

# Public Document Pack



Leader and Members of the Executive

Contact: Rebecca Dobson  
Ext: 2174  
Date: 17 January 2020

cc. All other recipients of the Executive agenda

Dear Councillor

## **EXECUTIVE - 21 JANUARY 2020**

Please find attached the following reports which were not available when the agenda for the above meeting was published:

11. Corporate Plan 2020/21 (Pages 3 - 16)

14. Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 (Pages 17 - 18)

Please download this supplementary pack to your device via ModGov prior to the meeting next Tuesday.

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Dobson  
Democratic Services Manager  
Rebecca.Dobson@eastherts.gov.uk

**MEETING** : EXECUTIVE  
**VENUE** : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
**DATE** : TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2020  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

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## East Herts Council Report

### Executive

**Date of Meeting: 21st January 2020**

**Report by: Linda Haysey, Leader of the Council**

**Report title: Developing a new Corporate Plan**

**Ward(s) affected: All**

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### Summary

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:**

- a) That the new Corporate Plan is considered by the Executive and recommended for adoption by Full Council.**

#### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 The council's current Corporate Strategic Plan runs from 2016/17 to 2019/20. The Plan sets the strategic direction for the council, and the priorities that guide the council's work. Progress and updates regarding the current Corporate Strategic Plan priorities are regularly reported to the Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight Committee (PAGO).
- 1.2 The current Corporate Strategic Plan is due for review. This report:
  - outlines the approach taken towards the development of new corporate priorities;
  - presents the priorities which will form the basis of the new Corporate Plan.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Since the development of the last Corporate Strategic Plan in 2016 progress has been made in different areas alongside various changes locally and nationally. Major capital projects such as investing in Hertford Theatre, Old River Lane and leisure services are proceeding at pace, the District Plan has been adopted and we are anticipating the applications for Harlow and Gilston Garden Town in 2020.
- 2.2 Externally, the landscape regarding sustainability and climate change is gathering momentum. Many councils, including East Herts, have made significant sustainability commitments which build on the work undertaken over the past few years.
- 2.3 Digital transformation and innovation shape to an even greater extent the ways in which we lead our lives, and the ways in which our customers prefer to access services. The council has already made significant advances in its provision of online services, meaning that our residents and businesses can access and receive information about our services in ways that best suit them.
- 2.4 At the same time, local authorities continue to face increasing pressure on services with limited resources, meaning that it is vital for the council to continue to pursue its efforts in the following areas:
  - o Developing our commercial approach and to seek out new and innovative income sources;
  - o Encouraging business growth and development across the district;
  - o Enabling our communities to work collaboratively with us and our partner organisations, in order to provide services where they are most needed and where they will make the most difference.

- 2.5 Against this background, Executive Members, with support from partners and officers, have been working to develop the council's priorities for the period 2020 - 2024. The development process began on 6th July 2019 when the administration held an away day, during which initial priorities for the council were identified. Since then a number of smaller workshops have taken place to refine these priorities further. Discussions involved senior officers and partners (including the Council for Voluntary Services, the Citizen's Advice Service, the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor, The Digital Innovation Zone and the Local Enterprise Partnership).
- 2.6 This development process has defined an overarching vision, underpinned by four cross-cutting themes. Each of the themes have an associated set of actions and priorities which will be delivered. The draft corporate plan can be found at Appendix A. The rationale and background for each of the theme is explained below:
- 2.7 **Sustainability at the heart of everything we do - rationale**
- Residents of East Herts and the council have a good track record of reducing our impact on the environment. Our recent declaration on climate change emphasised our appetite to continue doing so in future. We know, though, that there is a great deal more that we could all do to reduce our environmental impact. We need to promote behaviour change to reduce reliance on cars to get around the district, improve air quality at certain traffic pinch points, and increase our use of sustainable materials as well as recycling more. We are committed to providing good quality housing with a sustainable travel infrastructure which will support the needs of our communities while maintaining the highest environmental standards. Making sustainability one of

our cross-cutting themes will demonstrate the council's commitment to addressing this global challenge.

## **2.8 Enabling our communities - rationale**

The quality of life on offer in East Herts – from good schools, the mix of urban and rural space, historic market towns and excellent connectivity to London and Cambridge, make it an ideal place for residents and businesses to prosper. At the same time we know the population is estimated to grow by another 27,600 people by 2041. This means we will be creating new communities as well as enabling and supporting our existing communities. We recognise that services are better when they are shaped by those who use them, and at the same time we understand that we are one service provider amongst many partners working in the district. We want to work with our partners to ensure that residents have a say in the future of their local area and that the council can be an effective leader of place, enabling those who most need our support. Investing in major projects such as theatres and leisure services is about making our towns and places more attractive destinations for people to live, visit and invest. This theme demonstrates the council's commitment to creating communities not housing estates.

## **2.9 Encouraging economic growth - rationale**

We recognise that the prosperity of East Herts depends to a large extent on London and some of the large employers and supply chains in and around Stansted, Harlow and Stevenage. However, as well as providing highly skilled workers who commute every day we have a large number of micro-businesses operating across multiple sectors within the district. We are committed to continuing to support local businesses and listening to their needs, through providing flexible working and grown on space for businesses, creating opportunities

for networking and supporting the application of new technology. We understand that providing the right space for local businesses is critical to growing our local economy. We realise that to enable future prosperity we must plan for it - our District Plan both protects existing employment space and plans for more of it through future development. This theme demonstrates the council's commitment to supporting businesses through its regulatory powers but also ensuring that much needed housing growth is delivered alongside the right infrastructure.

#### **2.10 Digital by design - rationale**

East Herts is made up of many different towns, villages and communities. We are focused on providing the best possible services for all our residents and businesses, whether they live in towns or rurally, and see digital connectivity as a key to this aim. The way people work, interact, buy goods and access services is changing rapidly. Connecting people with ideas and information can be a powerful and enabling force, and has the opportunity to help us address some of the district's more difficult issues – such as social isolation and access to services in rural areas. We want to put the right foundations in place for digitally enabled communities (particularly where they are new such as Harlow and Gilston Garden Town). This is particularly significant in a district like East Herts when much of the funding for digital infrastructure is directed towards large urban centres. Working with key partners such as the Digital Innovation Zone will be a key part of realising the priorities in this theme. Alongside the council needs to continue transforming its own services so they are more customer responsive and maximising use of digital technology.

- 2.11 Each cross-cutting priority will be led at an operational level by a member of the council's Leadership Team, and delivered by a group of appropriate officers across

the organisation. Please see the Appendix A for further details on these priorities.

## Appendix A –Draft Corporate Plan

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

- 3.1 To seek Executive Committee members' views on the new Corporate Plan, to enable the council to take such views into account in setting its strategic direction.

### **4.0 Options**

- 4.1 The new Corporate Plan priorities have been developed through a process involving officers, members and key partners. No alternatives are currently being considered, as to do so would disregard the development process which has been undertaken.

### **5.0 Risks**

- 5.1 There is no legal requirement for councils to develop a corporate plan, however, should the Council fail to adopt new corporate priorities the risks arising may be organisational and reputational.
- 5.2 The impact of these risks would be moderate, and the likelihood unlikely.

### **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

- 6.1 The new Corporate Plan priorities will guide the organisation's work over the coming four years. They will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 6.2 Informal consultation on all the draft priorities has taken place with key partner organisations working across the district.
- 6.3 The priority 'Sustainability at the heart of everything we do' will ensure that all the Council's work is considered from an environmental and sustainable perspective.



**Community Safety**

No

**Data Protection**

No

**Equalities**

No

**Environmental Sustainability**

Yes

**Financial**

No

**Health and Safety**

No

**Human Resources**

No

**Human Rights**

No

**Legal**

No

**Specific Wards**

No

**7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

Appendix A –Draft Corporate Plan

**Contact Member**

Linda Haysey, Leader of the Council

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**Contact Officer**

Ben Wood, Head of Communications, Strategy  
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**Report Author**


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A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small amount of water, which is dripping onto a young green plant growing out of a mound of dark soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall mood is one of care and growth.

# EAST HERTS: A place to grow

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**S**ustainability at the heart of everything we do

**E**nabling our communities

**E**ncouraging economic growth

**D**igital by design



## Foreword

We have chosen the “seed” concept to represent the priorities of the Council as it characterises much of what our district offers. As well as our commitment to sustainability and being greener, East Herts is a place where you can grow whether you want to move to a new, energy efficient home, expand your business or enjoy our market towns and fantastic green spaces whilst still being in easy reach of London. My priority over 2020/21 – 2023/4 is to continue delivering much needed housing but ensuring this comes with the right investment in infrastructure for travel, education and health. We also have planned investments of well over £100m in the next few years to improve our leisure and arts offering as well as help keep town centres vibrant and relevant.

**Councillor Linda Haysey, Leader**





# Sustainability at the heart of everything we do



Our recent declaration on climate change emphasised our appetite to continue to reduce our impact on the environment. We need to reduce reliance on cars to get around the district, improve air quality at pinch points, and increase our use of sustainable materials. We are committed to providing good quality housing with a sustainable travel infrastructure which will support the needs of our communities while maintaining the highest environmental standards.

## Where we are now

The council has made a Climate Change Declaration which affirms the council's commitment to use its powers and influence to promote carbon neutrality both on the part of the council and the district more broadly. Latest records indicate the council produced 2,800 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2017 (the latest full year data), with 4.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> being produced per head across the district each year.

## Where do we want to get to?

- Environmental Sustainability to be at the heart of everything the council does
- The council to be carbon neutral by 2030
- Climate friendly planning and building control regulations to be in force
- Joined up multi-agency action being taken to tackle climate change
- The council to have fully used its powers and influence to promote the district being carbon neutral by 2030
- The council to achieve 65% recycling rate by 2035

## Strategy/objectives

1. We will make changes to how the council manages its own premises, people and services

## Actions/key projects

- 1a. Draw up a carbon assessment tool to be used to assess the carbon footprint of all council projects
- 1b. Audit the council's vehicles with a view to replacing them with e-vehicles
- 1c. Audit all our buildings to identify options to increase energy efficiency/reduce the carbon footprint

## Who

Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator

## When

30/09/20

31/12/20

Property Manager

31/03/21

2. We will use our regulatory powers to promote action by others

- 2a. Publish an Environmental Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document
- 2b. Facilitate the installation of rapid e-chargers to support a move to more e-taxis
- 2c. Survey locally active residential developers to better understand barriers to building higher energy efficient / Passivhaus properties

Service Manager

Planning Policy

Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator

Head of Housing and Health

30/12/20

31/12/20

31/12/20

3. We will influence and encourage others to be more environmentally sustainable

- 3a. Work with business organisations and groups to promote environmental sustainability
- 3b. Establish and run a multi-agency Environmental and Climate Change Forum
- 3c. Actively implement and encourage waste minimisation initiatives

Business and Economic Development Manager

Head of Housing and Health

Waste Shared service

31/03/21

01/04/20

31/03/21



# Enabling our communities



The quality of life on offer in East Herts – good schools, urban and rural space, historic market towns and excellent connectivity to London and Cambridge - makes it an ideal place to prosper. Our population is estimated to grow by 27,600 people by 2041, meaning we will be creating new communities as well as enabling our existing communities. We will work with partners to ensure that residents have a say in the future of their local area and that the council can enable those who most need support. Investing in major projects such as theatres and leisure services will make our district a more attractive destination for people to live, visit and invest.

## Where we are now

We are investing in several high profile projects which will improve the wellbeing of our residents. We need to ensure momentum is kept on delivery, ensure a clear and consistent narrative is understood by stakeholders and that services to our most vulnerable continue to be delivered.

## Where do we want to get to?

- Delivery of key milestones within major projects
- Deliver 150 new affordable homes each year
- Work with our vulnerable residents to prevent them becoming homeless by either maintaining their current home or assisting them to obtain more suitable alternative accommodation
- Time taken to process housing benefit claims/ changes (target: 10 days)
- Increased reach and engagements on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter
- Increased referrals from the social prescribing project

## Strategy/objectives

1. We will invest in our places

## Actions/key projects

- 1a. Complete construction of new Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre (78 week build starting Feb 2020)
- 1b. Deliver £20m investment in Hertford Theatre
- 1c. Deliver the Castle Park project
- 1d. Support the Herts 2020 Year of Culture

## Who

## When

2. We will ensure all voices in the community are heard

2. Grow our digital communications channels (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Linked in)

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Head of Operations   | 30/9/2021              |
| Head of Operations<br>Leisure & Parks<br>Development Manager | 31/3/2021<br>31/3/2021 |
| Community Wellbeing<br>Programme Officer                     | 31/12/2020             |

3. We will support our vulnerable residents

- 3a. Continue to deliver social prescribing and launch the Hertford and Bishop's Stortford Healthy Hubs
- 3b. Deliver affordable housing
- 3c. Support people with the transition to universal credit

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Head of Communications,<br>Strategy and Policy | 31/3/2021 |
| Healthy Lifestyles<br>Programme Officer        | 31/3/2021 |
| Housing Services Manager                       | 31/3/2021 |
| Head of Revenues<br>& Benefits Shared Service  | 31/3/2021 |

# Encouraging economic growth



The district's prosperity is supported by our proximity to London and the large employers and supply chains in our neighbouring towns. However, we also have a large number of micro-businesses operating in the district. We are committed to supporting and listening to local businesses in order to grow our local economy - providing flexible working space, creating opportunities for networking and supporting the application of new technology. To enable future prosperity we must plan for it - our District Plan protects existing employment space and plans for more of it. We are committed to ensuring that housing growth is delivered alongside the right infrastructure.

## Where we are now

The district plan has been adopted and key sites are being developed. The local economy remains robust with high numbers of small and micro-businesses operating across different sectors. However we need to ensure that investment in infrastructure is realised to ensure we build communities not just housing estates. Equally we need to ensure that employment land is retained on current sites and built out within any new developments.

## Where do we want to get to?

- Increase capital and revenue income from Millstream Property Investment Ltd to support key council priorities
- Increase the number of subscribers to the East Herts Lottery
- Increase the number of Launchpad users and the income generated from the facility
- Article 4 directions implemented on the 32 designated employment sites within the District Plan
- Delivery of at least 839 new dwellings per year
- Determine 80% of minor/other applications within 8 weeks
- Determine major planning applications within 13 weeks

## Strategy/objectives

1. We will develop new sources of income

## Actions/key projects

- 1a. Deliver the Millstream Property Investment Ltd's Business plan  
1b. Grow the East Herts Lottery

## Who

Head of Housing and Health  
Housing and Health Projects Officer

## When

31/3/21  
31/3/21

2. We will support businesses growth

- 2a. Expand the Launchpad offering  
2b. Provide discretionary business rate grants to incentivise new businesses to set up/ existing businesses to expand

Business and Economic Development Manager  
Head of Communications Strategy and Policy

31/3/21  
30/12/20

3. We will create viable places

- 3a. Begin construction of the multi-story car park on the Old River Lane site  
3b. Implement Article 4 Directions on designated employment sites  
3c. Support the Herts Growth Board with presenting a case for additional infrastructure investment in Hertfordshire  
3d. Delivery of the strategic sites allocated in the District Plan in accordance with the housing trajectory.

Project Manager  
Economic Development Officer  
Chief Executive

Head of Planning

30/12/20  
31/1/21  
31/1/21  
31/3/21



# Digital by design



East Herts is made up of many different towns, villages and communities. Digital connectivity is key to providing the best possible services for all our residents and businesses, in towns and rurally. The way people work, interact, and access goods and services is changing rapidly. Connecting people with ideas and information can help us address some of the district's difficult issues – such as social isolation and access to services in rural areas. We will work with partners such as the Digital Innovation Zone to put in place strong foundations for digitally enabled communities, particularly new communities such as Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. At the same time, the council will continue to transform its own services so they are more customer responsive and maximise the use of digital technology.

## Where we are now

The geographic make up of the district means telephony remains the channel of choice for residents. Equally footfall into our main reception areas remains high. Whilst we recognise the importance of providing these services we also need to ensure demand is managed where possible. Alongside this we need to work with partners and the private sector to ensure the digital technology and infrastructure is in place for new developments.

## Where do we want to get to?

- Increase proportion of customer contacts undertaken via the website
- Ensure 80% of govmetric ratings for face to face are rated as good
- Ensure 50% of govmetric ratings for web and email are rated as good
- Increase SOCITM ratings
- Increase % of households that have signed up to self service
- Increase % of businesses that have signed up to self service
- Increase % of landlords that have signed up to self service

## Strategy/ objectives

1. We will improve the customer experience for those who use council services

## Actions/ key projects

- 1a. Sign up to the MHCLG Digital Declaration
- 1b. Increase online and telephony payments options
- 1c. Put core staff competences in place for all staff which include customer focus and making effective use of digital solutions

## Who

## When

2. We will work with partners to ensure our communities are digitally enabled

- 2a. Ensure fibre to the premise (FTTP) is provided on all new developments
- 2b. Support joint delivery of Harlow and Gilston Garden Town as a fully sustainable and digital 'place'
- 2c. Support the Digital Innovation Zone to lobby for investment in our towns and villages
- 2d. Provide a programme of business networking and awareness raising on GDPR and cyber-security

Deputy chief Exec  
Head of Communications,  
Strategy and Policy  
Head of HR

30/9/20  
31/3/21  
31/3/21

Principal Planning Officer

31/3/21

Senior Planning  
Project Officer  
Deputy Chief Executive

31/3/21  
31/3/21

Economic Development  
Officer

31/1/21



## East Herts Council

### Treasury Management Report – Appendix A

The following paragraph Appendix A to the report has been amended, to correct an error in the original working capital calculation.

#### 2.3 Core funds and expected investment balances

| Year End Resources<br>£m    | 2018/19<br>Actual | 2019/20<br>Estimate | 2020/21<br>Estimate | 2021/22<br>Estimate | 2022/23<br>Estimate |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Fund balances / reserves    | 13.9              | 15.4                | 15.9                | 16.3                | 16.6                |
| Capital receipts            | 1.9               | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 |
| Provisions                  | 0.0               | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 |
| Other                       | 0.0               | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 |
| <b>Total core funds</b>     | <b>15.8</b>       | <b>15.4</b>         | <b>15.9</b>         | <b>16.3</b>         | <b>16.6</b>         |
| Working capital*            | 10                | 10                  | 10                  | 10                  | 10                  |
| Surplus capital resource    | 23.1              | 13.7                | 0                   | 0                   | 0                   |
| (Under)/over borrowing      | 7.5               | 7.5                 | (4.2)               | (4.1)               | (4.9)               |
| <b>Expected investments</b> | <b>56.4</b>       | <b>46.6</b>         | <b>21.7</b>         | <b>22.2</b>         | <b>21.7</b>         |

\* Working capital balances shown are estimated year-end; these may be higher mid-year

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