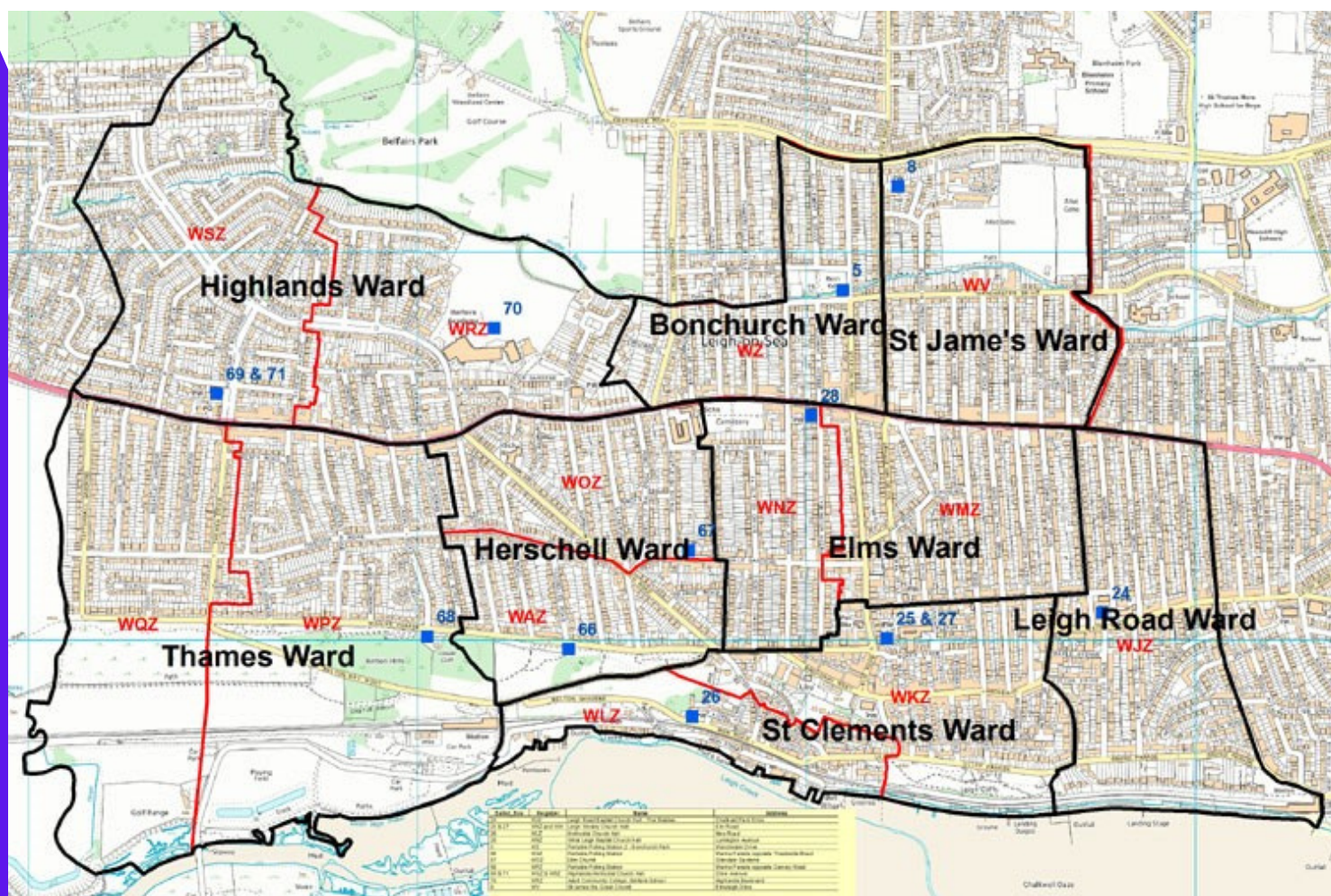
The Councillors and Council Officers are excited to deliver this plan and are determined to ensure that Leigh-on-Sea remains a town that delivers quality services to our residents, local businesses, visitors and the wider community.

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# WARD MAP



## COUNCILLORS

The Council area is split into eight wards. Ordinary elections to be a Councillor on Leigh-on-Sea Town Council take place every four years, unless a casual vacancy arises during this time. The councillors are distributed within the wards as so:

- Bonchurch Ward - 1 Councillor
- Elms Ward - 3 Councillors
- Highlands Ward - 3 Councillors
- Herschell Ward - 2 Councillors
- Leigh Road Ward - 2 Councillors
- St James' Ward - 1 Councillor
- St Clement's Ward - 2 Councillors
- Thames Ward - 2 Councillors

# INTRODUCTION

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council was formed in 1996. It is the only parished Council within the Southend-on-Sea City, and the first tier of local Government. Historically there had been an independent Leigh-on-Sea Urban District Council that ceased to exist in 1913. Today Southend-on-Sea City Council is the primary unitary authority for Leigh.

In 2020, the Town Council was awarded Gold Council status by the National Association of Local Councils. Being a gold council demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development. Gold councils provide leadership for their communities, bring people together, have excellent business planning processes, ensuring value for money as well as constantly seek new innovations and opportunities to improve. They highlight the very best we, as a sector, can achieve for our communities.

Leigh-on-Sea is an active and vibrant working town with a separate and distinctive identity but it is also an integral part of the larger urban community of Southend-on-Sea. In the past Leigh-on-Sea has been voted the happiest place to live by a Rightmove survey.

In the 2021 census, there were 22,600 residents living in the parished area of Leigh-on-Sea and in total there were 10,000 household spaces with a density of 3119 per square kilometre. The median age of a resident was 45 years old. In March 2023, the electorate totaled 17,170.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to represent the people of Leigh-on-Sea and to protect and promote the heritage and identity of Leigh-on-Sea in order to preserve the Town for current residents and to provide a legacy for future generations.

Our values underpin our decisions and actions. We aspire to be:

**Efficient and Effective:** Delivering services, ensuring value for money and evaluating the impact of our actions

**Open and Democratic:** Consulting with local residents and organisations in appropriate decision making

**Proactive and Innovative:** Finding solutions and acting in the best interests of local people

**Diligent:** Complying fully with legislation associated with local government, equal opportunities, health and safety and approved governance procedures



# COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

The Council comprises of four main committees. These committees are decision making bodies, which set the budget and decides how funds are spent. Council meetings are held in public at Leigh Community Centre.

## **Finance & Governance**

To develop, monitor and review Council policies and functions and review the Council's accounts and finances.

## **Staffing**

To consider and deal with staffing issues except where the overall staffing budget will be exceeded. In such cases the Committee will make a recommendation to the Finance & Governance Committee.

## **Community**

To consider and develop all leisure, foreshore and environmental matters relating to the Council's business. Responsibility for all Council premises and assets and for supporting the operation of the Leigh Community Centre (LCC) and considering their further development and the development of other facilities.

## **Planning, Highways & Licensing**

To make observations where appropriate on all planning applications within the Council area and Government and City Council planning consultations and to make site visits where necessary.

To make observations on any Licensing application within the Council area the Committee thinks appropriate.

To make observations on any relevant Highway issue referred from or being discussed by the Highway Authority.

# OUR PROVISION

The work of Council through the separate committees contributes to four main areas:

## **ARTS, CULTURE AND LEISURE**

- Town & Community Centre Events
- Artist in Residence & Community Art Wall Programmes
- Grant Award Scheme
- Community Transport & Over 60's Social Club
- School Holiday Activities
- Seasonal Market
- Youth Club & Youth Forum
- Promote health & wellbeing through activities at Community Centre

## **ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE**

- Planning
- Highways
- Licensing
- Hanging flower baskets and Christmas lighting
- Seasonal Litter Picks

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- Website
- Social Media
- Volunteer Scheme
- Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Magazine
- Notice Boards
- Annual Community Meeting
- Good for Leigh Awards
- Community Engagement App

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- Leigh Community Centre
- Allotments
- Special Police Constables
- Skate park
- Strand Wharf
- First Aid Post
- School Crossing
- Bell Wharf Beach



# ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The complex, challenging issues and changing circumstances faced by the local community require the Council to identify relevant, pertinent strategic objectives that will be understood by the residents and drive action in order to make progress towards the desired outcomes for Leigh-on-Sea.

The five year plan has three core priorities and an overarching aspiration of "improving the quality of town life."

Over the next five years delivery of actions highlighted by our three core priorities will be both exciting and challenging. The Council are looking forward to delivering the new Strategic Plan for 2023 - 2028 and are determined to ensure that Leigh-on-Sea continues to remain a town that delivers quality services to communities, residents and people who work in and visit the town.

## THE OBJECTIVES

- 1** To create and maintain effective working relationships between Leigh Town Council, partner organisations and community groups to ensure a shared vision for Leigh-on-Sea
- 2** To identify community facilities and services to enhance the quality of life for local residents and explore ways of securing the necessary resources with minimum impact on the precept
- 3** To raise awareness of local environmental issues and, in co-operation with a variety of groups, create opportunities for residents to engage with Leigh Town Council in finding and implementing solutions

# 01

**To create and maintain effective working relationships between Leigh Town Council, partner organisations and community groups to ensure a shared vision for Leigh-on-Sea**

- Councillors will work together to establish their shared vision for Leigh
- Council will create an engagement project with residents to establish the shared vision for the Town. This work is to incorporate establishing residents' views on community facilities and services along with environmental concerns.
- Combine all the evidence to establish a complete shared vision.
- Council to create further actions after the shared vision is established for continued working relationships.



**To identify community facilities and services to enhance the quality of life for local residents and explore ways of securing the necessary resources with minimum impact on the precept**

- Identify from the engagement project community facilities and services that residents feel would enhance the quality of life for them
- Identify what power the Council has to secure the resources or who the Council needs to work with to achieve the facilities and services identified.
- Identify costing and funding streams for further actions to take place mindful of precept impacts and views of residents (For noting - residents may have expressed in the engagement project that if it is really important a precept rise would be acceptable to them).

# 03

**To raise awareness of local environmental issues and, in co-operation with a variety of groups, create opportunities for residents to engage with Leigh Town Council in finding and implementing solutions**

- Identify from the engagement project the environmental concerns that residents have
- Establish what environmental concerns councillors have
- Both councillors and staff to research and understand carbon literacy in Leigh with training through the Carbon Literacy Project
- Identify what the Council has done/can do in relation to environmental concerns and promote these in the first instance
- Help educate residents on carbon literacy and promote the little wins that residents can do to help make an impact.  
From there:
- Council to identify what Council can do as a shared vision to make the most impact in reducing the Town's carbon footprint and create further actions for the remainder of the Strategic Plan



# CHECKING PROGRESS



The aim is for this Strategic Plan to help drive the Council forward over the next five years, delivering the vision of "improving the quality of town life."

The actions contained within the Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028 will be regularly monitored to ensure progress on delivering the three core priority outcomes.

Progress will be reported to the Council via committees on a regular basis to help monitor performance.

The Council will update the public on the progress of the strategic plan through the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Annual Report, website and social media pages.

## **EVALUATION, MONITORING & REVIEW**

- Evaluation of Strategic Objectives 2027
- Evaluation of Strategic Plan 2028
- Intermittent monitoring undertaken by the Town Clerk
- Intermittent reviews by Committees and Working Groups

Images Courtesy of  
Pg 1 - Linda Paul  
Pg 7 - Mark Taylor  
Pg 8 - Neil Fendell  
Pg 10 - Alfie Winters  
Pg 11 - Linda Paul

**For more information about the work we do contact...**



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Events**



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