

Telling the Story – An overview of achievements by Corporate Priority up to 31 March 2013:

Please note only the objectives where there are achievements to report have been listed and where an achievement relates to a specific service plan action this has been referenced. Text in ‘**Black**’ was reported in the first monitoring report, text in ‘**Blue**’ are new achievements for this reporting period.

Priority: People	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Enhance our local community engagement by working together with our partners such as Parish and Town Councils, for the benefit of our communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the Olympic torch in East Herts, which came through Hertford, Ware and Bishop’s Stortford. (12-CE03) • Held a successful and well attended annual Parish conference in Much Hadham for all parishes. • Joined Twitter and re-launched our Facebook page with usage growing and member social media training delivered. Currently over 2,000 people living or working in East Herts are connecting with us through our Twitter and Facebook pages. (12-CE01 and 12-CE09) • Provided £17,790 in grants for 67 Jubilee Street parties. The grants were given towards the costs of organising events that would bring people together in a fun, friendly way, and contribute to a sense of community and neighbourliness. Groups ranged from community centres, residents’ associations, village hall committees and parish councils to groups. (12-CE03 and 12-CE05) • Subsidised 55 Christmas Parties organised by groups that serve senior citizens, vulnerable people and people with disabilities (£3,264). Feedback was positive and showed how the events help combat

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	<p>Objective: Enhance our local community engagement by working together with our partners such as Parish and Town Councils, for the benefit of our communities (continued)</p>	<p>loneliness and social isolation by providing mental stimulation and a rare opportunity to meet up with friends for good food, singing and dancing. (12-CE05).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded 19 community capital grants. The grants ranged from £1,000 to £12,000 and were awarded to parish councils, village halls, and sports clubs to improve community facilities, green spaces and purchase equipment in rural East Herts. (12-CE05). Some of the projects that were grant aided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replaced 20-year old, redundant play equipment on village green at Bramfield ○ Purchased recreational and sports equipment for successful youth club in Little Munden ○ Purchased IT equipment for popular Internet café at High Wych Memorial Hall ○ Contributed to build of new annex at Benington Village Hall which hosts monthly lunch club for elderly residents • Supported towns and parishes to fund projects that directly help residents, through the new home bonus grant. Some of the areas in East Herts that have been helped are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little Berkamsted - a film club has been established as the parish council was able to purchase a new projector; replacement wooden foundations for the log play frame was paid for and the village hall was redecorated.

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	<p>Objective: Enhance our local community engagement by working together with our partners such as Parish and Town Councils, for the benefit of our communities (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hertingfordbury - new swings and a see-saw were paid for; repairs have been scheduled for the East End Green track and the parish council was able to award a grant to the Greens Residents Association to fight an appeal against refusal of planning permission for a traveller camp. ➤ High Wych - funds were put towards the resurfacing of the village car park. ➤ Datchworth - the majority of the funds have been put aside to contribute to the costs of creating a Neighbourhood Plan, however a small part has been used to pay the first year's rent for two outreach post office services in Datchworth and Burnham Green village halls. ➤ Furneux Pelham - two standpipes and taps to help allotment holders have been paid for, as well as fencing to go round the site. The rest of the funds are going towards a wooden bus shelter. ➤ Buntingford - the funds were put towards refurbishing the Christmas lights and future community projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with art centres in East Herts and Inspirational Arts, the Arty Bus was launched to take an interactive journey through the wide and varied arts scene that East Herts has to offer. The 39-seater bus transported participants of all ages between locations, where they could get off and enjoy some fun and educational activities, before getting back on the bus and heading off to the next adventure. The bus went from Hertford Theatre to Rhodes one day and from Rhodes to Hertford Theatre the next; feedback was very positive.

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	<p>Objective: Maintain our core services to a good standard and ensure high satisfaction with the council as measured through the biennial Residents Survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retained the Investors in People award (IiP) which recognises how the council helps staff to deliver improvements. During the four day assessment randomly selected staff were interviewed. The independent assessor found many areas of excellent practice and some areas where the council could do more and improve. An action plan has been drafted to address the areas for improvement. • Worked with the Community Voluntary Service to allocate £25,000 for fun free activities for children and young people aged between 5 -19. A total of 25 grants. For the first time, Hornsmill Community Centre in Hertford hosted two activities and Child UK run its popular Play and Teen Rangers scheme in local playing fields. Bedazzle Projects in Bishop's Stortford had a pop school for children with special needs. Towns and villages, including Standon and Puckeridge, Benington and Stanstead Abbots also received some of the funds. • Everyone Active, the organisation that manages East Herts Council's pools and gyms, won a top industry award. Voted by the residents who visit the leisure centres in East Herts and there other venues across the country. Everyone Active won the Leisure Operator of the Year award for the third year at the annual FLAME Awards, run by the Fitness Industry Association (FIA). • Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre in Bishop's Stortford and Fanshawe Pool and Gym in Ware received a silver and bronze award respectively in the annual Health Club of the Year Awards.

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	<p>Objective: Maintain our core services to a good standard and ensure high satisfaction with the council as measured through the biennial Residents Survey (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed a new Infreemation system to help us meet our target of delivering at least 85% Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within 20 days. This system makes the FOI process more accessible within the Council and helps to improve the overall management of requests. FOI performance was 92.4 % in 2013, which is an improvement on the previous year at 88.9%. (12-CPS03) • Invited an independent team facilitated by the LGA to give an objective view, share thinking and to help the council ensure it's heading in the right direction. The team concluded that the council was 'delivering good services with a high level of satisfaction from residents underpinned by a healthy financial base'. • Launched a new option on the council's website to make it easier and simpler for people to submit their comments for and against current planning applications. Using the new feature people can go directly to the application they wish to comment on and click a link allowing them to submit comments. There is also an option of adding attachments, such as supporting documents and photographs. this has proved a popular method of communicating with the Council in relation to planning applications. • As a member of the Local Strategic Partnership led by the council, funding was granted to work clubs at NextStep, Bishop's Stortford and the Selections Children's Centre in Hertford to help people living in East Herts to get into work. So far 64 work experience placements have resulted in 35 permanent offers of work. Work clubs help people

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	<p>Objective: Maintain our core services to a good standard and ensure high satisfaction with the council as measured through the biennial Residents Survey (continued)</p>	<p>with careers advice, skills development and recruitment opportunities. The also offer advice on CVs, job searching, job applications and computer skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received a good external audit report on the adequacy of the Council's anti-fraud arrangements, which demonstrates strong corporate governance.(12-CR03)

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	<p>Objective: Provide support for the vulnerable by working with our partners to increase the number of social and affordable homes, increasing the number of supported housing units and ensuring those in need access the benefits and support they are entitled to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Hertfordshire County Council, voluntary and community sector services to develop an integrated approach to engage more with older people forums to help strengthen their preventive role and achieve a wider range of health and wellbeing outcomes for this older community. • In partnership with small business Skill Ltd, hosted Shopmobility in the Jackson Square car park. As of March 2013, the charity has 533 registered users, which includes clients that are temporarily disabled. The service averaged 24 hires of electric scooters, manual and powered wheelchairs per week during the winter months. All trips are free to registered members who come from Bishops Stortford and surrounding villages. • Joined an online system making it easier for households wishing to join the East Herts Council Housing Register to apply for accommodation to do so, to view their assessment in more detail and update changes. A link at HomeOption takes applicants straight to the online form. It also explains what information they will need in order to register and how to contact the Council if they want advice in completing the form. • Agreed a new Housing Strategy at full Council on 26 September 2012. The strategy is now published. (12-HO1)

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	<p>Objective: Provide support for the vulnerable by working with our partners to increase the number of social and affordable homes, increasing the number of supported housing units and ensuring those in need access the benefits and support they are entitled to (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved a new housing register policy which sets out how homes will be allocated to applicants. Council approved the strategy on 6 March. The policy will go live on 1 May 2013. • Teamed up with Hertfordshire County Council, other districts in Hertfordshire, NHS Hertfordshire and voluntary organisations to win a £395,000 share of the Department of Health's Warm Homes Healthy People Fund. The fund was used to support vulnerable Hertfordshire residents to give them extra support to keep their homes warm and stay healthy during the winter by enhancing current schemes like improving insulation in homes, providing emergency heaters and providing extra services for homeless people. • Facilitated 175 new affordable homes of which approximately 75% will be for rent and 25% for shared ownership. This is an increase of 33% when compared to 2011/12. The majority of these properties are acquired and managed by housing associations from planning obligations on new private developments via S106 agreements where the council currently requests up to 40% affordable homes. Further developments are planned for 2013/14. (12-HO4).

Priority: People	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Address health inequalities and continue to ensure public health safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) on Gascoyne Way to include Ware Road and the Old Cross area in Hertford, as part of ongoing work to reduce pollution. An action plan to improve air quality within the AQMA has been put together and aims to improve air quality through traffic management and reducing congestion. To date there are 2 AQMAs in East Herts. The Local Air Quality Management Review and Assessment Process identified that the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is likely to be exceeded alongside the London Road and Cambridge Road, and a small section of Station Road and West Road in Sawbridgeworth. The report will be submitted to DEFRA for appraisal and should they agree with the report's conclusions an AQMA will be declared in this area.

Priority: Place	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Continue to review the council's assets and the best way to manage them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed ownership and management arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ware Drill Hall – asset transferred to a community group ➤ Scotts Grotto – retained current arrangements with Ware Society as this was the best management option ➤ Hornsmill Community Centre – provided support (12-CE07)
	<p>Objective: Ensure the sustainability of Hertford Theatre and explore possibilities for the theatre to be administered through a community trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertford Theatre completed its first full year since re-opening (previously Castle Hall). The Theatre has quickly become a vibrant and successful artistic and community hub. Success against the business plan and its growing cultural offer was acknowledged by the council's Scrutiny Committee in August 2012. (12-HT01 – 03).

Priority: Place	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Reduce waste sent to landfill by increasing our recycling rate to more than 50%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched SURGE – a promotion scheme designed to improve the amount of waste recycled and a decrease the amount sent to landfill, the campaign particularly targeted low performing areas based on the average amount recycled per round. In the first three weeks of the campaign the council received 230 requests for more containers. The post scheme appraisal showed a significant increase in recycling levels in the areas covered and income from sale of extra material collected funded the cost of the project, which is now being extended to other areas. Phase 2 of the project (the next lowest performing recycling rounds) will take place in early April 2013 and results should be available in September. (12-ES11)
	<p>Objective: Reducing the carbon dioxide emissions from our own operations by 25% by 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herts Sustainability Forum (HSF) has been established and has set up a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) which has been accredited by the Government. The HSF has also set up a Member working group to look at how to progress the Governments new framework for dealing with fuel poverty (known as the 'Green Deal'). Officers will report to East Herts Council's members once this work has been completed. The HSF is currently reviewing its priorities and has agreed to fund an awareness campaign covering a range of environmental matters. (12-ES17) • Continued to implement the Council's Climate Change Action Plan and a number of actions have been successfully completed. A report on progress will be presented to Environment Scrutiny Committee in June 2013. (12-ES18)

Priority: Place	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Sustain the percentage of residents who are satisfied with our parks and open spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness and use of open spaces by holding a 'Love Parks' week, at Southern Country Park which had an Olympics theme and 'Meet the Animals' events at Pishiobury Park. The Get Park Active events are designed to promote outdoor leisure and healthy lifestyles. These events attracted around 1000 visitors and positive feedback was received. Other activities have included 'The Big Dig' and a 'History Walk' with Friends of Pishiobury Park and Foxholes (Hertford) woodland walk. (12-ES05) • Retained our two 'green flags' for The Ridgeway in Hertford (for the fifth year running) and Southern Country Park in Bishop's Stortford (for the fourth year running). • Worked in partnership with the Environment Agency, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Countryside Management Service to restore a quiet corner of Hartham Common in Hertford, back to a wetland habitat. As part of the partnership the council set up a new walking route around the field to provide views of the ponds and the river. The Environment Agency funded the project to create a series of ponds across the site that naturally fill from water sitting close to the surface. The habitat will be especially beneficial to damselfly and dragonflies. The agency also paid for fencing and gates so that cattle can be introduced onto the site. This will help to improve biodiversity by reducing nitrogen levels in the soil and by keeping the grass to a level that will naturally encourage wild flowers.

Priority: Place	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Sustain the percentage of residents satisfied with street and environmental cleanliness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Won the bronze footprint RSPCA award, which is a national scheme that recognises local authorities that have clear procedures and policy on stray dogs. This year the council received 301 reports of stray dogs (both lost and found). 126 were collected by the Council of which 90 were reunited with their owners. The remainder were rehomed. • Held roadshows in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware to raise awareness of littering and in particular two of the biggest litter problems in East Herts – fast food packaging and cigarette litter, with local residents. The council is also encouraging local businesses to join the Tidy Business Scheme and help reduce litter as part of the 'Love where you live' campaign. 90 local businesses were visited and information packs circulated. 23 local businesses have applied to join at at the end of February 2013. Visible enforcement activity has led to 10 fixed penalty notices being issued for litter and four relating to throwing cigarette butts from cars. (12-ES03) • Maintained performance in the quality of the street scene in relation to litter and graffiti and improved performance in fly-posting and the removal of abandoned vehicles.

Priority: Place	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Uphold the safety of our communities and seek to reduce the fear of crime by supporting neighbourhood policing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributed, as part of the East Herts Community Safety Partnership to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduction of crime levels across the district. Recorded crime in East Herts has fallen by 15% from 6,130 in 2011/12 to 5,210 in 2012/13. ➤ Hosting FREE activities for young people aged 11-19 during the summer holidays, including zumba, canoeing and go-karting. Since 2009, 3075 young people have attended these summer activities and just under 10% have achieved a accredited outcome from Youth Connexions and crime during these activities has fallen. • Launched Operation Panther to combat anti -social behaviour and criminal damage across the whole of the area. The special operation, aims to deter young people from engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour, initially just operated in Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Buntingford and the surrounding rural areas. It now covers the whole of East Herts. Working in partnership with the local police and housing associations the Council is able to take positive action against anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and repeat offenders. Overall anti social behaviour has reduced by 35% in East Herts in the last year.

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	<p>Objective: Uphold the safety of our communities and seek to reduce the fear of crime by supporting neighbourhood policing (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued all our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) with bodycam. The bodycams will not be used as part of the ordinary parking management and enforcement process. Instead where there has been a verbal or physical attack on a CEO, footage may be used for evidential purposes and also where it may help in resolving a complaint from a member of the public. • Removed over 100 graffiti tags in Hertford in partnership with the Probation Service Community Payback scheme, whose teams have helped us remove the graffiti.

Priority: Prosperity	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Continue the streamlining of back office functions in order to ensure an efficient and sustainable Council for the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved a senior management restructure of three full-time Directors and the deletion of the Chief Executive post, to provide a more streamlined corporate team. An existing Director post has been redesignated to include many of the Chief Executive's previous functions and therefore by combining the two roles will save more than £100,000 annually. • Took robust action against fraud and during 2012/13 have prosecuted 8 people, issued 19 administration penalties and 38 cautions. This means that the council is recovering a combined total of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit overpayments of £288, 462.28 against these 65 sanctions and other overpayments determined as fraudulent. A further £13,154.28 in overpayments of Department for Work & Pensions benefits were also identified. • Developing collaborative arrangements with other authorities on key areas of procurement activity such as office cleaning and the East of England Postal project, to provide greater resilience and optimise the use of resources. Both projects are in development and the office cleaning contract has recently been advertised in the Official Journal of European Union (OJEU). The postal project is at project board stage and is now awaiting for the GPS (Government Procurement Service) to complete their tender process for their postal tender before the collaborative tender can take place. (C12-CR04)

Priority: Prosperity	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Develop a practicable and pragmatic Parking and Transport Strategy and action plan which delivers integrated and value for money policies in respect to car parking, walking, cycling routes and vital bus routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gave Apton Road car park a £100,000 makeover. The new design of the lower level makes it easier for motorists to circulate within the car park. The old surface, which was loose and prone to potholes, now has a smooth Tarmac topping, while new white lines clearly mark out the spaces and indicate entrance and exit routes. • Gave Hertford town centre car park a £600,000 revamp to make it more updated modern car park. Improvements included re-tiling, re-painting and the installation of anti-pigeon measures, as well as resurfacing. Also more spaces were created for blue badge holders. • Approved the district's first Parking and Transport Strategy on 4 July 2012. The strategy provides a position statement and a strategic framework to enable specific proposals to come forward later recognising the variety of transport and park challenges that the district is faced with. (12-CPS09) • Joined up with Sawbridgeworth Town Council to offer a free hour of parking, with the town council agreeing to underwrite the trial up to a maximum of £10,000. For an initial period of six months, until February 6 next year, motorists can park without charge for the first hour of their stay. In addition the cost of longer stays has been cut. It is hoped that this will encourage shoppers to the town and support local businesses.

Priority: Prosperity	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Develop a practicable and pragmatic Parking and Transport Strategy and action plan which delivers integrated and value for money policies in respect to car parking, walking, cycling routes and vital bus routes (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded RingGo to enable motorists to top up their car park ticket by phone without having to pay the 20p transaction fee. The service was introduced last year to allow motorists to pay for their parking by phone using a credit and debit card, to solve the problem of having no change. Since the expansion of Ringo, usage has more than doubled with 41,716 transactions taking place in 2012/13, compared to 17,347 in 2011/12. • Granted the Park Mark Safer Parking Award for the Old London Road car park in Hertford bringing the total number of Safer Parking car parks in East Herts to seven. The Park Mark Safer Parking Award is given to parking facilities that have achieved the requirements of a risk assessment conducted by the Police and the British Parking Association. The Safer Parking Scheme is an initiative of the Associations of Chief Police Officers (ACPOS), aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime in parking areas. The council has recently put in place measures to help deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

Priority: Prosperity	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: Increase the economic resilience of the market towns working with the local business community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded Markets Team of the Year award by the National Association of British Markets (NAMBA). Over the past year the team have introduced a range of new systems for the markets in Stortford, Hertford and Ware, including trader incentives and farmers' market. • Hertford Farmers' Market was shortlisted to be a finalist in the Certified Farmers' Market of the Year award by Farma, the national Farmers' Retail and Markets Association. It was shortlisted as it recognised Hertford farmers' market for its fantastic range of local and home grown produce, friendly and knowledgeable traders, and dedication to supporting all things Hertford. • Supported the exploration of a combined scheme for time limited pedestrianisation of South Street/Potter Street and creation of Shared Space focused around the South Street/ Station in Bishop's Stortford. The proposals were put forward by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group, as it was felt they could bring a number of benefits to the town, such as, improved pedestrian environment, improved street scene and walking opportunities and regeneration of the area in particular retail and commercial facilities. It was agreed further consultation be undertaken before it is recommended for inclusion in the Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Strategy.

Priority: Prosperity	What we want to achieve	What we have done
	<p>Objective: To freeze Council Tax for 2011/12 and 2012/13 and aspire to a zero percent increase in the following years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Froze council tax at the 2010/11 level for the financial year of 2011/12 and 2012/13. Further more the Council agreed a 1% drop in council tax from 1 April 2013 for the financial year 2013/14. The drop was due to a government grant given to the council for freezing its precept and it was decided to pass on the savings to residents.
	<p>Objective: Ensure, in partnership with the community, that new and existing housing and commercial development meet East Herts priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made additional resources available to ensure feedback from residents in relation to the significant development proposals at Bishop's Stortford North can be thoroughly assessed. The Council has formulated an initial Site Issues and Development Brief document. This is now being updated with partners to ensure that development proposals meet East Herts priorities. A first application has now been submitted and further ones are likely to follow. The Council will continue to ensure that these are widely publicised (12-PBC01).
	<p>Objective: Deliver the five year rural land based business development programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to lead the bid, in partnership with North Herts and Uttlesford District Councils and Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils, for £2.1 million funding to help rural enterprises. Since the start of the programme 17 projects in East Herts have been allocated funding (32 across the programme), totalling £1,212,009 (£1, 654,196 across the programme) and 30 new jobs have been created or forecasted to be created to date in East Herts. (12-ED02)

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	<p>Objective: Establish a sound planning framework for the District through the implementation of the Local Development Framework (LDF).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressing well with the production of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (now identified as the District Plan). Consultation has been delayed but this is necessary to ensure that the Plan is based on the most robust background information and will stand the test of challenge in the future. Whilst a precise date cannot be identified at present, it is now anticipated that a draft will be available for consultation later in 2013/14. (12-PBC03).