

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

East Herts Council Corporate Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17

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1. Introduction

This is East Herts' Corporate Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

East Herts Council's message to residents and businesses is that we are *Here to Help You*. East Herts Council remains committed to delivering good quality services that reflect local priorities and resources. However the need for austerity brought about by world events means residents businesses and the council face all kinds of new issues and challenges.

The traditionally understood role of district councils of collecting the waste bin and sweeping the road does not alone meet residents' expectations or needs. To be effective and fill some of the gaps that have emerged, local government cannot continue as it has been.

The scale of the challenge facing public services demands something more than efficiency and cuts alone. There is a need to invest in innovation and look beyond the immediate environment to define a future that looks more sustainable. That means experimenting, taking risks, being prepared to fail, learn and adapt. Our communities, residents and businesses also need more and different support and advice. They need quick and easy access to that support and advice.

We are developing our roles as members and employees to meet those challenges and ensure you can better access the kind of support you need. In particular, your councillors have been developing their skills to help you in the communities where you are.

Being here to help you is the ethos we are reinforcing in all our work and dealings with both the public and partners. We believe that working together we will be best able to shape and deliver better outcomes for you and the district of East Herts.

Councillor Anthony Jackson

Leader of the Council

George A Robertson

***Chief Executive and Director
of Customer & Community
Services***

2. East Herts Council in Context and Summary

Our Vision:

To improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that's best in East Herts

Our Strategic Priorities:

East Herts Council is here to help you. It is committed to the communities it serves; delivering good quality services that reflect local priorities and resources. In pursuit of our vision your elected councillors have identified three **PRIORITY THEMES** to provide focus in those endeavours

They are:

People – Opportunities for everyone to contribute to and access the council's services

Place – Safe and Clean

Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities

The relevance of our priority themes has been tested through regular formal and informal consultation with local residents, businesses and partners. Importantly, the priority themes are informed by the vision and priorities of East Herts Local Strategic Partnership, which brings together the views and talents of a wide range of groups and organisations.

The council's District Plan which provides the framework to shape the district's built environment supports the council's and the Local Strategic Partnership priorities, whilst at the same time balancing the many external pressures that impact on the plan.

The Council's Developing Roles: Here to help you

Being here to help you; supporting residents and communities to get the best access to the services and advice that they need means the council's role is much more than a service provider.

Our commitment is to East Herts as a place where the community is being well served and is realising its capacity.

The council's work in achieving much of this plan and how we will make a difference to the communities we serve, will be through a mix of any of the five main roles we have identified:

- **Community Leadership** – inspiring, galvanising and coordinating others' efforts with us and whichever partners can best help; helping communities to achieve their local ambitions
- **Influencer** – lobbying, listening, communicating, pressing and campaigning
- **Partner** – actively engaged with others and jointly committing time, money, intelligence and resources
- **Enabler** – making connections and removing barriers
- **Service Provider / Commissioner / Manager** – being a provider of good quality services that reflect local priorities and resources; having responsibility and resources for consistent delivery will provide the bedrock for an organisation that continues to be here to help you

3. Organisation and Culture - Here to Help You

Our organisation:

We are '**Here to help you**' our residents and to make a difference. We want to deliver the outcomes that local residents and communities want, so we will:

- Provide efficient and joined up services, easily accessible to the customer
- Be a gateway for access. If you need help and don't know who to ask, we will try to help you or put you in touch with someone else who can
- Provide excellent customer service ensuring that our customers get the services or support they need whether they are provided directly by us or through our partners
- Help your councillors to be more effective community leaders
- Work in partnership with others across the district through the East Herts Local Strategic Partnership
- Create an environment that communities feel empowered to provide their own solutions

Our Culture:

Our culture focuses on the ethos of being 'Here to help you'. This lies at the root of our organisational values and behaviours demonstrated by the actions of councillors and staff.

The councillors roles:

Your local councillors are elected to make council policy, take up issues and represent the local community. The role of councillors has been changing, with more emphasis placed on greater community engagement and stronger local advocacy. We see our councillors being **Strong Community Leaders** who:

- Are in touch with their local community
- Understand what the local issues are
- Support and champion their local issues by seeking resolution where possible or providing the conduit to get things delivered

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Every Councillor plays a role in ensuring this plan is delivered, whether that is as an Executive, Scrutiny or Regulatory Committee Member and of course as your elected ward Member.

Democratic Representation and Decision Making

East Herts has 50 councillors representing 30 wards and each councillor serves for four years. Following the district council elections in May 2011 the breakdown of the political representation was:

Conservative: 46

Liberal Democrat: 2

Independent: 2

The council operates a Leader and Executive model, with key executive decisions taken by an Executive of six councillors with decisions and other issues reviewed by three scrutiny committees. Separate committees undertake other specific functions, for example, in relation to Planning and Licensing. Full details of the council's decision making process are available at: www.eastherts.gov.uk.

Our Staff:

The council knows that its most important asset is its people. Therefore, it is essential that we have the right people with the right skills and knowledge in the right jobs, at the right time, to support the delivery of the Corporate Strategic Plan.

Our workforce planning has a central role in delivering improved services as it has been developed to:

- Meet customer and service needs and continue to develop the skills required to deliver them
- Support the council's integrated service and financial planning framework
- Be flexible and resilient to respond to service changes and developments
- Support management information

Thereby giving the council the flexibility it needs in its workforce to utilise staff resources.

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4. Delivering Your Priorities

The priorities and objectives, while very similar to those for 2011/12 have been amended to reflect the challenging financial position faced by the council.

<i>People</i>	
This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly those who are vulnerable and delivering strong services	
Therefore we want to:	Our role will be as a:
Reduce health inequalities, for example, by addressing obesity, smoking and physical inactivity Reduce fuel poverty	Community Leader, Influencer, Partner and Enabler
Increase community engagement	Community Leader, Partner and Enabler
Deliver strong and relevant services	Provider / Commissioner / Manger
Improve outcomes for the vulnerable	Community Leader, Influencer, Partner and Provider / Commissioner / Manager

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Place	
This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.	
Therefore we want to:	Our role will be as a:
Reduce residual waste and increase our recycling rate	Community Leader, Influencer and Provider / Commissioner / Manager
Reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from our own operations by 25% by 2020 and work with partners to reduce the emissions of households and businesses	Community Leader, Influencer and Provider / Commissioner / Manager
Maintain our clean streets and reduce litter	Community Leader and Provider / Commissioner / Manager
Maintain our parks and open spaces	Community Leader, Partner and Provider / Commissioner / Manager
Reduce anti social behaviour and the fear of crime	Community Leader, Partner and Enabler
Ensure future development meets the need of the district and its residents	Community Leader, Influencer and Provider / Commissioner / Manager

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<i>Prosperity</i>	
This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.	
Therefore we want to:	Our role will be as a:
Deliver value for money	Partner and Provider / Commissioner / Manager
Enhance the economic well being of East Herts	Community Leader, Influencer and Enabler
Deliver sustainable rural business growth	Community Leader, Influencer and Enabler
Protect the environment	Community Leader, Influencer and Provider / Commissioner / Manager

5. Measuring Success – A golden thread – How we plan, manage and deliver what we do

East Herts Local Strategic Partnership developed and agreed a Sustainable Community Strategy as the overarching partnership plan for East Herts. Informed by the community it serves, it articulates shared aims and aspirations for the district. For 2012/13 East Herts Local Strategic Partnership reviewed and revised its priorities to three priority outcomes –

- community safety
- promoting economic well being
- supporting the vulnerable being agreed.

Working groups supporting the original themes have been brought together and three partnership actions have been agreed for each priority theme.

East Herts Council's Corporate Strategic Plan (this plan) sets out the overall vision and direction for the council over the next four years. There is a clear link to the shared priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership. The Strategic Plan highlights the high level priorities for the council and identifies some of the key outcomes that will be achieved. The plan sets the direction for the organisation and forms the basis for the council's performance management activities and steers the distribution of resources.

Service Plans are produced every year by Heads of Service, agreed by the council's elected members. They set out what key development type actions need to be undertaken to deliver the outcomes contained in the Corporate Strategic Plan. These actions are linked to key performance indicators, so achievement can be measured and tracked.

The **Medium Term Financial Plan** considers how the resources needed to deliver the council's priorities and ambitions. Iterations of Service Plans and a structured member challenge process feeds into a four-year budget-planning model, which the council uses to plan its expenditure and make sure that financial resources are available to fund actions in priority areas.

The **People Strategy** is the council's framework for the delivery of people management, ensuring the council has a high quality

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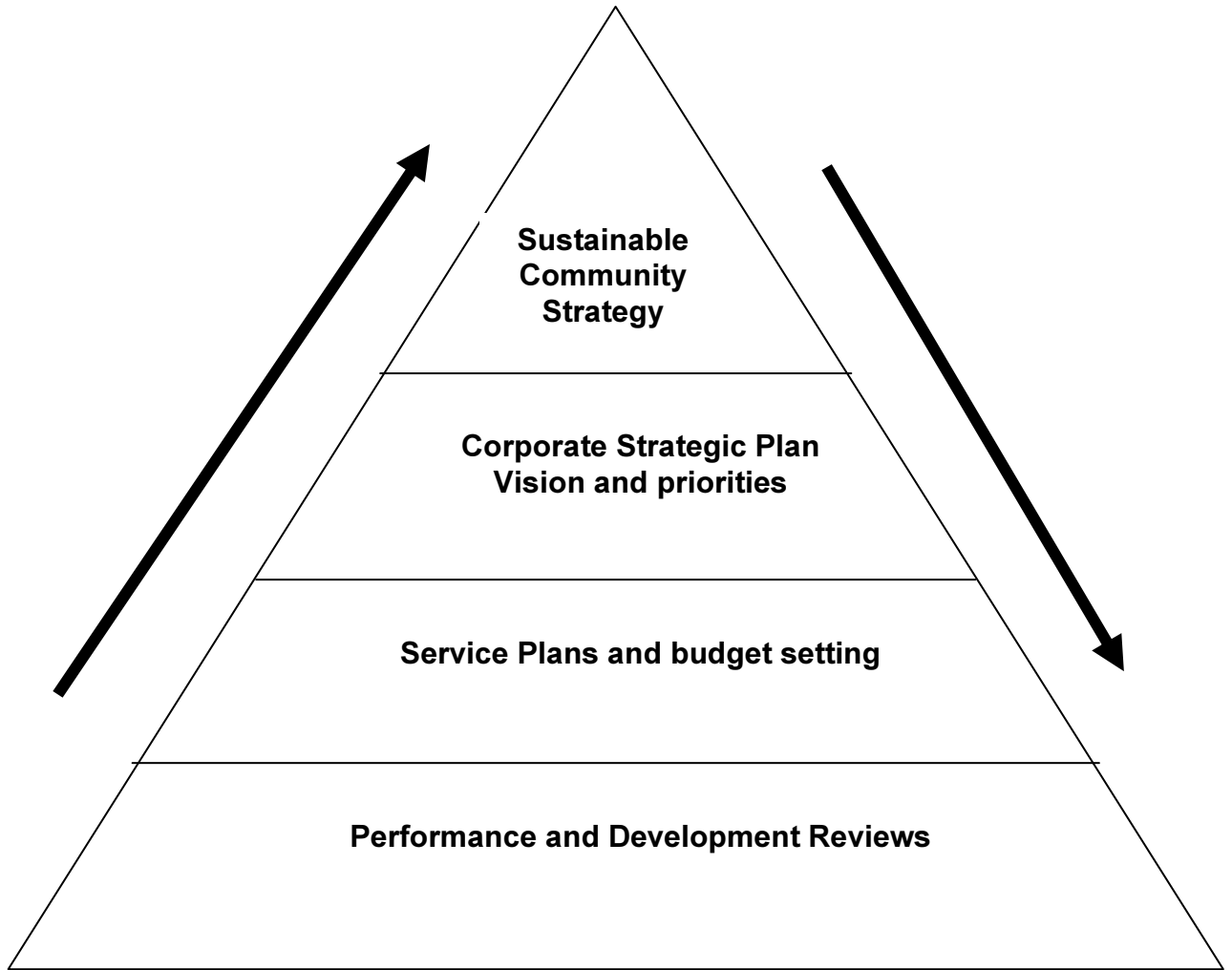
workforce delivering good quality services. The strategy contains seven key people objectives, which are aligned to the council's priorities.

Performance and Development Reviews set out individual's personal objectives that a member of staff needs to achieve to deliver their Service Plan and which contribute to the achievement of the council's priorities. This process helps ensure every member of staff has the opportunity to develop their learning and personal development plan.

The **Performance Management Framework** delivers timely monitoring of the council's priorities and delivery of outcomes. Financial and performance information and analysis is made available in the form of a regular **Corporate Healthcheck** and half yearly **Service Plan Monitoring Reports**. They are considered both by the **Corporate Management Team** and reported formally to the council's **Executive Committee** and **Scrutiny Committees**. Scrutiny meetings are open to all and we strongly encourage the public to attend.

East Herts Performance Management Framework:

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