

**Iminster Town Council  
Strategic Plan 2017/18 – 2020/2021**

**Approved by Council 13 December 2016**



**The Town Council will work to make Iminster a place in which people want to work, live and visit.**

**Introduction**

Iminster Town Council is the local council for the parish of Iminster, it is the third tier of local government - Somerset County Council and South Somerset District Council being the other tiers.

The town of Iminster has a population of approximately 6,000 of whom approx. 4,700 are aged over 16 years. There are approx. 2,700 dwellings.

The Town Council's responsibilities include the cemetery, play areas, approx. 55 acres of amenity land / recreational space, the Market House and the weekly market.

The civic year runs from May and starts with the election of the Mayor, appointment of the Deputy Mayor and election of the Committee Chairs at the Annual Town Council meeting.

There are 15 Town Councillors who serve the whole of the town (the town is not divided into wards) and elections to the Town Council are held every 4 years.

**Context of the Strategic Plan**

Iminster is set to experience a high level of growth with at least 1 major housing development (in excess of 300 dwellings) at the pre-planning discussion stage as this strategic plan is in its infancy.

The major roads passing close to the town are the A358 (leading to the M5) and the A303 / A30. The A303 is a major route from London to the west country. The A303 and the A358 are scheduled for significant upgrading (from single to dual carriageway) and improvement, at the time of drafting the strategic plan it is understood that Highways England are considering and assessing options but no details or timescales are yet known.

The Town Council's resourcing levels (time and money) are finite and constrained by a number of factors, including some beyond the Town Council's control – such as the levels of council tax support grant available and the impact of new legislation.

The development of the strategic plan is intended to focus activity and decision making, help prioritise projects and resourcing, and provide a baseline against which progress can be measured.

The Strategic Plan will be complemented by the development of a rolling 3 year Financial Plan.

## **Iminster Town Council SWOT Analysis**

Town Councillors have done a SWOT analysis to help identify areas of performance that could be improved and may be addressed when undertaking activities and projects

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>People (Staff and Councillors)            Non-political council            Friendly            Cautious            Community involvement of councillors            Community knowledge            Knowledge of the area            Community spirit            Countryside</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Poor communication            Structure needs review            Time            Generation of income            Restricted budget            Lack of planning</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>Income generation            Grant funding            Better communications            Development of Town            Local community / people            Financial Planning            Skills and knowledge of people new to the town            A358 Dualling – potential for more employment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <p>Loss of grants            Doing something new            Unseen risks            Time constraints            Development of town            Finance            Ability to do nothing            Government policy / cuts            Anti social behaviour</p>

### **Strategic Themes**

The Town Council's resources will be focussed on 3 strategic themes:

- The Iminster Economy,
- The Iminster Environment
- Community Engagement and Governance

For the duration of this strategic plan any project or activity must either be a legal / best practice requirement and / or fit within at least 1 of the strategic themes.

### **The Work Plan**

The work plan will be a dynamic document, updated regularly and presented to the Town Council for information at least 4 times a year. The workplan will indicate: the project / activity, the link between the activity and the strategic theme, completion target date and an indication of whether or not the project / activity is on track.

The list of projects / activities to be included in the 2017/18 – 2019/2020 workplan are:

- Open Spaces – provision of toilets in the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground, developing a dog policy, implementing the Open Spaces masterplan (regarding the Wharf Lane Rec & Britten's Field)
- Cemetery – researching future need, availability of suitable land and the feasibility of developing a new cemetery; acquiring suitable land and designing new facility
- Protecting Herne Hill from the impact of nearby development - including obtaining designation as a local nature reserve and acquisition of additional land
- Encourage use of Herne Hill by providing route signage and information boards
- Town Council accommodation
- Development of a Neighbourhood Plan (subject to community support)
- Protecting the burial / cemetery records whilst maintaining accessibility.

Note: the above list is not in any priority order