



COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 19th March, 2014

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 11 March 2014

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Pat Thornton on 01923 278372 or by email – legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk .

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

ACCESS

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Visitors may park in the staff car park after 4.00 p.m. and before 7.00 a.m. This is a Pay and Display car park; the current charge is £1.50 per visit.

The Council Chamber is on the mezzanine floor of the Town Hall and a lift is available.

Induction loops are available in the Council Chamber.

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RECORDING OF MEETINGS

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11 March 2014

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Wednesday, 19th March, 2014 starting at 7.30 pm at the Town Hall, Watford to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects, namely: -

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2014 to be submitted and signed.
(All minutes are published on the Council's website.)

4. **OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**
5. **MAYOR'S REPORT** (Pages 1 - 6)
6. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.0**
7. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.0**
8. **PETITIONS PRESENTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12.0**
9. **BUSINESS ESPECIALLY BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.**

10. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.0

Motion 1

The following motion has been moved by Councillor Turmaine and seconded by Councillor Bell

“That WBC deplores the illegal practice of ‘blacklisting’ within the construction industry and will ensure that any company known to have been involved in blacklisting practices and not to have indemnified their victims, will not be invited to tender for contracts by WBC until they have:

1. Identified the steps taken to remedy blacklisting for affected workers;
2. Identified the steps taken to ensure that blacklisting will not happen again;
3. Given assurances that they do not employ individuals who were named contacts for the Consulting Association.”

Motion 2

The following motion has been moved by Councillor Joynes and seconded by Councillor Dhindsa

That WBC undertakes to limit the sale of cheap, super-strength alcohol from off-licences and supermarkets Watford-wide.

1. This will mitigate the prevalence of street-drinkers;
2. Consequently lead to a reduction of ASB;
3. Thereby facilitating a more pleasurable shopping experience for people in local retail areas.”

11. CHIEF OFFICER PAY POLICY 2014 (Pages 7 - 26)

Report of the Head of Human Resources

12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME 2014 - ADOPTION OF NEW PENSION DISCRETION (Pages 27 - 32)

Report of the Head of Human Resources

13. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2014-18 (Pages 33 - 100)

Report of Cabinet – 10 March 2014.

14. MOVING SHARED SERVICES TO A LEAD AUTHORITY MODEL (Pages 101 - 110)

Report of Cabinet – 10 March 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manny Lewis'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'L' at the end.

Manny Lewis, Managing Director

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Mayor's Report – March 2014

Here is my report on information, news and updates relating to the town and my activities as Elected Mayor.

Health Campus

Public back the Health Campus

As members are aware, during January and early February we ran an extensive public consultation on the Health Campus to help the public to better understand the vision. We ran exhibitions, mailed every household and put all the details online. Reassuringly 77% of responses were positive. I fully believe residents understand what we are trying to achieve and are supportive – the Health Campus is not an issue that is raised negatively with me when I'm out and about.

BBC Inside Out

The Health Campus featured recently on BBC London's Inside Out programme. I was interviewed for it along with Farm Terrace allotment holders and Samantha Jones Chief Exec of the Health Trust. Despite them telling me it was a reasonably pro-allotment programme, I was pleased they presented it in a balanced way. That the Health Trust cannot yet specify exactly which hospital facilities will go on their land is not my concern, only that we allow them the space they have asked for and that they take whatever time they need to ensure they get it right.

Town Centre updates

Update on Watford Market

Work is progressing on our new market. We have now selected the construction contractor and container unit supplier – both of which are local companies. Preparatory works are also underway – the town twinning signs and the old display cabinets have been removed from the Exchange Road flyover, which has had a deep clean. We have had agreement from Herts County Council to part fund the new footpath link to the market.

As a reminder to members, the idea is to create a modern market that will look and feel different to the current market – which as we know has been losing business and is costing council taxpayers a lot of money. Therefore we do not expect every trader to be successful in their application for a new unit – Town and Country is carrying out a selection process and will choose traders they think will have most success to help ensure the new market thrives.

Launching our events strategy

I introduced our new events strategy to the cultural leaders in our town at an event at the Colosseum last week. One of the key components is the exciting programme of events we have planned for the new events space we're currently creating on the The Parade. I want residents to look forward to the monthly events, and for

families to enjoy themselves together. Working with the Palace Theatre, and local and national partners, we know we'll have top quality events that will deliver the fun factor too.

Awards event for Town Centre venues

I had a wonderful evening presenting awards at The Best Bar None Awards, which celebrate the responsible management of town centre nightspots. The awards build on the Purple Flag Partnership between Watford Borough Council and local businesses in ensuring a safe and positive night-time economy. The awards attracted 150 attendees from seventeen venues. Awards were given to the Best Pub, Best Bar and Best Club, as well as Best Door Team and Staff Member of the Year.

Transport matters

Watford Junction

In my last Mayor's Report I informed members that I had met with senior executives from Network Rail and London Midland to discuss the re-signalling project and issues surrounding the new station forecourt. Following that meeting Network Rail informed me that they have reduced the number of days that the railway will be closed in order to carry out the much-needed work. This means that the continuous 16 day line closure of the West Coast Mainline planned for this August and the 9 day continuous closure planned for February 2015 are cancelled. The work will now be carried out over a series of weekends. This is still a major issue for the town.

A working group, involving representatives from London Midland, Network Rail, Herts County Council and Watford Borough Council, chaired by Herts County Councillor Giles-Medhurst, has been set up to look at how best to resolve the issues surrounding the station forecourt, namely that buses are still parking on Woodford Road and the lack of provisions for drop off / collection at the Junction. In addition, we are working on a pedestrian safety improvement scheme to provide a safer route for pedestrians who cross-over the underground car park access road on to the Bridal Path footpath link. This includes an extension to the taxi bay and the installation of steel bollards to prevent obstructive parking.

Buses shelter improvements

We have been working with the Quality Network Partnership to get Real Time Passenger Information screens installed in a number of our town centre bus stops. In addition, we are in process of putting an up to date time-table in all of our 112 bus shelters across the Borough. We have also installed a new shelter in Haines Way two weeks ago and the new shelter for Vicarage Road, opposite Watford Hospital, is set to be installed the week commencing 17th March.

Croxley Rail Link plans are in

The planning applications have been submitted for the two new stations – Watford Vicarage Road and Cassio Bridge – as well as the viaduct and electricity substation. They will come to Development Control Committee on 4th April. Members can keep

up to date with all the information about the project at www.croxleyraillink.com

New BRE bus link

I was delighted to attend the launch event of a new bus service providing better links between BRE in Garston with Watford, St Albans and Hertfordshire University in Hatfield. This service recognises BRE's commitment to sustainable transport solutions for themselves and the local community. Over the past year they have been working closely with UNO bus service to extend the current 622 service. The service, which will commence on Monday 31st March, will include a stop on Bucknalls Lane and another on site for staff and visitors.

Partnership working

Flood Summit

Over the first two weekends of February, Watford experienced some flooding in the Lower High St area. The borough council's role is primarily the provision of rest care accommodation should it be needed. The main emergency responders are the fire authority, the police, and highways authority - who close roads affected by flooding and redirect traffic, and the Environment Agency which has responsibility for rivers and will instigate any actions such as opening sluice gates, which we had to do on this occasion. I have organised a meeting with the key representatives from these organisations to get a full picture of the impact of the floods, the collective response and what (if any) improvements could be made in the future.

Ambulance visit

I recently spent half a day with the local ambulance service, including having the exciting experience of riding with an ambulance crew as they responded to emergencies, so that I could get a better understanding of what they do and the challenges they face. I absolutely admire the dedication of the people who do this job and the care they give is terrific. I learned a lot, and what surprised me most of all was to discover just how many people call for an ambulance for reasons that are quite clearly not emergencies. The frequency of this has actually led to the service being downgraded by government to being an 'essential' service rather than an 'emergency' service – which is not great for the morale of all those that work there. I was amazed by how good their bedside manner was – even despite some of the reasons people gave for calling them out!

Supporting local organisations

Watford boxing club

I recently visited Watford Boxing Club, who currently operate out of Sun Postal Sports Club. They have been a club for 10 years and are producing high quality training delivered by accredited coaches. I was surprised by the friendly atmosphere and impressed by the concentration and focus of the youngsters there. Unfortunately they are being evicted in August. Their heart warming tales of how boxing has given individuals inner confidence, which has subsequently improved their school work and whole sense of worth was really touching and I'm keen to help

them. If members know of anyone that has a space that could lend its self to such a club do get in touch.

Alzheimer's fundraiser

I recently met with a watford resident who is planning a fundraising afternoon tea event for Alzheimer's research. She's very dedicated to the cause and has my full support. I am looking forward to attending the event of the 20th July and will circulate more information to members nearer the time.

Peace Hospice bag packing

I joined volunteers at Asda earlier this month to do some bag packing to raise money for the Peace Hospice. I admire the relentless fundraising the Peace Hospice carries out and the variety of ways they do it. They are of course such a popular and well-loved organisation in our town, people are always happy to donate something to their cause.

St John's Primary School

I was invited to a public meeting last month to speak about the proposed new St John's Church of England Primary School, which the church wants to establish in central Watford. As members are all too aware, we have a shortage of primary school places in the town – something we are working with the County Council to try to address – so I am fully in favour of this new school.

Economic prosperity and business

Big business connect

When the recession struck, it was more important than ever for me that we as a council engaged more with the business community to build confidence in the town and secure our future economic prosperity. We set up our Big Business Connect group, which is a forum for the top 30 companies in Watford to get together and express their views and lobby us on what we can do to remove barriers to growth. At our most recent session, up at Warner Bros, among other things we agreed to promote the town's strong HQ presence, and improve Watford Junction in its capacity as being the landmark point for those that arrive in our town by train.

Chamber of Commerce

As members will know, we as a council are closely involved with the Chamber and have funded roles within the Chamber, supporting the creation of its successful Business Growth Forum and Sector Networks, leading business support through the recession and creating an inward investment / business retention service. This has ensured we have retained and attracted over 30 companies, representing additional investment in excess of £20m, creating or safeguarding over 500+ jobs. We all said a very fond farewell to the former Chief Executive Roger Gagen last week, but I am confident his replacement will continue the good work.

Town Centre Partnership

Our new Town Centre manager has started. She is a council employee who will support the work of our new Town Centre Partnership, which we initiated now that our plans for making the town centre more family friendly are starting to really take shape. It's formed of town centre businesses who are working together to improve the marketing of Watford to increase footfall and decrease vacancy rates. We wanted it to be business-led to ensure it is most effective and resilient in the long term.

Engaging the community

Schools visits

I have given an assembly most recently for pupils at Bromet School and Cassiobury JMI about having pride in our town. I am immensely proud of Watford, so I do believe it is important that children recognise that they do live in a great town and want to look after it and get involved in keeping it nice. I am also talking to pupils at Westfield Academy about local government.

Talking to neighbourhoods

Part of the role of Mayor is about taking difficult decisions when necessary that benefit the majority of the town. To do this I make sure I listen to a real cross-section of people not just those that shout loudest, so I try to talk to local neighbourhoods whenever possible. Most recently I have been at the Kingswood Residents Association and the Central, Nascot and Oxhey Neighbourhood Fora, where I have been updating them on what is going on in our town.

Efficient & effective, well run council

Flying a Flag for The Commonwealth

We joined over 500 councils, charities and community groups to take part in Commonwealth Day celebrations by holding a flag-raising ceremony. It's the largest single raising of the Commonwealth flag in history, at which a newly written Commonwealth Affirmation was read out, together with a message from The Queen. My thanks to Councillor Derbyshire, as Vice Chairman, for raising the flag on behalf of Watford.

Tackling benefit fraud

We continue to prioritise tackling those individuals or organisations who behave fraudulently, costing the council money or depriving others from valued services. We have most recently successfully prosecuted a resident for benefit fraud, who must now pay back over £17,000. The lady had been claiming Housing and Council Tax Benefit from both Watford Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council for a property in Newhouse Crescent and a property in Coates Way after supplying both councils with false tenancy agreements.

Our consistent success in prosecuting benefit fraud cases acts as a powerful statement of intent from Watford Borough Council – that we will not tolerate benefit

fraud. Members should encourage their residents to report a fraud in confidence using the council's freephone fraud hotline on tel: 0800 459 9200.

Successful flytipping prosecution

We also take a tough stance on environmental crime and have recently successfully prosecuted a Watford resident for flytipping, who had left a number of black bags and laundry bags on the Boundary Way estate. The resident was sentenced to a fine of £130 plus £20 victim surcharge. Prosecution costs of £650 were also awarded. Anyone who sees someone in the act of flytipping is encouraged to report it by telephone on tel: 02035 676900 or via the ['Report it'](#) link on the homepage of the council website.

Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 19 March 2014
Report of: Head of Human Resources
Title: Chief Officer Pay Policy 2014

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report presents for approval the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15.

1.2 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the requirement for all councils to develop and publish annually a Pay Policy Statement. and the purpose of the Statement is to ensure that remuneration of Chief Officers and Senior Staff is reviewed annually and that the relativity of pay with other officers within the council remains fair.

1.3 The Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15 presents the outcome of the review of Chief Officer Pay in 2013 and reflects the award of a nationally negotiated 1% pay increase in 2013 for all officers of the Council.

1.4 The Pay Policy Statement is attached at appendix 1 and on approval will be published on the Council's web site.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Pay Policy Statement attached as appendix 1 be approved.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Sue Adlam, Acting HR Manager, extension 8312, email: susan.adlam@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Cathy Watson, Head of Human Resources

3.0 DETAILED REPORT

3.1 The Localism Act 2011 obliges all councils to publish prior to the start of each new financial year a pay policy statement. The Council's statement is attached as appendix 1. It's format is governed by the requirements of the Localism Act 2010 and it's purpose is to provide transparency with regard to Chief and Senior Officer pay and benefits and enable residents or Mr Pickles 'Arm Chair Auditors' to see the relativity of pay between the highest and lowest paid within each council.

3.2 Once approved the Statement must be published on our web site and will have to be adhered to when recruiting any Chief or Senior Officer during the course of the year.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications contained in this report.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report. This is a Statement that can only be approved by Council.

4.3 Equalities

Watford Borough Council is committed to equality and diversity as an employer, service provider and as a strategic partner

- 4.3.1 The Pay Policy Statement relates to the remuneration of posts within the council not the remuneration of individuals.

The value of each post is derived based upon the outcome of an analytical job evaluation. Job evaluation establishes the value of each post relative to each other post and is independent from post occupancy; i.e. the post holder would always receive the remuneration that is applicable to the post they occupy.

Therefore, the Council monitors its workforce composition; i.e. who is occupying the posts to ensure that it fulfils its commitment and duties under the Equality Act 2010. Analyses against the protected characteristics are conducted bi-annually and a Workforce Composition report is published annually on the Council's web site.

In addition the council advertises all vacant posts and monitors job applicants.

Analyses are conducted against the following protected characteristics:

Age
Disability
Gender reassignment
Pregnancy or maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex
Sexual orientation
Marriage or civil partnership

4.4 Risks

There are no risks associated with the approval of this report

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- 4.5 **Staffing**
 - 4.5.1 No impact on staffing

 - 4.6 **Accommodation**
 - 4.6.1 No impact on accommodation

 - 4.7 **Community Safety**
 - 4.7.1 No impact on Community Safety

 - 4.8 **Sustainability**
 - 4.8.1 No impact on sustainability

Appendices

Appendix 1

Watford Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2014/15

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

None

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WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL**HR POLICY: PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2014/15****REPORT TO COUNCIL 2014**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council's success relies on the talent and contribution of its workforce enabling and ensuring it meets its objectives. Our Pay Policy seeks to ensure the Council is able to attract, recruit, retain and engage the right people in order to achieve this.
- 1.2 The Pay Policy pulls together all the elements that make up the Council's reward practices. It provides assurances of our consistency, fairness and transparency and gives clarity to all our stakeholders about how and what our people are rewarded for. It defines the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers, and all Senior staff, in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish its position in relation to specific areas of chief officers pay as follows : - remuneration levels, all other payments, incremental progression, performance related pay, bonus payments, redundancy, severance/compensation, and retirement payments, and the Council's policy on the re-engagement of chief officers. This Pay Policy statement sets out the Council's position in these areas.
- 1.4 The Council employs 221 officers, that represents a full time equivalent based on a 37 hour week of 195.43.
- 1.5 The gross expenditure for the Council for the financial year 2013/2014 is estimated to be £63,820,000.
- 1.6 Best practice recommends the Council consults a remuneration committee on all proposals relating to pay and reward for Senior Officers thus ensuring openness and accountability. This responsibility is delegated by Full Council to the Chief Officer pay panel.
- 1.7 This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by Full Council, and may be accessed via the Council's external web site.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The policy applies to all Chief Officers.
- 2.2 The definition of Chief Officers (as set out in section (43(2)) of the Localism Act 2011 is not restricted to Heads of Paid Service and Directors. It also includes all other Senior Managers (statutory and non statutory officers) who report directly to them and to their direct reports termed as Deputy Chief Officers. That is the Head of Paid Service (Managing Director), Heads of Service and Section Heads.
- 2.3 The Council's post holders who fall within the definition of Chief Officers are as defined within the Councils Constitution and are shown in the following table:

Head of Paid Service	Managing Director
Shared Director of Finance	Director of Finance, Section 151 Officer (shared with Three Rivers District Council)
Heads of Service	Head of Democracy and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Head of Community and Customer Services Head of Regeneration and Development Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services Head of Human Resources (shared with Three Rivers District Council) Head of Finance (shared with and employed by Three Rivers District Council) Head of Revenues and Benefits (shared with and employed by Three Rivers District Council)
Section Heads/Deputy Chief Officers	Section Heads and other managers that report directly to Officers outlined above.

See organisation structure chart in appendix 1.

- 2.4 The remuneration of the Managing Director, and Heads of Service was last determined by the Chief Officers' Pay Panel in 20013.
- 2.5 The Council shares a Director of Finance/ Section 151 Officer who is employed by Three Rivers District Council and remunerated in accordance with Three Rivers District Council Chief Officer pay rates for Directors.
- 2.6 The remuneration of the MD and Head of Service posts was subject to an external Pay and Grading review that was conducted by the Local Government Association (LGA), in 2013.
- 2.7 Pay bands are attached as appendices 2 and 3

3.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 3.1 The Council's Chief officers, i.e. the MD, Shared Director of Finance, and Heads of Service (non Shared Services) are engaged on Joint National Council (JNC) national terms and conditions of service.
- 3.2 The Council's Shared Heads of Service and Section Heads/ Deputy Chief officers, i.e. those who report directly to Heads of Service, are engaged on National Joint Council (NJC) national terms and conditions.
- 3.3 It should be noted that different national negotiating machinery applies across the Senior management team.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The Pay Policy reflects the aspirations of the Council's strategic road map and defines the Council's approach to managing reward that is guided by the following principles
- 4.2 All Council officer jobs are job evaluated using an analytical job evaluation scheme to allocate points to posts and establish relativity between all posts in the organisation.
- 4.3 The Council reviews appropriate external pay market information to ensure remuneration levels are consistent with Local Government, provide value for money for the taxpayer, and support the Council to remain competitive as an employer in areas of skills shortage.

- 4.4 If appropriate, market factors are applied to hard to fill posts. Where applied these supplements are reviewed annually in accordance with the market factor policy.
- 4.5 The MD receives a spot salary the level of which was reviewed in 2013.
- 4.6 Cost of living inflation increases for Chief Officer pay scales are awarded in accordance with the Joint National Council for Chief Executives and Chief Officers (JNC). Chief Officers are remunerated according to the pay scale applicable to their job, within a four grade pay model. Each grade has four incremental spinal column points, (see appendix 2). Progression within each grade is time based, subject to satisfactory performance and where appropriate awarded annually to the top of the grade, effective from 1 April.

The independent review conducted by LGA of 2013 ensured that the pay scales of Chief Officers are comparable to rates of pay for similar jobs in similar sized local authorities in the outer London and Home Counties area.

- 4.7 Deputy Chief Officers, i.e. Section Heads are remunerated within the top three grades of an eleven grade pay model. Each grade has five incremental spinal column points, (see appendix 3).
- 4.8 The remuneration of a Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer on appointment will be at a point on the relevant pay scale for the job appropriate to their experience and salary level in the previous job.
- 4.9 It is not the policy of the Council to award bonuses to its Chief Officers.
- 4.10 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness; is clear about what people are being paid for, and is consistent, systematic and transparent when applying reward practices. Pay models have been developed based upon appropriate pay market information and ensure that the ratio of pay levels between the highest paid officer and the median/ mean average/ low paid earnings in the Council remains consistent and is not distorted as a result of pay awards.
- 4.11 The Council's lowest paid employees are those post holders whose jobs are graded in the lowest pay band, which is Band 3 in an 11 band pay model. Jobs are evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation scheme.
- 4.12 Resignation. The Chief Officer's last entitlement to pay will be the last day of service, taking into account notice period and any period of pay in lieu of notice.

Redundancy or early termination in the interests of the service and Pension Benefits of Chief Officers will be made in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Early retirement and early termination compensation policies.

5. EQUALITIES

- 5.1 The Council is committed to equality of opportunity. All members of staff will be treated fairly based on ability, performance and contribution irrespective of their employment or contractual status and personal circumstances, i.e. part time, fixed term. The Council monitors equalities data and this policy shall be applied fairly, consistently and equitably for all employees irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, offending past, caring or dependency status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity or gender identity and it is incumbent on those managing this policy to ensure that this is the case.

6 GRADING

6.1 Chief Officers – MD, Director and Heads of Service

6.2 **Job Evaluation** – posts were job evaluated by the LGA Senior manager job evaluation scheme. The salaries awarded reflect a compact management structure that is flatter due to the deletion of Director posts. Salaries for shared heads of service reflect the complexity of providing shared services across multiple Councils. Salaries reflect the full range of duties within the role including any requirement for out of hours working.

6.3 Deputy Chief Officers - Section Heads

6.4 **Job evaluation** – All posts are job evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation Scheme (LGJES). The scheme is used to evaluate all non Chief Officer posts in the Council, ensuring relativity between all Council posts covered by NJC terms and conditions. The job evaluation policy should be consulted for further information.

6.5 **Pay model** - The pay model is presented in appendix 3

6.6 **Labour market information** - The Croner Reward Job Evaluation system and the Croner Market Pay analysis for Public Services provides the source of comparative pay information for all officer posts in hard to fill and areas of skills shortages within the Council. Market supplements currently apply to the following Deputy Chief Officer roles and are reviewed annually in accordance with the Market Factor policy –

Development Section Head
Housing Section Head
Finance Manager
Property Section Head

6.7 All other posts in the Council

6.8 All other officer posts are job evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation Scheme (LGJES), and graded within one of the pay Bands in the 11 grade pay model in appendix 3. No Council post is graded below Band 3, and minimum pay is £16,215 plus £806 London weighting allowance, (see 8.1 below). Where appropriate posts attract a market supplement and the market forces payments policy should be consulted for further information.

6.9 Market factor supplements apply to the following non Deputy Chief Officer posts in the Council

Community Safety Manager
Planning Policy Manager
Senior Solicitor
Principal Management Surveyor
Property Manager

7 INCREMENTS

7.1 Posts receive annual time based increments effective on 1 April until remuneration reaches the top of the grade.

7.2 On appointment, all posts will normally be remunerated at the lowest incremental spinal column point within the grade, (unless 4.8 applies above).

7.3 The Council will apply the annual cost of living percentage increment as negotiated by the NJC national agreement to the values of incremental spinal column points as appropriate. A 1% pay increase was awarded on 1 April 2013.

8 ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS

- 8.1 London Weighting (LW) – is the inner fringe London Weighting Allowance and is negotiated as part of the national framework. LW is an additional payment that is made to all officers in the Council, and the rate is negotiated nationally by NJC.
- 8.2 Chief Officers' Travel Allowance (TA) - £300 per annum is a local allowance paid to all Chief Officers and Heads of Service (but not the Head of Paid Service). The TA payment is intended as compensation for travel around the Borough of Watford and Three Rivers District for which business mileage may not be claimed.
- 8.3 The Head of Paid Service receives additional payment for duties as Clerk to the West Herts. Crematorium, and fees for Returning Officer duties during elections as and when appropriate.

9 PERFORMANCE RELATED PAYMENTS AND BONUSES

- 9.1 The Council does not operate a performance related payments scheme.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS)

- 10.1 All officers are eligible to join and contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Officer contribution rates are a percentage of their earnings. Levels of contribution are stated by the scheme, and are based on the whole time equivalent value of all contractual pay excluding any travel allowance payments. The employer's contribution to the scheme is 19%.
- 10.2 The table below provides the proposed Member contribution table for 2014.

Pay Bands	Contribution Rates
Up to £13,500	5.5%
£13,501 - £21,000	5.8%
£21,001 - £34,000	6.5%
£34,001 - £43,000	6.8%
£43,001 - £60,000	8.5%
£60,001 - £85,000	9.9%
£85,001 - £100,000	10.5%
£100,001 - £150,000	11.4%
Over £150,000	12.5%

- 10.2 The normal retirement age for the LGPS is State Pension Age, or age 65 (whichever is the higher).
- 10.3 With the exception of early retirement for the reason of permanent ill health (to which no age restrictions apply), the earliest age an officer can retire and receive pension benefits is 55.
- 10.4 Early retirement may be granted in the following circumstances:
- Early termination of employment for the reason of redundancy
 - On ill health grounds
 - On compassionate grounds
 - Efficiency of the service
 - Request to go
- 10.5 The Council's Redundancy, early retirement and early termination compensation, pension discretions should be consulted as appropriate for further information.

11 REDUNDANCY

11.1 In the event of redundancy, i.e. where a post to be vacated would not be replaced, the Council pays a discretionary redundancy payment by applying a 2.2 multiplier to each week's redundancy pay, thus providing up to a maximum of 66 weeks' pay based on contractual pay.

11.2 Officers aged 55 and above will retire in this circumstance and have access to their accrued pension benefit.

11.2 The Council does not augment additional pension membership; however the Officer may elect to purchase additional LGPS pension membership with the discretionary payment. Full details are specified in the Council's redundancy policy and this should be accessed for full details.

12 EARLY RETIREMENT FOR THE REASON OF ILL HEALTH

12.1 To qualify an officer must be confirmed by the Council's Medical Adviser as being permanently unable of discharging the duties of their employment because of ill health or infirmity and have a reduced likelihood of obtaining gainful employment before reaching age 65.

13 EARLY RETIREMENT ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

13.1 To qualify an officer would have to have a compelling hardship or difficulty that would most usually be due to caring responsibilities.

14 SEVERANCE – EARLY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY TO THE SERVICE.

14.1 There may be situations that are initiated by management to facilitate organisational change where a post to be vacated would be replaced. The Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation policy applies and should be consulted.

14.2 Where appropriate, the Council will make a discretionary severance/ compensation payment by applying a 2.2 multiplier to each week's severance pay, thus providing up to a maximum of 66 weeks' pay based on contractual pay.

14.3 Officers aged 55 and above will retire in this circumstance and have access to their accrued pension benefit.

14.4 The Council does not augment additional pension membership; however the Officer may elect to purchase additional LGPS pension membership with the discretionary payment. Full details are specified in the Council's redundancy policy and this should be accessed for full details.

15. EARLY PAYMENT OF PENSION BENEFITS ON REQUEST TO LEAVE (ASK TO GO)

15.1 Criteria

Initiated by the employee who must be aged 55 or above. Employee submits a written request to the Head of Service stating grounds and case for consideration and first approval. The Head of Service and Head of Human Resources will then submit a report for approval by the Managing Director.

The rationale for agreement will include Improvement in organisational efficiency e.g. needs of job, new skills required, need to work in different ways, improved productivity.

An assessment of the strain on the pension fund in relation to the benefit obtained by the Council will be conducted. The strain cost would normally need to be recovered within 2 years of the retirement.

The post will be replaced

15.3 **Benefits**

Under 55

- Not available

Over 55

- Actuarially reduced accrued pension benefits
- No added years are awarded by the Council

The Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation policy applies and should be consulted.

16. FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

16.1 This is subject to agreement by the Council, providing an option for an officer to continue in employment post Local Government Pension Scheme retirement age and to take some or all of their Local Government Pension that is due to them whilst continuing to work on reduced hours or reduced pay. The benefit for the Council is the ability to retain skills, knowledge and experience.

16.2 An abatement of pension will apply if the pay for the new post plus the LGPS pension they receive exceeds the value of the salary for the post from which they retired. London Pension Fund Association (LPFA) should be consulted for advice.

The Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation policy and flexible retirement policy applies and should be consulted.

17 RE-EMPLOYMENT POST SEVERANCE OR REDUNDANCY

17.1 The re-employment of officers who were granted early retirement, are receiving their Local Government pension, or have received a severance/ compensation payment, or a redundancy payment is discouraged. The following criteria should be considered. Refer to the Council's policy for early retirement/ early termination compensation for further information.

- What is the nature of the work to be undertaken?
- How similar is the work to that formally undertaken by the individual?
- Is it work that the individual could have been redeployed to?
- The work should be a specific project or task where the skills/ knowledge set required is unique to that individual
- The work should be such that it could not be undertaken by anyone else currently employed in the Council

18 OFFICERS WHO HAVE RETIRED AND ARE IN RECEIPT OF PENSION

18.1 If an officer is in receipt of their Local Government Pension and returns to work for the Council an abatement of their pension will apply if the pay for the new post plus the LGPS pension they receive exceeds the value of the salary for the post from which they retired. LPFA should be consulted for advice.

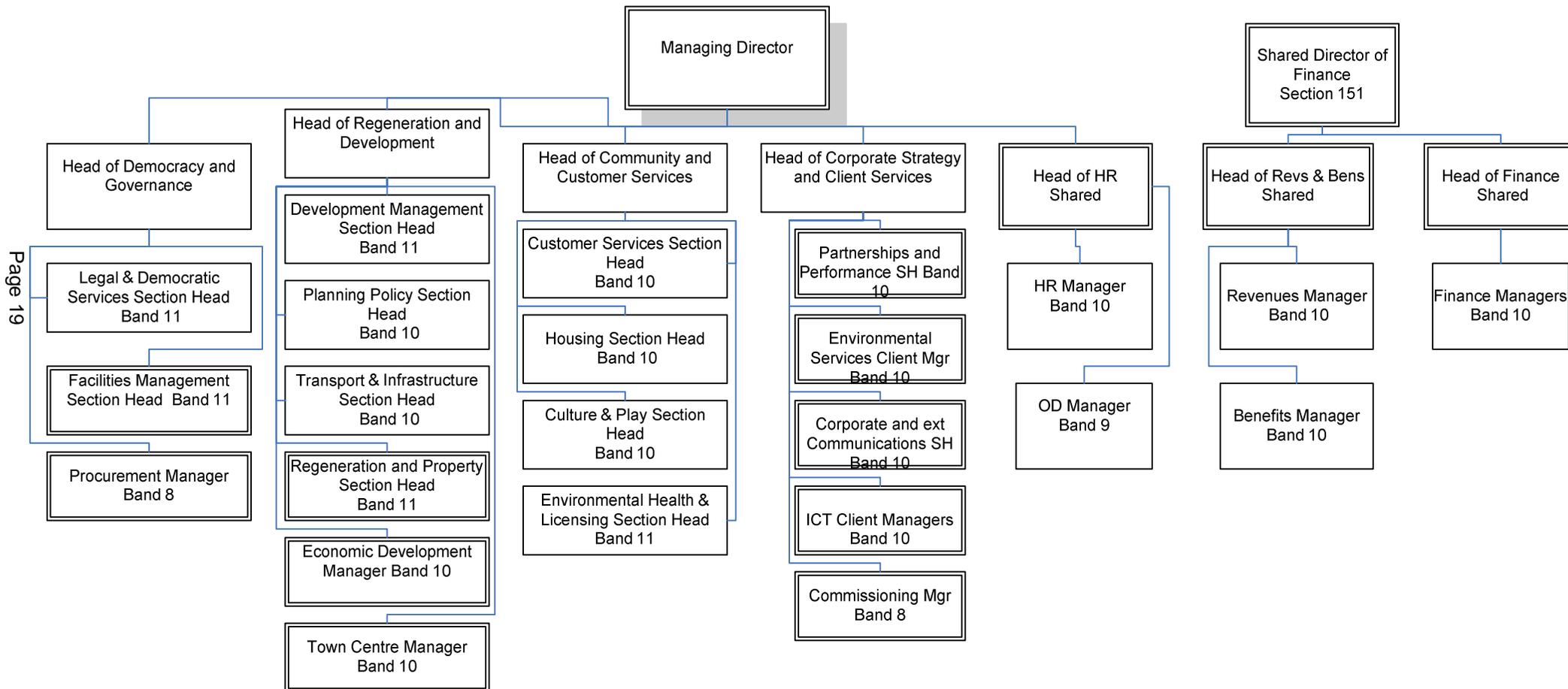
18.2 Flexible retirement subject to agreement by the Council provides an option for an officer to continue in employment post retirement age and to take some or all their pension working on reduced hours or reduced pay. The flexible retirement policy should be accessed for full information.

19 PAY RELATIVITY AND LOWER PAID STAFF

- 19.1 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness when setting pay levels for all officers. All jobs are job evaluated meaning each has an analytical score providing its relative value in the organisation and each job is linked to a defined pay model.
- 19.2 The Council defines its lowest paid staff as those whose posts are graded on the lowest grade in the pay model. Pay rates are based on whole time equivalent salaries.
- 19.2 The mean average earnings in the Council are £27,236, giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:4.9. The median earnings in the Council are £26,276, giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:5.1, and the lowest earnings in the Council are £16,852 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:8.
- 19.3 The lowest pay band on the pay model (Band 1) is not in use by Watford Borough Council whose lowest remunerated post is within band 3 paying £8.73 per hour including LW. This is above the living wage for London and the South East and the ratio with National Minimum Wage is 1:1.4.
- 19.4 Cost of living pay increases in the Council are awarded consistently in line with those negotiated nationally by NJC. An analysis of pay awards for the previous 5 years is provided at appendix 4.

Appendix 1

Watford Borough Council



Job Description - Managing Director

Corporate Accountabilities	Management Accountabilities	Personal Accountabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the delivery of the Mayor's and the Council's strategies and policies. • Assuring understanding, acceptance and support for the Mayor's Executive role • Transacting the Mayor's, Cabinet and Council decisions • Advising the Mayor • Advising Members • Managing the Officer/Political interface • Aligning corporate values with Political direction • Aligning strategic direction, corporate planning and resource allocation • Budget strategy • Defining / delivering priorities • Structural and Cultural change • Supporting Strategic Partnerships • Leading on performance management • Corporate values • Strategic Direction • Officer/Member interface • Advising Members • Defining/delivering priorities • Structural and cultural change • Budget strategy • Management standards • Strategic Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring effective communication – up, down and outwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying the Mayor and Cabinet agenda through the Management Team • Articulating the Mayor and Cabinet agenda in corporate and service objectives • Delivering these objectives • Giving managerial leadership at all times • Managing the corporate and service management matrix • Alignment of cross-cutting programmes with substantive plans • Setting management standards • Setting the tone and style • Ensuring good communications - up, down and outwards • Challenging departmental absurdities • Resolving conflict • Management of Executive Directors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisals • Agreement of objectives • Reviewing performance • Conflict resolution • Service integration • Direction of cross cutting programmes • 'Setting the tone'/style • Tight/ loose management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a personal aide and confidant to the Mayor. • Leading by example • Promotion of Watford • Promotion of good public relations • Enhancing Watford's influence locally, regionally, nationally and overseas. • Enhancement of personal external profile • Personal accountability for civil emergencies. • Specific 'cross functional' projects or accountabilities <p>major physical developments</p> <p>complex procurement</p> <p>e-government</p> <p>regionalism</p> <p>cultural change</p> <p>local strategic partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR and representation of Watford Borough Council • Good external relations • Enhancement of external profile of Watford Borough Council • Personal development

Job Description – Shared Director of Finance (employed by Three Rivers District Council)

Job Title:	Director of Finance	Post Reference No:	RG0101
Post Number:			
Service/ Department:	Corporate Resources and Governance	Section:	Finance
Grade:	Chief Officer		
Location:	You will normally be based at Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth and Watford Town Hall, Watford or any such other place of employment within the remit of the Shared Service as may be required.		
Hours per week:	37 hours per week. The post holder is expected to work the hours required to meet the demands of the role.		
Driver's licence requirements:	Casual. The post holder will be expected to travel as necessary to achieve the requirements of the role.		
Responsible to:	Joint reporting to Chief Executive Three Rivers District Council and Managing Director, Watford Borough Council		
Responsible for:	Shared Services. Direct management responsibility for Finance and Revenue and Benefits; relationship role for Human Resources and ICT (which are directly managed by Watford)		
Purpose of Role:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To act as Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council statutory, section 151, Officer providing advice to members and senior management on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Planning Financial Control Financial reporting To lead and manage the Shared Services Finance and Revenue and Benefits Service 			
Important Notes Relating to Duties:			
<p>In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that she/he:-</p> <p>Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the councils' constitutions, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Code of Official Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time;</p> <p>Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and</p> <p>Seeks advice from a more Senior Officer if in any doubt about the proper course of action.</p>			

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To act as the joint statutory section 151, Officer to both Councils, ensuring an even spread of time is available to each Authority. In this role you will provide key strategic and financial advice to both authorities whilst recognising that they are separate and independent bodies and may well have different aims and priorities.
- To play a key role in the successful achievement of major regeneration projects at both authorities.
- To provide accurate medium term financial strategies to both authorities to enable future service delivery to be planned in a controlled environment.
- To identify opportunities to realise efficiency savings over the short and medium term which could include in house re-structuring or potential outsourced, partnership arrangements.
- To play an active role in guiding and advising the Senior Management Teams and key elected Members in achieving the vision of best performing authorities.
- To chair and coordinate the Shared Services Management Team meetings
- To oversee the operation of Revenues and Benefits and Financial Services to both authorities. This role will necessitate a continuous review of both services to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, provide value for money and strive to be 'best in class' service providers. Every opportunity should be taken to harmonise processes within the overall constraint that the two authorities may wish to apply different policies.
- To be a lead client officer for the Internal Audit Service provided by Herts. County Council and the provision of an ICT outsourced service (Capita);
- To provide impartial advice to elected members at all key decision taking and scrutiny committees.
- To represent both councils at countywide and national forums.
- To undertake any other duties, commensurate with the grade and seniority of the post, as may reasonably be required.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- The budget process, including account closing, budget setting, Council tax levy and external audit is completed on time and within specified procedures;
- Accurate, timely and detailed budget information is provided for members and senior management
- Achievement of sustainable budgets for both Councils
- On going review of cost base for both Councils, achieving increased value for money

Job Description – Head of Service (not shared services)

Corporate Accountabilities	Management Accountabilities	Personal Accountabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring customer focus through high quality service delivery • Maintaining capacity • Specific support for corporate projects • Specific delivery of corporate priorities • Advising Members • Service standards and policies • Communications up, down and outwards • Liaison and integration • External partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and intelligence • Service and substantive plans • Budgetary planning • Organising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and staffing • Systems and operational efficiency • Quality assurance • Controlling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management • Budget monitoring • Staff control and discipline • Leading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial leadership • Professional leadership • Motivation of staff • Staff training and development • Resourcing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service budgets • Achieving best value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR and representation of Watford • Good external relations • Major service projects • Service innovation • Enhancement of professional profile and promotion of Watford • Personal development

Appendix 2

Chief Officer pay structure - Watford Borough Council

	Spinal Column Point	Basic Salary	Salary plus travel and fringe
Non Shared Services Heads			
	1	65,650	66,756
	2	66,714	67,820
	3	68,148	69,254
	4	69,690	70,796
Non Shared Services Heads +	1	68,078	69,184
	2	68,791	69,897
	3	70,808	71,914
	4	72,170	73,276
Directors	Posts deleted		
Managing Director	N/A	136,456	-

Chief Officer pay structure – Director of Finance – Three Rivers District Council

Position Held	Salary Range Wef 1.4.13 (£)	
Director of Finance	74,609 – 88,007	
	Increments	74,609 77,246 79,756 82,329 85,144 88,007

(incorporating a 1% pay uplift)	Spinal Column Point	Salary effective 1 April 2013
Shared Services Heads		
	1	65,650
	2	66,714
	3	68,148
	4	69,690

Appendix 3

Pay Scale for Watford Borough Council & Shared Services 2013-2014

Band	Scale Point	£ per annum 1/04/13	Band	Scale Point	£ per annum 1/04/13
1 0-165	5	12,435	7 485- 551	35	29,528
	6	12,614		36	30,311
	7	12,915		37	31,160
	8	13,321		38	32,072
	9	13,725		39	33,128
2 166- 236	10	14,012	8 552- 612	40	33,998
	11	14,880		41	34,894
	12	15,189		42	35,784
	13	15,598		43	36,676
	14	15,882		44	37,578
3 237- 297	15	16,215	9 613- 650	45	38,422
	16	16,604		46	39,351
	17	16,998		47	40,254
	18	17,333		48	41,418
	19	17,980		49	42,032
4 298- 368	20	18,638	10 651- 713	50	42,936
	21	19,317		51	43,840
	22	19,817		52	44,746
	23	20,400		53	45,659
	24	21,067		54	46,580
5 369- 429	25	21,734	11 714+	55	47,498
	26	22,443		56	48,460
	27	23,188		57	49,394
	28	23,945		58	50,315
	29	24,892		59	51,255
6 430- 484	30	25,727			
	31	26,539			
	32	27,323			
	33	28,127			
	34	28,922			

Fringe Weighting Allowance : £806 per annum

Essential Car User (where applicable) : Lump sum allowance - effective from 01/04/2013

Up to 999 cc : £846.00 per annum

1000 cc and above : £963.00 per annum

Stand by duty allowance (where applicable) : £26.76 per session

Appendix 4

Summary of JNC/ NJC national pay awards previous 5 years

2009 1.0% - increase of 1.25% to spinal column points 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10*.

2010 No pay award

2011 No pay award

2012 No pay award

2013 1.0% increase

* note that there are no posts in the Council that are remunerated below spinal column point 15 – (£8.73 inc LW).

Living wage rates November 2013

Living wage £7.65

National Minimum Wage rates 1 October 2013

Adult rate £6.31

18 – 20 yrs £5.03

16 – 17 yrs £3.72

Apprentice* £2.68

*applies to under 19, or in the first full year of apprenticeship. If aged over 19, or past the first year the rate applicable to age applies.

Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 19 March 2014
Report of: Head of Human Resources
Title: Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 – Adoption of new pension discretion

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The objective of the report is to seek Council's approval to exercise its discretion under Regulation 9 (3) of Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2008.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council agrees to exercise its discretion under Regulation 9(3) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2008 by determining the rate of each employees contributions monthly.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Brian Kane, HR Officer
telephone extension: 8313
Email: Brian.Kane@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Cathy Watson, Head of HR

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 On 1 April 2014 the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) changes from a final salary scheme to a Career Average Re-valued Earnings (CARE) Scheme.

This means that each scheme member will have an individual pension account for each year. Their pensionable pay and their pension contribution rate will be calculated based on their actual total pay for that year and not on the whole time equivalent as at present. The pension amount accrued is then added to their pension account

At the end of each scheme year the amount in the pension account will be adjusted in line with a cost of living indicator (currently the Consumer Price Index) to ensure it

keeps its value.

Therefore, unlike the current LGPS, which is based on whole time equivalent final pay, it is essential that a comprehensive and accurate account is maintained for each year of an employee's Scheme membership.

It is the responsibility of the Employing Authority (WBC) to collate accurate data through payroll and provide it to the Administering Authority (Herts County Council). Under LGPS 2014 non-contractual overtime earnings become pensionable, and the proposed discretion will enable this information to be recorded accurately.

Under the new scheme each Employing Authority has to exercise its own discretion under Regulation 9 (3) on how frequently it determines the rate of each employees contributions per pay period.

The simplest way to achieve the required level of accuracy is to monitor earnings each pay period (i.e. monthly) and reflect any pay changes as they occur. The current automated payroll system is capable of managing this level of detail. Backdated pay awards will continue to be applied retrospectively; they will not form part of the monthly review.

The only disadvantage is that an employer is required to notify in writing an employee of any new contribution rate that is payable and the date from which it is to be applied. However, as movements between contribution bands in WBC should be relatively infrequent, this is not considered to be problematic.

Council is therefore asked to agree to exercise its discretion under Regulation 9(3) by determining the rate of each employees contributions monthly.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

4.1.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The legal implications are contained in the body of the report.

4.3 Equalities

4.3.1 There are no known equalities implications.

4.4 Potential Risks

4.4.1	There are no potential risks in following the recommendations	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
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4.5 Staffing

4.5.1 Not applicable

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 Not applicable

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 Not applicable

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 Not applicable

Appendices

- Appendix 1: WBC Employer Discretion R9 (3) April 2014

Background Papers

- <http://lqpsregs.org/>

File Reference

- None

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WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

**HR POLICY: Local Government Pension Scheme 2014
Employee Contribution Rate Discretion**

DATE ISSUED: APRIL 2014

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2008, each Employing Authority is required to publish and maintain a Discretions Policy under the LGPS. This document sets out below a new discretion to be applied within Watford Borough Council as a consequence of the Local Government Pension Scheme becoming a career average pension scheme from 1 April 2014.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure set out in this document applies to all Council employees, who are eligible to and have elected to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

3. DISCRETION WITHIN THE SCHEME

- 3.1 Discretion of employer to determine employee contribution rate - Regulation 9(3)

All employers within the LGPS must review the contribution band to which they allocate Scheme members each April. Employers have the discretion to review band levels during the year.

Watford Borough Council will assign new members of the Local Government Pension Scheme to a contribution band on their first day of Scheme membership, based on their annual pensionable pay.

The Council will then monitor earnings each pay period (i.e on a monthly basis) and reallocate scheme members into the appropriate contribution band each time the scheme member's pensionable pay changes, i.e due to overtime payments or honorariums. Backdated pay awards will be applied retrospectively, they will not be subject to the monthly review.

4. DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS AND DISPUTES

- 4.1 Any applications to deal with questions and disputes arising from the administration of the scheme membership must be made in writing to the Head of Human Resources, 3rd Floor, New Annexe, Town Hall, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 3EX.

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Agenda Item 13

Agenda Item 13

REPORT TO COUNCIL – 19 MARCH 2014

REPORT OF CABINET – 10 MARCH 2014

Cabinet met on 10 March 2014. The minutes are published on the Council's website.

The following Members were present at the meeting:

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill	(Strategic partnerships/external relationships and community safety)
Cllr D Scudder	(Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Strategy & Client Services.)
Cllr Crout	(Community & Customer Services Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Sharpe	(Regeneration & Development Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Watkin	(Democracy & Governance Portfolio Holder)

Also present: Councillor Bell.

The following was a recommendation to Council

MIN NO 62 - DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2014-18

Cabinet received a report presenting the Council's draft Corporate Plan 2014-18. The plan articulated the Council's strategic direction in the medium-term and outlined how it would achieve its vision and priorities over the next four years.

As the Plan was being recommended to Council on 19th March it was agreed that any discussion could take place at that meeting.

RESOLVED

that Cabinet

1. notes the current draft of the Corporate Plan 2014-18 and **recommends it to Council**
2. notes the key performance indicators identified to support the monitoring of the Corporate Plan and ensures it contributes to the Council's aim of continuous development and improvement
3. notes the current progress update for the work identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-17. This will be finalised following the end of the financial year.

A Copy of the report to Cabinet is attached.

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PART A

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 10 March 2014
Report of: Managing Director
Title: Draft Corporate Plan 2014-18

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the council's draft Corporate Plan 2014-18. The plan articulates the council's strategic direction in the medium-term and outlines how it will achieve its vision and priorities over the next four years (see Appendix I)
- 1.2 The council undertook a significant review of its priorities last year. This resulted in a revised set of priorities and a refreshed Corporate Plan for 2013-17. A considerable amount of discussion supported the development of the current Corporate Plan, including agreement that it should retain its medium term focus. This means the Plan provides direction for a four year period. Unless subject to significant changes to either the external or internal environment, therefore, there is no rationale for a major refresh of the Plan just a year into its delivery. A progress update for the corporate work programme identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-17 is attached as Appendix III.
- 1.3 For 2014-18, therefore, the recommendation is to undertake a light touch review of the Corporate Plan, ensuring that it reflects any contextual changes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet to:

- 2.1 Note the current draft of the Corporate Plan 2014-18 and recommend it to Council (Appendix I)
- 2.2 Note the key performance indicators identified to support the monitoring of the Corporate Plan and ensure it contributes to the council's aim of continuous development and improvement. These are section 7 of the Corporate Plan and are also attached for reference as Appendix II.
- 2.3 Note the current progress update for the work identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-17. This will be finalised following the end of the financial year. (Appendix III)

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Kathryn Robson
telephone extension: 8077 e-mail: kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Manny Lewis, Managing Director

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 As part of its business planning cycle, the council undertakes an annual review of its Corporate Plan. Through this process the organisation reviews and agrees what is important and where it should focus resources to deliver good quality services to our community and real improvements to the town.

The Corporate Plan is, therefore, the council's key improvement and planning document. From the Corporate Plan the council develops its service business plans which, in turn, inform the work programme of each team within the council and the individual objectives of each member of staff, identified through our annual performance review process.

Last year, the council undertook a thorough review of its corporate planning. This was in recognition that it had been through a period of significant transformation, which included the development and implementation of a new organisational structure and new service areas. The corporate planning process, therefore, reviewed and reset the council's direction. This ensured that at both the corporate and service level the organisation was effectively aligned and clear on where to focus effort and resources to achieve the outcomes identified as important to Watford.

3.1 Corporate Plan 2014 – 18

- 3.1.1 The medium term focus of our Corporate Plan has meant that there is no need for a significant review and refresh for 2014 – 18. By setting a direction and work programme for a four to five year period the council is clear as to its priorities and the outcomes it wants to achieve to 2017/18.

- 3.1.2 The Corporate Plan 2014 – 18, therefore,:

- Retains the basis of the Corporate Plan developed last year, including the overall framework of the Plan, the context and the approach to identifying priority areas of work and projects – see Appendix I
- Includes the key performance indicators that the council will use to monitor progress in certain areas – see Appendix II

- 3.1.3 To support the delivery of the corporate plan 2014-18, a detailed delivery plan is being developed. This delivery plan 'sits beneath' the corporate plan and sets out how the projects and development areas within the plan will be delivered in the short-term (2014/15). It contains quarterly milestones, identifies the key staff resources that will be required to ensure effective project delivery and outlines how the organisation will measure success at the end of 2014/15. This delivery plan informs service planning and quarterly reviews and is, therefore, adaptable across a number of the council's business planning processes.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Finance**

The drive to operate the council efficiently and effectively is a priority within the Corporate Plan, which reflects the importance to the council of using its resources effectively and delivering value for money. The council has developed a Medium Term Financial Plan, which supports the synergy between its financial and corporate planning and identifies how the council will make sure it links its financial decisions to the delivery of the Corporate Plan. To help illustrate this, a section within the corporate plan provides an overview of the council's financial resources and links these to current council expenditure (revenue and capital).

4.2 **Legal**

The Corporate Plan is one of the policy framework documents listed in the constitution that has to be approved by full Council.

4.3 **Equalities**

- 4.3.1 The Corporate Plan is informed by the Watford context, including an understanding of the demographic make up of the borough's community and feedback from local people on the issues that are important to them. The council has identified delivering the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 as an area of work within the Corporate Plan to support the delivery of Corporate Priority 3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town. Impact analyses are undertaken on specific projects/programmes where relevant. An overall equality impact analysis has been undertaken on the Corporate Plan.

4.4.1

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
<i>The council's Corporate Plan and its Medium Term Financial Strategy work together to achieve outcomes identified within the Plan. Failure to link the two effectively might result in insufficient financial resourcing for areas of work identified or failure to meet financial targets.</i>	1	4	4
<i>The council has acknowledged the importance of the organisation taking ownership of its corporate planning framework to ensure there is commitment to delivery and that targets are achieved. Failure to achieve this 'buy-in' could delay projects and programmes and impact on overall deliver</i>	2	4	8
<i>The Corporate Plan represents a significant programme of work. The organisation needs to understand the interdependencies of the areas of work identified and their call on time / resources. Failure to do so effectively would risk delivery.</i>	2	4	8

4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 The corporate plan is a key document for staff and provides an important part of the council's performance framework that supports services to develop their own delivery plans, which in turn inform individual staff objectives and outcomes.

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 No implications identified.

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 Community safety projects will help the delivery of Corporate Priority 1 - Making Watford a better place to live in.

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 The importance of embedding sustainability across the council and in its partnerships work is addressed through the objective Corporate Priority 1 - Making Watford a better place to live in.

Appendices

- I. Draft Corporate Plan 2014-18
- II. Draft performance indicators to support Corporate Plan 2014-18
- III. Progress update on Corporate Plan 2013-17

Background papers

- Corporate Plan 2013-17

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Watford Borough Council

Draft Corporate Plan 2014-18

Investing in our town

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Foreword by Dorothy Thornhill MBE, Elected Mayor of Watford

I am pleased to introduce Watford Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2014-18. This is where we identify what we intend to do over the next four years and how we will measure how successful we have been in keeping our promises.

Last year, following a review of our corporate priorities and our Corporate Plan, we set ourselves a significant medium term programme of work that reflects what is important to our residents and what we know about Watford and the challenges and opportunities the borough faces. Over the last year we have made real progress in delivering successful outcomes for the town and our residents.

I am particularly proud of the work we have done in keeping our major projects on track because they are really important to Watford's future success and prosperity – which benefits all residents and local businesses. Our over-riding aim is to make Watford an even better place to live, work, visit and study. By working together and supporting each other we know we can achieve the best for the borough.

We are confident that the direction we set last year is the right one for the town and the council. It reflects a new approach to our work, which has emerged from our response to what have been difficult economic times and certainly challenging ones for local authorities. Our plan now recognises the different ways good quality services can be provided for Watford and our role in ensuring that Watford's interests, and that of local people, are met by all the different organisations – whether private, public or community – working in the town.

This Plan also confirms that we will continue to focus on providing leadership for our communities, we will look to safeguard essential services, maximise the use of our assets and, importantly, to invest in our town. As we all hope that the green shoots of recovery that emerged during 2013 take a strong root both nationally and locally, the council needs to be confident that Watford is in a good place to make the most of any economic upturn. We think we are but we are not complacent, which is why this Plan makes sure we are doing the right things and keeping on track.

It is vitally important for us to ensure that both our plans and our decisions are informed by the views of our residents and local community. Over the last year, I have been out and about across the borough and met many of you. This has given me a great opportunity to find out at first-hand what is important to you and what areas we need to focus on to improve the town and your experience of living in Watford. We have also put on a number of other special events, which have given you the chance to tell us what you think about some key areas of our work and future plans. There will be additional ways to get involved with the council and our plans over the next year. I hope many of you do take the opportunity to feed back to us.

As ever, if you have any comments on the Corporate Plan, our plans major projects or the council, then email me on themayor@watford.gov.uk or call 01923 226400 and ask for the Mayor's office.

**Dorothy Thornhill MBE
Elected Mayor of Watford**

1. Our Corporate Plan

Each year, we review and agree what is important to us as a council and where we should focus our resources to deliver good quality services to our community and real improvements to the town.

This corporate planning process sets the organisation's strategic direction in the medium-term (the next four years). The ultimate aim of effective corporate planning is to make sure the organisation is clear about what it has promised to deliver, has a shared understanding of what work needs to be completed in the short and medium - term, the milestones that will measure progress and the outcomes that will measure its success.

Last year, we undertook a thorough review of our corporate planning. This was in recognition that the council has been through a period of significant transformation, which includes a new organisational structure and new service areas. We understood that this meant we needed to review and reset our direction as an organisation so that we fully aligned where to focus our efforts and resources with the outcomes we wanted to achieve.

This review established the council's current priorities and underpinned the Corporate Plan. With a medium term focus, the Plan identified our major areas of work and the outcomes we want to achieve for the next four to five years.

Corporate Plan 2014-18

The Corporate Plan 2014-18 builds on last year's revised plan and consolidates the direction and the priority areas of work we established.

The Plan remains our key improvement and planning document, which identifies where we are focusing our efforts and resources both over the next year and for the medium term. From the Corporate Plan the council develops its service business plans which, in turn, inform the work programme of each team within the council and the individual objectives of each member of staff, identified through our annual performance review process.

Over the next 12 months members and council staff will use this Plan to ensure we are delivering on our promises and that we have achieved what we set out to do. We will regularly report back on our progress to members and to our community so that they can feel confident about how effectively this Plan is being delivered.

What informs and influences our corporate planning?

A number of important factors underpin this Plan and are considered when we identify what specific areas of work we will focus on over the next four years (see our Corporate Medium Term Delivery Plan). These include:

- our corporate vision and priorities, which we reviewed last year
- our challenges and opportunities
- our progress and achievements against our commitments in previous plans
- our staff and financial resources, including capital investment
- linkages to other key council strategies - such as the Local Plan Core Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Cultural Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy, Housing Strategy and

Property Strategy

- feedback from our community and local residents, which helps identify what are the most important things for us to do both in the short and longer term
- an understanding of the local area including what the Census 2011 tells us about our residents and the borough
- external issues and influences (such as responding to government requirements and legislation)

2. Our corporate vision and priorities

Our corporate vision

All successful organisations have at their heart, a clear vision of what they want to achieve. This vision sets out the organisation's direction, defines its priorities and guides its actions, whilst making sure that it is constantly striving to improve the services it provides in line with local priorities and financial constraints.

By their very nature, corporate visions have a long-term perspective. Therefore, we believe our vision remains relevant to the council and to the borough:

Watford's vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit.

Our vision as a council sets us two challenges – it is about the sort of place we want Watford to be and it is about what sort of organisation we need to be to make this vision a reality.

Our corporate priorities

We have an ambitious agenda for Watford. To make sure we are best placed to deliver this agenda we have ensured our corporate priorities provide the right framework and direction for the organisation. We need to ensure they clearly represent what we see as our main areas for focus and what we aim to achieve by 2018 so that we meet the challenges of our corporate vision.

Our four corporate priorities, we believe, reflect our aims, clearly set out what we want to achieve for Watford as well as how we will continue to improve the way we work as an organisation.

Corporate Priority 1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

What this priority means for us

This priority is about the quality of Watford as a place to live, work and visit. It recognises that the council, although it does not deliver all the services and facilities that are important to the town and local people, does have an important role to play in ensuring that everyone is working together to achieve the best for Watford and its residents. We know that by seeing the borough as a 'total place' we can have a greater impact on those issues that are central to the quality of life in the borough.

We want to take greater ownership of what happens in the town. This involves working closely with our partners, particularly Hertfordshire County Council as well as other organisations that

provide or influence services in Watford. These could be in the public, private or voluntary sector. We have identified delivering our core strategy commitments (see page 15) as fundamental to this priority. These involve areas of crucial importance to the town such as housing and new homes, improvements to transport across the town, planning in light of Census 2011 information and ensuring specific issues such as good quality design and conserving the town's heritage are addressed.

The changing delivery of public health

From April 2013 statutory public health responsibilities transferred from the Primary Care Trust and Strategic Health Authority to Hertfordshire County Council. We see this as a key area for further development in the coming years and recognise that the council's services and policies play an essential and critical role in improving the health of our residents. We further acknowledge that the health of our residents is a key issue in achieving the potential of us as individuals, our businesses and the town as a whole. We have been involved in developing the local Health and Wellbeing Strategy that identifies the priorities to be addressed across the County and the Mayor, Dorothy Thornhill MBE is one of only two District Council representatives on the Health and Wellbeing Board whose responsibility it is to give strategic direction. We see the transfer of responsibilities to local government as a unique opportunity to give a greater focus and impact to improving health outcomes and believe that both Watford and Hertfordshire County Council services play a key role in achieving this. The diagram below gives an overview of some of the services that are key in this delivery and the coming year will be spent developing our understanding across the organisation of how we currently influence health outcomes and how we can further develop our services to have a positive impact.



We have identified some key actions that will help shape this priority and ensure we can keep track on our progress and achievements.

CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating Watford BC statutory and non-statutory services business plans – departmental service business plans will all contribute to this key objective. • Delivering new homes – target of 260 new dwellings per annum • Identifying and managing ways to tackle homelessness and the demand and supply while improving conditions through the revised Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy and Private Sector Renewal Policy • Implementing measures to maintain and improve conditions within homes to ensure they are suitable for use and promote the health, safety and welfare of residents through the revised Private Sector Renewal Policy. • Working with registered providers including the Watford Community Housing Trust on affordable housing solutions • Working with partners to develop our strategic response to issues where housing related activity could promote health, wellbeing and economic growth including a review of key policies and strategies to ensure a coherent, integrated approach • Delivering new schools with Hertfordshire County Council (Ascot Road, Lanchester House and Watford Health Campus) • Delivering Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations, Development Management Policies, Town Centre Policies • Protecting the Town's Heritage - Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan, designation of new Conservation Areas • Delivering an investment plan for public realm, parks and open spaces through use of s.106 funding, other funding bids (including the Heritage Lottery Fund supported restoration of Cassiobury Park) • Working with partners and stakeholders to develop a Sports Facilities Strategy for the town • Tackling Congestion and improving air quality in the borough with Hertfordshire County Council - Intelligent Transport Systems Strategy, Big Herts Big Ideas, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the Green Deal (<i>see below for details</i>) programme as a member of the Green Deal Together Community Interest Company to deliver energy efficiency solutions to businesses & residents, to reduce ill health due to excess cold and to address fuel poverty. • Delivering the Climate Change Action Plan for Watford including determining if committing to the Climate Local is advantageous (this is essentially the new Nottingham Declaration). • Strategic planning with the elected Police & Crime commissioner to maintain the successful partnership approach to community safety in Watford • Implementing and supporting the Thriving Families project within Watford • Further embedding responses and management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the borough in the mainstream work of both ourselves and our partners to achieve an agreed reduction in reported ASB. • Reducing the levels of violent night-time crime and disorder (% to be agreed by Safer Watford partnership) and enhance the reputation of the night-time economy through initiatives implemented by ourselves, the Police, Town Centre Pubwatch and other partners. • Strategic planning with the new Health & Wellbeing Board and developing a health and wellbeing strategy for Watford to deliver improved health outcomes for local people • Developing Strategic dialogue with Hertfordshire CC (education, youth services, social care, libraries) • Working with the County on a review of education performance and achievement in the borough • Designing out Crime – Working with Police to ensure that new housing schemes over 10 units meet Secured by Design standards/update of Residential Design Guide • Taking forward a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Watford Museum |
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CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

<p>Quality Network Partnership, Watford Community Cycle Hub, Delivery of South West Herts Transport Strategy and Watford's Air Quality Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the quality of the town's leisure provision and that it is accessible and affordable to support the health and wellbeing of our residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Round 2 HLF application for Cassiobury Park Ensuring the quality of the town's environment through the delivery of well maintained streets, parks and public spaces Ensuring local people have easy to access ways to engage in recycling and waste reduction
<p>Key Public / Private Partnerships currently supporting this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hertfordshire County Council Hertfordshire Police Police & Crime Commissioner One Watford Registered providers Hertfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board Herts Valleys NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Watford and Three Rivers Health Partnership Cultural Leaders Forum Veolia Environmental Services HQ Theatres SLM Watford Palace Theatre Capita 	<p>Key Public / VCS partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports Arts / Heritage Community Centres Play Health Community Safety HARI PoSH Heritage Lottery Fund Herts and Middlesex Groundwork Trust Emerging other partnerships - these will be decided and implemented through the life of the Corporate Plan

Measures of success

- New homes delivered each year, including number of affordable new homes
- Households supported to find solutions to their housing needs
- Number of homes improved to remove hazards to residents' health, safety and welfare
- Green flags for parks and open spaces
- Local people's satisfaction with parks and open spaces
- Health Strategy for Watford – including health outcomes and indicators being understood and embedded within mainstream decisions of the council and partners.
- Planned data published in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities
- Satisfaction with parks and open spaces
- Satisfaction with waste and recycling
- Satisfaction with street cleaning
- Take up of Green Deal installations by those eligible.
- Waste and recycling targets achieved
- Street cleanliness targets achieved
- Reduction in anti social behaviour and violent night time crime and disorder
- Maintain Purple Flag status of the town centre
- Local people's feelings of pride in Watford

“Green Deal Together”

The Green Deal is the Government’s initiative to make energy efficiency available to all, whether people own or rent their domestic or commercial property. The principle is that the cost of works to upgrade the property is paid back from the savings made on energy bills. This new scheme replaces all pre-existing national energy efficiency schemes and is key in achieving the national target of eradicating fuel poverty by 2016 as well as reducing our carbon emissions. Watford Borough Council sees the ability to influence and direct the delivery of the scheme as critical for realising the benefits to residents and businesses and to ensure we can continue to support those residents that are fuel poor or live in homes that are not energy efficient. It is for these reasons that the Council has chosen to become a founding partner of a Community Interest Company “Green Deal Together” along with several other councils and a proven energy agency. This type of company primarily exists to benefit the community and the majority of future profits will be invested back into the local community, as well as a percentage coming back to the investing authorities. Over the coming year we will be working as part of the company to develop the offers to our local residents and businesses, to target areas where we can lever in additional funding from partners including Energy Companies and to develop business opportunities for our local supplier network.

Corporate Priority 2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth

What this priority means for us

This priority recognises the vital importance of economic growth to the prosperity of the borough. This prosperity brings with it jobs and good future prospects for both local residents and businesses. In difficult economic times, we cannot take Watford's economic growth for granted. And as the economy seems set to recover, we want to make sure Watford can make the most of any opportunities that this brings. We have to understand and work with business to find out what issues they face and use our influence both within, and beyond, the borough to explore solutions and opportunities. This also involves building the relationship between business and education so that they can work to improve the match between local people's skills and those needed by local employers.

This priority also recognises the importance of the major projects that are being progressed across the town and the impact that they have on our local economy.

Below are some key actions that will help shape this priority.

CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth

- Investment in infrastructure and public realm: Charter Place, Watford Health Campus, top of the town, Croxley Rail Link, Watford Junction, Lower High Street, Ascot Road, Watford Business Park
- Supporting the Town Centre Partnership and working to ensure the vibrancy and success of the town centre
- Leading (with HCC and the LEP) the development of a programme to support businesses through improved regulatory delivery aimed at promoting growth and reducing burdens. This to include development of a business plan with Hertfordshire County Council to offer Primary Authority agreements to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing a Developers Forum in order to promote opportunities for sustainable growth in the borough • Integrating the cultural offer into the town centre and continue to support the economic impact of the town's cultural offer as part of the implementation of the Cultural Action Plan • Completing the new Watford Market • Establishing town centre wi-fi 	<p>businesses within and outside Watford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing a delivery Plan for the 6 Special Policy Areas including Lower High Street and Watford Business Park. • Developing Site allocations Development Plan Document – identifying the best future land use for Watford's key land assets • Considering the most effective way of optimising funding opportunities – such as Business Rate Retention, New Homes Bonus, Grant Funding applications • Up-dating & Implementing the Economic Strategy and action plan • Managing our property portfolio to stimulate growth, generate returns and meet changing service needs
<p>Key Public / Private Delivery Partnerships currently supporting this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Watford • Watford LABV • Watford Enterprise centre (Town Centre Partnership, Wenta, Watford For You, Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce, West Herts College, Inward investment /business retention collaborating together in a 'one stop shop' to support business growth and market the Town.) • Cultural Leaders Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Herts strategic collaboration with Hertfordshire LEP • Business Growth Forum initiatives – working closely with the Chamber of Commerce • Housing partners (HARI, POsH) • Registered housing providers • Hertfordshire County Council, National Regulators and other Herts District Authorities • Federation of Small Business

Measures of success

- Major project milestones achieved
- New business start-ups and new job opportunities created
- Meeting Economic Development Strategy measures
- Establishing and meeting Property Strategy measures
- Satisfaction with town's cultural offer
- Number of Primary Authority agreements in place
- Creation of a Regulators Charter and integration of information about Regulators into the Hertfordshire LEP's soft landing package.

Corporate Priority 3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town

What this priority means for us

This priority recognises that our local community and residents are the heart of the town and are the key factor in its success. We want people to be proud to be Watford residents and to feel that their voice can be heard on issues that matter to them. We know people want to understand and get involved in decisions that affect them or their neighbourhood and we are exploring how we communicate with our community to open up more channels for two-way communication. This priority also commits the council to finding the right ways to engage more effectively with residents whether through meetings, surveys, social media or more formal routes.

Below are some key actions that will help shape this priority.

CP3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the cultural leaders forum in providing a framework for the development of a more joined up and sustainable cultural offer which connects more strongly with the whole community. • Open up culture across the town from the buildings to the streets, establishing spaces and events where diverse communities can gather, connect and enjoy cultural activities • Understanding our Customer profile including Census 2011 analysis and using this knowledge to support our engagement and shaping our decision • Reviewing and implementing equalities objectives • Continuing the annual community survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging on the vision for Watford 2031 including building understanding of our plans for growth and development and bringing to life our major projects and their positive impact on the town • Revising Communications and Engagement Strategy • Responding to the Localism Agenda (community right to challenge, neighbourhood planning, resident fora) • Developing a co-ordinated response with our partners on the impact of Welfare Reform on residents of the Borough • Delivering individual electoral registration
<p>Key Public / VCS partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Watford • Cultural Leaders Forum • Watford and Three Rivers Trust • Community and voluntary sector groups • Neighbourhood Forums • Tenants and Residents' Associations 	

Measures of success

- Local people feel involved in shaping the town and in decision-making
- Local people feel well-informed about the council and what is happening in the town
- Maintain satisfaction levels for council services and the borough

Corporate Priority 4 - Operating the council efficiently & effectively

What this priority means for us

This priority focuses on ensuring we have the best people, systems, processes and management arrangements in place to deliver efficient, high quality services that represent real value for money to the community. We know that money is going to continue to be tight so we recognise that the council will need to continue ensuring it manages its budget effectively and allocate its resources in a way that supports its priorities

Below are some key actions that will help shape this priority.

CP4 - Operating the council efficiently & effectively

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term financial strategy • ICT strategy • Organisational development strategy • Consolidating Shared services • Monitoring & evaluation of service delivery including key performance indicators • Contract & client management - ensuring we get maximum value and best outcomes from our contracts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective resource allocation • Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the parking service • Implementing more efficient ways to manage the council's office printing requirements • Demand management – to undertake preventative work (eg on homelessness) and increase self-serve • Review local council tax support scheme |
|---|--|

Public / Private Delivery Partnerships

- Three Rivers District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Veolia Environmental Services
- Capita
- SLM
- Vinci Park
- HQ Theatres
- Land Registry

Measures of success

- Medium term financial strategy targets achieved
- ICT performance targets achieved
- Performance measures in contracts (such as Veolia parking, SLM) achieved
- Key performance measures achieved

Our residents' perspective

Feedback from our residents last year confirmed their priorities for the council and the town.

We asked local people to choose their top three priorities from a list of areas people often tell us are important for the council. The table below shows the top five responses.

Given the financial pressures we face and thinking about the role of the council and what it does for the town and residents, which of the following do you think we should be prioritising in the future?

TOP FIVE PRIORITY AREAS FOR RESIDENTS	% response	LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITY
Keeping the town safe and tackling anti-social behaviour	71%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Promoting economic prosperity including attracting, developing and supporting local businesses and jobs	55%	CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth
Looking at how our services are delivered to ensure they are cost effective	48%	CP4 - Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Maintaining the appearance of the town (clean streets / well maintained grass verges etc)	47%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Protecting our parks and open spaces	46%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

Our Corporate Planning Framework

Our vision and priorities are the fundamental building blocks that support the delivery of our Corporate Plan, service plans and individual work programmes.

Watford's vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit

CP1	CP2	CP3	CP4
Making Watford a better place to live	To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	Operating the council efficiently and effectively

3. What else has shaped this plan

i Challenges and opportunities

Current challenges

The last few years have brought a number of significant challenges for local authorities as they respond to changing government requirements and expectations, as well as the substantial reduction in government funding.

In 2010, the reduction in funding for Watford corresponded to around £5 million worth of savings due largely to a reduction of 35% in our general funding from government. This was a challenging savings target and represented a substantial cut to our budget. We have worked hard over the last two years to work towards this saving and to minimise the impact on the council, the services we deliver, the local community and on its staff. However, we have had to take some very difficult decisions and know that there will be more to be made as we work through the announcement of our government funding for the next four years.

£5 million of savings achieved

Whilst reducing the council's budget by such a considerable sum was certainly a challenge, we are delighted that, by next year, the council will have made £5 million worth of savings. This means it has a sound financial base for the future.

Programming our savings

We recognised that removing the full extent of the savings in one go would be a risk to the council and to the services that are valued by local people. Our approach has been to programme our savings over five years.

Our initial savings programme – **service prioritisation** – delivered over £2.5 million of savings. Service prioritisation involved reduced expenditure and related changes in various activities the council undertakes. The first area the council looked at, as part of service prioritisation, was to make savings in its management costs, accommodation costs and administration costs. Having explored all these options, the council still had to look at reducing some of the services it provides. Some service prioritisation proposals were relatively easy to introduce and, overall, secured more than half of the council's savings target relatively quickly.

In order to deliver the remaining savings target, the council developed its **Future Council programme and roadmap**. Through this programme, the council explored ways it could transform how it delivers services and how it operates that would achieve savings whilst maintaining the quality of services. Future Council supported the outsourcing of waste and recycling, street cleaning and parks and open spaces, which alone will achieve over £4 million worth of savings for the council to 2020 (around £550k per year). Whilst this is a significant level of saving, Future Council has impacted across the organisation and highlighted areas where savings could be achieved. It has achieved a further £1.5 million savings.

Government funding

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement in December 2013 provided an update on the government's expectations for local authorities and what they can expect in terms of funding in the medium term (the next 3-4 years):

The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (detailed under 'Our Financial Resources') incorporates the council's government funding over the medium term.

Current opportunities

Whilst there are challenges that need to be met, the council is still well placed to consider the opportunities and new prospects that do open up - even in difficult times.

Watford has a number of strengths as a borough, which makes it a place where people want to live, work, study, visit and do business. These include its location (close to London and transport links, which make it easy to get to by car and public transport) good schools, mix of homes and its sense of identity and community. Because people recognise these strengths, they often look to Watford as somewhere to base their home, their family, their work or their business.

The work programme identified in this Corporate Plan acknowledges these opportunities. It identifies what we can do to make sure that Watford makes the most of them as and when they arise. In this way, we can work towards sustaining the sound economic foundations that have made the town successful and ensure we are exploiting all the avenues that will maintain its prosperity in the future. We understand that successful places don't just happen and need the combined efforts of the council working with our public, private and community sector partners to shape and channel future growth and development.

In view of the challenges the council faces, it is more important than ever to ensure we have the right plans in place to deliver the level of savings the council needs to make, whilst maintaining good quality services that local people tell us are important and progressing our key projects that we see as vital in transforming our town.

We are under no illusions that the next four to five years will be challenging and some difficult decisions will need to be made but we are confident that whilst we look to reduce expenditure in some areas we will maintain the quality of our services in those areas people have told us are important. We will also continue to engage with our partners to deliver some of the larger-scale projects that we believe are important to the longer-term future of the town such as the Watford Health Campus, Croxley Rail Link, Charter Place regeneration and town centre improvements.

ii. Key achievements in 2012/13 against our Corporate Plan priorities

A review of the Corporate Plan priorities 2012-16 highlighted that a number of key projects had been completed in 2012/13 and significant progress has been made in the delivery of longer-term projects. Below are some of the highlights of our year:

- ✓ successfully outsourced our waste, recycling, street cleaning and parks service to Veolia Watford, achieving significant savings to the council whilst retaining the quality and responsiveness of these much valued services
- ✓ launched, in partnership with Veolia Watford, a new recycling service for Watford that has already made an impact on our recycling rates and which will help reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill
- ✓ retained our three Green Flags which recognises the best green places in the country and our Purple Flag for the excellent way we work in partnership to manage our night time economy in the town centre
- ✓ continued to work closely with business to maintain and build the town's economic prosperity, including establishing a Town Centre Partnership

- ✓ made significant progress on our major projects that will transform the town and enhance its offer to local people, visitors and businesses:
 - Watford Health Campus has achieved planning permission for the new road that will link the site to the M1, provide improved access to Watford General Hospital and reduce traffic congestion on the roads in west Watford. The council has established the Watford Health Campus partnership LLP with Kier that is responsible for delivering the Health Campus in partnership with West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust. An indicative masterplan will be submitted for planning approval before the end of the financial year
 - Ascot Road regeneration took a major step forward with the completion of the deal with Morrisons and the opening of the much looked forward to store on the site in December
 - Charter Place redevelopment was secured by the agreement with intu Watford. This will deliver an improved town centre retail, leisure and restaurant offer including a new cinema for Watford right in the heart of the town. Planning permission for the development was achieved in January 2014
 - Parade improvements came to life during the year as work on the top of the town took shape, including improvements to the Pond, upgrading of the public realm with new surfacing, less clutter and fewer cars

- ✓ developed our staff and secured our internal building blocks for the future
 - Outsourced our ICT service in partnership with Three Rivers to Capita to improve our service and provide future resilience
 - Gained Bronze IIP accreditation
 - Implemented a new performance development review system to ensure staff are focused on delivering our corporate priorities and are supported to achieve
 - Rolled out our STEP training programme to manager and non-managers

A revised organisational structure

Closely aligned to this Corporate Plan is the need to ensure the council is organised and managed in a way that supports us to do our jobs and deliver services effectively and, ultimately, facilitates the successful delivery of our corporate priorities.

A significant part of our savings target over the last two years has been achieved through the deletion of posts at the senior manager level. This cannot be done without a thorough review of how we continue to provide the quality of leadership and management that has brought us success in the past and will be critical to our future achievements.

Over the past twelve months, we have implemented a review of our organisational structure and responsibilities and roles associated within each area. We took the following underpinning principles as the framework for developing the structure as well as our revised corporate priorities.

- Promoting local governance (Democracy & Governance)
- Place Shaping (includes Economic Regeneration)
- Community Leadership (includes key partnerships)
- Operating the Council Efficiently & Effectively (Creating Capacity)
- People (residents, businesses and visitors to Watford)

This resulted in the following four service areas:

- Democracy & Governance
- Corporate Strategy & Client Services
- Community & Customer Services
- Regeneration & Development

iii. Investing in our staff and our financial resources

Our staff

During the last year, we have made significant investment in developing our staff and in ensuring the organisation continues to align its vision and priorities with its resources – including its human resources. In addition, we want to continue to be an organisation that values its staff and recognises the contribution they make to our achievements and success.

What we have done to develop and recognise our staff:

- ✓ **SEA awards**
Ran our staff excellence awards (SEA) for a third year to recognise the contribution people are making to delivering high quality services (both internally and externally) and held a very successful ceremony to cement these achievements with a range of our partners
- ✓ **STEP programme**
Extended our excellent 'STEP' programme, designed to improve leadership and management across the organisation, to managers, frontline managers and non-managers
- ✓ **Competency and appraisal framework**
Implemented our revised competency and appraisal framework – known as our per so that it better reflects our corporate priorities and provides an effective framework for staff to understand how they contribute to the aims and ambitions of the council and to develop their personal skills and abilities

Our financial resources

Aligned with this Corporate Plan, the council approves a four year financial forecast which identifies factors likely to impact upon capital and revenue budgets.

Our medium term financial strategy is aligned with the priorities outlined in this Plan and provides the underpinning financial planning needed to ensure we deliver them.

When we agree new priority projects we look to deliver them within existing budgets but the annual budget process is used to ensure that these projects receive the necessary funding. Where projects involve major investment such as large building projects like the improvements to the top of the town, funding mainly comes from the sale of council assets (buildings / land), which are no longer needed to deliver our priorities.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy is based on looking at the factors that are likely to impact on the council's budget over the coming four years. We take account of our vision, our Corporate Plan and significant external pressures so that we can be sure that we can best use our resources to deliver our targets and meet corporate priorities. It also takes into account other plans and strategies to ensure we align our spending priorities with our objectives. A key element of the Financial Strategy is the need to reduce our costs through greater efficiencies and value for money.

The council's medium term financial strategy supports delivery of council priorities and this Plan. It:

- plans for a medium term balanced budget
- looks to deliver short and medium term savings from completion of efficiencies and service reviews
- recognises that a balanced budget will not be delivered through service efficiencies alone and that it will be necessary to consider other areas of service expenditure and of income generation to balance the budget
- controls new growth and looks to fund it from savings elsewhere
- maintains prudent reserves levels to meet unforeseen circumstances
- supports delivery of the Asset Management Plan and capital programme, ensuring investment for the future
- freezes council tax in 2014/15 (following a freeze over the last three years).

Watford Borough Council expenditure

The Medium Term Financial Strategy indicates that the budget requirement for 2014/15 is:

£14,313,080

This will be funded from the following sources:

- Settlement Funding Assessment
- Specific Government Grants
- New Homes Bonus
- Council Tax
- Collection Fund Surplus
- Revenue Reserves

Government funding

Watford has received the following settlement from government for 2014/15.

Funding	£
Government Grant	4,913,270
New Homes Bonus	1,731,450
Grant for Council Tax Freeze	369,180

This settlement is one of the main sources of funding for the council. The other is council tax.

Council tax for 2014/15

£ 7,523,180

This means the average charge (£249.84) remains unaltered for 2014/15.

Use of reserves

We do not underestimate the extent of the savings we still need to make and know that, for such large sums, it is not always easy to be exact as to the timing and the final sums that will be achieved. In view of this, the council will make use of some of its reserves to 'smooth' the delivery

of the savings. Using reserves does not mean that the savings will not need to be made but it ensures that the council's budget balances whilst the organisation undertakes the work necessary to achieve permanent savings.

The use of reserves for 2014/15 is £89,430

The council's expenditure is allocated across our service areas as follows:

Spending	2014/15 Gross £million	Income	2014/15 Net £million
Democracy & Governance	5.56	-2.31	1.38
Corporate Strategy & Client Services	11.17	-2.59	8.58
Community & Customer Services	5.56	-0.57	4.98
Regeneration & Development	6.23	-7.32	-1.09
Revenues & Benefits	39.43	-38.59	0.84
Other services	1.29	-1.40	0.11

iv. Linkages to other key council strategies

This Corporate Plan provides a framework for other council strategies and policies.

In this way it provides a central link between how our strategies and policies deliver our corporate vision and corporate priorities.

The most significant strategy that connects this Plan to the overall development of the town is the Core Strategy. We are delighted that this was found to be 'sound' by the government inspector. The Core Strategy vision for Watford complements our corporate vision and the work outlined within this Plan plays a crucial role in delivering its objectives.

Watford's Local Plan (Core Strategy) – how this shapes our planning and work

Watford's Local Plan (Core Strategy) was adopted in January 2013. This sets out the strategic vision and spatial strategy for Watford from now to 2031.

The strategy is to provide a balance between directing growth to sustainable locations (e.g. where there is unused land and good local transport links) and protecting and enhancing the character of other parts of the town.

In order to ensure that sufficient infrastructure (roads, schools, play areas) is provided to meet the needs generated by new development, the council is developing a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Levy and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Both of these documents will be going out for consultation with local residents and other stakeholders later in 2013.

The council produces an Annual Monitoring Report which shows how it's performing in terms of delivering against key targets, such as numbers of new homes.

Local Plan (Core Strategy) vision for Watford

- *Watford will offer a modern highly sustainable environment providing easy access to jobs and services and where development meets high standards of urban design that respects the town's distinctive character and heritage*
- *Watford will be a place where people from all backgrounds can feel they belong, feel safe and secure and have the opportunity to be involved in their local community*
- *Sustainable transport links will be developed and improved with the conversion of the Abbey Flyer line from St Albans to Watford into a light rail link, and the Croxley Rail Link, which extends the Metropolitan Line to Watford Junction mainline station*
- *Watford town centre will strengthen its regional role by developing further its vibrant mix of shops, offices, leisure and cultural activities, within a highly accessible pedestrian and cycle friendly environment. By 2031 the town will have extended its range of services and facilities further to provide activities for all age groups; a 'family-friendly town centre' at all times*
- *Watford town centre will have a series of sectors where commercial, shopping, leisure, recreation and cultural activities support each other in well designed surroundings. Further high quality town centre housing will be developed, providing safe and attractive accommodation of various types, including family units, in good proximity to the railway stations at Watford Junction and Watford High Street*
- *Watford's existing local centres will be improved to provide our communities with strong neighbourhood centres with a wide range of services, including schools and retail facilities with good access to public transport. There will be an appropriate mix of housing suitable for all, including affordable housing. The new housing will lead the way in sustainable construction and technology.*
- *Watford's employment areas will be improved to offer the quality accommodation required by modern businesses, with access to facilities to help employees and businesses function effectively. Watford's excellent educational offer will be maintained and improved by supporting existing top class facilities such as West Herts College and improving the quantity and quality of our schools*
- *Key elements in the high quality of life enjoyed by Watford's residents and visitors are the open spaces and parks within the borough, and its extensive range of recreational, sports and leisure facilities. These recreational, leisure and sports assets will be protected and enhanced for use by all age groups*
- *Residents will have the opportunity to choose healthier lifestyles with access to a range of leisure opportunities, as well as more opportunity to walk or cycle. There will also be improved access to quality healthcare, with an enhanced new hospital and neighbourhood GP surgeries*

Core Strategy objectives

CORE STRATEGY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITY
1: A family-friendly town centre	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth
2: Sustainable neighbourhoods	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in CP3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town
3: Enhance Watford's regional economic and transportation role	CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth
4: Enhance Watford's regional health, recreational, educational, cultural and social role	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth CP3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town
5: Enhance Watford's environment, green infrastructure and heritage assets	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

v. What is important to local people

Listening to local people and ensuring they have the opportunities to influence decisions is essential if we are to focus on what matters most to our communities. We are committed to understanding needs and ensuring everyone has an opportunity to have a say.

Through consultations and engagement our community has told us what is important to them and the town. This has been reflected in our new corporate priorities but it also influences the work we do to deliver these priorities.

In our Community Survey 2013 we asked local people what they thought was important in making somewhere a good place to live. Below are the top five responses and how they link to our corporate priorities.

These are some things that people have said are important to them or help to make their area a good place to live. Which of them are important to you as a resident of Watford?

TOP FIVE THINGS THAT PEOPLE SAY HELP MAKE THEIR AREA A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE	% response	LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITY
Level of crime / community safety	48%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Road and pavement repairs	34%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Level of litter and dirt on the streets	28%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Level of traffic congestion	27%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Road and pavement repairs	27%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in
Quality of health services	25%	CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in

The top issue remains unchanged since 2012 (level of crime / community safety). The other top four from last year remain in the top five (level of litter and dirt on the streets, road and pavement repairs, quality of health services and parks and open spaces) although the order of importance has changed. Registering in the top five in 2013 is the level of traffic congestion.

vi. An understanding of the local area

The release of Census 2011 means that we have a more up to date picture of the population of our borough than we have had over recent years. Census data is being released on a phased basis and so the picture that is emerging of Watford is being completed bit by bit. This information is important to the council as it supports how we plan services, work with partners and understand the current and future pressures and opportunities the borough faces.

Currently, we know:

Population	The size of Watford's population at the time of the census was 90,300 . This is around a 13% increase in population since the last census in 2001 when the population was 79,726. The current mid-year estimate (2012 revised) puts the population at 90,700 .
Population density	The population density for Watford is 4,282 people per square kilometre. This makes it the most densely populated district in England and Wales. However, in comparison with some metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, the density is relatively low.
Age bands	Watford continues to be a relatively young population - particularly in comparison to the rest of Hertfordshire. The largest populations by age band in Watford are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25-29 (8,000) • 30-34 (8,100) • the numbers in each successive age-band fall progressively

	<p>until there are estimated to be 1,600 who are 85+.</p> <p>The median age in Watford is 35 - no change since 2001. This is the lowest median age in Hertfordshire and is the fifth lowest median age in the Eastern region (47 local authority areas in total). The median age for the UK is 39.</p> <p>Watford has the fourth highest percentage population of 0-4 year olds in the Eastern region and the sixth highest 0-14 year olds. In comparison, Watford has the third lowest percentage population of 65+ in the region.</p>
Households	<p>The average household size in Watford is 2.4. This is average for the region.</p> <p>Number of households The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of the Census; as of March 31 2013 is the figure was 37,840.</p> <p>Watford had the fourth highest percentage change in households - +14.6% - in the Eastern region from 2001 to 2011.</p> <p>Household Composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most frequent household = single people aged under pensionable age. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grown from 17.5% in 2001 to 21.1% in 2011 (overtaken married couples with children) • Lone parents - significant rise in the number and % of lone parents (from 4.9% in 2001 to 7.2% in 2011) • One person pensioner households – declined in both numbers and percentage (from 12.2% 2001 to 10.0% in 2011) <p>Household tenure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately rented housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased from 3,170 homes in 2001 to 7,371 homes in 2011, from 9.8% to 20.1% of the housing stock • Homes owned outright: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased from 26.1% to 24.4% • Homes being purchased with a mortgage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased from 46.1% to 37.2% • Social housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remained static as % of the total housing stock (16.3% in both 2001 and 2011) yet it has increased in number from 5,266 in 2001 to 5,987 in 2011
Projections	<p>The ONS interim 2011-based subnational population projections are an indication of the future trends in population over the next 10 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watford's population is projected to be 95,300 by 2021 • Births are projected to be double deaths each year

Ethnicity	<p>The White British population has decreased from 2001 to 2011 and is now 62% of the Watford population.</p> <p>All ethnic categories except for White British and White Irish have increased over the time period, with notable percentage increase in White Other, Indian, Pakistani and Black African.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the percentage increase in Other White from 2.1% (3,140 residents) to 7.7% (6,947 residents) - although the figure is not broken down any further this reflects what we have experienced in terms of the increase in residents from Europe - particularly Eastern Europe • the percentage increase in Indian residents - up from 2.4% (1,884) to 5.5% (4,923) • the percentage increase in Pakistani residents - up from 4.6% (3,709) to 5.5% (6,082) • the percentage increase in Black African residents - up from 1.0% (784) to 3.5% (3,142)
Education	<p>A skilled workforce supports the economic development and employment aspirations for Watford. Year on year results show that there is an increasing trends in both GCSE results for pupils in Watford and the qualifications of the working age population.</p> <p>In the academic year 2011/12, 92.2% of pupils in Watford achieved 5 or more GCSEs graded A* to C, compared to the national average of 81.8%,</p> <p>There has been a mostly increasing trend in Watford over the last few years in NVQ qualifications held and these again increased during 2012. Watford's working age population has the second highest percentage (43.7%) in Hertfordshire of those with qualifications at NVQ 4 and above (St. Albans is the highest with 52.9%); this is also higher than both the 40.4% average in Hertfordshire and the England average of 34.2%.</p> <p>There are fewer people with no qualifications and significantly more people with Level 4/5 qualifications (degree level).</p>
Health	<p>Watford's population enjoys better health than the Eastern Region and England overall with nearly 85% of the population stating that they have 'good health' and just under 14% recording a disability.</p>

4. The role of our Members in shaping and delivering the Plan

Watford Borough Council has a directly-elected mayor – just one of 16 local authorities to have this form of leadership and just one of two district councils.

A directly-elected mayor means that local people elect the person who leads the council. In authorities which do not have directly-elected mayors the leader is chosen by the councillors. The Mayor is supported by a Cabinet that plays a key role in determining the overall budget and policy framework of the council. At Watford the Cabinet is made up of the Mayor and four councillors. Each individual member of the Cabinet has a 'Portfolio' for which they are responsible and they can make decisions within their area of responsibility.

The council also has an Overview and Scrutiny Committee which reviews and scrutinises the policy of the council, its performance and, with the help of the Budget Panel, its budget. We also have five further committees covering: development control, licensing, audit, functions and standards.

In addition, all councillors play an essential role in the democratic leadership of their communities and providing an advocacy role for their residents. We are working to ensure that our councillors are supported and equipped to be effective in this critical role.

Watford Borough Council's Cabinet members and responsibilities

Dorothy Thornhill – Elected Mayor – responsible for strategic partnerships, external relationships and community safety

Councillor Derek Scudder – Deputy Mayor – portfolio holder for Corporate Strategy & Client Services

Councillor Iain Sharpe – portfolio holder for Regeneration & Development

Councillor Keith Crout - portfolio holder for Community & Customer Services

Councillor Mark Watkin – portfolio holder for Democracy & Governance and shared services

5. Watford Borough Council Vision & Values

Watford's vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit.

Our values underpin our behaviour with each other and our customers and how we deliver our services. We believe it is important for our residents and customers to be clear about what they should expect when they engage with us – no matter what the issue or service area they engage with.

Our values are:

INCLUSIVE

We will engage with all the Town's communities to seek to provide services that meet differing needs. We will enhance, welcome and encourage diversity and promote good community relations. We will value the views of our staff, our service users and stakeholders so that we can better respond to the issues and opportunities that arise.

FAIR

We will make balanced decisions by applying policies, standards and the law consistently. We will explain our decisions and be open to review how they are made.

BOLD

We will be progressive, seeking to continuously improve our services. We will be open to change, taking account of best practice and innovative thinking. We will be willing to take appropriate risks to secure a step change in the way we deliver to our communities.

And we will act with
INTEGRITY

We will be honest with ourselves, service users and partners and seek to ensure that we keep our promises and set high standards internally and externally.

6. Our Corporate Medium Term Delivery Plan 2014-18

Our Corporate Plan identifies the main focus of Watford Borough Council for the next four years. It sets out the key priorities for the council, in the context of our new corporate priorities.

Although times are tough we are committed to leading Watford into a prosperous future, where individuals, families and businesses can thrive. We will be looking at how to balance the challenges while continuing to deliver good quality services.

Our service areas and the work they deliver to contribute to the corporate priorities and Corporate Plan 2014-18

In the medium term delivery plan, we focus on the areas we believe will deliver real improvement for our communities. Not everything the council does is captured in the delivery plan. A significant amount of the work the council undertakes, much of which is required by law, continues to happen routinely to benefit the community and improve the organisation.

- We see this as the council's ongoing commitment and in many ways reflects our 'core business'. This work is monitored in a number of ways including through service business plans and regular monitoring of performance measures by both councillors and Leadership Team. – see section 7.

How our Corporate Plan 2014-18 projects support the delivery of our corporate priorities

We have identified specific project and development areas which support the delivery of our corporate priorities.

These are outlined below and are mapped against the priorities, showing where they make their most significant contribution. As they are complex areas of work they all contribute to more than one priority and show how, through working across our service areas, we can achieve positive outcomes.

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor1	Updating Watford BC statutory and non- statutory services business plans – departmental service business plans will all contribute to this key objective	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor2	Delivering new homes – target of 260 new dwellings per annum	✓	✓	✓	
Cor3	Working with partners to develop our strategic response to issues where housing related activity could promote health, wellbeing and economic growth including a review of key policies, strategies, assets and working practices to ensure a coherent, integrated approach	✓		✓	
Cor4	Delivering new schools with Hertfordshire County Council (Ascot Road, Lanchester House and Watford Junction)	✓	✓	✓	
Cor5	Delivering Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations, Development Management Policies, Town Centre Policies	✓	✓	✓	

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor6	Protecting the Town's Heritage - Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan, designation of new Conservation Areas	✓	✓	✓	
Cor7	Deliver the investment programme in green spaces (e.g. allotments, parks improvement, reprovision of Farm Terrace, relocate Hurling Club etc)	✓		✓	✓
Cor8	Working with partners and stakeholders to develop a Sports Facilities Strategy and action plan for the town	✓	✓	✓	
Cor9	Tackling Congestion and improving air quality in the borough with Hertfordshire County Council - Intelligent Transport Systems Strategy, Big Herts Big Ideas, Quality Network Partnership, Watford Community Cycle Hub, Delivery of South West Herts Transport Strategy and Watford's Air Quality Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor10	Build on strong partnerships in leisure and community to ensure services are high quality and resilient to support the health and wellbeing of the community	✓	✓	✓	
Cor11	Build on the Veolia and other partnerships to deliver high quality, cost effective clean/green services	✓	✓	✓	

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor12	Deliver the outcome of HLF bid for Cassiobury Park	✓	✓	✓	
Cor13	Implementing the Green Deal programme as a member of the Green Deal Together Community Interest Company to deliver energy efficiency solutions to businesses & residents, to reduce ill health due to excess cold and to address fuel poverty.	✓	✓	✓	
Cor14	Delivering the Climate Change Action Plan for Watford as part of the council's commitment to Climate Local	✓	✓	✓	
Cor15	Strategic planning with the elected Police & Crime commissioner to maintain the successful partnership approach to community safety in Watford	✓	✓	✓	
Cor16	Implementing and supporting the Thriving Families project within Watford	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 17	Further embedding responses and management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the borough in the mainstream work of both ourselves and our partners to achieve an agreed reduction in reported ASB.	✓	✓	✓	

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor 18	Reducing the levels of violent night-time crime and disorder (% to be agreed by Safer Watford partnership) and enhance the reputation of the night-time economy through initiatives implemented by ourselves, the Police, Town Centre Pubwatch and other partners	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 19	Strategic planning with the new Health & Wellbeing Board and develop a public health strategy to deliver improved health outcomes for local people	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 20	Work with HCC to produce a biennial State of Watford Education report	✓		✓	
Cor 21	Designing out Crime – Working with Police to ensure that new housing schemes over 10 units meet Secured by Design standards/update of Residential Design Guide	✓		✓	
Cor 22	Taking forward a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Watford Museum	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 23	Investment in infrastructure and public realm: Charter Place, Watford Health Campus, top of the town, Croxley Rail Link, Watford Junction, Lower High Street, Ascot Road, Watford Business Park				

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor 24	Supporting the Town Centre Partnership and working to ensure the vibrancy and success of the town centre	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 25	Introducing a Developers Forum in order to promote opportunities for sustainable growth in the borough	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 26	Integrating the cultural offer into the town centre and continue to support the economic impact of the town's cultural offer as part of the implementation of the Cultural Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 27	Completing the new Watford Market	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor 28	Establish town centre wi-fi	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 29	Leading (with HCC and the LEP) the development of a programme to support businesses through improved regulatory delivery aimed at promoting growth and reducing burdens. This to include development of a business plan with Hertfordshire County Council to offer Primary Authority agreements to businesses within and outside Watford	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 30	Producing a delivery Plan for the 6 Special Policy Areas including Lower High Street and Watford Business Park	✓	✓	✓	

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor 31	Developing Site allocations Development Plan Document – identifying the best future land use for Watford's key land assets	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 32	Up-dating & Implementing the Economic Strategy and action plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor 33	Managing our property portfolio to stimulate growth, generate returns and meet changing service needs	✓	✓		✓
Cor 34	Identifying the most effective way of optimising funding opportunities – such as Business Rate Retention, New Homes Bonus, Grant Funding applications	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 35	Working with the cultural leaders forum in providing a framework for the development of a more joined up and sustainable cultural offer which connects more strongly with the whole community.	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 36	Open up culture across the town from the buildings to the streets, establishing spaces and events where diverse communities can gather, connect and enjoy cultural activities	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 37	Lead a co-ordinated/integrated approach to intelligence gathering to support the development of corporate strategy and our equality objectives	✓	✓	✓	

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor 38	Engaging on the vision for Watford 2031 including building understanding of our plans for growth and development and bringing to life our major projects and their impact on the town	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 39	Develop and implement a new, integrated approach to communications	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor 40	Responding to the Localism Agenda (community right to challenge, neighbourhood planning, resident fora)	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 41	Developing a co-ordinated response with our partners on the impact of Welfare Reform on residents of the Borough	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cor 42	Delivering individual electoral registration			✓	
Cor 43	Developing the council's medium term financial strategy				✓
Cor 44	Develop and deliver fit for purpose, adaptable ICT services	✓		✓	
Cor 45	Developing the council's approach to organisational development	✓	✓	✓	
Cor 46	Consolidating shared services	✓		✓	✓
Cor 47	Monitoring & evaluation of service delivery including key performance indicators	✓	✓	✓	✓

Corporate Plan reference	Project	CP1 Making Watford a better place to live in	CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth	CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town	CP4 Operating the council efficiently & effectively
Cor 48	Contract & client management - ensuring we get maximum value and best outcomes from our contracts	✓		✓	✓
Cor 49	Identify ways to improve customer access, including exploring the potential for channel shift through the More Efficient Ways of Working (MEWWs) project			✓	✓
Cor 50	Review local council tax support scheme			✓	✓
Cor 51	Effectively manage sickness absence				✓

7. Key Performance Indicators 2014/15

Each year, we identify a number of performance indicators that measure our key priorities or where we know we need to improve our performance. These measures support the organisation ensure that high quality outcomes are being achieved for the organisation and for the borough. They also provide an early indication if performance levels are not being achieved and highlight where some additional focus might be needed.

Our chosen key performance indicators (KPIs) for 2014/15 are:

Ref	Indicator	Service area responsible for reporting
FINANCIAL		
KPI 1	Capital receipts programme	Regeneration & Development
KPI 2	Occupancy rate commercial	Regeneration & Development
KPI 3	Rental income commercial	Regeneration & Development
KPI 4	Revenue budget	Finance
KPI 5	Capital programme – general	Finance
KPI 6	Capital programme – section 106	Finance
KPI7	Creditor payments paid within 30 days	
KPI 8	General debtors raised	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 9	General debtors collected	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 10	Collection rates of council tax	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 11	Collection rates of NNDR	Revenues and Benefits
SERVICE DELIVERY		
KPI 12	Average time to process housing benefits claims (from date of claim)	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 13	Average time to process change of circumstances	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 14	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘major’ applications (% determined within 13 weeks) • ‘minor’ applications (% determined within 8 weeks) • ‘other’ applications (% determined within 8 weeks) 	Regeneration & Development
KPI 15	Affordable homes on identified sites	Community and Customer Services
KPI 16	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Community and Customer Services

Ref	Indicator	Service area responsible for reporting
KPI 17	Number of private sector units secured for use under Homelet	Community and Customer Services
KPI 18	The number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation and nightly lets who are pregnant/with dependent children	Community and Customer Services
KPI 19	Residual household waste per household	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 20	Household waste recycled and composted	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 21	Improved street and environmental cleanliness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of litter Levels of detritus Levels of fly posting 	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 22	Recorded crimes (all crimes)	Community and Customer Services
KPI 23	Recorded violence against the person crimes (including aggressive behaviour, assault, domestic violence)	Community and Customer Services
KPI 24	Incidents of anti-social behaviour reported by public	Community and Customer Services
CUSTOMER SERVICE		
KPI 25	CSC service levels – 80% calls answered in 20 seconds	Community and Customer Services
KPI 26	'Long waits for calls received to CSC and Benefits <i>Long wait = calls not answered within 2 minutes</i>	Community and Customer Services
KPI 27	% of stage 1 complaints resolved within 10 days	Community and Customer Services
KPI 28	Voter registration	Democracy and Governance
STAFF		
KPI 29	Sickness absence	Human Resources

Alternative Formats of this Plan

For a copy of the Plan in large print or on audiotape, please contact:

Partnerships and Performance
Watford Borough Council, Watford Town Hall, Watford WD17 3EX

or email kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk or telephone 01923 278077.

This plan is also available on our website www.watford.gov.uk

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Key Performance Indicators 2014/15

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FINANCIAL		
KPI 1	Capital receipts programme	Regeneration & Development
KPI 2	Occupancy rate commercial	Regeneration & Development
KPI 3	Rental income commercial	Regeneration & Development
KPI 4	Revenue budget	Finance
KPI 5	Capital programme – general	Finance
KPI 6	Capital programme – section 106	Finance
KPI 7	Creditor payments paid within 30 days	
KPI 8	General debtors raised	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 9	General debtors collected	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 10	Collection rates of council tax	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 11	Collection rates of NNDR	Revenues and Benefits
SERVICE DELIVERY		
KPI 12	Average time to process housing benefits claims (from date of claim)	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 13	Average time to process change of circumstances	Revenues and Benefits
KPI 14	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘major’ applications (% determined within 13 weeks) • ‘minor’ applications (% determined within 8 weeks) • ‘other’ applications (% determined within 8 weeks) 	Regeneration & Development
KPI 15	Affordable homes on identified sites	Community and Customer Services

Appendix II

Ref	Indicator	Service area responsible for reporting
KPI 16	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Community and Customer Services
KPI 17	Number of private sector units secured for use under Homelet	Community and Customer Services
KPI 18	The number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation and nightly lets who are pregnant/with dependent children	Community and Customer Services
KPI 19	Residual household waste per household	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 20	Household waste recycled and composted	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 21	Improved street and environmental cleanliness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of litter • Levels of detritus • Levels of fly posting 	Corporate Strategy and Client Services
KPI 22	Recorded crimes (all crimes)	Community and Customer Services
KPI 23	Recorded violence against the person crimes (including aggressive behaviour, assault, domestic violence)	Community and Customer Services
KPI 24	Incidents of anti-social behaviour reported by public	Community and Customer Services
CUSTOMER SERVICE		
KPI 25	CSC service levels – 80% calls answered in 20 seconds	Community and Customer Services
KPI 26	‘Long waits for calls received to CSC and Benefits <i>Long wait = calls not answered within 2 minutes</i>	Community and Customer Services
KPI 27	% of stage 1 complaints resolved within 10 days	Community and Customer Services
KPI 28	Voter registration	Democracy and Governance
STAFF		
KPI 29	Sickness absence	Human Resources

Appendix III - Corporate Plan 2013-17 review – January / February 2014

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
Corporate Priority 1 - Making Watford a better place to live in					
1:1	Updating Watford BC statutory and non statutory services business plans – departmental service business plans	<p>Service plans for 2013/14 were developed to reflect the new structure meaning work was undertaken later than normal during the business planning cycle. A revised template was developed with the aim of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing the overall focus and direction for the service • understanding its main challenges and opportunities • identifying areas of work - including delivery of Corporate Plan <p>Template to be reviewed for 2014/15 + service plan workshops with DMTs for non-shared services - Dec 2013. MD to attend to support discussions / help shape. Leadership Team to consider all service plans in Feb 14 and services to share with relevant portfolio holders for final approval.</p> <p>Shared services plans agreed by JSSC in Nov 13. Consideration of format for 2014/15.</p>	Ongoing	All services	✓
1:2	Delivering new homes – target of 260 new dwellings per annum	<p>There is a time lag between delivery and reporting of new homes so most recent figures are for 2012/13.</p> <p>There were 541 net housing completions during 2012/13 and Watford's 5 year housing land supply is 137.7%, (equating to almost</p>	Ongoing	Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<p>seven years worth of housing land supply) which is above the National Planning Policy Framework requirement of 105%.</p> <p>There were 184 affordable dwelling completions in total during 2012-13 across five sites, with the mix made up of 122 (66%) social rented dwellings, 31 (17%) affordable rented dwellings and 31 (17%) low cost ownership (shared ownership and intermediate rent). Noticeably, affordable homes average 34% of the 541 total net housing completions for 2012/13.</p>			
1:3	<p>Identifying and managing ways to tackle homelessness and demand for housing and increase supply while improving conditions through the revised Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy and Private Sector Renewal Policy</p> <p>Working with partners to develop our strategic response to issues where housing related activity could promote health, wellbeing and economic growth including a review of key policies and strategies to ensure a coherent, integrated approach</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy published Dec 13 and implementation has commenced. Projects due for completion up until first annual review in Nov 2014.</p> <p>Implications of legal advice on nomination policy and the need for a robust EIA being worked through. Approval date and implementation date being adjusted as many interdependencies. New project plan to be drafted Dec 13</p> <p>Private sector discharge policy on hold pending nomination policy and issues around private sector access. NOTE: Private Sector Renewal Policy to be completed after adoption of Housing Strategy</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy on track</p> <p>Nomination Policy delayed and new project plan to be drafted</p> <p>Housing Strategy project launched and completion date reprofiled</p>	Community & Customer Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		Housing Strategy workshops held October and November with officers and PPAG/HPAG to launch as a corporate project. Evidence base and topic papers on the main themes are being drafted throughout December and January for next PPAG/HPAG in Feb 14. Approval date adjusted to September 14 in recognition of the scale of the project.			
1:4	Implementing measures to maintain and improve conditions within homes to ensure they are suitable for use and promote the health, safety and welfare of resident through the revised Private Sector Renewal Policy	Private Sector Renewal Policy delayed until Housing Strategy adopted	Project timescale reviewed	Community & Customer Services	✓
1:5	Delivering new schools with Hertfordshire County Council (Ascot Road, Lanchester House and Watford Health Campus)	<p>Engagement established with Hertfordshire CC.</p> <p>Orchard Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A public exhibition was held on the 20 and 21 November 2013. A town planning application was submitted in December 2013, with the aim of a decision by 7 March 2014. The ecology survey has highlighted potential reptile life on the ex allotment land and as such any works on this site has to be after April. If reptile life is found then subject to the weather, works cannot start until the reptiles are removed. • An additional single mobile is being planned for September 2014 on the school site, as it is unlikely that the new build will be completed before the new intake. • A detached playing field license has been agreed with WBC for the school to use. 	Progress made with HCC ongoing	MD / Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC discussing detailed designs and allotment land with the school <p>Lanchester Building (Free school)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC has registered the planning application for the LB. The free school trust and HCC are currently reviewing the programme and risks associated with the works. WHCFST held a public exhibition on 30th November at West Herts College. The exhibition highlighted concerns from local residents on the potential highway issues. Cllr Watkins and Cllr Derbyshire were both in attendance. • The current programme is very tight and subject to a favourable town planning decision, contractors have indicated possible completion for September 2014. The construction tenders were submitted in December. • The Avenue car park heads of terms have been drafted for WBC comments. <p>Ascot Road (Free school)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A site pre-handover meeting took place on 14th November 2013. HCC were aiming to complete the Development Agreement by the end of the calendar year to enable works to remove the slab and undertake ground surveys in Jan/Feb 2014. • Heads of terms for the sublease between HCC and WHCFST have been agreed. • HCC contractors have indicated that reserve matters submission to WBC is 			

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<p>scheduled for 6 January 2014. A town planning decision is being programmed for February / March 2014 with building works commencing in April 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A temporary building will be required as building works on Ascot Road are unlikely to complete before September 2014. HCC are exploring a number of options to accommodate the potential 60 reception age children. <p>Central Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal works are programmed for the 1st week of February 2014 in the Newton Price Building. • The school has agreed the design options. • Existing community users of the school have been consulted on the works and the school have agreed to accommodate community usage as far as possible during the works and after. • It is planned that the works will be completed before September 2014. • Proposed works for an extension to the reception area are being designed. 			
1:6	Delivering Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations, Development Management Policies, Town Centre Policies	<p>Consultation planned for November 2013 – closed December 2013.</p> <p>Analysis of feedback will be completed in early 2014, with second round of consultation planned from May/June 2014. Adoption planned for end 2014.</p>	On target. Ongoing	Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
1:7	<p>Working with partners and stakeholders to implement the Green Spaces Strategy, Allotments Strategy and develop a Sports Facilities Strategy for the town</p> <p>Deliver the £6.5 million HLF funded restoration of Cassiobury Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Spaces Strategy - approved November 2013 – for implementation 2014/14 Allotment Strategy - approved April 2013. Terms and conditions updated and approved – sent to all allotment holders. Significant engagement on allotment improvement programme Sports Facilities Strategy – carried forward to 2014/15 Round One successful, Round 2 in progress –submitted in February 2014 	2 of 3 strategies approved	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	<p>✓ Sports Facilities Strategy</p> <p>✓ Submit Round 2</p>
1:8	Tackling Congestion and improving air quality in the borough with Hertfordshire County Council - Intelligent Transport Systems Strategy, Big Herts Big Ideas, Quality Network Partnership, Watford Community Cycle Hub, Delivery of South West Herts Transport Strategy and Watford's Air Quality Action Plan	<p>Number of initiatives completed or in progress to tackle congestion and improve connectivity within the borough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watford has entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Hertfordshire County Council, Dacorum Borough Council and the Bus Operators in relation to the establishment of a voluntary Quality Bus Network Partnership for the Watford and Dacorum areas. The key outcome from the MoU is the co-operative working of the public and private sector to develop the bus network as a means of encouraging modal shift away from the private car 	Completion of number of initiatives.	Regeneration & Development	

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting in Feb 2014 with HCC to discuss the new Growth & Transport plan that is currently being prepared for Watford • Range of improvements to cycle routes • Grand Union Canal Towpath Enhancement Partnership Project (Phase 1 and Phase 2) undertaken • New Bus Shelter Installations • Ebury Way signage Improvements • Subways Enhancement Project • A range of traffic orders have been implemented to address local parking issues • Number of consultations undertaken on CPZ including Oxhey Village, Callowland and Zone E (Smith Street area) 			
1:9	Ensuring the quality of the town's leisure and cultural provision and that it is accessible and affordable to support the health and wellbeing of our residents	<p>Continue to work with our outsourced leisure and cultural partners (SLM and HQ Theatres) feeding into the Sports Facility Strategy and Cultural Plan. Satisfaction survey undertaken with SLM members in summer 2013 and Community Survey 2013 will provide overall satisfaction measure for sports and leisure facilities.</p> <p>This area of work involves linking a range of service areas including our partnerships with culture and leisure providers as well as the voluntary sector. It also reflects the work the council is doing around events, sports development and specific projects such as HLF.</p>	ongoing	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
1:10	Develop Partnership programme with Watford Community Housing Trust – working with the Housing Trust as a delivery partner	Strategic meeting with WCHT in September. Exploring joint opportunities for delivery of new homes and improved community facilities e.g. Leavesden Green Community Centre, MUGAs	ongoing	Community & Customer Services	✓
1:11	Strategic planning with the newly elected Police & Crime commissioner (PCC) to maintain the successful partnership approach to community safety in Watford	A representative from the PCC's Office will attend quarterly WRAG to provide two way flow of information. Assistant Chief Executive attended in June & gave a comprehensive update & overview Continuing to work closely with PCC office, (Community Safety Manager) met with Assistant Chief Executive to discuss Watford grant applications to PCC. Dates being identified for two visits for t a whole day into the evening to each of the 10 authority areas in Watford Assistant Chief Executive attends bi-monthly county CSM meetings to inform & update. Successful strategic planning meeting held in Dec 2013 to identify priorities.	Good relationships built and dialogue on Watford ongoing.	MD/ Community & Customer Services	✓
1:12	To fully implement the Thriving Families project within Watford through implementation and monitoring of a service level agreement	Thriving Families presented their achievement update to Councillors Community Safety Task Group in September & will be attending WRAG in October to update on progress	Improved communication & joined up working to achieve positive results	Community & Customer Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<p>A working protocol has been agreed, with qualifying family criteria adapted and agreed</p> <p>Project now expanding to include other local partners identified to lead on case management of qualifying families they are or could work with</p> <p>New officer post located within WCHT jointly funded by WBC & WCHT to target work specifically with qualifying families to help prevent homelessness due to their ASB.</p>			
1:13	To further embed responses and management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the borough in the mainstream work of both ourselves and our partners to achieve an agreed reduction in reported ASB.	<p>Review undertaken in regard of proposed legislation changes.</p> <p>Successfully implemented introduction of Safety Net into ASBAG meetings</p> <p>Ongoing through the work of the ASBAG</p> <p>Reductions exceeded with ongoing monitoring</p> <p>Quarter 3 - reductions continue to exceed targets fewer reports when compared to 1st April -30th September the previous year.</p>	<p>Positive results achieved</p> <p>Need to promote success to build feelings of safety (link to Community Safety results - most NB issue for residents)</p>	Community & Customer Services	✓
1:14	To reduce the levels of violent night-time crime and disorder (% to be agreed by Safer Watford partnership) and enhance the reputation of the night-time economy through initiatives implemented by ourselves, the Police, Town Centre Pubwatch and other partners	<p>Agreed a joint Pubwatch, Police and WBC crime reduction plan</p> <p>WBC Licensing Policy reviewed and agreed.</p> <p>Purple Flag accreditation renewed and celebrated. Approach reviewed to ensure good involvement of partners / businesses etc.</p> <p>Visitor standards poster. Best Bar none</p>	<p>Good results achieved</p> <p>Need to promote success to build feelings of safety (link to Community Safety results -</p>	Community & Customer Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<p>launched - good participation.</p> <p>Serious violent crime down.</p> <p>Town Centre Manager appointed to support the management and promotion of the town centre.</p>	most NB issue for residents)		
1:15	Strategic planning with the new Health & Well Being Board and review the public health delivery function within the council to support delivery of the Hertfordshire Health and Well Being Strategy and deliver improved health outcomes for Watford residents.	<p>Undertaken an audit of public health functions and delivery to inform future strategy development</p> <p>Actively engaging in the Public Health Board and Health and Wellbeing Board</p> <p>Developing understanding, awareness and input into public health functions across the organisation by lunch and learns, ELT sessions, service workshops, Member training</p> <p>Paper on Health for Portfolio holders to support future direction.</p> <p>Strategy for Watford to be developed to address identified as priorities for Watford.</p>	Progress made on developing understanding of this agenda	Community & Customer Services	✓
1:16	Developing Strategic dialogue with Hertfordshire CC (education, youth services, social care, libraries)	Building relationships particularly around education – see below	Progress made on developing understanding of this agenda	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
1:17	Designing out Crime – Working with Police to ensure that new housing schemes over 10 units meet Secured by Design standards/update of Residential Design	Development Management has a regular monthly visit from: <i>Mike Sibley</i> Crime Prevention Design Advisor , Herts Constabulary Crime Prevention Design Service	Ongoing	Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
	Guide	<p>when he discusses, with case officers, aspects of designing out crime in relation to particular planning applications. His advice is passed to the applicant and, where appropriate, amendments or additions to submitted schemes are requested (and hopefully received) in order to take on board the advice that Mike Sibley has proffered.</p> <p>The Planning Policy team have been working on a revision of the Residential Design Guide, and this has recently gone out for consultation alongside the draft Local Plan Part Two. Where appropriate, this guidance incorporates advice for designing out crime in new residential developments, and the document also contains a reference to the further guidance available at www.securedbydesign.com</p>			
1:18	Introducing State of Watford Education Report (biennial) – twice a year working with the County on a review of education performance and achievement in the borough	Initial education meeting held with HCC. Taking forward to 2014/15 with view to an ‘education summit’.	Ongoing	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
1:19	Propose an Elected members’ scrutiny - social care issues impacting Watford services (including 'Thriving Families' project) – remitting this key area to Overview & Scrutiny to examine what’s working and how Watford BC needs to respond to increasing pressures on social care provision	<p>HCC have had a Thriving Families scrutiny in March 2013. Copies have been forwarded to the MD and Mayor. There were no specific recommendations relating to issues affecting Watford residents. The recommendations will be reviewed in March 2014.</p> <p>Thriving Families gave a presentation to the Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny recently relating specifically to Watford and</p>	Considered	Democracy & Governance	✗

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		Three Rivers. No actions were recommended by members following this.			
1:20	Implement the Green Deal (see below for details) programme as a member of the Green Deal Together Community Interest Company to deliver energy efficiency solutions to businesses & residents, to reduce ill health due to excess cold and to address fuel poverty.	Formally adopted a share holding in the Green Deal Together (GDT) CIC consortium. Installer Advisor position in place with GDT and Watford Chamber of Commerce. Options paper for future ECO schemes partnering with WCHT and Cozyseal in development to provide no cost solid wall insulation to Watford residents GDT now Green Deal accredited. Bid submitted through GDT with NEF as project manager for ECO and Green Deal delivery.	Progress made and positive outcomes achieved for identified homes.	Community & Customer Services	✓
1:21	Delivering the Climate Change Action Plan for Watford including determining if committing to the Climate Local is advantageous (this is essentially the new Nottingham Declaration)	Report to Cabinet December 2013. Approved. Watford signed up to Climate Local and on target to achieve a cumulative overall CO2 reduction of 30% by 2014/15.	ongoing	Community & Customer Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
Corporate Priority 2 – To provide the strategic lead for Watford’s sustainable economic growth					
2:1	<p>Introducing a State of Watford debate: demography change, employment data, trends & indicators – understand what’s happening in Watford that needs to influence policy decisions</p> <p>Engaging on the vision for Watford 2031 including building understanding of our plans for growth and development and bringing to life our major projects and their impact on the town</p>	<p>Watford 2031 multi media presentation being developed for launch for April 2015.</p> <p>Developing better understanding of messages to link to engagement with residents. Consistent narrative based on sound understanding of Watford’s context.</p> <p>Approach for 2014/15 will be to adapt message so appropriate for given audience – take opportunities as and when they arise to discuss issues – particularly around growth.</p>	Approach revised.	MD / Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
2:2	Investment in infrastructure and public realm: Charter Place, Watford Health Campus, top of the town, Croxley Rail Link, Watford Junction, Lower High Street, Ascot Road, Watford Business Park	<p>Major projects being progressed. Significant work being undertaken and effective relationship management supporting delivery.</p> <p>Parade / Top of the Town – due for completion in spring 2014. To be supported by an events programme.</p> <p>Charter Place / Intu – planning application to determined. Very positive plans for the Centre including town centre cinema and improved retail, restaurant offer.</p> <p>New Watford Market – Planning permission granted (Dec 2013) and Town & Country Markets appointed to manage the new Market (Sept 2013). Opening planned for summer 2014.</p>	Significant progress made against a number of major projects.	Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		<p>Watford Health Campus – Agreement with Kier secured and Watford Health Campus partnership LLP established. Considerable work undertaken to develop market facing masterplan that will deliver a quality development. Masterplan consultation Jan 2014 for submission to WBC March 2014.</p> <p>Croxley Rail Link – work scheduled to start in May 2014. New stations named, planning application submitted.</p> <p>Ascot Road – Morrisons store opened on time. Reserved matters application for school received. Discussions ongoing regarding remainder of site.</p> <p>Watford Junction - discussions ongoing</p> <p>Watford Business Park – car parking re-surfaced (lighting and signing done). Working in partnership with Greenhills on feasibility for regeneration.</p>			
2:3	Reviewing of Town Centre Management including the consideration of Business Improvement District	<p>Town Centre Partnership established. Good representation from business achieved.</p> <p>Town Centre Manager appointed to support this agenda.</p>	Good progress achieved. On target.	Regeneration & Development	✓
2:4	Exploring the introduction of a Watford 'One Stop Shop' for business	Discussions ongoing with Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce		Regeneration & Development	✗

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
2:5	Producing a delivery Plan for the 6 Special Policy Areas including Lower High Street and Watford Business Park.	See 1:6. Working with the LEP and SEP on growth plan.	Ongoing	Regeneration & Development	✓
2:6	Considering the most effective way of optimising funding opportunities – such as Business Rate Retention, New Homes Bonus, Grant Funding applications	Grant Funding opportunities being explored including HLF for Watford Museum and potential Hertfordshire LEP support for major projects. New homes bonus received and incorporated into the council's financial planning.	Ongoing	Finance	✓
2.7	Up-dating & Implementing the Economic Strategy and action plan	To be commissioned in 2014/15.	To be progressed.	Regeneration & Development	✓
2.8	Integrating the cultural offer into the town centre and continue to support the economic impact of the town's cultural offer Working with the cultural leaders forum in providing a framework for the development of a more joined up and sustainable cultural offer which connects more strongly with the whole community Open up culture across the town from the buildings to the streets, establishing spaces and events where diverse communities can gather, connect and enjoy cultural activities	Successful Imagine Watford 2013 event. Successful Inland Waterways Festival 2013 at Cassiobury Park A sub group of the Cultural Leaders has been set up called the EPG [Event Planning Group] – Key Objectives for town centre events have been agreed An events framework has been produced focusing on an event per month in the new town centre parade .This is to be worked up in more detail and presented to the EPG by the end of November	Positive outcomes in terms of events held. Established approach to developing and implementing strategic direction for cultural offer	Community & Customer Services	✓
2.9	Developing Site allocations Development Plan Document – identifying the best future land use for Watford's key land assets	See 1.6 – incorporated as part of work on Local Plan Part 2.	Initial work completed for finalising in 2014/15.	Regeneration & Development	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
2.10	<p>Managing our property portfolio to stimulate growth, generate returns and meet changing service needs</p> <p>Implementing Asset management strategy and reviewing to ensure we are making the best use of our assets</p>	<p>Approach developed for agreement. Identified need for external support to develop options for property portfolio.</p> <p>Property review being commissioned for reporting in early summer 2014.</p>	Approach established to take this forward.	Regeneration & Development	✓
2:11	Introducing a Developers Forum in order to promote opportunities for sustainable growth in the borough	Event planned for April 2014.	Planning for event in 2014/15 underway	Regeneration & Development	✓
2.12	Leading (with HCC and the LEP) the development of a programme to support businesses through improved regulatory delivery aimed at promoting growth and reducing burdens. This to include development of a business plan with Hertfordshire County Council to offer Primary Authority agreements to businesses within and outside Watford	<p>Presented proposal to CE and Herts Leaders group. Approval to progress given.</p> <p>1st steering group meeting held in June and agreed governance Regulator forum feeding into Steering group and reporting to HCOG. Membership on the board includes LEP, FSB and Chamber of commerce.</p> <p>ToR for Regulator Forum and Steering group agreed.</p> <p>Regulator's Charter drafted, consulted on and awaiting submission to CEs and Leaders</p> <p>Priority work areas agreed to be Charter, Training for Regulatory Officers and information on to the Soft Landing Pack for the LEP. BIS event project asked to run a workshop on how to engage partners. N</p>	Good progress and positive relationships established to make approach effective	Community & Customer Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
Corporate Priority 3 – Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town					
3.1	Implementing our voluntary sector commissioning framework to ensure our thriving voluntary sector provide valuable services to residents.	This work is now embedded and commissioned services are being effectively monitored to ensure outcomes delivered	Completed	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✘
3.2	Understanding our Customer profile including Census 2011 analysis	Corporate approach being developed to building better analysis, sharing and use of intelligence. Individual areas of analysis undertaken including AMR.	Requires agreed approach corporately (PID to LT in early 2014)	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
3.3	Implementing equalities objectives	Ongoing legal requirement. Next date for publication is Jan-15. EIAs developed to support decision-making. Develop link between equalities data and overall corporate intelligence.	Achieved.	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
3.4	Continuing the annual community survey	Community Survey 2013 conducted. Results to be presented Mar-14.	On target	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
3.5	Revising Communications Strategy Engagement strategy (to include widening the way we engage, public empowerment and working on a neighbourhood level on areas that people identify as important to them	Review of communications delivery completed. Identified need for revised approach. New section head recruited with responsibility for delivering new communications and engagement strategy. This will involve identifying resource requirements to meet Strategy.	Ongoing	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
3.6	Responding to the Localism Agenda (community right to challenge, neighbourhood planning, resident fora)	Only one request received for asset of community value. Agenda still being established.		Democracy & Governance	✓
3.7	Individual Electoral Registration	Dry run data matching exercise taken place with DWP. Cabinet Office has given a presentation to Members about IER. Work ongoing to match as much data as possible prior to going live next June.	Ongoing	Democracy and Governance	✓
3.8	Involving local people in improvements to parks and open spaces	Deliver ongoing improvements to parks and open spaces, children's play areas and apply for further Green Flags Significant achievements in relation to engagement on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotment engagement • Self management (Callowland) • Play areas Area of work to take forward with Veolia Watford.	Ongoing. Oxhey Park Green Flag in 2014 (4 overall for 2014)	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
Corporate Priority 4 – Operating the council efficiently & effectively					
4.1	Medium term financial strategy	On target. Finance working with services, LT and members to build robust strategy that establishes a sound financial position for the council in the medium term. Financial settlement received Dec 2013. Budget approved Jan-14.	On target	Finance	✓
4.2	Organisational development strategy	New competency and performance development review process developed and introduced. Step programme extended to managers and non-managers. IIP Bronze achieved.	On target	Human Resources	✓
4.3	Consolidating Shared services	Discussions with TRDC on 'lead authority' model for consideration and agreement in early 2014/15. Staff briefed and project team identified to take forward.	On target for 2014/15	MD	✓
4.4	Monitoring & evaluation of service delivery	Ongoing monitoring of service plan commitment and performance measures to identify any issues of under performance / slippages in delivery. Approach for 2014/15 to consolidate current commitments in corporate and service plans and to improve performance / secure performance levels.	Ongoing	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓

	Description	Progress	Status	Lead	Carry forward to 2014/15
		Key organisational performance measures / indicators for 2014 /15 and Corporate Plan to be supported by detailed monitoring report. Scrutiny role established for outsourced services. Client management reporting to Outsourced Scrutiny Panel on regular basis.			
4.5	Contract & client management - ensuring we get maximum value and best outcomes from our contracts	Successful workshop to bring together areas / officers with responsibility for contract and client management. Identified strengths and where we need to improve our approach etc. Aim to establish consistent, effective approach to deliver better outcomes. Contract Management Forum established.	Established approach and identified areas of focus.	Corporate Strategy & Client Services	✓
4.6	Emergency Planning	Emergency plan + business continuity training being undertaken and plans updated to reflect new structure.	On target.	Democracy & Governance	✗
4.7	Piloting project with Land Registry for the delivery of the Land Charge service	Prototype completed end Nov 2013 and go live programmed for Dec 2013. Will then await ministerial decision in early 2014.	Ongoing	Regeneration & Development	✓
4.8	Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the parking service	ICT improvements in Parking Shop implemented Dec 2013.	Completed	Regeneration & Development	✗

Agenda Item 14

Agenda Item 14

REPORT TO COUNCIL – 19 MARCH 2014

REPORT OF CABINET – 10 MARCH 2014

Cabinet met on 10 March 2014. The minutes are published on the Council's website.

The following Members were present at the meeting:

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill	(Strategic partnerships/external relationships and community safety)
Cllr D Scudder	(Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Strategy & Client Services.
Cllr Crout	(Community & Customer Services Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Sharpe	(Regeneration & Development Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Watkin	(Democracy & Governance Portfolio Holder)

Also present: Councillor Bell.

The following was a recommendation to Council

MIN NO 64 - MOVING SHARED SERVICES TO A LEAD AUTHORITY MODEL

Cabinet received a report on the proposed Lead Authority Model Agreement including Service Specifications

Watford and Three Rivers Councils formally established a shared service for undertaking their Finance, Revenues and Benefits, Human Resources and IT services in 2008. The services were overseen by a Joint Committee of the two councils and managed by a Shared Services Management Board made up of the Heads of Service plus the Director of Finance for Three Rivers District Council and Executive Director Resources (initially) then Head of Strategic Finance Watford Borough Council. Both Councils had now appointed a Shared Director of Finance.

In January and February 2013 reports went to each respective full council meeting seeking approval to move toward a lead authority model for the continued operation of the shared services.

The legal agreement was based on the premise that for each of the shared services there would be one council who was the lead council whilst the other was the client. The lead council would have complete responsibility for all staff in the service. Any currently employed by the client would be TUPE'd over on the start date and the lead council would deliver the service in line with the service specification to the client for a fee.

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It was proposed that Watford Borough Council would be the lead council for Human Resources and IT: Three Rivers District Council would be the lead council for Finance and Revenues and Benefits.

Councillor Watkin introduced the report. He commented that, when the Shared Services arrangement was first set up, no-one knew how it would work out. It had, however, been appropriate at the time and had helped in creating a framework in which to develop further close working.

He drew Members' attention to the section in the report on the sharing of expertise on procurement and contract management. Watford Borough Council had a Procurement Manager and was working toward setting up a centre of excellence approach to contract management in the light of the number and variety of external relationships it had for service delivery. The proposal was that Watford would be the Lead Authority in any shared arrangement for these services on the basis of a service specification and charge.

He also referred specifically to the governance arrangements as outlined in the report including the role of the Executive Board and arrangements for scrutiny. He commented that this was a good basis for future joint work.

The Mayor said that the key issue was about responsibility and that this would be much clearer. She added that, with the increasing pressures on budgets, more and more councils would be looking at arrangements such as these; Watford was ahead of the game. The fact that the original shared services arrangement had been re-visited enabling weaker areas to be strengthened demonstrated a healthy and forward looking approach.

Councillor Bell commented that his Group had expressed some initial concerns around the continued ability to scrutinise and whether individual councillors would still be able to approach officers regarding issues such as revenues and benefits. He also asked whether the Boards would report back to everyone.

The Managing Director responded that the Executive Board was purely an operational body which already met and monitored services. Accountability for the new arrangements was very clear: Cabinet for Watford, the appropriate committee for Three Rivers and the Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel whose terms of reference were to be extended to include each of the shared services.

The Mayor endorsed the Managing Director's points and added that any councillor could request a briefing with officers. Other scrutiny committees such as Overview & Scrutiny and Budget Panel also provided a means for councillors to question and challenge issues of concern.

Councillor Sharpe concluded the discussion by commenting on the accountability and transparency of the proposed arrangements. He added that it was a pioneering exercise in respect of a different form of governance. There had been problems with the Shared Services arrangement in terms of accountability as the services responsibility was to the joint committee which only met every three months. As well as Cabinet/Executive Board and Members being able to raise matters with their respective officers on the Executive Board there would now be provision for Portfolio Holders/lead Members to have direct access to

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the Heads of Shared Services, regardless of which council was their direct employer

RESOLVED

To recommend to Council:

that, subject to Three Rivers District Council also agreeing to recommendations 1 and 2 below before 31 March 2014:-

1. the Joint Committee Agreement for Shared Services with Three Rivers District Council dated 26 August 2008 terminate with effect from midnight 31 March 2014.
2. that Council enters into the Shared Services Agreement with Three Rivers District Council attached at appendix 1 to the report with effect from 1 April 2014.
3. that Council agrees to the addition of Procurement including sharing best practice on contract management to the services in the Agreement with Watford Borough Council being the Lead Authority
4. that the Shared Director of Finance be given delegated authority to agree any minor amendments to the agreement as may be necessary, including the service specification and charges for Procurement.
5. that the Shared Director of Finance be given delegated authority to agree any minor amendments to the agreement as may be necessary prior to the meeting of Council on 19 March 2014.

A copy of the report to Cabinet is attached. The appendices are available on the Council's website

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Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 10 March 2014
Report of: Shared Director of Finance/Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Moving Shared Services to a Lead Authority Model

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 To present the proposed Lead Authority Model Agreement including Service Specifications

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To recommend to Council:

That subject to Three Rivers District Council also agreeing to recommendations 1 and 2 below before 31 March 2014

1. The Joint Committee Agreement for Shared Services with Three Rivers District Council dated 26 August 2008 terminate with effect from midnight 31 March 2014.
2. That Council enter into the Shared Services Agreement with Three Rivers District Council attached at appendix 1 with effect from 1 April 2014.
3. That Council agrees to the addition of Procurement including sharing best practice on contract management to the services in the Agreement with Watford Borough Council being the Lead Authority
4. That the Shared Director of Finance be given delegated authority to agree any minor amendments to the agreement as may be necessary, including the service specification and charges for Procurement.

2.2 That the Shared Director of Finance be given delegated authority to agree any minor amendments to the agreement as may be necessary prior to the meeting of Council on 19 March 2014.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact:-
Carol Chen Head of Democracy and Governance e-mail
carol.chen@watford.gov.uk telephone extension 8350

Report Approved by Joanne Wagstaffe Shared Director of Finance

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Watford and Three Rivers Councils formally established a shared service for undertaking their Finance, Revenues and Benefits, Human Resources and IT services in 2008. The services being overseen via a Joint Committee of the two councils and managed by a shared services management board made up of the Heads plus the Director of Finance for Three Rivers District Council and Executive Director Resources (initially) then Head of Strategic Finance Watford Borough Council. Both Councils have now appointed a Shared Director of Finance.
- 3.2 In January and February 2013 reports went to each respective full council meeting seeking approval to move toward a lead authority model for the continued operation of the shared services.
- 3.3 A project group of the Shared Director of Finance, Head of Democracy and Governance, Head of Human Resources, Legal and Democratic Section Head, Solicitor to the Council and Principal Solicitor Three Rivers District Council have been working on drafting a legal agreement to effect the change. This agreement is attached at appendix 1.
- 3.4 The Heads of Shared Service have also drafted service specifications these are included in the Agreement at Schedule 3.
- 3.5 The legal agreement is based on the premise that for each of the shared services there will be one council who is the lead council whilst the other is the client. The lead council will have complete responsibility for all staff in the service. So any currently employed by the client would be TUPE'd over on the start date. The lead council will deliver the service in line with the service specification to the client for a fee. For the first year the fee will be based upon the budgets that were approved by the Shared Services Joint Committee in November 2013. There is provision that any increases for inflation for contracts and any nationally agreed pay rises will be automatically factored into further years budgets. There will no longer be a need for the shared service to have its own separate set of accounts as the lead council will treat the service as it would currently treat a non shared service budget now, and the client would treat payment for the service as an expense, as it would for paying for an outsourced service as it does now. The premise is that the lead council will not seek to make a profit from the charge it levies to the client council. The charge will reflect the actual cost of providing the service as set out in the specification. It is envisaged that the shared service would recommend its budget via the Executive Board (see 3.6 below) to each of the respective councils for approval via their normal budget setting mechanisms. In the event of any disagreement over the budget which could not be sorted out informally between the two councils by the time each budget needed to be set, then the council objecting would be required to set a budget based on the previous year plus inflation and any pay rise and the matter would go into a formal dispute resolution process.

3.6 It is proposed that Watford Borough Council will be the lead council for Human Resources and IT. Three Rivers District Council will be the lead council for Finance and Revenues and Benefits.

There is no intention to make any changes to current service structures, job descriptions or work locations. Staff under TUPE would transfer under their current terms and conditions.

The officer governance arrangements will be by 2 boards. An Operations Board being made up of the Heads of Shared Services plus the Shared Director of Finance. This is essentially a replica of the current shared services management board.

The role of this Board is:-

- Setting, monitoring and reviewing service standards
- Reviewing and updating the service specifications and any service level agreements
- Providing general supervision
- Considering requests for extra work and/or resources via a change control mechanism
- Making recommendations to the Executive Board on the budget for each service and the charge to be made to the client service.

The other board will be an Executive Board being made up of the Managing Director of Watford Borough Council, the Chief Executive of Three Rivers District Council and Shared Director of Finance.

The role of this Board is:-

- Determining the strategic direction of the shared service
- Monitoring performance and dealing with complaints from either council
- Resolving conflicts between competing interests amongst the councils
- Reviewing the governance arrangements
- Dealing with matters referred up to it by the Operations Board
- Having overall supervision of the Shared Service
- Receiving annual reports on each service within the shared service.

As well as cabinet/executive board members being able to raise matters with their respective officers on the Executive Board there is also provision in clauses 3.3 and 3.4 for portfolio holders/lead members to have direct access to the Heads of Shared Services, regardless of which council is their direct employer.

Scrutiny arrangements will be for each council to determine itself. For Watford it is proposed that the terms of reference of the Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel would be extended to include each of the Shared Services, both those for which Watford is the client and the lead. This will mean that for any proposed scrutiny of a service being run by Three Rivers as the Lead they will be invited to attend and contribute, and as now, with any scrutiny of a third party, any conclusions would be shared with them and they would be able to respond. Officers would suggest inviting Three Rivers to use the Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise the new shared service arrangement as well, particularly as they are moving away from having a separate scrutiny function in their new governance arrangements.

3.7 The agreement contains a clear change control mechanism that will need to be adhered to in order for any changes to be made to service specifications, key performance indicators, staffing levels, structures etc.

This is to ensure that the full implications of any change are understood and agreed by

both councils before being implemented.

The council proposing the change will need to prepare a detailed business case which will go to the Operations Board and the Executive Board for approval.

This includes changes being proposed by any of the Heads of Shared Services themselves.

3.8 Termination provisions.

It is not proposed for this agreement to be time limited. Each Council can serve notice on the other to terminate by giving not less than 18 months notice to be served on or before the 1 September in any year.

This is the same time as in the current Joint Committee arrangement, and practically, is the minimum time necessary to disentangle the arrangement.

The arrangement with Capita is such that regardless of any termination notice served to end the shared service both councils are jointly committed under one contract with Capita for at least 5 years and it would be very expensive to terminate that arrangement early unless there was evidence of clear breaches by Capita of the terms of the contract and we had gone through the required process for notification of them etc.

3.9 Service Specifications:

These set out the level of service the client council can expect to receive and the key performance indicators that will be monitored and measured. These specifications are based on the service plans agreed by the Shared Services Joint Committee in November 2013. These are subject to annual review as a service plan has to be agreed annually.

For IT the contract with Capita will form the basis of the service specification for the service they are to provide.

Similarly the contract with Hertfordshire County Council for the Shared Internal Audit Service.

3.10 Consultation has already started with staff and Unison over TUPE.

3.11 In addition to the services that have historically been in the 2008 agreement, both councils have been discussing the sharing of expertise on procurement and contract management. Watford Borough Council has a Procurement Manager and is working toward setting up a centre of excellence approach to contract management in the light of the number and variety of external relationships it has for service delivery. The proposal is that Watford would be the Lead Authority in any shared arrangement for these services. Detailed work on a service specification and charges needs to be undertaken and agreed. The agreement attached does allow for additional services to be added, therefore it is recommended that Council agree the principle of adding these to the shared service and delegating to the shared Director of Finance the detailed service specification and charges.

3.12 Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council the adoption of this Agreement to commence on 1 April 2014.

Three Rivers District Council will be also asked to agree the adoption of this Agreement at a special council meeting on 26 March 2014.

Implications

4.1 Financial

The Shared Director of Finance comments that the costs of the proposed services are currently included in each Council's budget.

4.2 Legal

The Head of Democracy and Governance has been part of the working group drafting the Agreement. The legal implications are contained in the body of the report.

4.3 Staffing

TUPE will apply and those staff currently employed by the council that will become the client council for their service will transfer to the lead council. Staff and Unison are being consulted in accordance with the Regulations. There is no intention to alter terms or conditions or to relocate any staff.

4.4 Risks

Potential risk	Likelihood	Impact	Score
Council does not agree to enter into the agreement	1	1	1
Three Rivers does not agree to enter into the agreement	1	1	1

Appendices.

Appendix 1 Shared Services Agreement

Background Papers

None

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