

**NORTH SOMERSET**

# Empowering Communities Strategy and Action Plan



2022-2024

# Background

The **Corporate Plan** is the council's overarching strategic document. It is the only plan which covers the full range of the council's responsibilities and is an important tool to help us decide where to focus our effort and resources.

We have aims within the plan to be **a Council which empowers and care about people and to be an 'open and enabling'** organisation. Key areas of focus that provide the context for this strategy and seek to enable us to meet these priorities are:

- Tackling inequalities and improving outcomes
- Engage with and empower our communities
- Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

To help contribute to these priorities we have co-produced this **Empowering Communities Strategy** with a wide range of Community and Voluntary sector partners, including the North Somerset Together network, representatives from North Somerset Town and Parish Councils and the North Somerset Wellbeing Collective.

The strategy and supporting action plan provides the framework for the council and its partners to build upon the strengths within communities across North Somerset while tackling some of the key challenges identified by working together.

The **Empowering Communities Strategy** connects to other key North Somerset Council strategic frameworks e.g. the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan, in relation to its aims and ambitions.



# The Corporate Plan

## OUR VISION An open, fairer, greener North Somerset

### Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset.

### Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.

### Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

## Our priorities

### A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- A transport network which promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel
- An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth
- A broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability

### A council which empowers and cares about people

- A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities
- An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
- A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential
- A focus on tackling inequalities and improving outcomes

### An open and enabling organisation

- Engage with and empower our communities
- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation
- Manage our resources and invest wisely
- Embrace new and emerging technology
- Make the best use of our data and information
- Provide professional, efficient and effective services
- Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

## Our values

We act with  
**INTEGRITY**

We  
**RESPECT**  
each other

We  
**INNOVATE**

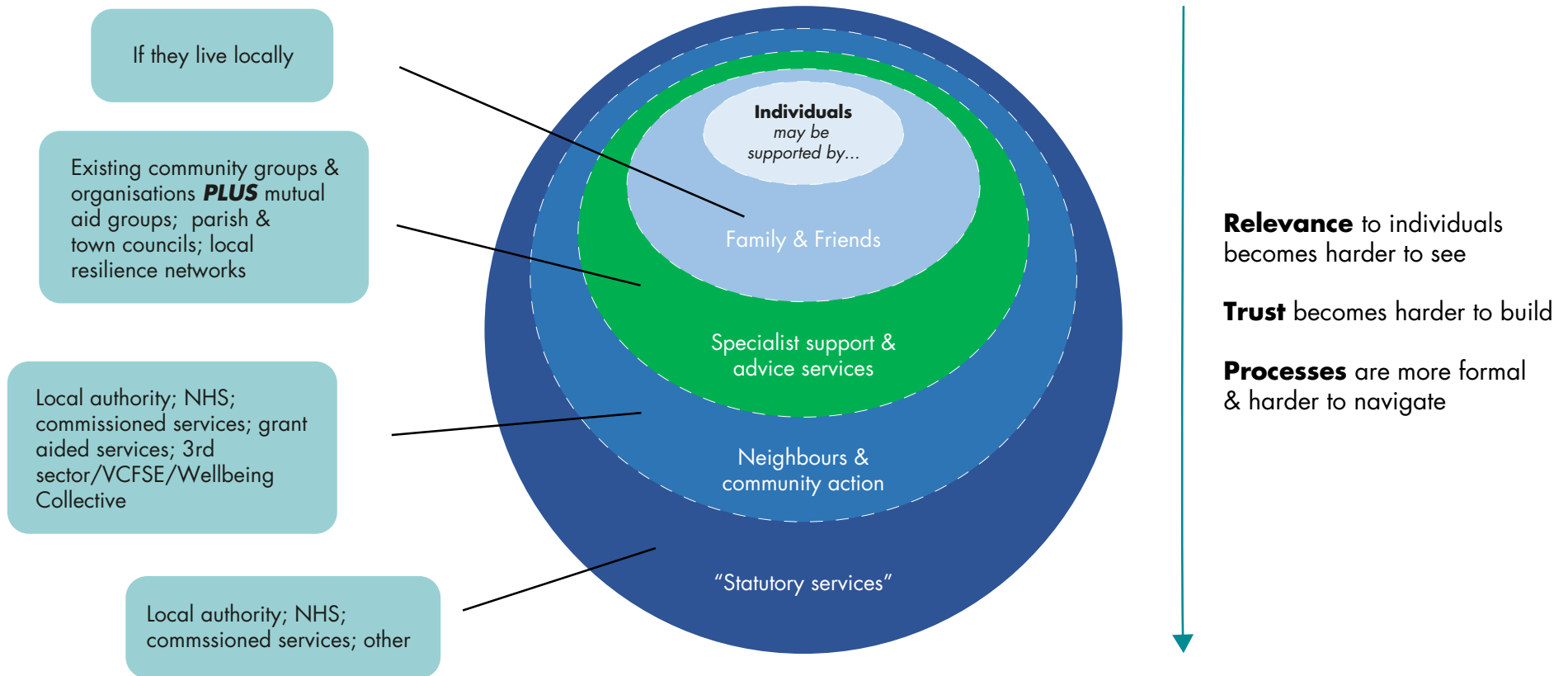
We  
**CARE**

We  
**COLLABORATE**

# Our aim

Our Empowering Communities Strategy aims to:

Recognise, make connections and improve collaboration across the spectrum of the types of support available across North Somerset



We will work towards our aim by:

- Recognising the strengths within our communities.
- Enabling a shared understanding of local skills and challenges.
- Improving access to services and locally trusted support.

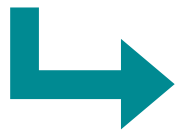


# Vision:

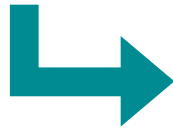
Our vision: Enabling connected, cohesive and resilient communities  
To achieve this we will:



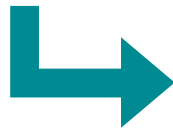
1. Work with North Somerset Together and our community networks/partners to deliver NSC's objective; enabling connected, cohesive & resilient communities



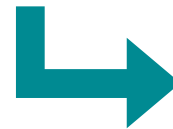
2. Achieve this through enabling and facilitating community-led action, focused on what matters locally



3. Supporting devolved community action that is people-centred, strengths based, creative, entrepreneurial & agile



4. Demonstrate a clear commitment to the wider VCFSE sector to enable capacity building & the continued development of specialist voluntary services



5. Ensuring connections between community action and statutory services delivered by NSC and our partners where appropriate

# Key principles

The key principles to enable the implementation of the Empowering Communities strategy are:



- A commitment to **greater engagement and partnership**
- Recognising that **there is no single blueprint** for collaboration and partnership
- Recognising that different communities have **different strengths and priorities**
- **Understanding the local strengths** that can be supported and built on
- Building **a shared understanding** of the challenges in resourcing public service delivery
- Identifying **shared priorities** for action
- Identifying the **resources** available
- Maximising **collective impact**
- Clarity about respective **roles and responsibilities**
- Enabling **improved communication and discussions** between partners

# Objectives

- Continued development of North Somerset Together and thematic groups to implement actions to achieve shared priorities
- Enabling and supporting wider system development across communities, North Somerset Council and its partners services to enable collaboration and engagement to improve how we work together
- Establishing joint commissioning/funding opportunities to build upon strengths where possible and appropriate
- Enable oversight and improvement of collaborative approaches including through alignment with key complementary strategies that focus on the wider determinants of health

# Our key engagement networks

To enable the ambitions within this strategy to be achieved we will engage with a wide range of communities, stakeholders and networks. Listed below are some examples of the key groups that we will work with to support the implementation of the strategy.

	North Somerset Together	Thematic networks and working groups	Place-based Wellbeing Partnerships	Town and Parish Council Forums
Who	North Somerset Council facilitated partnership for enabling and supporting the delivery of the Empowering Communities strategy, and collaboration opportunities	North Somerset Council facilitated thematic partnerships to support the development of key areas of work identified for the implementation of the Empowering Communities strategy	Locally defined and led Wellbeing Partnership activity to support the implementation of the Empowering Communities strategy	Facilitated Town and Parish Council engagement and participation across North Somerset in association with Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA)
How	Informal open network of partners across the spectrum of public, private, voluntary and community organisations/groups	Focused collaboration across a range of interests to develop specific work programmes in line with the objectives of this strategy	Network of wellbeing co-ordinators to share learning, local insight and ensuring connectivity within localities and the wider health and wellbeing system	Communication and engagement forum to share information and seek input into work programmes



# Key connections

Work with partners includes a wide range of organisations who contribute to the wellbeing of the area as follows:

<b>North Somerset Wellbeing Collective</b>	<b>Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs)</b>	<b>Locality Leads</b>
<p>Self-organised partnership of organisations seeking to improve wellbeing support across North Somerset. A forum for identifying collaboration opportunities, strategic influence and challenge</p>	<p>Contributing and collaborating with Weston, Worle and Villages, and Woodspring ICP's to align objectives and activity where appropriate</p>	<p>Liaison and working with Weston, Worle and villages, and Woodspring locality Leads to enable the interface between communities and VCFSE (voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise) sector and local Health and Wellbeing activity</p>

# Implementing the strategy – Action Plan (2022-2024)

To achieve the vision and objectives of the Empowering Communities Strategy, an Action Plan has been developed. Key areas of work include:

- Lead the development of a Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan with local partners to support North Somerset residents
- Develop a Food Resilience Pathway and Food Equality Strategy to tackle food insecurity with North Somerset Food Alliance and strategic partners
- Support and project manage implementation of Community Renewal Community (CRF) HUBs pilot programme for 2022
- Manage the VCSE sector UK Shared Prosperity Grant programme in line with the North Somerset Investment Plan 2022-2024
- Support the development of the North Somerset Virtual Community Hub to improve signposting to appropriate statutory and community services alongside Citizens Advice North Somerset (CANS), Curo and Alliance Homes and local health and social care partners
- Work with Town and Parish Councils and rural communities partners to develop a Wellbeing Co-ordinators network.
- Continue to build upon our engagement and liaison with Town and Parish Councils by developing best practice guidance and facilitating forums with Avon Local Council Association
- Support the VCFSE capacity building programme led by Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS)
- Develop, with the VCFSE infrastructure organisations, a strategy that builds on the strengths within the sector
- Maximize where possible the investment within the VCSFE sector by supporting external funding opportunities

# Expected outcomes



- Improved community connectivity, collaboration, resilience, capability, efficacy and cohesion
- Increased range of community-led “early help” services across North Somerset
- Increased use of “strengths-based” approaches, with investment in those areas with lower levels of social capital
- Greater use of social as opposed to medical interventions to support vulnerable people in the community
- Greater local “civic leadership” focused on place based priorities
- Identification of opportunities for shared strengths-based service delivery
- Testing and evaluation of new approaches to delivering outcomes in complex systems

**For further information about this  
strategy please contact:**

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North Somerset  
**TOGETHER**

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together)

