

# Midsomer Norton Town Council

## *FIVE YEAR BUSINESS PLAN*

### *2020 – 2025*



*Prepared by*  
*Midsomer Norton Town Council*  
*Adopted : 02/03/2020*

**MIDSOMER NORTON TOWN COUNCIL  
FIVE YEAR BUSINESS PLAN 2020 – 2025**

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# MIDSOMER NORTON TOWN COUNCIL FIVE YEAR BUSINESS PLAN 2020 – 2025

***The Council's vision is of an inclusive community that has pride in Midsomer Norton. Individuals will respect each other and contribute to the well-being of the community as a whole.***

*The Council identified three strategic objectives or "Pillars" in 2011 which are clearly reflected in its Vision for the town:*

- *Pillar 1 - To develop a strong sense of community.*
- *Pillar 2 - To encourage civic pride in our town.*
- *Pillar 3 - To be a well-run council that delivers results.*

## **1: Introduction – What is a Business Plan?**

The Midsomer Norton Town Council Business Plan sets out the aims and objectives for both the Council and the community. It will determine the Council's vision for the town, including its main priorities and what it hopes to achieve over the next five years. The aim of the Business Plan is to give the residents of Midsomer Norton an understanding of what the Council does, what it is trying to achieve and what the Council intends to focus on.

As a live document, the Business Plan will be subject to regular review and monitoring. It will be assessed on a yearly basis. The plan will be used to drive the budget process, plan activities for the coming year and allow the Council to monitor its progress against key activities.

The Business Plan sets out areas that are additional to day to day operations, on which the Council proposes to focus for the ongoing benefit of the community.

### **1:1 Why has the Council produced a Business Plan?**

Developing a Business Plan gives an opportunity to revisit and confirm its priorities and to set the strategic direction for the next five years. This enables a more proactive approach to decision making and allows for a more consistent and co-ordinated method of working.

The Plan will help it identify the key areas to focus on and set annual goals which can be used to set the budgets for future years. It will be a live document that will be regularly reviewed and updated through normal Council business and refreshed formally every year and shared with the town at the Annual Town Meeting.

While the Business Plan is a statement of intent, there may be occasions where budgetary constraints, policy or legislative changes result in the Council having to make decisions contrary to those stated. This will result in changes being made to the Plan and an updated version being produced accordingly.

### **1:2 Consultation with the Community**

In order to make sure that this Business Plan is compatible with residents' requirements and wishes, the Council will consult on its contents. The Business

Plan will be published on the Council website and will be open to feedback from the community for 28 days. Changes to the Business Plan will be considered in response to any feedback received.

### **1:3 Overseeing the Business Plan**

Assessing the Business Plan against the key actions will take place annually during a meeting of the Full Council. Any barriers to the progress of the Plan will be considered, and it will be reviewed and amended in order to keep it as up to date as possible. In any event the Plan will be reviewed annually and published online. The Town Clerk will be able to provide a hard copy if required.

## **2: About Us and Our Community**

Midsomer Norton in Somerset, England is a town located 10 miles south west of the Spa City of Bath and 10 miles north east of Wells, the smallest city in England. Midsomer Norton Town Council came into existence in May 2011 as a consequence of the Bath and North East Somerset (reorganisation of Community Governance) (Norton Radstock) Order 2011.

Although the exact origins of the town's name are unclear it seems most likely to have come from a combination of being located on the River Somer and having received a Royal Charter from Henry III in 1248 for a fayre on Midsummers Day. The town has a long history associated with the development of the Somerset coalfield and several pits provided employment until their closure in the mid 1960's.

Midsomer Norton Town Council can now be found in the Town Hall, where the foundation stone was laid over 150 years ago to create the Midsomer Norton Market Hall.

Midsomer Norton is a popular place to live and provides services and shopping for surrounding villages acting as the retail centre of the Somer Valley. There are two secondary schools and four primary schools with a fifth currently being built to support the influx of new families being attracted to the new homes in the area. There are several sports clubs, including football, rugby and cricket, a sports centre, a skate park and children's play areas and over 100 community groups. A new town park is underway with a view to creating a multifunctional recreation and events area, while maintaining the valuable ecology of the site.

### **2:1 The Council and its Employees**

The Town Council consists of eleven elected Councillors supported by a full time Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, a part time Town Warden and two part time office staff. It meets as a Full Council every other month (except for a recess in August) and is supported by a Council Planning Committee and Finance and Operations Committee both with formal terms of reference. The next Councillor election will be in May 2023.

In addition, working parties are formed to lead initial work in areas such as Personnel and Allotments. The Council appoints Members to outside bodies to develop relationships with stakeholder organisations and groups and ensure that their interests are recognised in developing Council policy.

The Town Council works within a policy framework reflecting the range of its legislative responsibilities, its powers and duties and its responsibilities as a Council and an employer. These are regularly updated and publicised on the Council's web site ([www.midsomernortontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.midsomernortontowncouncil.co.uk)).

### **3: The Council's Vision**

Midsomer Norton is a key market town in the Somer Valley with a strong sense of community, shared civic pride and a well-run Town Council that delivers results. In 2011 when the Council was established it identified three strategic objectives which are clearly reflected in its vision for the town:

- To develop a strong sense of community.
- To encourage civic pride in our town.
- To be a well-run Council that delivers results .

#### **3:1 Key Actions to Develop a Strong Sense of Community**

Support Community Groups by providing open and accessible community grants.

- Having secured community facilities like buildings and green spaces for the future through community asset transfer and other acquisition opportunities, continue to work to empower and engage the community to run them through the Midsomer Norton Community Trust. At the same time ensure the potential of these properties in the long term, Assets can be maintained and developed for the benefit of local people under the umbrella of the Midsomer Norton Town Trust of which the Town Council is corporate trustee.
- Work with the Community Trust and other stakeholders to support events that engage the community across a range of interests.
- Reach out to all sections of the community including young and old, long-standing residents and those who have moved here recently to involve them in the life of the town through newsletters and face to face consultation.
- As Corporate Trustee of the Midsomer Norton Recreation Ground Trust manage West Clewes for the benefit of people in the town.

Key Activity	Tasks for Year	Targets	Measures	Key Milestones
Provide Community Grants.	Run three rounds of Grant Awards in June, November and March.	<p>Maintain a compliant &amp; relevant Grant Policy.</p> <p>Set a budget for Community Grants.</p>	<p>Advertise, decide awards and issue funds to successful applicants within timescales set out.</p> <p>Make any changes required to Grant policy &amp; update documentation &amp; web site.</p>	Update Community Grant Policy.
Secure and develop community facilities such as buildings & green spaces through community asset transfer & other acquisition opportunities.	<p>Finalise the Asset transfer of Town Hall to the Town Trust with the completion of works by B&amp;NES.</p> <p>Develop the Town Park project in partnership with the Town Trust.</p> <p>Develop plans for green spaces in the town - Garden of Friendship.</p> <p>In the long term work to support the Town Hall Transformation project in conjunction with the Town Trust and Community Trust.</p>	<p>Conclude agreement to transfer the Town Hall.</p> <p>Continue to secure funding for development of the Town Park.</p> <p>Create project plans for ongoing maintenance / management of green spaces &amp; begin delivery of agreed solutions.</p> <p>Fundraising strategy concluded and plan in place.</p>	<p>Working with the Community Trust develop with the community business plans for the future sustainability of community buildings.</p> <p>Town Park initially created and plan for ongoing management and maintenance in hand.</p> <p>Secure a link from Sainsburys car park into the Garden of Friendship in order to provide better access and connectivity.</p>	Conclude agreement to transfer the Town Hall.

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Tasks for Year</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>
Work with Community Trust and other stakeholders to support events that engage the community.	Support Events: Carnival, Arts Programme, Summer Fayre, Christmas Fayre.	Commission events with funding, support publicity and ensure Council attendance at events.	Ensure events are well run in line with B&NES Safety Advisory Group recommendations, supported and funded and that they meet the needs of residents and visitors who will then be engaged/attend.	Through grants policy and representation on outside bodies continue to monitor and intervene with 'light touch' as and when support is needed.
Reach out to all sections of the community.	Run Events and support services: OAP & Childrens Xmas Party, Civic Service, Youth Club.	Run and support events and services that involve all parts of the community.	Events are well run, supported and funded. Continuation of Youth Club.	
Run the Midsomer Norton Recreation Ground for the benefit of people in the town.	Manage the ground in accordance with the objects of the Charity.  Improve facilities and security.	Inspect and maintain play area, clear rubbish regularly. Compete grass cutting contract. Increase use of ground by community. Complete CCTV Install. Manage Outdoor Gym & develop plans to improve play area. Review B&NES contract & seek longer term solution for gym maintenance.	Inspection reports and condition of equipment and grass.  Numbers of bookings.  Incidents reduced.  Numbers using gym.  Costs minimised.	

### 3:2 Key actions to encourage Civic Pride

- Campaign for investment in the town centre to secure its role as the retail centre/main market town of the Somer Valley through the Midsomer Norton Economic Development Partnership (MNEDP).
- Enhance the appearance of the town centre and the surrounding area by investing in horticulture displays and working with the Local Authority to secure improvements to the public realm.
- Continue with the Neighbourhood Development Plan to help shape future development after consulting the community about its priorities.
- Respond to planning applications on time with observations based on material planning considerations and the Local Planning Authority's relevant planning policies that will reflect the Council's vision for the town.
- Work with partners to address anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related crime in the town centre and surrounds and support the town's night-time economy
- Invest in supplementing the work of the Local Authority to clean and maintain the town centre and surrounds.

Key Activity	Tasks for Year	Targets	Measures	Key Milestones
Campaign for investment in the town centre to enable it to be the principal commercial hub/market town of the Somer Valley.	<u>Use the role of the MNEDP as route to raise issues and reach agreement on priorities.</u>			
Invest time and resources to enhance appearance of town centre & surrounding area including enabling management of the River Somer, invest in horticulture displays and campaign for improvements.	River Management.  Compete contracts for horticulture and grass cutting.	2 surveys per annum.  New contracts in place.	Surveys completed and action taken.  Town environment maintained.	Contract in place to manage River Somer.



<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Tasks for Year</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>
Respond to planning applications on time and with observations based on material planning considerations and the Local Planning Authority's relevant planning policies	Hold monthly planning committee meetings  Prepare applications for consideration	11 meetings per annum and respond to LPA on time  Responses to be on material planning considerations	Numbers of applications where Town Council view is endorsed by LPA	
Work with partners to address anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related crime in the town centre and supporting the town's night-time economy.	Support CAP  Manage street marshal contractor	Cost of Street Marshals  Safe environment in town centre	Monitor contract  Crime figures	
Invest in supplementing the work of the Local Authority to clean and maintain the town centre.	Town Warden  Litter Picks	Contractor employed on key requirement areas and prepare for new contract to be awarded  Support at least 2 per annum	Review requirement and compete contract  Town environment maintained	New contract in place

### 3:3 Key actions for an efficient and effective Town Council

- Manage financial matters by prioritising expenditure and seeking value for money in all of the Council's purchases and contracts.
- Operate within the relevant legal framework.
- Manage risk proactively and protect the assets of the Town Council through effective Insurance and asset management.
- Plan projects and prioritise Officer and contractor effort.
- Develop Officer and Councillor skills to meet the demands made of the Council.
- Make the Council's work transparent to the Community through the web site and Press Releases.
- Continue with the quarterly Life Magazine distribution to every home in Midsomer Norton.
- Establish a Social Media presence.
- Introduce monthly Councillor Surgeries.
- Maintain an up to date Register of Councillors Interests.

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Tasks for Year</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>
Manage financial matters by prioritising expenditure and seeking value for money in all of the Council's purchases and contracts.	Review contracts.  Ensure compliance with financial processes.	Payroll, accountancy and audit costs minimised.  Insurance costs minimised.  Submit Annual Accounts.	Budget maintained at present levels.  Baseline cover kept at same cost.  Successful completion of audit on time.	Earmark reserves for key activities.    Review Financial Regulations.
Manage risk proactively and protect the assets of the Town Council.	Maintain asset register and update.	Stocktake and inspect assets annually.  Update register and include mapping capability.	Asset Register meets internal audit requirements.  Annual asset report to Town Council.	

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Tasks for Year</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>
Operate within the relevant legal framework.	Run Council meetings, record resolutions and publish minutes and agendas.	Run monthly meetings (with exception of August), one Annual and one Annual Town Meeting.  Publish agendas and minutes.  Keep up to date with legislation framework.	Agendas and minutes issued on time and within legislation.  All policies in framework are specific to MNTC and up to date.	
Plan projects and prioritise Officer and contractor effort.	Complete Town Council Strategy.  Manage Officer priorities with Finance & Operations Working Party and Mayor/Deputy Mayor.	Update Strategy Annually.  Clerk to report on progress at every Town Council Meeting.  Report regularly to Town Council.	New Annual Plan to be completed .  11 times per annum.  Council agrees priorities.	
Develop Officer and Councillor skills to meet the demands made of the Council.	Training for Officers and Members.	Carry out annual appraisals for Officers.  Set training plans for Officers and Members.	Appraisals completed by end June.	

Key Activity	Tasks for Year	Targets	Measures	Key Milestones
Communicate with the Community.	Quarterly LIFE Newsletter.	Issue 4 newsletters per annum.	Issued and delivered on time to all households.	
	Manage web site and IT.	Complete Sponsorship agreement with Ignyte. Review IT contract and web site hosting plan. Keep up to date, back up IT systems and hosting costs.	Daily back reports actioned.	
Councillor Surgeries.	Record residents issues and the outcomes.	Update web site monthly and monitor content weekly. Run monthly Surgeries.	Web site up to date. Keep a record of monthly issues and their resolution/feedback to resident.	

#### 4: Finances

##### 4:1 Income

For 2020/2021 each Midsomer Norton household can expect to pay, on average, £1.87 per week towards the Town Council. This is based on an annual precept of £97.19 for a Band D household.

The total net budget expenditure for the Council in 2020/2021 is £414,719. This money is received from the following:

- £388,156 from precept received.
- £5,500 from miscellaneous income.
- £1,100 from allotments.
- £3,000 from West Clewes.

- £16,963 from reserves..
- A total of £414,719.

## 4:2 Expenditure

The main items of expenditure are:

- Central services, the Council offices, staff, equipment and professional fees.
- Community support, including grants and events.
- Town environment.
- Devolved services, including street marshals.

## 4:3 Allowances

The eleven Councillors are volunteers and do not receive any payment for their time.

## 4:4 Action Plan & Budget

The action plan is published on the web site and summarises findings from community engagement and sets out the aims and objectives that respond to community views. The budget shows how the action plan is put into practice and manages risks to public money.

### ACTION PLAN

ACTION	STATUS	Brief	Budget
Wayfinding Project		De-cluttering The High Street. Removed old signs and repairing the broken ones.	
New Finger Posts Signs	Complete	New Town Centre On-street "finger post" signs helping residents and visitors find facilities and enjoy attractions.	2018/19 Budget
New Town Map	Complete	A New Town Centre Arrival Map providing essential arrival information where people need it.	
		A Signed Pedestrian Route connecting the High Street, Welton & Westfield.	
West Clewes			
New Play Equipment	Complete	New park play equipment at West Clewes	2019/20 £7,500 4925
£10,000 Lottery Funding	Complete	Funding secured for West Clewes park	No Budget required
Picnic Bench	Complete	New picnic bench within the park	2019/20 £0 4036
New CCTV	Complete	New CCTV at West Clewes	2019/20 £2,000 4035
Town Warden			
Dave - New contract	Complete	Originally self-employed now hired with contract	No Budget required
Shed in Yard	Complete	Shed at West Clewes	No Budget required
Paperwork trail and recording			No Budget required
Desk space for laptop useage			No Budget required
Dave Mileage	Complete	Fuel allowance back to Dave	No Budget required
Office			
Re-Organisation	Complete	Moved office around and organised space for new staff	No Budget required
New Staff	Complete	X2 new part time office staff - approved in March	2019/20 £81,900 4001
Archive file	Complete	All files checked and Archive list created	No Budget required
Re-Decoration of Office	Complete	Painting	2019/20 £250 4038
Move Office Space		Possible move to Somer Centre	No Budget required

Town Park			
Phone Box project		Feature for the Town Park	S106 funds
Lockable Barrier/Alligator Teeth		Gathering quotes and installation costings	S106 funds
Wellow Brook			
Maintenance Plan	Complete	Make a plan to maintain Wellow Brook	No Budget Required
Grass Cut	Complete	Create on going plans for grass to be cut	2019/20 £1,020 4039
Garden of Friendship			
Seating Area		Around the friendship garden	2019/20 £1,500 4922
Access to Car Park	Complete	Via lockable gate	No Budget Required
Phone Box	Complete	Information boards	2019/20 £1,500 4922
Car Park	Complete	Who owns the car park?	No Budget Required
Training			
Office staff Training	Complete	RBS / DCK	2019/20 £6,500 4005
Councillors Training	Complete	ILCA	2019/20 £6,500 4005
Clerks Training	Complete	SLCC	2019/20 £6,500 4005
Website		SOTO	2019/20 £6,500 4005
GDPR			
Policies			No Budget Required
Arrange Audit			No Budget Required
Youth Engagement			
Youth Club Project			
Children's Christmas Party	Complete	Sunday 8th Dec	2019/20 £2,000 4211
Easter Egg Hunt			
Senior Citizens Christmas Party	Complete	Friday 13th Dec	2019/20 £2,000 4211
IT Review			
New Server	Complete	Server is fine as it is.	2019/20 £2,000 4928
PC	Complete		2019/20 £2,500 4027
Laptop	Complete		2019/20 £2,500 4027
Mobile Phone	Complete		218/19 £1,600 4021
Update Website		Create a weekly planner to update website	No Budget Required
War Memorial			
Structure Report			2019/20 £1,500 4038
Add Names			2019/20 £1,500 4038
Complete the work			2019/20 £1,500 4038

Listed Building		Need to apply to Banes for consent	2019/20 £1,500 4038
Planning Permission			2019/20 £1,500 4038
Conservational Structural Engineer			2019/20 £1,500 4038
Funding		War Memorial Trust	2019/20 £1,500 4038
Planning Permission			2019/20 £1,500 4038
<b>Asset Register</b>			
New PC and Desktop	Complete	Dispose of old PC	No Budget Required
New PC and Laptop	Complete	Clerks Office	No Budget Required
New Play Equipment	Complete	West Clewes	No Budget Required
Office Furniture	Complete	Clerks Office	No Budget Required
<b>Quality Awards</b>			
			No Budget Required
			No Budget Required
			No Budget Required
			No Budget Required
<b>Town Council</b>			
New Banners		To be displayed at events	2019/20 £200 4032
Banes		Footpath Overgrown - needs to be reported	No Budget Required
Facebook/Twitter	Complete		No Budget Required
Neighbourhood Plan			No Budget Required
<b>Community</b>			
ABS Mobile CCTV Camera	Complete	Contribute towards an ASB mobile CCTV camera for £2,500	
Civic Awards	Complete		2019/20 £500 4231
Vehicle Activation Signs	Awaiting Installation	Purchased the vehicle activation signs as well as the Bluetooth at a cost of £3,250.00 plus VAT	2019/20 No Budget 4930
Midsomer Norton Christmas Lights/Fayre		Released funding for the Christmas Lights/Fayre and request a breakdown of the money spent.	2019/20 No Budget 4223
<b>Grants</b>			
Somerset Farmers Market	Complete	Awarded £3,600 over 3 years (£1200 per year)	2019/20 £21,720 4203
MSN Dial a ride	Complete	Awarded £3,000 over 3 years (£1000 per year)	2019/20 £21,720 4203
Swallow	Complete	Awarded £4,500 over 3 years (£1500 per year)	2019/20 £21,720 4203
Somer Squadron Air Cadets	Complete	Awarded £3,500	2019/20 £21,720 4203
MSN Rugby Football Club	Complete	Grant Awarded	2019/20 £21,720 4203
Wansdyke Association	Complete	Grant Awarded	2019/20 £21,720 4203
Keynsham & District Mencap Society	Complete	Grant Awarded	2019/20 £21,720 4203
Bath & North East Somerset Age UK	Complete	Bath & North East Somerset AGE UK – Revenue Grant £3000 for 3 years	2019/20 £21,720 4203

## 5: Areas of Responsibility for Midsomer Norton Town Council

Midsomer Norton is the third largest settlement in Bath and North East Somerset.

### 5:1 Local Authority - Bath and North East Somerset County Council

The Local Authority is Bath and North East Somerset Council and they are responsible for dealing with the following in Midsomer Norton:

- Bus Passes.
- Dog Warden Service.
- Fly Tipping.
- Garden Waste.
- Grass Cutting.
- Graffiti Removal.
- Gritting of Roads.
- Libraries.
- Parks and Open Spaces.
- Pavements and Road Maintenance.
- Planning Enquiries.
- Public Toilets.
- Public Transport.
- Recycling and Waste.
- Road Faults and Potholes.
- Road Safety.
- Street Lighting.
- Litter.

### **5:2 Midsomer Norton Town Council Asset Transfer**

From its creation in March 2011, Midsomer Norton Town Council started negotiations with BANES to secure the freeholds of the Town Hall and the Somer Centre along with a 99-year lease on the Orchard Hall. At the same time, recognising that house building had reduced the amount of public green space for residents to enjoy, the Town Council acquired St Chad's Well, purchased land for the Town Park, and sought to secure the freehold of the Silver Street Nature Reserve.

Having seen the ownership of the Town Hall lost in the past, the Town Council vowed to stop this happening again, and so created the Midsomer Norton Town Trust. This was created to hold, maintain and protect assets for the people.

In order to enable the community to run buildings and events the Town Council facilitated the creation of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust to enable the people of Midsomer Norton to volunteer without taking on huge personal liabilities. The Community Trust has space for eleven trustees, made up of seven independent trustees from the public and four nominated trustees who are appointed by the Council. The Community Trust currently employs one full time member of staff, the Trust Manager who is responsible for the day to day management of the organisation. Both organisations became Registered Charities in 2018.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, BANES exchanged contracts with the Council to transfer the freeholds of the Town Hall, the Somer Centre and Silver Street Nature Reserve and complete a 99 year lease on the Orchard Hall. The buildings and green spaces are places where groups can meet, hold events or simply be enjoyed by individuals and are essential to maintaining a vibrant and caring community. Also, the sustainability of these community assets can only be achieved if they are run for the people, by the people and will be protected for generations to come.

### **5:3 Midsomer Norton Town Council Responsibilities**

The Council is, therefore, responsible for the following:



- The Town Park.
- West Clewes Park.
- The War Memorial.
- The River Somer in the town centre.
- Wellow Brook.
- St Chads.
- St Johns Garden of Friendship.
- The allotments.
- Defibrillators.
- Grants.
- Midsomer Norton Life Magazine.
- Flowers – all the tubs and baskets on the High Street, planting at the Hollies garden and around the gateway signs in Midsomer Norton.

#### **5:4 Representation on Outside Bodies**

The Council also represents Midsomer Norton on several outside bodies including:

<b>Name of Organisation</b>
ALCA/NALC
Midsomer Norton & Radstock Chamber of Commerce
Midsomer Norton and District Twinning Committee
Midsomer Norton Community Association
Midsomer Norton Community Trust
Midsomer Norton Neighbourhood Development Plan
Midsomer Norton Society
Midsomer Norton Town Trust
Parish Cluster Meetings
Somer Valley FM
Somer Valley Forum
Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust
South Wansdyke Advice Network (SWAN)
Sports Group
Transport Group
Welton Rovers Football Club
Writhlington Trust
Youth Groups

The Council is also a member of Avon Local Councils Association.

#### **5:5 Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, Road Traffic Accidents and Lost Property**

Avon and Somerset Police are responsible for dealing with crimes, accidents on the road, lost and found property and anti-social behaviour in Midsomer Norton.

#### **6: Engaging with the Community and Council Activities**

The Council will seek out and respond to views and ideas expressed by its residents.

The Council will address the diversity of its community including different age groups, service users, physical locations, housing types, language, employment status and skill. The Council is committed to being actively involved in all parts of the community and will continue to work closely with community groups.

The following table sets out some examples of a range of activities that the Town Council has put in place, supported, sponsored or facilitated since it was created in 2011:

Launching a quarterly newsletter – Midsomer Norton LIFE – which is delivered to every household and business	Launching a Community Alcohol Partnership in the town responding to the town survey which highlighted anti-social behaviour as an issue	Supported the launch of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust and provided financial and organisational support.
Launching a community grant scheme which has provided funds totalling over £130,000	Developed a welcome pack which was distributed to new families moving to the town	Launched the Midsomer Norton Town Trust to hold property on behalf of the community
Sponsoring or funding community events such as the summer fayre and Christmas activities	Launched a community spaces initiative which has seen additional area being opened up to the community	Managed the land at West Clewes for the community as a whole as well as supporting Welton Rovers FC
Supporting civic groups such as the Midsomer Norton Society and the Twinning Association	Sponsored Arts programmes in association with B&NES Council	Installed an outdoor gym for community use at West Clewes
Launched and developed a web site for community communications	Carried out a major consultation through a Community Survey in 2013	Produced and funded a tourism leaflet to help promote the town.
Created a database of community groups and signposted their activities on the web site	Installed 2 life-saving defibrillators which are inspected by the Council every two weeks	Created a legacy of floral displays across the town and supported the In Bloom bids in winning successive awards
Supported the creation of an Allotment association and enabled it to take on the day to day running of the Radstock Road allotments	Engaged young people and supported the launch and ongoing delivery of a youth club	Funded a joint programme of Regeneration work in the town with B&NES Council
Purchase the land to create a new Town Park		

In order to build on the wide range of work already in hand or completed, to engage with and support the community, the Town Council aims to achieve the following key goals:

- To consistently promote the Council's role in the democratic process and explain how it will engage with the community to carry out that role.
- To create and maintain effective two-way communication with the whole community.
- To plan and fund a range of activities each year to engage the community and to review their effectiveness at the end of the year.

## **7: Neighbourhood Plan**

Following an application approved by the Town Council, Midsomer Norton was successfully designated as a Neighbourhood Area in November 2013, to enable the town to facilitate the Neighbourhood Plan process. The Neighbourhood Plan is one part of the development plan for the town over the period 2019 to 2029, the other parts being the 2014 Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy and the BANES Placemaking Plan.

The designation has been followed by the establishment of a Steering Group that is working together with community volunteers and a consultant. The Plan has been prepared by the Midsomer Norton Neighbourhood Plan Group (MSNNPG).

The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The MSNNPG has prepared the Plan to establish a vision for the future of the Parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the plan period.

The purpose of the Plan is to guide development within the town and provide guidance to anyone wishing to submit planning applications for development within the town. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas covered by each section of the plan are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Midsomer Norton, its residents, businesses and community groups. Under each section is the justification for the policies presented, to provide an understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. Planning applications will then be assessed against these policies.

After having carried out a major Community Survey in late 2013, a series of consultation events on the plan aims and vision were held in December 2014. The output from these was analysed and the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan drafted. The emerging plan will continue to be tested through further informal and formal consultation which must be reflected in an updated plan before being submitted to the Local Planning Authority for an independent review. If this is successful, it will then be put to the electorate in a referendum for adoption.

## **8: Governance**

Midsomer Norton Town Council aims to be a professional and competent Town Council. It is open and accountable and ensures sound financial management of its resources.

### **8:1 Effective Communication**

The Council will communicate with its residents in the following ways, by:

- Ensuring that all Council meetings and Committee meetings are held in public and are advertised via the Council noticeboards and electronically via the website.
- Setting aside a period of time at the start of Council meetings and Committee meetings for residents to raise issues or ask questions.
- Continuing to publish agendas and minutes on the website.
- Keeping its social media platforms updated.
- Distributing press releases to the local Midsomer Norton and Radstock Journal, the online Nub News and posting on the Council website.
- Posting a monthly “Round Up” Newsletter on the website and social media platforms.
- Distributing to all of the homes in Midsomer Norton a quarterly “Life” magazine.
- Maintaining an updated version of the Business Plan on the website.
- Continuing to appoint Councillors to represent the Council on outside bodies and organisations.
- Attending relevant meetings and conferences.
- Continuing to be involved and working with both the Midsomer Norton Town Trust and the Midsomer Norton Community Trust.
- Dealing with enquiries and fault reports from members of the public speedily and efficiently.
- Continuing to deliver a monthly Surgery attended by Councillors, to provide the residents with the opportunity to ask questions or give their views on matters concerning them.

The Council recognises the role of good communication in building positive relationships with the public and with organisations that provide services in the town. We will continue to seek to improve upon the established channels of communication and strive to find new methods.

### **8:2 Successful Community Governance**

For community governance to be effective the Council will:

- Review training needs of both Councillors and staff on an annual basis.
- Improve its services to the public by encouraging members and staff to develop their skills through appropriate training.
- Ensure Councillors have the opportunity to keep abreast of new opportunities and policy.
- Be a good and fair employer by providing fulfilling work opportunities and conditions for staff.

- Be well-informed about the needs and opinions of the parish's residents by consulting them on major issues.

## **9: Approval of the Business Plan**

This Business Plan was formally approved and adopted at a Full Council Meeting on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 and published on the Council website on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and from then being open to feedback from the community for 28 days.