

East Herts: A Place to Grow

DRAFT Corporate Plan Refresh for 2022/ 2023

The Council's Corporate Plan (2020/21 – 2023/24) was agreed in January 2020 and sets out a range of actions and objectives against 4 overall, 'SEED' priorities. Whilst the aspirations in that plan are still relevant Covid-19 has changed local, national and global priorities for public service delivery and impacted how and where East Herts Council is deploying its resources. As we move towards Covid recovery this refreshed plan outlines amended objectives for the 2022/ 2023 year which better reflect the needs of the district in this context.

Each of the 'one page plans' for the 4 themes have been updated. New priorities have been included where relevant and actions which have either been completed or are now less relevant compared to one year ago have been removed. Please note that for each theme there is a wider set of actions and measures which sit underneath the one page plan.



Sustainability at the heart of everything we do 2022/ 2023

The council's work towards achieving its nine commitments for tackling climate change has continued at pace in 2021/22. Over the last 12 months the council has completed the redevelopment of Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre, minimising the building's carbon emissions by installing solar PV panels and a combined heat and power system, commissioned the installation of 59 additional e-vehicle chargers in council car parks (which will be ready to use by summer 2022) and run a food waste minimisation publicity scheme.

In 2022/23 we will publish an overarching Climate Change Strategy which will pull together how we are working with key partners in the county and beyond to promote sustainability in a cost effective way. In addition, we will focus on supporting residents to make positive changes to their behaviour.

Strategy/ objectives	Actions/ key projects
1. We will make changes to The Council's own premises, people and services we deliver	1a. Switch the council's fleet of diesel vans to electric vehicles. 1b. Publish a Climate Change Strategy including a proposed route map to the council's services being carbon neutral by 2030. 1c. Deliver sustainability upgrades at the remodelled Hartham Leisure Centre in Hertford.
2. Use our regulatory powers to promote action by others	2a. Publish revised Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document covering new development, including provision for e-v charging points at new residential properties and locations. 2b. Incorporate the findings of the Hertfordshire-wide Biodiversity Baseline Study into planning guidance. 2c. Implement stricter taxi emission requirements for all new vehicle applications and renewal applications.
3. Influence and encourage others to do things	3a. In partnership, seek external funding to introduce e-v chargers in more rural locations in the district. 3b. Promote domestic energy efficiency improvements supported by the national Local Authority Delivery 2 scheme and the domestic energy efficiency assessment. 3c. Work with Hertfordshire County Council and community groups to promote or directly undertake tree planting as part of the national Queen's Green Canopy initiative

Enabling our communities 2022/ 2023

Over the past 12 months we have kept up momentum on delivery of our capital programme demonstrating commitment to the wellbeing of our communities. This includes the opening of our brand new £30m leisure centre at Grange Paddocks in Bishop's Stortford and working with community groups to co-design and open the new play area at Hartham Common. The Council has also created a new portfolio for Communities and adopted an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in the summer of 2021 highlighting the need to understand and address the disproportionate impact that challenges like Covid has had in East Herts.

In a survey residents informed us that parks and open spaces are the service that they are most satisfied with and a major priority for 2022/23 will be the delivery of a new strategy reviewing use of these assets and ensuring their public health and leisure benefits are maximised where possible. We will also continue to focus on delivering our capital programme, whilst still delivering services to our most vulnerable residents. This will of course include supporting partners with Covid recovery efforts and rolling out the national vaccination programme.

Strategy/ objectives	Actions/ key projects
1. We will invest in our places	1a. Complete refurbishment of Hartham Leisure Centre 1b. Deliver £20m investment in Hertford Theatre 1c. Deliver the Castle Park project 1d. Deliver the Cultural Strategy
2. We will ensure all voices in the community are heard	2a. Grow our digital communications channels (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Linked in) 2b. Deliver the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
3. We will support our vulnerable residents	3a. Further establish the East Herts Healthy Hub to promote access to health, social, wellbeing advice and support 3b. Provide specialist support to those facing or recovering from homelessness
4. Keeping communities safe	4a. Support national vaccination roll out with East Herts assets where possible 4b. Support national and county led communications campaigns on vaccine roll out and vaccine hesitancy 4b. Provide regulatory advice and support to businesses with post Covid recovery

Encouraging economic growth 2022/ 2023

Since the start of the pandemic we have given out £53m in grants to businesses affected by Covid. Our High Streets are under enormous pressure to recover and remain relevant and with changing patterns of workplace distribution we will face additional pressure on viability of commercial development. However this may also bring opportunities for the district and the 34 businesses that have opened up new premises in the last 6 months with our support indicates a healthy demand for economic growth.

Over 2022/23 we will continue to focus on delivery of major projects such as Old River Lane and our European Funded Launchpad 2 business support programme. Working in partnership with the County Council, Town Councils, police and businesses will be an important means of ensuring residents feel comfortable and confident when visiting their town centres. Continuing to work with developers on delivery of growth sites across the district and supporting communities with neighbourhood planning will be key to ensuring East Herts remains a vibrant place to live.

Strategy/ objectives	Action/ key projects
1. We will continue to support businesses and business growth	1a. Deliver the match funded ERDF Launchpad 2 project and continue to grow the Launchpad in Bishop's Stortford and Ware 1b. Submit a plan for East Hert's share of UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support economic growth in the district
2. We will support town centres with post Covid recovery	2a. Learning from the 20/21 pilot work in Hertford on developing a town centre vision and action plan in conjunction with stakeholders, support similar approaches in other towns
3. We will ensure development is viable	3a. Support the Herts Growth Board with presenting a case for additional infrastructure investment in Hertfordshire 3b. Complete construction of the multi-story car park on the Old River Lane site 3c. Deliver an SPD and Masterplan for the Old River Lane site 3d. Delivery of the strategic sites allocated in the District Plan in accordance with the housing trajectory.

Digital by default 2022/ 2023

Global changes in behaviour following the pandemic have accelerated the take up of digital services and this has been evident with the 92.5% take up of green waste by the website, 100% take up of business grant applications via webform and the increasing use of our appointment booking and web chat software. We will build on this impetus to further enhance the digital offer to residents and businesses aswell as internally to all our employees and elected representatives.

The Transforming East Herts programme is designed to save the council £1m over the next 3 years by automating more processes, streamlining the customer experience, being more commercial in our mindset and more creative with our office space and ways of working.

Strategy/ objectives	Action/ key projects
1. We will encourage greater use of the website and self-service for customers	1a. Expand use of the appointment booking system for customers who need to see us 1b. Expand use of the chatbot to help customers resolve their queries
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
3. Deliver the Transforming East Herts programme	3a. Creating modern workspaces 3b. Creating a modern workforce through new blended working arrangements 3c. Developing a more commercial approach to service delivery 3d. Investing in modern technology and software