

Our Corporate Strategic Plan

for 2016/17 – 2019/20

A note from the Chief Executive

Our elected representatives have set out what they want to achieve over the next four years and it is my job to ensure the organisation makes this a reality. This will be no small challenge given the pressure on public finances – we know our grant funding from government will be completely withdrawn over the next four years. We need to think about new ways of doing things, generating new income streams and working with other key public sector organisations to reduce costs, share resources and improve the quality of the services delivered to residents.

The way we will do things is to ensure all our activities are customer led – providing more choice in how customers can access our services and delivering value for money in everything we do. Some of the key actions we will be pursuing over the next few years are as follows:

- *Building on the success of our current shared services with Stevenage Borough Council (for ICT and Revenues and Benefits) and developing a Shared Service for Waste and Street Cleansing with North Herts District Council*
- *Developing a joint building control service to ensure the continuity of an efficient and effective building control service*
- *Making better use of technology to deliver our services, recognising that different people want to engage with the council in different ways*
- *Delivering an organisational development strategy to ensure our workforce has the right skills needed for the future*
- *Re-tendering of key contracts (such as parking enforcement) to ensure value for money*
- *Implementing our new economic development strategy to ensure we are a business friendly council.*

Liz Watts



Introduction from Leader of the Council

This Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction and priorities for East Herts Council over the next four years. It describes what we will do to ensure the best possible services are delivered for our residents, partners and businesses at a time of change for councils. Every district councillor plays a role in ensuring this plan is delivered, whether they are an Executive, scrutiny or regulatory committee member and of course as an elected ward member.

East Herts has a lot to offer. Generally we enjoy a good quality of life, good education and healthcare, making it an attractive place to live and work for many families. We also enjoy high levels of employment and a diverse local economy made up of small to medium sized businesses with the added benefit of being close to London, Cambridge and with good access to Stansted and Luton airports. There are however challenges. For example the largely rural nature of the district can leave some people feeling isolated, with limited access to technology improvements such as high speed broadband and 4G mobile phone coverage and public transport (for those without regular access to a car).

The government is pursuing an ambitious agenda and, like many areas across the country, local residents and families are likely to be impacted. Ongoing welfare reform as well as the forthcoming Housing and Planning Bill are likely to impact upon some of our most vulnerable individuals and families. The good quality of life attracts many people to the area and we need to accommodate population growth in a managed way. The construction of up to 15,000 new homes is being discussed over the next 20 years, and large scale developments are under varying degrees of progress. Around 750 homes are expected to be built every year in order to meet our housing needs and for every year we haven't done this since 2011 we need to make up the shortfall. The latest expectation is that the district requires 900-1,000 new homes each year. We need to work closely with developers and key partners to ensure growth comes with the right infrastructure and high quality design.

Overall we have to balance the pressure for new housing with preserving the character of the local area and ensuring that our local businesses remain competitive.

Amongst all these challenges I want to preserve the special qualities of East Herts and ensure it remains one of the best places to live and work in the country.

Linda Haysey



 @Eastherts

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Priority 1: Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities

Residents living active and healthy lives

Provide sport activities for over 50s in our towns and villages through the 'Forever Active' East Herts programme.	Timescales 2016/17
Invest in our parks and open spaces to encourage health, fitness and biodiversity including improvements to Grange Paddocks, Hartham Common and Presdales Recreation Ground.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19
Undertake a pilot on tackling obesity in conjunction with the County Council and Leeds Beckett University.	2016/17
Implement the Wellbeing Dementia Project in order to increase the quality of life for those diagnosed with dementia and their carers.	2016/17
Produce a leisure strategy to determine future direction and planning for the council's two Leisure Centres and three joint use swimming pools.	2016/17 2017/18
How will the performance be measured?	

To be developed around public health.

Support for our vulnerable families and individuals

Implement the Homeless Strategy, focusing on providing appropriate and timely housing advice to prevent homelessness.	Timescales 2016/17 2017/18 2018/19
Work with partners to assist people through the transition into universal credit.	2016/17 2017/18
Process new housing benefit claims and changes in circumstances within 10 working days.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19 2019/20
How will the performance be measured?	

Time taken to process housing benefit and new claims and change of events.
Number of prevented homeless applications.
Number of affordable homes delivered.

Communities engaged in local issues

Work with local community groups to develop community energy schemes.	Timescales 2016/17 2017/18
Support communities in rural areas with accessing infrastructure for super-fast broadband.	2016/17
Move all services to a platform of digital delivery whilst still ensuring face to face and telephone services are maintained for those who need them.	2016/17 2017/18
How will the performance be measured?	

Satisfaction levels with council services.
% of services accessible via digital channels.
Percentage of superfast broadband accessibility in the district (defined as over 30 Mb/s).
Social Media – Number of followers (twitter and facebook).

Priority 2: Enhance the quality of people's lives

Attractive places

Implement the Environmental Crime Strategy (focusing on new measures and penalties for environmental crimes such as dog fouling) and Public Space Protection Orders.	Timescales 2016/17 2017/18
Work with owners to return empty properties back into use.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19 2019/20
Deliver successful Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 1 bid for Waytemore Castle (Bishop's Stortford) and deliver management plan for Hertford Castle Grounds (in partnership with the Town Council).	2016/17 2017/18
Secure Local Nature Reserve Status for Pishiobury Park, Sawbridgeworth.	2016/17 2017/18
How will the performance be measured?	

Street and environmental cleanliness: Litter levels.
Street and environmental cleanliness: Detritus levels.
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.
Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste.
Number of empty properties brought back into use.

Future development best meets the need of the district and its residents

Publication and adoption of the District Plan.	Timescales 2016/17
Seek to shape development proposals for key sites in the district including the broad locations for development identified in the District Plan.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19
Support and maximise the provision of additional affordable housing in association with developers and registered providers.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19
Undertake feasibility work on setting up a company to build new homes.	2016/17
How will the performance be measured?	

Processing of planning applications: major applications.
Processing of planning applications: minor applications.
Processing of planning applications: other applications.
Percentage of affordable homes agreed on affordable sites.
Net additional homes provided.
Supply of ready to develop housing sites.

Priority 3: Enable a flourishing local economy

Support for our businesses and the local economy

Review business start-up provision and identify further opportunities to improve support to new businesses.	Timescales 2016/17 2017/18
Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership on the "growth hub", an enterprise network for small businesses that are seeking to grow.	2016/17 2017/18
Deliver the EU-funded Rural Development Programme to support business growth.	2016/17 2017/18 2018/19 2019/20
Work with Visit Herts to increase the profile of local attractions and support businesses in their supply chains.	2016/17
How will the performance be measured?	

Business counts (enterprises and local units).
Number of East Herts District residents or businesses based in East Herts District signing up to use the My Incubator base.

Vibrant town centres

Develop a planning framework for Bishop's Stortford, focusing on Old River Lane and key adjoining town centre sites and develop a masterplan for Old River Lane.	Timescales 2016/17
Actively contribute to the Urban Design Study in Hertford town centre.	2016/17 2017/18
Undertake feasibility work with town centre businesses on implementing Business Improvement Districts.	2016/17
How will the performance be measured?	

Town centre footfall.
Town centre premises - vacancy rate.

Working with others, to have achieved the right infrastructure for our businesses and communities

Work with key partners such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, County Council and London Stansted Cambridge Consortium on identifying infrastructure requirements and ways to bring them to fruition.	Timescales 2016/17 2017/18
Work with key partners such as the County Council on sustainable transport solutions for East Herts, including community transport and green travel planning.	2016/17
How will the performance be measured?	

To be developed.