

DRAFT

Saltash Town Council Business Plan
2024-2027



Contents

The Draft Business Plan is at the early stages of development and requires further work throughout.

1.0	Background	Page 2
2.0	Introduction	Page 3

TO BE COMPLETED AT THE END

Saltash Town Council began developing the Business Plan for the next three years (2024-2027). The Town Council consulted widely with the public and the Business Plan was recommended by the Town Vision Sub Committee and adopted by Saltash Town Council on XXXX. The three-year business plan has six Strategic Priorities and the overarching vision of Saltash being an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects with a reinvigorated Town Centre and Waterfront, award-winning new housing, a diverse economy, with an excellent quality of life and lifestyle for all ages.

The 16 Councillors and 24 Council Officers are looking forward to delivering the new Business Plan 2024-2027 and are determined to ensure that Saltash continues to remain a town that delivers quality Services to the residents and people who work within and visit the town. Over the next three years, delivery of the actions highlighted by the 6 Strategic Priorities will be both exciting and challenging. Saltash Town Council will determine how to address various challenges through continued collaboration with key stakeholders.

Further work required.

STC Chairman to add a welcome/supportive section

PICTURE

Sinead Burrows

Town Clerk / Responsible Finance Officer

Introduction

Saltash is a town and civil parish in south-east Cornwall with a population of 16,000. Saltash faces Plymouth over the River Tamar and is popularly known as “the Gateway to Cornwall”. Saltash landmarks include the Tamar Bridge which connects Plymouth to Cornwall by road and Isambard Kingdom Brunel’s Royal Albert Bridge taking the railway line into Devon, Cornwall, and beyond.

Saltash was founded as a market town by the lord of Trematon Castle in the 12th century. The town was sited at a point where an ancient highway crossed the Tamar estuary by means of a ferry. By the end of that century Saltash had achieved borough status.

Saltash is a thriving community, with lots of drive and ambition to improve. It has a unique waterfront setting, it is a desirable place to live, work, learn and visit. These give immense opportunities for prosperity through well balanced growth.

Saltash Town Council forms the third tier of local government and works with Cornwall Council who are our Unitary Authority. We are the largest Town Council in the south-east area of Cornwall.

The Town Council is committed to providing excellence in the Services and Facilities which it provides, we aim to be responsive, accessible, and transparent in our approach and work delivered.

There are sixteen Councillors representing three Wards – Essa, Tamar and Trematon <https://modern.saltash.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>. Councillors are elected from the community every four years. Spaces are filled via by-elections, or by means of the Town Council choosing new Councillors via co-option.

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are elected by Members of the Town Council annually at the Annual Town Council meeting held in May. The Chairman also undertakes the role of Mayor representing the Town Council and community at official engagements, with their consort.

We employ 23 staff who, led by the Town Clerk, are responsible for the administration of the Town Council and delivery of our Services.

Over the last ten years, the Town Council’s responsibilities and assets have grown considerably. Through devolution (asset transfers) from Cornwall Council, refer to the Town Council Portfolio’s to find out more.

The Town Council operates a Committee system which sets the budget and decide how funds are to be spent <https://modern.saltash.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>. Town Council meetings are open to the public and the Town Council provides monthly sessions where the public can attend and raise issues with their Local Councillor.

Background

This document is the Town Council's Business Plan. It outlines and clarifies strategic priorities of the Town Council and aims to provide a framework for budget setting and identified operational targets over the period.

The statements contained within this Business Plan give the Town Council's vision for Saltash, its purpose, values, objectives and priorities. The aims and future aspirations should be what Saltash Town Council itself can achieve, either through direct operational decisions or by increasing its influence on other delivery bodies, such as Cornwall Council.

The aim of the Business Plan is to give Saltash residents a clear understanding of what the Town Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to work towards delivery. It details what the Town Council intends to focus on over the next three years.

An agreed Plan will help provide a framework for the Town Council to work within, enabling it to operate in a consistent and co-ordinated way as well as focusing debate and budget decisions on the key priorities.

The future development of the Business Plan will be based on community engagement and involvement, which in turn will enable the Town Council to become even more confident with its decision-making.

At the same time, the Plan will help the local community to have better understanding of who does what in Saltash, explaining what issues fall under the responsibility of other delivery bodies such as Cornwall Council, CORMAC, National Highways etc.

The Business Plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the Town Council remains focused on the delivery of its objectives and to assist with the budget setting process. This function will be a responsibility of the Town Vision Sub Committee in order that it can take an overview of proposed projects considered by each Committee and Sub Committee recommending amendments to Full Town Council.

Committees and Sub Committees of the Town Council will work to the Business Plan to meet or exceed the set core priorities.

The Town Councils Business Plan is directed by and is aware of the aims within the following documents:

1. Saltash Neighbourhood Development Plan [file:///C:/Users/sinead.burrows/Downloads/SALTASH-NDP-SUBMISSION-DRAFT-1%20\(6\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/sinead.burrows/Downloads/SALTASH-NDP-SUBMISSION-DRAFT-1%20(6).pdf)
2. Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/localplancornwall>
3. National Planning Policy Framework https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

Strengths Weaknesses Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

The below table outlines a SWOT analysis of the current working situation.

Strengths:

- The Town Council is recognised by Cornwall Council and other organisations as a voice in the community.
- Improved collaborative working.
- Right at the 'Gateway to Cornwall'.
- Unique waterfront position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers.
- Councillors are engaged in the work of the Town Council and their constituents.
- Saltash is a thriving community, with lots of drive and ambition to improve.
- Good community knowledge.
- Community spirit support for events and organisations.
- Good diverse experience and knowledge within the Town Council.
- Cautious and balanced approach.
- Community open spaces, play provisions, library service, leisure and sport facilities and youth services.

Opportunities:

- Town Councils now have higher/greater remit to become involved in more.
- Highly committed team with opportunities to progress and create a career path.
- Future funding opportunities to improve/support the high street and the wider town.
- Right at the 'Gateway to Cornwall'
- Unique waterfront position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers.
- Expand tourism that supports existing and future facilities
- Neighbourhood Plan.
- Public transport.

Weaknesses:

- The Town Council doesn't have the capacity to run the operations efficiently or the space to accommodate future staff.
- The community is unaware of the Town Council role, there is confusion about who provides what service.
- Lack of strong engagement within the community.
- The Town Council has very little generating assets.
- Fore Street needs a spruce up to attract residents to shop and visitors to visit the town.
- Poor connectivity from the waterside to the high street.
- Poor standard of NHS provision.
- Lack of clarity regarding Councillors non-executive roles and complementarity with the executive team.
- Lack of consideration and inclusion of Saltash as a town in its entirety rather than limited to Fore Street.

Threats:

- Uncertain future very hard to plan for.
- Continuing cost of living crisis making it tricky to budget and deliver projects.
- Loss of funding.
- Far greater demand on councillor time with the expanding role.
- Future public spending cuts will have an effect.
- Anti-social behaviour and vandalism.
- A38 taking people away from the town.
- Plymouth is a neighbouring city often means Saltash is forgotten having a negative impact on continuity.
- Staff or councillor resignation.
- Affordability of housing, low wages, competing land uses, traffic congestion

Our Vision for Saltash

Saltash vision has been shaped by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Our intention is that by 2030 Saltash will be an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects, with a reinvigorated Town Centre and Waterfront, award-winning new housing, a diverse economy, with an excellent quality of life and lifestyle for all ages.

Our Mission

Saltash Town Council endeavours to promote the best social, economic, and environmental practices for Saltash by efficiently managing services, assets, and the resources of the Town Council for the benefit of the local community. The Town Council aims to be a professional and competent Town Council, which is open/transparent and accountable and ensures sound financial management of the Town Council's resources.

The vision will be achieved by delivering the following objectives to:

- Secure a diverse and prosperous Local Economy;
- Regenerate the Town Centre, especially Fore Street, and Manage the Growth of “Out of Town” shopping;
- Create and support Sustainable Neighbourhoods;
- Revitalise the Waterfront;
- Ensure a balanced Range of Quality New Housing;
- Project and Enhance the Built Environment;
- Enhance the Natural Environment of the Parish;
- Manage the Rural Areas of the Parish in a Sympathetic Manner;
- Meet the changing demand for Health, Education, and Community Services and Facilities;
- Meet the growing demand for additional Sport, Recreation and Leisure Facilities;
- Encourage Improved and Sustainable Connectivity;
- Tackle the causes and impacts of climate change.

Our Core Values

- Be Transparent
- Be Civil and Respectful to others
- Be accountable for our actions
- Be fair
- Be collaborative
- Be innovative

Saltash Town Council Six Strategic Priorities

1. Boosting Jobs and Economic Prosperity:

To ensure Saltash benefits from higher income, reduced poverty, improved facilities and quality of life. Promote Saltash as a vibrant and welcoming visitor destination.

2. Health and Wellbeing:

To support the Saltash Healthcare Action Group in improving our local NHS provision. Support improvement to mental health, fitness facilities, educational wellbeing of children and opportunities to access a high level of quality learning for young people.

3. Housing:

To ensure Saltash has a balanced range of high quality and affordable housing by working in partnership with Cornwall Council.

4. Travel and Transport;

To work with key stakeholders to support access to affordable, accessible and sustainable transport in Saltash and the rural and urban areas and promote walking and cycling.

5. Climate Emergency;

To continue to acknowledge a climate emergency and to bring forward a local climate change strategy.

6. Recreation and Leisure;

To continue to provide, improve, and support in Saltash, play parks, open green spaces, library service, cultural activity, leisure and sport facilities, and to acknowledge our unique position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers.

Our Aims

- To improve the quality of life for residents and businesses in Saltash;
- To provide effective, transparent and accountable local government of Saltash Town Council;
- To ensure best value for money;
- To effectively represent the residents and businesses in Saltash;
- To protect and enhance the Services in Saltash;
- To preserve and enhance the rural, built, and natural environments of Saltash;
- To enable residents to be involved in the life of Saltash and its future development.

Our Objectives

- To keep informed of changes to legislation and ensure that procedures and Town Council policies are reviewed and revised in line with such changes;
- To continue to maintain and update the Town Council website. Publish all information required by legislation and as much other information as possible.
- To give residents and businesses the opportunity to express their views and represent these effectively;
- To communicate effectively with residents linked to the Town Council Communication Strategy and continue to explore new ways of communication;
- To work effectively with Cornwall Council, Councillors, and other key stakeholders for the betterment of Saltash;
- To use the Saltash Neighbourhood Plan effectively in all matters relating to the town;
- To continue to consider all local planning and enforcement matters that effect the town and provide comment on their impact on local residents, businesses, and the rural nature of the town.

How Saltash Town Council will deliver this Business Plan

Each year, we will produce an activity plan for the year ahead which will guide our work. The first will be set in April 2024 for the 2024-25 financial year and these will then be reviewed and finalised early part of the following year, ahead of the start of the new financial year in April.

The activity plan will detail the specific actions the Town Council will undertake in the civic year (April to March) to contribute to meeting our objectives and overarching aims. Each action will be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound (SMART), assigning the responsible officer and which committee has oversight of ensuring delivery. Many of our objectives may take several years to complete and we will set out appropriate milestones to strengthen accountability as part of our activity plan.

Our Committees and Sub Committees will have a key role in making the strategic and policy decisions required to give effect to the objectives of the Town Council. For specific objectives we may also establish more informal working groups, comprising of councillors and relevant stakeholders, to develop the detailed plans and actions we need to meet to delivery our aims.

Whilst we will detail specific actions to take, we will also be flexible in responding to opportunities and issues that arise. When considering new activity not covered by the activity plan, we will appraise whether it contributes to meeting our objectives.

Further work required.

Appendix to be added to the business plan.

Communication Strategy

Communications and Engagement WG to consider the Town Council communications strategy recommending to P&F.

Governance and Accountability

To maintain and improve the quality of the Town Council's Services and Property in line with public expectation whilst ensuring value for money.

To delegate more decisions over day-to-day operations to the Town Clerk / RFO whilst overall accountability rest with the Corporate Body.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council and its operations through a culture of adapting to change and regular review.

To work towards obtaining the [Local Council Award Scheme](#) to ensure we continue to perform to a high standard and that Saltash Town Council is up-to-date and progressive by the standard set by the sector. The Local Council Award Scheme provides a framework to plan, improves performance and confidence, with policies in place for continuous development.

Further work required.

Your Town Council is Responsible for

Saltash Town Council and Cornwall Council are responsible for different services in Saltash. The links below detail what Saltash Town Council are responsible for.

Further work required.

Tamar Ward <https://modern.saltash.gov.uk/documents/s9398/Tamar%20Ward.pdf>

Essa Ward <https://modern.saltash.gov.uk/documents/s9399/Essa%20Ward.pdf>

Trematon – TBC

Leases, Land, Property [Land, Leases, Licences and Property MASTER CONTROL DOCUMENT.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Public Rights of Way [Public Rights of Way \(PRoW\) MASTER CONTROL DOCUMENT.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Grit Bins [Grit Bins - MASTER CONTROL DOCUMENT.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Town Council Management and Operations

The Town Clerk is the most senior employee and undertakes the administration of the Town Council. The Town Clerk is required to carry out all the functions required by law as the Town Council's Proper Officer and to issue all statutory notifications. Local Government Act 1972 s112.

The Responsible Finance Officer is responsible for the administration of the Town Council financial affairs. Local Government Act 1972 s151.

Councillors are not line managers or a director of Town Council Officers. A Councillors role is to represent their Ward and the people that live in it. Councillors provide a bridge between the community and the Town Council. As well as being an advocate for local residents and signposting them to the right Officer at the Town Council.

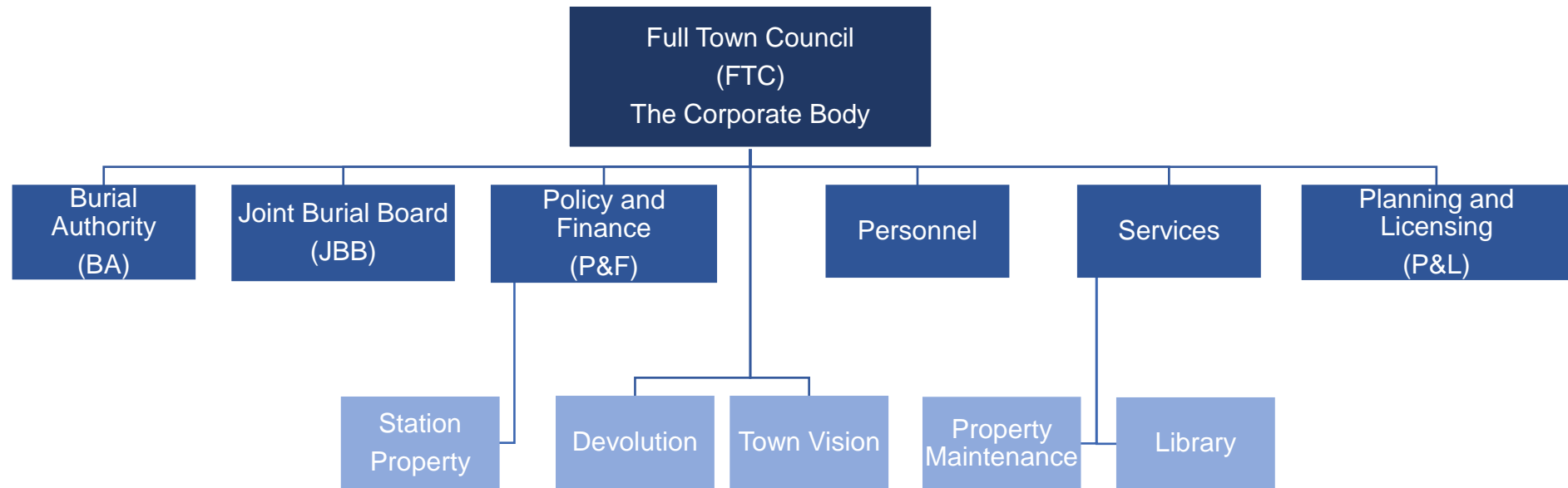
Councillors and Officers are indispensable to one another a mutual respect between both is essential for good local government. Together both roles bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective public sector organisation. Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the Town Council, whereas Officers contribute the professional expertise needed to deliver the Town Council framework within the law.

The Town Council fully supports Continual Professional Development (CPD) which covers both Officer and Councillor needs to ensure competency, relevance, skills and knowledge to guarantee all roles are performed effectively.

Organisation Structure, Committee Structure and Ward Town Councillors are available for view on the next pages.

Organisation Structure – see attached

Committee Structure



KEY

The Corporate Body

The Town Council as a corporate body represents the community and makes decisions through the democratic process of voting. As a body it can delegate decision making to an officer, a committee, a sub committee or another council, but not to a Councillor. No individual Councillor, (not even the Chair) can make a decision on behalf of the council. Individual Councillors represent the Town Council as a corporate body. As a corporate Local Authority, the Local Council decides whether to work in partnership with other organisations and can agree to serve on other bodies.

Full Standing Committees (excluding Burial Authority and Joint Burial Board)

Committees are delegated to make decisions on behalf of the Town Council. These are executive Committees. It is good practice for the Council to appoint a committee for a particular aspect of its work and then if necessary for the committee to appoint a Sub Committee to focus the work further.

Committees with delegated powers mean that decisions can be made quickly with The Corporate Body overseeing all the decisions made.

Sub Committees

A Sub Committee is an advisory committee created on the basis of a specific project by The Corporate Body or Full Standing Committee with all works feeding into the overseeing Committee. Sub Committees benefit from being a small group, sometimes including experts from outside the Town Council who concentrate on research and recommendations.

Professional group staff picture

Professional group cllr picture

Fundraising Strategy

Raising revenue for the Town Council. What that looks like and the risks. Over the next three years – forecast – town vitality, connectivity, CIL play parks – Project related stuff.

Further work required.

Finance – Further work required

Primarily the Town Council financial resource is from the precept, funded through the local residents of Saltash, through what is known as the local 'precept'. This is the local tax levied by the Town Council which is collected on its behalf by Cornwall Council as part of the overall Council Tax bill.

- Budget summary
- Audit
- Accounts
- Reserves
- Assets

Further work required

