



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 5th July, 2016

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 27 June 2016

Contact

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

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

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27 June 2016

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Tuesday, 5th July, 2016 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 24 May 2016 to be submitted and signed.

Copies of the minutes of this meeting are usually available seven working days following the meeting.

(All minutes are available on the Council's [website](#).)

- 4. Official Announcements**
- 5. Mayor's Report (Pages 7 - 18)**
- 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**

The following question has been received from Andrew Moore:

“At a West Hertfordshire Hospital Trust (WHHT) Meeting Board meeting in July 2015 the statement below is made on page 4. Can the council confirm when the additional 2m loan to the Trust was made and is the loan now recorded as a long term liability for its future accounts taking into account that the notes state that there was currently no structure to repayments. Additionally, will the council be forward funding the further maximum liability of 3.7M? I note that there is reference to the health campus link road funding at page 100 of the council’s 2014/15 audited accounts.

“Under the Camus Agreement and overarching Business Plan the Trust is obliged to pay up to £9M towards the cost of the project infrastructure including the construction of the new link / access road and associated services. To date the Trust has already paid £7M, with the remaining £2 due, in full or part, if the total cost for the Infrastructure Business Plan exceeds £16.613M. The current estimate for the work exceeds £18.6M. On this basis the full £2M would be required from the Trust.

Under the Agreement this money will be forward funded by Watford Borough Council, who will subsequently be reimbursed by the Trust through lump payments linked to the completion of clinical buildings built over the first 12 years of the project, or through annual instalments (timing and number not defined). Under the overarching Business Plan the Trust has a further maximum liability, capped at £3.7M, to support the remainder of the Business Plans included within the Agreement”.

The following question has been received from Sara Jane Trebar:

“The Watford Allotments Promotion Programme updated in June 2015 states at item 17 that Watford Council and Veolia would “Outreach to community groups where lower take up of allotments were identified” with one of the measures of success taken from an increased uptake amongst targeted groups.

Can the council provide a list of the targeted groups that it approached, what it and Veolia exactly did, the results from the measurement of success after the delivery date stated in the programme of the end of Summer 2015 and any further subsequent actions. The assumption would be that the council approached a number of community groups located within Vicarage Ward taking into account that approximately 50% of the total population are from an ethnic background”.

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**
11. **Watford Borough Council's reviewed vision, priorities and values and the Corporate Plan 2016-2020 (Pages 19 - 50)**

Report of Cabinet 6 June 2016
12. **Changes to the constitution (Pages 51 - 56)**

Report of Democratic Services Manager
13. **Neighbourhood Forum Annual Report 2015/16 (Pages 57 - 78)**

Report of Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manny Lewis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Manny Lewis, Managing Director

Mayor's Report – July 2016

Big Events

Big Word Fest

Our first Literary Festival took place in April and featured nationally acclaimed actors, authors and playwrights. Guest speakers included actor and director Simon Callow, crime writer Elly Griffiths, crime fiction expert Barry Forshaw and writer, broadcaster and politician Michael Portillo.

The festival also featured children's activities, with The Roald Dahl themed events proving particularly popular with all workshops fully booked and hundreds taking part in the Roald Dahl Parade.

Big Dance

The Big Dance Bus returned to Watford again this year and saw hundreds of local people showcase their dance moves in front of a live audience.

Local dance groups from West Herts College, Central Primary School, Act One Arts Base and Hertfordshire Youth Dance Company all performed, as well as professional dancers from across London.

Footfall in the town increased to 23,000 compared with 14,000 the previous two Sunday afternoons.

Imagine Watford

Imagine Watford is now in its sixth year and promises to be bigger and better than ever. I'm delighted that we are able to welcome internationally acclaimed artists to our town centre for two weeks of first class street art.

Few towns of our size are able to host performers of this calibre. Many artists performing in Watford during the festival also perform in major European destinations. It really shows how we punch above our weight as a town and we are lucky to have a first class partner in the Palace Theatre who coordinate the event.

The festival is good news for traders in the town too, increasing visitor numbers and also increasing footfall at the top end of the town.

Big Beach and Screen

I am delighted to welcome back the Big Beach for a second year running. Following feedback from last year's big beach we are extending the duration of the event. The beach will now be on the parade for a month beginning on 24th July.

We're also bringing back the big screen which will show classic and family films, host comedy nights and also screen the Rio Olympics live.

Audentior Awards

Nominations have now opened for this year's annual Audentior Awards. The prizegiving ceremony will be hosted in the Colosseum on Friday 7th October and will honour Watford residents, business and community groups who have made an outstanding contribution to the town.

To make a nomination, search 'audentior awards' on www.watford.gov.uk and fill in the online form. Alternatively contact our Civic Officer Paul Bateman on 01923 278374.

The closing date for nominations is Thursday 7th July

Major Projects Update

Cassiobury Park

Work has started on the new Cassiobury Park hub building which will provide improved changing facilities for the paddling pools, sports changing rooms, a new kiosk and upper floor café, and a flexible teaching and exhibition space.

The council have signed a lease with an operator for the new Cha café which is due to re-open in August.

The fountain which formerly stood in front of the café is also due to be replaced. Along with the bandstand this is another part of the park's heritage which is being restored as part of the £6.6m improvements.

The Bandstand

The bandstand has been restored back to its original condition and painted in the colours of the Capel Family crest. It is being re-sited to its original place in the park over the next few weeks.

Herts County Council have consulted on plans to revamp the former bandstand site outside the library as a 'Town Hall Square' with enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes, landscape improvements, a water fountain and newly planted trees. We are awaiting details from the County on responses, budget, funding arrangements and timescales.

Metropolitan Line Extension

Work is ongoing to reroute gas, water, electric and communication services in preparation for the construction of the new Metropolitan Line viaduct which will carry trains over Baldwins Lane to the new stations at Cassiobridge and Vicarage Road before joining the existing line at Watford High Street Station.

I am looking forward to seeing plans for a new mixed development at the Cassiobridge station site which will include retail, offices, residential and public realm improvements around the new station building.

Watford Health Campus

The Government have granted permission for the Farm Terrace Allotment site to be used as part of the Health Campus project. West Herts Hospital Trust have welcomed the decision.

Work on the new road is progressing well and is on target to open in the Autumn. We will be naming the new road 'Thomas Sawyer Way' in honour of Captain Thomas Sawyer who fell in Afghanistan. Tom was a lifelong Watford FC fan and grew up just a few minutes from the Health Campus site. Dedicating the new road to his memory will serve as a permanent memorial to his life and his service to our town and our country.

Intu Centre

Keltbray have now completed the demolition works on the Charter Place site ahead of the main construction work.

Laing O'Rourke have been appointed as the main contractor to build the intu extension at Charter Place.

Retailers confirmed for the intu extension at Charter Place now include: Cineworld, Debenhams, New Look and H&M . Restaurants will include Las Iguanas, Byron, Cabana, Thaikun, TGI Fridays, YO! Sushi.

Digital Watford

Over 12,000 people have now registered with our Town Centre Wifi scheme which covers the entire town centre, plus Clarendon Road and Watford Junction, Market Street and some sheltered housing schemes and community centres.

The Wifi service is provided and managed by intechnologyWIFI and operates at no cost to the council.

The Council's new website was launched recently, with a simplified layout, an improved search function and easier access to the most-used areas of the site such as council tax enquiries, registering to vote, waste and recycling and benefits enquiries.

The Regeneration of Ascot Road

The Council has signed a new 250 year lease with regeneration specialist Orion Land and Leisure who will develop the site adjacent to the new Cassiobridge Station. I am looking forward to seeing plans for the land which will include new retail, office and residential units plus public realm improvements near the new station. Car parking for the station will also be provided on the site.

A planning application is due to be submitted later this year. The developers are hoping to complete the project to coincide with the opening of the new Cassiobridge tube station in 2020.

Partnership Working

BID Launch

Watford now has its first Business Improvement District (BID) which gives local businesses a greater say over what happens in our Town Centre.

The Watford BID is one of over 200 now operating across the country and they help promote and improve our town centre, and have the ability to raise and spend additional money.

The BID have recently installed the floral displays on the high street and I look forward to working with them closely on projects to make our town centre bright, busy and a great place to do business.

Hertfordshire Constabulary

Dave Wheatley who served as Watford's Chief Inspector since 2013 has moved on to a new job with the police. I met Dave to thank him for his service to the town and wish him well in his new Headquarters role.

I have also met with Paul Sandwell who has taken over as Watford's Chief Inspector.

Meriden Community Centre Astro turf

Watford FC's Community Sports and Education Trust are refurbishing the Meriden Community Centre, and I recently visited the site to see how work was progressing.

A 'third generation' artificial grass pitch has been installed, replacing the weathered multi-use games area. The new pitch will make better use of the space, will be easier to look after and can be used in any weather. The project is being partly funded by Watford Borough Council.

Unfortunately a few weeks after completion, the surface was vandalised and the astro turf pitch has been temporarily closed except for bookings. WFC CSE Trust are hopeful that the surface will re-open for general use shortly.

The next stage of the project is the refurbishment of the community centre building. When complete it will provide a modern, comfortable space for sports and social clubs, local residents' groups and childrens' activities – and will become a hub for the local community.

Watford Cultural leaders

I took the Watford Cultural Leaders group on a tour of three historic buildings in the town, Little Cassiobury, Frogmore House and the former workhouse buildings at Watford General Hospital.

Little Cassiobury and Frogmore House are both on English Heritage's 'at risk' register and both are important heritage sites. Little Cassiobury is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and Frogmore House is in possession of St.

William who are developing the former Gas Works site on Lower High Street. Frogmore House as a listed building will be incorporated into the development – I am looking forward to seeing plans come forward for the restoration of both of these important heritage buildings.

Herts County Council – Recycling event

Herts County Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council held a waste recycling event at Wiggshall Depot on Saturday 18th June to encourage residents to dispose of unwanted appliances, whether in working condition or not.

We hope to run similar events in the future.

Supporting Local Organisations

Community Garden

I attended the opening of a new community garden at St Mark's Church on Leggatts Way with Bishop of St Albans and around 100 local people including 30 children;

The garden was opened as part of the Church's 'lift off!' project which sees several churches across the town work together to provide activities and events for local children and their families.

The land was cleared by volunteers and will be available for local people to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables.

Callowland Rec cricketers

A new artificial wicket has been installed at Callowland Recreation Ground after I met with a group of local cricketers who regularly used the Rec and wanted the playing surface to be upgraded.

I was pleased to attend a special North Watford vs. West Watford fathers and sons' match which was played on the new wicket and I was encouraged by the number of young people taking part in the game.

Photographic exhibition

I opened the Watford Photo Artists Group exhibition at the Intu centre, which displayed a variety of work by local photographers.

Swiss Cottage

I joined a team of archaeologists and volunteers to excavate the former Swiss Cottage site in Cassiobury Park. An open day was also held for members of the public to get involved with the project and help with the dig.

St John's School

The new St John's CofE Primary School in Woodford Road will accept its first pupils in September.

Set up by St John's Church and the Diocese of St Albans in response to local demand, the school will take over the former Labour Club building. I have been a proud supporter of the project from the very beginning and look forward to visiting when it opens its doors to pupils for the new academic year in September.

Business News

One Bell Pub

I have met with the new owners of the One Bell pub and their agents for a site visit.

I was appalled by the condition of the interior of the building which was unhygienic, poorly maintained and not fit for purpose – honestly it was one of the most unpleasant building I've ever stepped foot in.

This pub has been a source of trouble in the town centre over the years and I am hopeful that the new owners will be able to turn the One Bell into an asset for our town. I'm looking forward to seeing their plans.

Business Networking

I was delighted to be guest speaker at Peace Hospice's Business Networking Event which was held at Faborjé on the Parade.

Our town's business community are generous supporters of local charities and work hard to raise funds and promote their work.

I enjoyed discussing progress on our major projects and the opportunities they will bring for local businesses.

Market

New screens have been erected at New Watford Market next to the flyover, in response to requests from traders.

Car park refurbishments

The refurbishment of Church, Gade and Sutton car parks by CitiPark is now complete.

The improvements include upgraded CCTV and industry-leading technology such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and a brand new parking management system, altogether allowing for a quicker, easier and more secure parking experience.

All three of the CitiPark car parks in Watford are now open 24/7.

As part of the intu works the Charter car park has restricted access and residents requiring step free access to the intu centre are advised to use the Palace car park.

High Street

The pavement at the lower end of the High Street is being widened to make it easier for pedestrians to get between High Street Station and the town centre. It's the latest stage in a project aimed at improving access to the town by public transport and by bicycle.

A cycle-friendly crossing is also being installed to create better links between the town centre and national cycle routes 6 and 61 to Rickmansworth and St Albans.

In order to widen the pavements, the bus stop for routes 142 and 258 will be relocated to King Street and services 8, 306, 306b, 346, 398, 602, W19 and W20 will now stop further up the High Street outside McDonalds.

The poor condition of the road surface on the paved section of the High Street is a major concern and I have raised this matter at the highest level at Herts County Council. The County have acknowledged the problem and are arranging a site visit with their contractors, Ringway, to look at the damaged surface. I am hopeful that this will be rectified and I will continue to monitor the situation.

Engaging the Community

Lea Farm Play Area dedicated to Cpl Chris Harrison

Lea Farm Play Area has been dedicated to the memory of Cpl Chris Harrison of Royal Marines 41 Commando Regiment, who gave his life serving in Afghanistan. Chris, who grew up in Garston, used the play area regularly as a child and went to school at what is now Grove Primary.

The dedication ceremony was attended by Chris's commanding officer and colleagues from the Royal Marines, his family and Grove Primary pupils.

The dedication will serve as a permanent memorial to Chris's life and the service he gave to our country.

Public Mayor's Surgery

I have held my first public surgery of the new council year in North Watford with Cllr Laird.

I will continue to hold public surgeries and 'Meet the Mayor' sessions in different locations across the town. Residents raised a variety of issues which I have been able to take up on their behalf.

Watford Met Station

I have written to new Mayor of London Sadiq Khan on behalf of residents in the Cassiobury area who are affected by the closure of Watford Met Station.

Recently retired Cllr George Derbyshire has persistently campaigned for the station to be retained and has put forward several suggestions which could see the Met station retained without having a detrimental effect on the rerouted extension. I have informed mayor Khan of his ideas and asked for them to be considered.

Watford Junction Rezone Campaign

I will also be writing to the Mayor of London and the recently elected chair of the London Transport Committee Caroline Pidgeon to put forward the case for re-zoning Watford Junction Station in line with TfL's pricing structure.

Currently passengers using Watford Junction pay significantly higher fares than those travelling similar distances from stations such as Epping, which is further from Central London but in Zone 6.

The Met Line Extension not only improves connectivity for Watford residents but also for residents of North West London who will be able to change trains at Watford Junction to reach Milton Keynes, Birmingham and the North rather than travelling into Central London to travel via Euston.

The petition to re-zone the station now stands at over 3,000 signatures and I am hopeful that the new Mayor and Transport Committee Chair will take a more productive approach than the previous Mayor.

I will continue to lead the campaign for the station to be rezoned as part of the Metropolitan Line Extension to encourage rail passenger growth and offer an affordable alternative to car use to cut congestion.

Council News

Temporary Accommodation

I recently accompanied housing officers to visit our new temporary accommodation in Harrow. The building is a former office block which has been converted into studio apartments for temporarily homeless residents.

As has been well reported, we are facing a housing crisis and the Government's decision to focus solely on homes to buy, at the expense of homes to rent, has exacerbated the problem in Watford.

We do not have a statutory duty to house all homeless residents – many single, healthy men for instance do not have the right to be housed by the council. We work closely with the YMCA and New Hope to help these people find a place to live.

Report to Council – 5 July

Report of Cabinet 6 June 2016

Cabinet met on 6 June 2016. The minutes are published on the Council's website.

The following Members were present at the meeting:

Present:

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill
Councillor Collett
Councillor S Johnson
Councillor Sharpe
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Watkin

Also present:

Councillor Bell

The following was a recommendation to Council:

5. Watford Borough Council's reviewed vision, priorities and values and the Corporate Plan 2016-2020

Cabinet received a report of the Managing Director regarding the council's corporate vision, priorities and values following a review as part of an annual review of the council's corporate planning framework. Following an earlier report to Cabinet in March 2016 this report presented the final recommendations on the new corporate planning framework and the council's draft corporate plan for 2016-2020.

The Mayor introduced the report and reminded Cabinet that it had to go to Council for approval in July. As the town was changing rapidly, it was important to change the council's priorities and make necessary structure changes to achieve the new priorities. The local government landscape was also changing and Watford Borough Council needed to be ahead, particularly as the government grant would end after 2018/19.

The Managing Director explained that the existing corporate plan had been in place since 2012 and all organisations needed to review progress and priorities regularly. The way that the town was changing and the demands on the council's services along with the council's ambitions justified a review of priorities.

The new vision for the Council: to create a bold and progressive future for Watford was about ambition and taking measured risks and working with partners to deliver in a bold and progressive way.

The Managing Director took Cabinet through the new council priorities:

- Identify ways to manage the borough's housing needs
Housing was set as a top priority due to the huge pressure and demand, the scale of temporary accommodation the council had to provide support for and the high costs of housing in the borough.
- Champion smart growth and economic prosperity
Maintaining the journey to prosperity, forecasts for Gross Value Added increases from the Metropolitan Line Extension were showing an £8bn investment into the town. Growth should be smart; adjacent to transport links and with development on predominantly brownfield land.
- Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities
Ensuring that growth in the town was to the benefit of all residents.
- Deliver a digital Watford to empower our community
To transform how the council engages with residents in terms of technology and digitalisation.
- Secure our own financial future
To ensure the council would be financially sustainable as the government withdraws grant. The council would be dependent upon business rates, recycling property assets and investment from major projects.

The Mayor commented that there would be hard decisions to come and there would be changes such as the joint venture housing company with Watford Community Housing Trust.

Councillor Bell welcomed housing being one of the main priorities.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet:

1. approves the final recommendations for the council's new vision, values and priorities and to note that these form the basis for the council's corporate planning framework including the corporate plan, service plans and individual work objectives.
2. notes the draft corporate plan 2016-20 and recommends it to Council.

3. notes that the new corporate planning framework will be supported by communications and engagement with staff to ensure ownership and understanding.

Appendices

Report to Cabinet 6 June 2016

Part A

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 6 June 2016
Report of: Managing Director
Title: Revised corporate planning framework and draft corporate plan 2016-2020

1.0 **Summary**

- 1.1 Over the last year, Watford BC has undertaken a review of its corporate vision, priorities and values as part of its annual review of the council's corporate planning framework.
- 1.2 A report to Cabinet on 7 March 2016 set out the overall direction for the new vision, priorities and values and approval was given to take this work forward with a further report to be presented to Cabinet covering: the final recommendations on the new corporate planning framework and the council's draft corporate plan for 2016 -2020.

These are, therefore, set out in this report for consideration and approval.

2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 To approve the final recommendations for the council's new vision, values and priorities and to note that these form the basis for the council's corporate planning framework including the corporate plan, service plans and individual work objectives.
- 2.2 To note the draft corporate plan 2016-20, propose any amendments and recommend it to Council (Appendix I).
- 2.3 To note that the new corporate planning framework will be supported by communications and engagement with staff to ensure ownership and understanding.

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**

The council's framework for corporate and service planning and setting individual work objectives for staff through the performance development review process is underpinned by its vision, priorities and values. Through these, the council sets out its direction and purpose in order to:

- Address new challenges and opportunities
- Maintain focus on delivery and outcomes
- Establish priority areas of work
- Highlight areas for improvement or transformation
- Improve employee performance and motivation

The last review undertaken of the vision, priorities and values was in 2012 and led to a new corporate framework for the council. Four years on, the drivers that informed this review have changed considerably. The organisation itself is in a very different place, and operating in a very different environment, in terms of both national and local challenges and opportunities. It has also successfully delivered on a number of priority areas identified at this time and, through this, is in a position to refine the areas of work that will help deliver the council's ambitions for Watford and the organisation itself.

In view of this, work has been undertaken to establish a revised corporate planning framework that would then be used to develop the corporate plan 2016-2020, service plans as well as individual work objectives.

This work has been tested with portfolio holders, staff through workshops and discussions and initial progress shared with Cabinet in March 2016. This collective approach has helped refine all three main elements of the framework (the vision, priorities and values) and ensured they reflect a shared view of both the council and town in terms of its ambitions and the type of place and organisation we want to be.

3.1 **The new corporate planning framework: vision, priorities and values**

3.1.1 **Council vision**

A vision is a statement of aspiration and the high level goals we are hoping to achieve. It should be clear, straight forward, concise and reflect the council's own identity so that it is not generic (i.e. could belong to any area) and not bureaucratic. The vision also needed to be about what the organisation is aiming to achieve – not 'the how' but 'the what'.

3.1.2 In reviewing the vision and developing one to reflect our future goals for the council and the town a number of key themes emerged. These themes reflected the strengths

of Watford – its vibrancy, prosperity, a place where residents and businesses can thrive - and the council’s role in making this happen. These include ‘championing’ the town and being forward looking , innovative, bold and progressive

3.1.3 From these themes, the following vision was agreed and is recommended for approval:

To create a bold and progressive future for Watford

A vision cannot tell the whole story and, just as important, will be the narratives developed to expand on the vision and what it means in terms of delivery. For example, what might ‘bold’ mean for our business community or our community groups and, equally, what might ‘progressive’ mean to our residents and partners.

Certainly a bold Authority is one that has ambition, takes measured risks, empowers its staff and the community, uses its leverage, takes responsibility and delivers directly as well as through partnerships. A progressive authority is welcoming, invests in community cohesion and equalities, is inventive and plans continuously for the future.

These themes will inform the corporate framework going forward in terms of our key competencies for staff and ‘how we work’.

3.1.4 **Council priorities**

The new priorities have been developed to support the council deliver its vision. Priorities by their very nature signal what is important to an organisation and what areas require focus and attention. This does not mean that other areas are not valued or do not make a significant contribution to the council’s success. Priorities are where challenges and opportunities have been identified and where focused effort is required to bring about the outcomes and results that match the council’s ambitions.

3.1.5 The five new priorities are set out below:

- Identify ways to manage the borough’s housing needs
- Champion smart growth and economic prosperity
- Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities
- Deliver a digital Watford to empower our community
- Secure our own financial future

- 3.1.6 Housing has been identified as a priority because of the huge pressure the town faces in this area and the significant amount of work that is being, and needs to continue to be, done to address the issues that have arisen from high demand and the high cost of housing in the borough both within the rental sector and in terms of house prices. The costs of, and increase in demand for temporary accommodation combined with a serious shortfall in affordable homes are big issues for the Council. In addition we need to provide a mix of high quality housing particularly in our own major projects and tackle inappropriate development.
- 3.1.7 A priority that emphasises the importance of well-planned and managed growth and the town's economic prosperity has been retained because these are vitally important to Watford's future. Our plans for growth are critical for ensuring the town has a strong economic base but we want to achieve this so the town retains its distinctiveness and appeal for all our communities.

Smart growth is a better way to build and maintain our towns and cities. Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports local economies and protects the environment. It is exactly our strategy through the developments along the route of the MLX from west Watford through to Watford Junction.

We must ensure that, where possible, growth benefits all and that those who are most vulnerable are given the support they need – this is reflected in our third priority, to provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

Census 2011 shows the town's changing demography with 38% black & ethnic minority community and a significant increase in the 'white non-British' community particularly Polish and other eastern European. Good community cohesion continues to be a measure of the town's success. And the pressures in terms of homelessness are significant with over 200 households in temporary accommodation at the start of the year (a 29% increase on previous year) and a 35% increase in homeless applications. It is also likely that there will be pressure in future for local authorities to take more refugees. As our equality landscape changes we need to ensure that:

- The good work led by the Community Safety Partnership on protecting vulnerable groups is continued
- We have a good understanding of the changes needed to ensure services across the town are responsive to the different needs
- We are engaging effectively with new communities and providing them with the opportunity to succeed and achieve economic independence
- Our third sector and relevant community groups are well placed to provide

support.

- 3.1.8 The final two new priorities do signpost the step change we want to deliver as an organisation. The council has not yet had the opportunity to fully address and make the most of the benefits the digital world can offer the organisation, our residents and customers. The digital agenda is transformational and brings together so much more than IT and new technologies. Our challenge is understanding what this means for the council and the town and providing the leadership needed to take this forward. We have already started work on this and so have built the initial understanding of the important areas of work and projects that will deliver this priority but there is a lot more to do.

We need to:

- rapidly develop the Council's IT infrastructure, and this is taking place through the modernisation investment
- transform our corporate customer services by introducing a more responsive 24/7 self- service online capability
- devise and invest in a long term digital strategy
- streamline the customer journey through customer accounts to reduce the amount of duplication and double entry
- reengineer our back office services to share single databases and improve workflow
- build on the functionality of the new website
- optimise the use and development of the town centre wi-fi

- 3.1.9 Finally, the challenges faced by the change to local government finances cannot be underestimated and will require the organisation to look at its finances in new and innovative ways. This brings a number of opportunities that will need to be considered and pursued if the council wants to achieve its priority of securing its own financial future.

Government revenue support grant disappears completely for the Council in 2019/20 reducing from a level of £1.3m in 2016/17. The Council faces in £3m gap by the end of this medium term and the strategy to address the gap is centred on driving income upwards, particularly commercial income through the Property Investment Board, business rate growth, returns on investment from our major projects and selling services. Further efficiencies will also be necessary.

- 3.1.10 Whilst these five priority areas are recommended for approval, the council understands that there are other important themes that underpin the corporate work programme and should be reflected in all that we do. These themes are:

- Effective two-way engagement and communication
 - to ensure effective resident and stakeholder engagement
 - to proactively make the case for investment in growth and the

- town's economy
 - to win hearts and minds on the need for increased, high quality housing whilst protecting the character of the town
- Sound management and high performance
 - to ensure services requiring improvement are rapidly addressed
 - to set and achieve upper quartile performance targets
 - to benchmark our performance against the best councils
- Improving the Town's environment
 - to continue to tackle pockets of neighbourhood degradation
 - to improve private sector rental accommodation standards
 - to enhance areas of the town centre that need further investment

3.1.11 Council values

Values are an integral part of the corporate framework and the right values will support the vision, shape the culture and clearly set out the council's principles and expectations in terms of behaviours.

3.1.12 The new vision challenges staff to be bold and progressive – both behaviours that will help deliver the transformation and innovation that the council will require over the next four years. In view of this, it is recommended that clarity of the proposed new vision should be carried through, and reinforced by, the council's values. The previous values of integrity, fairness and inclusiveness are still key features of the organisation's expectations of staff but are well-embedded within our behaviours and our approach.

3.1.13 The new set of values, therefore, are:

BOLD: We work as a team and we make things happen

PROGRESSIVE: We are ambitious, we are innovative and we are welcoming

3.2 Delivery and monitoring

3.2.1 To support the delivery of the corporate plan 2016-20 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 (2016/17). 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 2016/17. This delivery plan informs service planning and quarterly reviews and is, therefore, adaptable across a number of the council's business planning processes.

3.3 Communications and engagement with staff

3.3.1 The new corporate planning framework is a significant departure from the council's previous vision, priorities and values and clearly signals the need for change and new

ways of thinking and working.

3.3.2 It is important for staff to understand why the change has taken place and the thinking that underpins the new framework. In view of this a comprehensive communications and engagement programme is planned so that all staff understand their role in delivering the council's ambitions and programme of work.

3.4 **Organisational and management changes to drive delivery of the corporate plan priorities**

3.4.1 A number of strategic and leadership changes are necessary to achieve the challenging requirements of the new corporate plan. In summary these are to:

- ensure our financing disciplines are strong, with clear integration of revenue, capital and project finance, robust cost analysis and accurate forecasting
- enhance the senior capacity to drive the leadership of priority areas and integrate our service delivery more effectively
- provide for the leadership of Digital Watford and technology innovation
- reinforce the move from strategy development to strategy delivery through increased project management support

3.4.2 These organisational and management changes required are set out in a separate report on the Cabinet agenda.

4.0 **Implications**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 **Finance**

4.1.2 The importance of securing the council's financial future is recommended as a new priority and work to achieve this is outlined within the draft corporate plan 2016-2020. 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. .

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the corporate plan is one of the policy framework documents listed in the constitution that has to be approved by Council. The current draft document will be updated for approval at Council in July 2016.

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 developing

a profile of our communities as an area of work within the corporate plan to support the delivery of Corporate Priority 3: 'Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Impact analyses are undertaken on specific projects/programmes where relevant. An overall equality impact analysis has been undertaken on the corporate plan.

4.4 Potential Risks

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall score |
|---|------------|--------|---------------|
| 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. | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| 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. A full communications plan is being developed to engage and communicate with staff. | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 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. | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| The Corporate Plan represents a significant programme of work. There is potential for slippage and failure to meet milestones without robust project and programme management. | 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. The corporate values provide staff with clear expectations on the way we work and the behaviours we expect.



MAKING
WATFORD
BOLD & PROGRESSIVE

Watford Borough Council's Corporate Plan to 2020



Introduction to our Corporate Plan

This Corporate Plan introduces our new vision, priorities and values for Watford and makes a clear statement about our ambitions for the town over the next four years.

Whilst we achieved a lot over the period of our last Corporate Plan, we want to use our success, and the considerable range of achievements we have delivered for the town, to spur us on to do even more.

We are clear we need to modernise as an organisation, taking full advantage of the new digital world that is open to us, and making sure our staff perform at the highest level to deliver the high quality services our residents expect.

At the same time our ambitions for the town remain at the heart of what we do and we have identified a challenging but exciting number of projects that will deliver our vision of creating 'a bold and progressive future for Watford'.

Over the lifetime of this Plan we will see some of the transformational projects we have been driving and supporting come to fruition including the exciting development at Intu and the Metropolitan Line Extension. It is through these projects that we can secure the town's prosperity, which is important to us all, and ensure that it continues to be a great place to live, work and visit.

Over the last year, I have been delighted that time and again Watford is appearing at, or near, the top of the list as somewhere people want to be. This doesn't happen by accident, keeping somewhere vibrant, attractive and welcoming takes effort and really bold forward thinking. I am pleased that, even through difficult financial and economic times, we have achieved this for the town and we are determined to continue to shape and influence Watford's future success.

Like all councils achieving our goals is set against a very challenging financial picture. The way councils are financed is going to change fundamentally with the government ending the grant it pays to local authorities by 2020. However, whilst difficult it does present opportunities for us to do things differently and explore ways of working that will help us secure our financial future.

A key theme throughout this Plan is the importance we place on communicating with our residents and community and ensuring you have every opportunity to feedback to us and share your views. I, along with your local councillors, welcome hearing from you and would encourage you to get involved in shaping our plans and decisions.

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.

Baroness Dorothy Thornhill MBE

Elected Mayor of Watford

Shaping our Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan sets out our ambitions for both Watford and how we will deliver these commitments by 2020.

Over the last year, we have undertaken a fundamental review of our plan and the vision, priorities and values which provide the framework for our planning. We did this based on:

1. the significant successes we have delivered against the priorities we set in previous corporate plans; and
2. the need to respond to the challenges and opportunities we know are facing councils over the next few years
3. our elected Mayor's manifesto commitments and the priorities she has set the organisation for the town during her fourth period in office

The review clearly shows us two things: firstly, we cannot meet the financial challenge ahead without making fundamental changes to the way we do business, and secondly, we cannot afford to scale back our ambition for the borough and the Council. That means we will need to be more creative and more resilient than ever as an organisation, if we want to continue to be successful as we go forward.

Watford is changing

We know Watford is changing. Its success as a town means it is an extremely popular place to live, work and visit. This means the pace of economic and population growth is high. This has impacted on house and rental prices over the last few years and housing is now certainly top of the challenges we need to address as a council. We also know we have a shifting demographic, with a growing young, diverse population, and rising pressure on local infrastructure and services.

Additionally, the expectations of our communities continue to rise; they expect high quality and responsive services and a Council that is prepared to listen to them and deliver services not just in office hours but in many cases 24/7. The pace of life is fast, supported by new technologies, and citizens expect their councils to modernise in line with the opportunities new technologies bring.

We are committed not just to keeping up with change but to keeping ahead of it where it supports our goals.

Fulfilling our ambitions

Our Corporate Plan needs to reflect how we can seize every opportunity that comes our way to deliver new homes and create jobs and opportunities for our residents and to make economic growth work for Watford so that our residents can share in our borough's success. We need to understand how we can secure our own finances and protect services we know are important to residents whilst also ensuring we listen and respond to our community in a way that meets their needs.

A critical driver for this Corporate Plan is our need to respond to the government's ongoing reduction in funding to local government. In December 2015, we learned that this includes the removal of revenue support

grant by 2020. The revenue support grant has been an integral part of funding for local government for many years and so this presents a real step change for all councils. For Watford Borough Council, it means a loss of around of £3million of revenue (on top of the £5million worth of savings we have already had to make since 2010), which is a significant proportion of our current £16.035 million budget. Everything we outline in this Plan is informed and influenced by our requirement to meet this financial challenge without diminishing our ambitions. This is why it is so important that this Plan sits alongside our Medium Term Financial Strategy. Together they set out how we will establish the basis for successful future growth and deliver on our key priorities which are intended to maintain Watford as an exceptional borough providing opportunities for all that live and work here.

This Corporate Plan, therefore, responds to our new vision by challenging us to be bold and progressive so that we create the environment the Council needs to thrive and fulfil its ambitions for the town.

We will need to be an excellent organisation

To do these things and to do them well, we will need to be a high performing organisation. We need to have the people, skills and key infrastructure, such as IT systems, in place so that we can be dynamic and responsive, fast and flexible, innovative and creative. We also want to be outward looking as an organisation, engaging with our communities and building partnerships across the private, public and voluntary sectors that support us deliver for the town. For our staff, this Corporate Plan provides the direction on how they can contribute to the town and the Council's success and challenges them to look at how they work to see if there are new and better ways to deliver services.

How we will deliver

This plan outlines how we will deliver our priorities whilst ensuring we maintain the high quality we have achieved in delivering our core areas of business such as waste and recycling, street cleaning, revenues and benefits and planning performance. Indeed, ensuring we manage performance across the Council so that our key business areas provide the service levels our residents expect is a key theme underpinning everything set out in this plan.

Part One

The Council's Vision, Priorities and Values

OUR VISION: To create a bold and progressive future for Watford

Our new vision reflects our approach to the current challenges and opportunities facing the Council as an organisation and the town as a place to live, work, visit and learn. We want to champion our town so that it is a place where all our communities thrive and prosper, benefitting from strong economic growth and good quality local services and facilities. This will require the Council to be innovative and explore new ways of working and champion initiatives that will transform the town and the organisation. More of the same isn't going to secure the future we want for Watford, which is why **bold** and **progressive** lie at the heart of our ambitions.

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES:

Supporting this vision, the Council has 5 new priority areas of work. These have been developed from what we know about the challenges and opportunities we will face over the next few years and our Mayor's manifesto commitments. Our priorities are critical to the Council achieving successful outcomes for its ambitions for the town.

1. Identify ways to manage the borough's housing needs
2. Champion smart growth and economic prosperity
3. Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities
4. Deliver a digital Watford to empower our community
5. Secure our own financial future

In addition, our core, day to day business underpins everything we do and all of our work and effort contribute to our success. In particular, we recognise the importance of 3 key areas in making us an effective organisation, in touch with our residents and delivering in the areas and in a way that they expect. These are:

- Effective two-way engagement and communication
- Sound management and high performance
- Improving the town's environment.

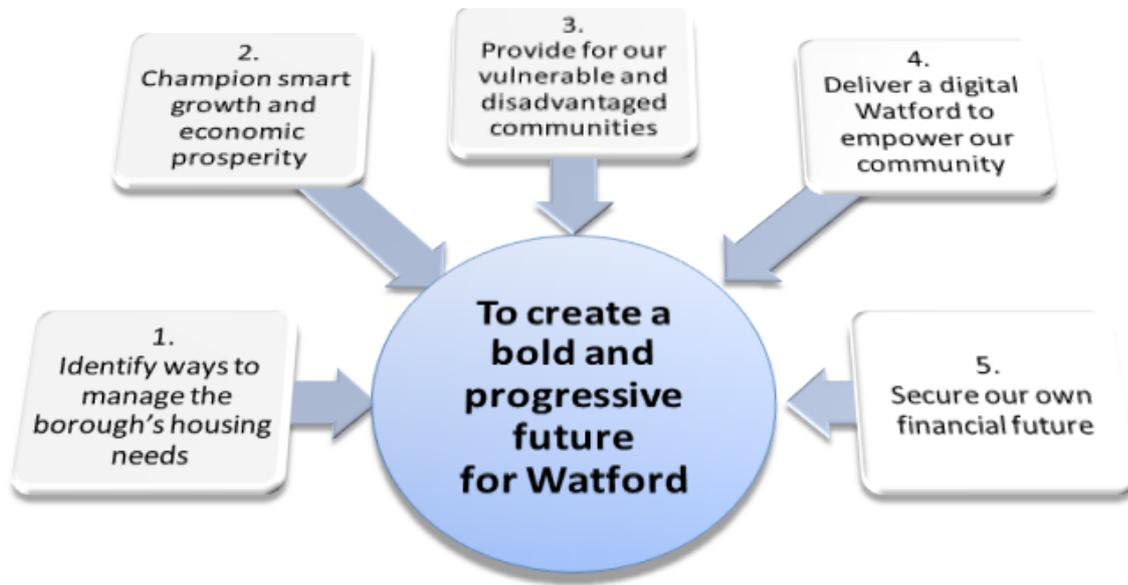
OUR VALUES:

Our revised corporate values reflect the behaviour we expect our staff to demonstrate in their work and clearly establish how they contribute to delivering our new vision.

1. **BOLD:** We work as a team and we make things happen
2. **PROGRESSIVE:** We are ambitious, we are innovative and we are welcoming

Our values focus on taking forward our new corporate agenda. We are more confident that the behaviours of being fair, showing integrity, and being inclusive are now embedded across the organisation.

OUR CORPORATE FRAMEWORK



VISION AND PRIORITIES



DAY TO DAY BUSINESS

BOLD: We work as a team and we make things happen

PROGRESSIVE: We are ambitious, we are innovative and we are welcoming

VALUES

Part Two

Watford today

Watford is a place to be proud of, and as a council, we plan to keep it that way. We value our clean streets, well-kept parks, and places for children to play, the vibrant high street and diverse range of activities and facilities across our borough. We have a cohesive community who add to the vibrancy of our town and our residents are generally satisfied with the Council and their local services. Understanding our town and our community helps us to identify what shapes Watford and the challenges and opportunities we face as a council to champion our town.



Population: 95,500 over an area of **8.5 sq miles**

Young population: average age **36.46** years

Diverse population: **38% BME**

38,485 households

Average household size: **2.44** people

High proportion of single person households: **31%**

High number of households in rental accommodation: **37%**



High growth in house prices and demand:

Most in demand place to live on the tube map (2015)

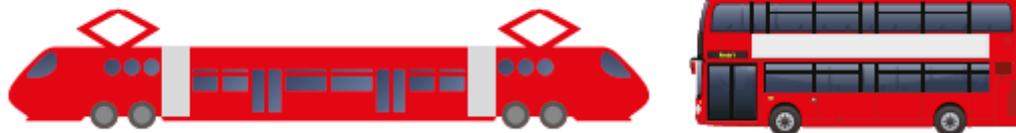


Voted 9th happiest place to live in the country

6 Green Flag award winning parks



Career Builders: Singles and couples in their 20s and 30s progressing in their field of work from commutable properties – most common MOSAIC group: **12%**



5th best connected borough in UK - M1, M25, West Coast Mainline, Overground, Underground

Direct services to London Euston in **16** mins



3,500 businesses **57,000** jobs

Low unemployment / high level of qualifications

48% of Watford employment is in Knowledge Sectors

12.7% self-employment rate



72% of residents are satisfied with how Watford BC runs things (2nd highest in Hertfordshire)

Part Three

How we will deliver our priorities

1. Identify ways to manage the borough's housing needs

Watford is a popular place to live. Its location close to London, great road and rail links, good schools and employment opportunities have seen demand for homes in the town increase over recent years. However, it has also meant rising house prices and rental costs, which has put affordability under pressure.

As demand and housing costs rise, we have seen unparalleled numbers of people presenting at the Council with housing issues and the solutions available to us have been severely under pressure. We have already started some innovative work to tackle the supply of housing available, including setting up a joint venture with the Watford Community Housing Trust to deliver new homes.

Our challenges

- Over-heated housing market – high demand and high prices
- High use of temporary accommodation
- Affordability under pressure
- High rental costs
- Growing population
- Limited space in the borough for new homes
- Household and demographic changes

Our opportunities

- New models of delivery including the joint venture
- Strategic sites identified for the delivery of new homes
- Innovative solutions to achieving our new homes target

We will do this by:

- Supporting the delivery of the Council's target of 260 new homes per annum
- Identifying and manage ways to tackle the demand and supply for housing in the borough including taking forward our Joint Venture company in partnership with Watford Community Housing Trust, developing new cost effective temporary accommodation, reviewing how we manage homeless applications and re-assessing the future role and resources required for the housing management function
- 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.
- Ensuring our planning policies are sufficiently flexible to support the delivery of more affordable homes

2. Champion smart growth and economic prosperity

One of Watford's achievements over the lifetime of our previous Corporate Plan was its success in maintaining its economic prosperity through the recent recession and having the right plans in place to be ready to take full advantage when the upturn came. By being forward thinking, we have secured local employment, retained businesses and remain an attractive place for investment. The Council has played its part through investment in the town, such as the improvements to the top of the town and our parks and open spaces, and by securing the right partnerships to take forward some of our major projects such as Charter Place and Watford Business Park.

Even with so much achieved, we know the town cannot stand still if it wants to remain successful and prosperous. As a council we want to shape our town, which is why we are proud of our Local Plan that clearly sets out our commitment to well-planned and managed growth – without this we would be at risk of poor quality, unplanned developments and back filling. We want to continue to attract investment and address the issues we know are important to our residents such as congestion and parking.

Our challenges

- Competing demands for land within the borough
- Limited land for new business / industrial space
- Traffic congestion and parking
- Shortage of fit for purpose office and light industrial accommodation
- Ensuring sufficiently skilled local labour force to meet needs of local employers and businesses

Our opportunities

- Location remains a strong driver for prosperity – regional centre for retail, culture and leisure
- Sound Local Plan provides robust framework for managing growth
- Strategic development sites located close to good transport links
- Inward investment in Watford – Intu, Watford Health Campus, Watford Business Park, Metropolitan Line Extension
- Strong local partnerships such as Watford BID, Skillmakers, creative leaders to promote prosperity

We will do this by:

- Progressing investment in infrastructure and public realm: Town Hall Square, Charter Place, Watford Health Campus, Metropolitan Line Extension, Watford Junction, Clarendon Road, Watford Business Park
- Supporting Watford BID to ensure the vibrancy and success of the town centre
- Working in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council on tackling congestion and promoting more sustainable methods of transport including improving cycling and walking routes
- Delivering the Cassiobury Park 'Parks for People' HLF project

- Delivering the first phase of Sports Facilities Strategy
 - Woodside
 - Oxhey Park North
 - Gaelic Football Club
 - Cassiobury Site (Fullerians)
 - Cassiobury Croquet Club
- Delivering Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations, Development Management Policies, Town Centre Policies
- Developing a narrative on the benefits of our approach to smart growth to inform our community and build understanding

Smart growth is a better way to build and maintain our towns and cities.

Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports local economies and protects the environment. Our Local Plan has, at its heart, the positive outcomes that can be achieved through smart growth.

3. Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities

We are fortunate in Watford that the majority of our population enjoy a high standard of wellbeing, healthy lives and are able to access help when they may need it. We recognise that this is not the case for everyone and people’s circumstances can change. We need to understand where these pressure points are for our town and for individuals and ensure that we are working with our partners to minimise the issues vulnerability can bring.

Work to support people affected by Welfare Reform changes has included close working with a range of partners to ensure that advice is correct and consistent. With the introduction of Universal Credit, there is more focus on providing practical support through partners to advise and enable local people to adapt to the new arrangements.

Our challenges

- Harnessing prosperity to benefit all our citizens
- Changing demographics and emerging communities
- Impact of cuts and changes to benefits and other support
- Pockets of deprivation and health inequalities within the borough

Our opportunities

- Targeting our support to those most in need
- Working with partners, such as the police, to understand vulnerabilities and our emerging communities
- Public health funding to address our identified health need

We will do this by:

- Evaluating the impact and outcomes of the Voluntary and Community Sector Commissioning Framework 2013-2016 and the contribution to 'community wellbeing' of the borough
- Understanding our borough profile including Census 2011 analysis and using this knowledge to support our engagement and shaping our decisions
- Delivering a refreshed Sports Development Framework to support improved health and wellbeing
- Delivering improved play facilities

4. Deliver a digital Watford to empower our community

Developing a digital strategy for Watford is a key area of work for this priority. Through our digital strategy our aim is to empower local people and communities, to improve their lives, make things easier and quicker, and to give them access to things they might not have been able to take advantage of before.

We also aim to support businesses to better exploit the digital age, to promote their services, create new avenues of business and become better connected.

Successful digital transformation requires effective leadership in order to bring together all the elements required and this will be provided through establishing a Digital Transformation Board.

We also see this priority delivering the next step up to our approach to customer services across all our service areas, led by our successful Customer Services team.

Our challenges

- Speed and complexity of some of our processes and transactions
- Citizen expectations on how they access our services
- Current workforce skills in the digital arena
- Speed of technological change
- Not all residents and businesses have online or digital skills or experience

Opportunities

- Harnessing the potential of our new website
- New model of IT delivery and IT transformation will support change
- Town wide Wi-Fi established to promote digital inclusion
- High level of take up of new technologies and social media in Watford

We will do this by:

- Establishing a Digital Transformation Board to provide leadership and direction for the digital agenda in Watford
- Developing a digital transformation strategy for Watford which identifies how we will deliver a digital workforce, digital customer services and a digital town
- Delivering the next stage of the website project as part of our digital journey to fully maximise its potential to improve: customer experience, access to services and engagement and communication with our residents. Priority areas identified include online payments, reporting street care, fly tipping, missed bins, statutory nuisance and abandoned vehicles
- Exploring introducing 'citizens accounts'
- Building a new approach to two way engagement with our residents through the use of social media and other channels so they can make a contribution to local issues, policy development and service improvement
- Progressing a step up in our customer services including embedding our new customer service standards and improving the face to face experience
- Reengineer back office services to produce more efficient processes

5. Secure our own financial future

All of the work in this Corporate Plan is dependent on the Council getting its finances right and securing a sound financial base. This has never been more challenging with the Council facing the loss of around £2.5million revenue support grant by 2020. However, this also brings the drive to innovate and look for ways to do things differently that will deliver savings or generate additional income.

Our challenges

- Loss of revenue support grant by 2020
- Savings or additional income of £3 million needed to 'balance the books' by 2020
- Need to finance our ambitions as well as business as usual
- Growing population means an increasing demand for services

Our opportunities

- Access funding streams to support our ambitions
- Identify opportunities to trade our services
- Work with other organisations (both private and public sector) to deliver services

We will do this by:

- Undertaking an analysis of the Council's cost base to build a more thorough understanding of the costs of our services
- Developing a 'commercial strategy' including how we enhance our commercial skills and experience and how we can trade our services
- Managing our property portfolio to stimulate growth, generate returns and meet changing service needs including review of:
 - Council accommodation
 - our community assets
- Establishing a new approach to the Council's fees and charges policy
- Developing a corporate debt policy
- Ensuring our contracts are delivering value for money and high quality services through robust tendering and procurement processes and ongoing review including: Leisure Management, Veolia, ICT
- Progressing an energy company for Watford
- Driving business rate income growth
- Capturing returns on investment from our major projects and joint ventures

Part Four

Underpinning themes

Whilst this Corporate Plan focuses on our priorities and the areas of work that will drive delivery, there are some key, important foundations that ensure our success and also build our effectiveness as an organisation. These are the themes that underpin the organisation and reflect our ongoing commitment to being a quality organisation, achieving high performance across all we do.

Effective two-way engagement and communications

Our local community and residents are the heart of the town. We want them to feel confident that they are kept well-informed about all that is going on in the town and that their voice can be heard on issues that matter to them. Whatever we do must be underpinned by effective and relevant communication and be responsive to how people want to engage with us, whether this be through meetings, consultation, our website or social media. At the same time we need to keep up to date with the way new technology is rapidly changing how people choose to communicate – our local population is relatively young and many are early adopters of new technologies. Our challenge is to keep up with them whilst still responding to those with more traditional ways of staying in touch.

Sound management and high performance

Successful delivery of our ambitions relies on making sure 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.

Our vision challenges us to continually improve and ensure we are amongst the top performing councils across all the services we deliver – whether we do these ourselves or through effective partnerships. This means we need to set ourselves targets that really stretch what we do and how we work and look to the best authorities for our benchmark. We need to embed a culture of ‘delivery’ through sound programme and project management and rapidly identify and address any areas where there is a risk to meeting milestones.

Our support services like IT, HR and Finance continue to be the essential building blocks for our success. IT remains critical for all that we do and whilst real step change has begun, we need to ensure IT continues to improve and that we have the right strategy in place to make the most of the opportunities it offers. We want our staff and members to be equipped with the best IT solutions available, including making sure our critical business applications are up to date and that we modernise where better solutions present themselves.

Talented, well skilled staff are vital if we are to achieve what we have set out in this Corporate Plan. We want to retain and grow our own talent where possible but when we do recruit we want to make sure we attract the best from elsewhere. We will work with our HR team on embedding a culture where strong performance and delivery are recognised, people are encouraged to be innovative and strive to make a real contribution to the Council and the town.

Improving the town's environment

An attractive, well maintained environment is fundamental to our town and, we know, is really important to local people. We will ensure that the refuse, recycling and street cleaning service remains high quality and we will identify pockets where a focused, partnership approach to bring the neighbourhood up to standard would be beneficial. This is part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing the public realm including building on the successful improvements to the top of the town, which have seen this area revitalised, with work planned for the civic area outside of the library and Town Hall.

Our finances

Our finances are perhaps the most critical building block for our plans. We need our finances to not only support our day to day activities and provide our services (through our revenue budget) but also to deliver the major, transformational projects that make such a difference to our town and local neighbourhoods (through our capital budget).

Our Medium Term Financial Strategy is a four year forecast that sets out our budget and looks at factors likely to impact on our expenditure.

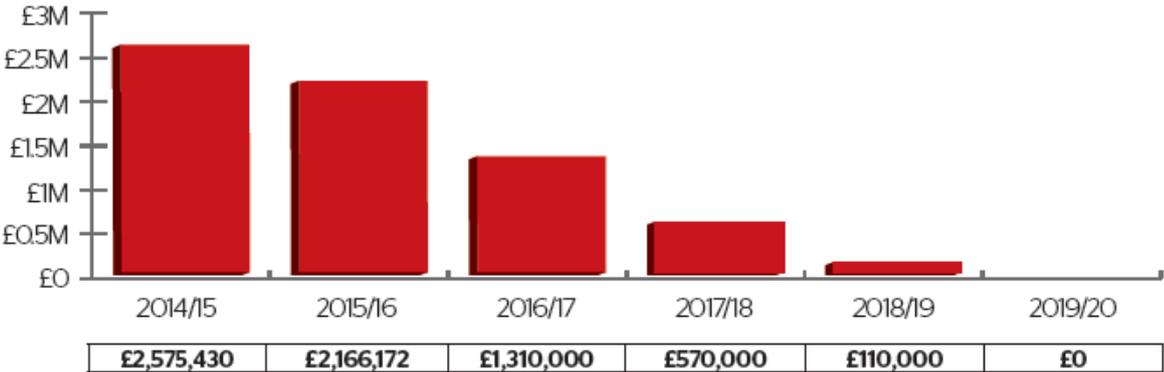
For 2016/17, the strategy shows that our budget requirement is **£16,035,060**.

There are a number of ways this is funded:

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

Changes to government funding

In terms of the Settlement Funding Assessment, this is the grant councils receive from government to help support the cost of the services they deliver. In December 2015, the government announced that this funding will come to an end – for Watford this will be in 2019/20. What this means is shown in the chart below – indicating a loss of £2,575,430 by 2020.



As set out in this Plan, this presents a significant challenge for Watford – in percentage terms it is around 16% less budget to spend by 2020. Addressing how to bridge this gap will be a major area of focus for the Council over the next four years. Our goal is to ensure we maintain the quality of the services that are important to our residents whilst still being able to innovate where this delivers improvements or in response to new opportunities.

Use of reserves

With the savings we need to make over the next year (and following three years), 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 is allowed to, and will, make prudent use of some of its reserves to ‘smooth’ the delivery of the savings. Obviously using reserves to support the revenue deficit is not sustainable in the longer term and, therefore, this means that savings and efficiencies will still need to be made. It does, however, ensure that the Council is able to set a balanced budget whilst the organisation undertakes the work necessary to achieve a permanently secure financial footing. Our medium term financial strategy has allowed for the use of £761,500 of reserves in the next financial year.

Council tax

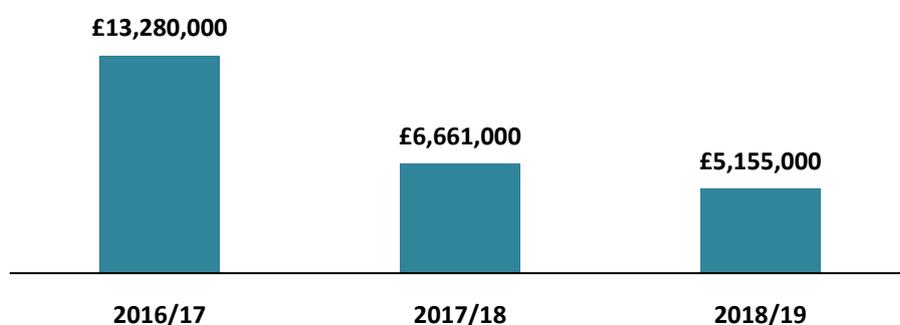
With the ongoing reduction in government funding, council tax is now the major source of funding for the Council. Unlike many other councils, including Hertfordshire County Council, which have increased council tax for 2016/17 in response to funding cuts, Watford has managed to freeze its element of council tax for 7 years in a row.

The money brought in by council tax for 2016/17 is £7,823,667. With the freeze in place, the average charge of £249.84 remains unchanged this year.

Capital spending

The Council’s plans are supported by its capital budget. Even if there is pressure on the revenue budget, councils are not allowed to use money in their capital budgets to support revenue spending on day to day activities and service delivery. It has to be used to either acquire or create a new asset or to enhance an existing asset.

The capital budget for the next three years is:



There is a huge amount of capital investment in Watford over the next few years and the Council is committed to use its own capital budgets to leverage this funding. Below are some of the major projects and areas of work we have identified for capital expenditure.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Cassiobury Park Heritage Lottery Fund | £6,149,000 |
| Watford Health Campus | £4,500,000 |
| Watford Business Park | £11,300,000 |
| Green spaces | £574,000 |
| Cemetery improvements <i>NEW for 2016/17</i> | £250,000 |
| Cassiobury Strategic Sports Site Development with Fullerians <i>NEW for 2016/17</i> | £200,000 |
| Review of play <i>NEW for 2016/17</i> | £1,250,000 |

Part Five

Monitoring the Plan

Ensuring we deliver our Corporate Plan is critical to our success as an organisation and builds our residents confidence that we keep our promises.

We ensure delivery is on track through:

- Making sure all our Corporate Plan areas of work are reflected in service plans, work programmes and individual performance development review objectives, building the 'golden thread' through the organisation
- Identifying the key milestones for our work and holding ourselves to account for delivery – this will include regular updates to Cabinet and Leadership Team
- Establishing a robust set of performance measures that are regularly monitored by Leadership Team, Portfolio Holders and our Scrutiny Committees. These measures extend to our outsourced services
- Providing challenge and assurance through robust governance including: Programme Management Board for our major projects, Property Investment Board for our property related work and Digital Board for our digital agenda



How do I find out more?

www.watford.gov.uk/councilplan

Part A

Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 5 July 2016
Report of: Democratic Services Manager
Title: Changes to the Constitution

1.0 **Summary**

1.1 This report details changes to the Constitution recommended by the Constitution Working Party following its meeting on 14 June 2016.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 That the terms of reference for the Major Projects Board are amended (as shown in Appendix A) to extend its remit to review the Property Investment Board strategy to diversify the investment portfolio.

2.2 That incidents of poor behaviour by councillors at a full Council meeting be dealt with between meetings of Managing Director/Monitoring Officer/Chairman and Group Leaders

2.3 That the following text be added to the constitution (Article 5)
“The Chairman and Vice Chairman when undertaking their civic and ceremonial roles should not:

- Bring the Council into disrepute through abuse of office
- Attend any function or otherwise give support to any organisation or person, whose objectives are contrary to law and/or council policy
- Solicit engagements or visits at home or abroad or otherwise procure favours by virtue of office.
- Overspend their budget
- Use their position for party political purposes, including seeking their own re-election and avoid controversial political roles such as chairing major committees, standing for parliamentary and mayoral elections in Watford”

2.4 That the order of business on a full Council agenda is changed to move the motions to after the substantive business

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Caroline Harris,
Democratic Services Manager
telephone extension: 8372 email: caroline.harris@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Carol Chen, Head of Democracy and Governance

3.0 Detailed Proposal

3.1 The Constitution Working Party met on 14 June 2016 to consider various changes to the constitution. A copy of the agenda and reports are available at <http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=1795>
These are their recommendations.

3.2 Major Projects Board (MPB)

3.2.1 The Major Project Board's role has evolved from its original purpose of focussing on the council's procurement strategy into an advisory group to Cabinet and officers on major projects across the town. The Constitution Working Party commented that the addition of property to the terms of reference for MPB was a good fit with the other items which were received and added another element to the Board's work. The working party therefore recommended that the terms of reference for MPB were extended (as at Appendix A) to include reviewing the Property Investment Board (PIB) strategy to diversify the investment portfolio.

3.2.2 The working party discussed the role of Budget Panel in reviewing the council's revenue budget and capital programme which would reflect any income generation following decisions made by the PIB.

3.3 Member behaviour at Council

3.3.1 The working party considered changes to the constitution to ensure appropriate behaviour was maintained at full council meetings.

3.3.2 The working party noted the various provisions already in the council procedural rules for controlling member behaviour at meetings

- 3.3.3 The working party recommended that in addition to the existing rules the Chairman, Managing Director and Monitoring Officer could call in group leaders for a meeting after council if there had been problems at the meeting with a member's behaviour.
- 3.4 **Council Chairman**
- 3.4.1 The working party agreed that the current system of selecting the next Vice Chairman through seniority (length of service) should be continued.
- 3.4.2 The working party discussed formalising conventions in the constitution regarding the role of the Chairman and their conduct during their year in office. Following a vote the Working Party proposed the following to be recommended to council to be added to the constitution:
"The Chairman and Vice Chairman when undertaking their civic and ceremonial roles should not:
- Bring the Council into disrepute through abuse of office
 - Attend any function or otherwise give support to any organisation or person, whose objectives are contrary to law and/or council policy
 - Solicit engagements or visits at home or abroad or otherwise procure favours by virtue of office.
 - Overspend their budget
 - Use their position for party political purposes, including seeking their own re-election and avoid controversial political roles such as chairing major committees, standing for parliamentary and mayoral elections in Watford"
- 3.5 **Order of Business at Full Council Meetings**
- 3.5.1 The working party recommended that motions be moved to the last item of business at a full Council meeting to allow members time to have discussion on the items of substantive business.
- 3.5.2 At Council meetings in the previous municipal year there had been a number of motions at each meeting which contributed to the length of business at each meeting. The time taken on debates on motions had led to debate on substantive business either being curtailed or the need to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond 10:30 p.m. Whilst the order of business had on occasion been altered at the Chair's discretion it was felt that this should be formalised.
- 4.0 **Implications**
- 4.1 **Financial**
- 4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications 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 in the body of the report.

4.3 **Equalities**

4.3.1 This report is not considering a new policy

4.4 **Potential Risks**

4.4.1 None identified

4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 No implications

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 No implications

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 No implications

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 No implications

Appendices

Appendix A: Amended terms of reference for Major Projects Board

Background Papers

Report and minutes of Constitution Working Party 14 June 2016

File Reference

None

8.0 Working Groups

| Working Group | Membership | Terms of Reference |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Major Projects Board | As elected at Annual Council | <p>To advise the Executive on procurement and delivery of all matters concerned with development and progress of major capital and property projects</p> <p>In particular the Board will be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To oversee the ongoing development of those projects • To be consulted on the most appropriate form of any procurement required to implement such projects • To receive information on the progress of such procurement • To receive regular updates from officers on the progress on implementation of those projects and to act as critical friend • To make recommendations to the Executive as required. • Current major capital and property projects are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health Campus ○ Watford Junction ○ Ascot Road ○ Watford Business Park ○ Charter Place ○ Croxley View ○ Diversifying the property investment portfolio (PIB strategy) ○ MLX (Metropolitan Line Extension) |

PART A

Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 5 July 2016
Report of: Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer
Title: Neighbourhood Forum Annual Report 2015/16

1.0 **Summary**

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Forums were established at Annual Council on 21 May 2008. It was agreed that each Forum would comprise the three ward councillors for the local electoral ward.
- 1.2 In accordance with the protocol for Neighbourhood Forums, each Forum is required to produce an annual report providing details of the activities which have taken place during the year. The report should include information about the Forum's spending, meetings and projects.

2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 that the annual reports provided at Appendix 2 be noted.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Ishbel Morren, Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer
telephone extension: 8375 email: legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Carol Chen, Head of Democracy and Governance

3.0 **Detailed proposal**

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Forums were established to enable the ward councillors to engage with local residents and businesses and other community groups in their Ward. They can also be used to promote the Council's business and to carry out consultation on ward-related matters.
- 3.2 In 2015/16 each Neighbourhood Forum was allocated a budget of £2,500. The budget

could be used to set up meetings with residents, businesses and other community groups. Two Neighbourhood Forums held meetings within their wards to consult on local issues.

3.3 The budget could also be used to support projects within the ward. During 2015/16 all 12 Neighbourhood Forums chose to fund projects for their area. All wards made donations to local groups, particularly benefiting younger or older residents, to cover the cost of new equipment, improved facilities or towards the costs of local events. The majority of wards made donations towards environmental improvements in their areas, including planting trees, shrubs and flowers, as well as the establishment of a new community garden and the purchase of gardening equipment. Two wards made donations towards highway improvements. Details of the overall expenditure for each ward are shown in Appendix 1.

3.4 All 12 wards have submitted an Annual Report and these are attached as Appendix 2.

4.0 **Implications**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 There are no financial implications. Expenditure was within the allocated budget for 2015/16.

4.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

4.2.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

4.3 **Potential Risks**

None identified

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Forum Expenditure 2015/16
- Appendix 2 – 2015/16 Neighbourhood Forum Annual Reports

Background Papers

- Application forms and expenditure sheets for the individual forums

File Reference

None

**NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
EXPENDITURE 2015/16**

The table below provides expenditure details of each Neighbourhood Forum. It has been broken down to show the amount spent on holding meetings and funding projects within the wards.

| WARD | AMOUNT SPENT ON MEETINGS | AMOUNT SPENT ON PROJECTS IN WARD | TOTAL EXPENDITURE |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Callowland | - | £1,924.94 | £1,924.94 |
| Central | £132.34 | £2,315.00 | £2,447.34 |
| Holywell | - | £2,338.92 | £2,338.92 |
| Leggatts | - | £2,500.00 | £2,500.00 |
| Meriden | - | £2,458.75 | £2,458.75 |
| Nascot | £474.29 | £2,025.39 | £2,499.68 |
| Oxhey | - | £2,499.42 | £2,499.42 |
| Park | - | £1,317.46 | £1,317.46 |
| Stanborough | - | £2,499.24 | £2,499.24 |
| Tudor | - | £2,500.00 | £2,500.00 |
| Vicarage | - | £2,500.00 | £2,500.00 |
| Woodside | - | £2,500.00 | £2,500.00 |

Total spent: £27,985.75

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Callowland

Membership: Councillors Sohail Bashir, Favour Ewudo and Seamus Williams

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|--------------|--|
| Beechfield School CD | £250.00 | Very well received by all associated staff and pupils. |
| Skip for the new community garden in Copsewood Road | £265.00 | Extremely appreciated by the Community Garden Association to clear up vegetation from land to be used for the purposes of a community garden for the benefit and use of local children and families |
| Donation towards the cost of new garden equipment for the community garden in Copsewood Road | £569.94 | Extremely appreciated and very well received by the Community Garden Association. Gardening equipment which has been purchased with the funds provided is being used to maintain the Community Garden for the benefit and use of local children and families |

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|---------|--|
| Skips for residents in St Georges Road, Leavesden Road and Bruce Grove | £840.00 | The skips were very well received and used by a significant number of Callowland residents and they were hugely welcomed and appreciated by the residents of Callowland Ward. The skips were used to clear household rubbish in three distinct and easily accessible areas of Callowland Ward to serve large sections of the Ward. |

Signed Councillor Sohail Bashir

Date: 21.6.2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Central

Membership: Councillors Stephen Bolton, Mike Haley and Rabi Martins

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|--------------|--|
| Cost of printing for meeting held in March 2015 | £132.34 | |
| Contribution towards the cost of improvements to the Estcourt Road environment through enhancements of the footpath, tree guards etc | £750.00 | Estcourt Road falls within the Conservation Area Thus it was felt appropriate to invest in improving the street scene That is not to say other areas are not considered worthy of investment |
| Forum meeting held on 17 December 2015 at Spiritualist Church Hall, Estcourt Road | £0 | This was a forum paid for personally by ward councillors because it was expected to be a small meeting targeted at a small group |
| Contribution towards the costs of establishing the Watford Fields Residents Association (WFRA) | £375.00 | Central Ward Councillors believe that Residents Associations contribute to the welfare of the area and bring people together. WFRA was set up through encouragement from ward councillors |

| | | |
|--|---------|---|
| Contribution towards the cost of 2 students from Watford Girls Grammar School to attend the National Science and Engineering competition in Birmingham | £150.00 | <p>One of the students was a resident of the ward</p> <p>The school is in the ward</p> <p>The project had the potential to benefit other schools in the Ward and the town as a whole</p> <p>The girls won their category</p> |
| Contribution towards the administration costs of the Central Town Residents Association (CTRA) and production of a newsletter | £200.00 | <p>As above</p> <p>CTRA is a long established Residents Association. However its membership has declined in recent years. This money was to pay towards a program of activities to boost its membership.</p> |
| Contribution towards the total costs for environmental improvements in Watford Fields | £840.00 | <p>This was money towards a project to improve facilities on Watford Fields. The majority of the cost was picked up by HCC Locality Budget.</p> <p>The works were to make the footpath safer by the play area, and protect the adjoining grass. The path was being used illegally by cyclists, who were cycling on the grass to avoid the barriers, and it was being churned up.</p> <p>The work was to install posts and rail along the edge of the grass.</p> |

Signed Councillor **R Martins**
 Councillor **S Bolton**

Date: 24th June 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Holywell

Membership: Councillors Nigel Bell, Jackie Connal and Matt Turmaine

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|-----------|---|
| Contribution towards the travel costs to Dusseldorf for Kodokan Kendo Club | £200.00 | We gave £200 towards the total cost enabling 4 juniors to take part in a major competition in Dusseldorf. |
| Donation to Holywell Youth Club for equipment | £538.92 | We are pleased to hear that local young people have been able to use the sports equipment and other facilities we were able to purchase. |
| Food hygiene course organised by Westfield Children's Centre | £600.00 | The Childrens centre were delighted to be able to help young families as part of their important outreach work. |
| Donation to 16 th Watford South Scouts | £1,000.00 | As the Scout Leader has stated our donation has helped children who often don't get involved in outside activities to be able to take part in feeling more part of the community. |

Signed Councillor Nigel Bell
Councillor Jackie Connal
Councillor Matt Turmaine

Date: 21st June 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Leggatts

Membership: Councillors Anne Joynes, Asif Khan and Bilqees Mauthoor

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|--------------|---|
| Contribution towards the cost of flags for Courtlands Residents' Association | £200.00 | This was for use with their annual 'Fun Day'. |
| Contribution towards cost of Treat boxes organised by Courtlands RA | £250.00 | The RA organised treat boxes for their lunch club members and we were happy to contribute. |
| Donation to First Watford Guides towards the cost of new uniforms for the 'uniform bank' | £500.00 | As the uniforms are expensive and not all members could afford them, we contributed to the purchase of uniforms so that the company could have a 'bank' of uniforms for Guides to hire for a small deposit. |
| Donation to 1st North Watford Scouts towards their work | £571.00 | Contribution to renew equipment. |

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|---------|--|
| Donation to Orchard School for materials for the early years classes | £200.00 | As all three schools have had to expand by one form of entry, we contributed funds so that they could buy necessary equipment for Year 1 pupils. |
| Donation to Beechfield School for materials for the early years classes | £200.00 | As above. |
| Donation to Cherry Tree School for materials for the early years classes | £200.00 | As above. |
| Funding for a television for the Tuesday Circle and other groups who meet at St Marks Church | £379.00 | This was requested by the Tuesday Club for their use and for the other activities both after school and holiday time activities. |

Signed Councillor Anne Joynes
 Councillor Asif Khan
 Councillor Bilqees Mauthoor

Date: 22 June 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Meriden

Membership: Councillors Jan Brown, Kareen Hastrick and Mark Whitman

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| Pitch fees for Meriden FC at Garston Park and football kit | £685 + £547.79 = £1,232.79 | Supporting sports club and local young people who run the Club |
| Gardening equipment for Meriden Community Centre | £425.96 | WFC Charitable Trust now raising their own funding. The provision of gardening equipment enables on-site staff to keep the immediate grounds tidy and removes the need to pay external gardeners |
| Planting flower bed Eastlea Avenue | £500 | Improving the existing flower bed at busy entrance to Meriden Estate at the junction with A41 and Westlea Avenue |
| Asda gift cards for pensioners | £300 | Supporting Meriden Residents Association initiative at Christmas |

Signed Councillor Kareen Hastrick
 Councillor Jan Brown

Date: 21 June 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Nascot

Membership: Councillors Mark Hofman, Linda Topping and Mark Watkin

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|--|---|
| Christmas 'treat boxes' for vulnerable residents | £250 | Together with a similar donation from Leggatts Councillors these funded "hampers" containing a mix of sweet and savoury food items were provided to over 40 elderly residents selected by the Courtlands Residents Association. It is hoped to repeat this again this year. |
| Neighbourhood Forum meeting | Printing - £430.29 Delivery - £140 Hall hire - £44 | As in previous years Nascot Councillors believe it is important that they hold a public meeting where they can be held to account by residents. This year's was held in the Recital Hall of Nascot Wood Junior School and was attended by over 80 residents. This was a highly successful. Items covered the Nascot Conservation Area, tree protection in the Ward, the plans for Civic Quarter, and Highways matters, including the Nascot Wood Road chicanes. |
| Maths materials for Cassio Pre-School | £283.91 | Cassio pre-school working from St Andrew's Church is a Nascot institution of long standing. Councillors have supported it in the past and this year we agreed to fund essential materials to enable them to meet Ofsted's requirements for teaching maths. |

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|---|--------------|--|
| Gazebos for Courtlands Residents' Association | £466.48 | These will be used by the Courtlands Residents Association both at their Annual Fund Day and at other events that they may choose to hold from time to time. |
| Cooker for Nascot Lunch Club | £358 | The Nascot Lunch Club is a highly popular monthly event held at Cheslyn House. It has been running for over three years, but the facilities at Cheslyn House are basic. This new cooker will enable the Club to serve a wider range of meals than was possible before. |
| Camping equipment for North Watford Cub Pack | £316 | The North Watford Cub Pack has only recently been formed and operated under the care of the Watford District Synagogue although it is open to any child. It has started from scratch so this donation enabled it to invest in camping equipment, essential for any Cub Pack. |
| Planting at Holly Tree House | £211 | On the public land at the front of Holly Tree House there is a raised bed originally provided by the Courtlands Residents Association. This donation enabled it to be restocked with flowers for the year. |

Signed Councillor Mark Watkin
 Councillor Mark Hofman

Date: 1st June 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Oxhey

Membership: Councillors Shirena Counter, Iain Sharpe and Peter Taylor

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|---|--------------|--|
| Replacement tree for Oxhey Road | £140 | Street trees are an important part of the street scene across Oxhey ward. This tree was in a prominent location, close to the bridge linking Watford Heath and Oxhey Road. |
| Play equipment for Oxhey Methodist Church | £200 | Each Thursday morning many children, carers, parents and grandparents attend this popular toddler group. They receive no financial support and rely entirely on donations to cover their costs. This donation enabled those who run the group to purchase new play equipment including a play house, slide and small trampoline. |
| Bushey and Oxhey Scout Group – building refurbishment | £500 | Bushey and Oxhey Scout hut is used by a number of popular youth groups. This donation was towards their ongoing capital appeal to improve the building, especially the roof. |
| Bookshelves for St Matthews Oxhey Bookswap | £626.52 | St Matthew’s have set up a new bookswap group. This meets each month and is open to everyone. Following the cessation of the mobile library in Oxhey this offers residents the opportunity to swap their books and to meet others. |

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|---------|---|
| Donation to fund two students at Watford Girls Grammar School to attend the final of a competition for a project on carbon footprints and environmental science. | £150 | This funding enabled two female students to attend a prestigious national science competition in Birmingham. Their project on carbon footprints won first prize. |
| Plants for the lower terrace gardens in Oxhey Park | £467 | Oxhey Park is a well used green space by residents across Oxhey and the whole town. Recent investment by the council resulted in the park being awarded a green flag for the first time in 2015. These plants added to the attractiveness of the lower terrace gardens. They were purchased and planted by Friends of Oxhey Park. |
| Purchase of litter pickers, hoops and a wacker plate for Friends of Oxhey Park. | £415.90 | The Friends of Oxhey Park meet each month to clear litter and other items from the park. They requested two long handles pickers and hoops to assist with this work. The wacker plate will be used to maintain the paths in the park. This will be especially helpful for those with mobility difficulties. |

Signed. Councillor P. Taylor
Councillor Iain Sharpe

Date: 17.6.16

Ward: Park

Membership: Councillors George Derbyshire, Binita Mehta and Anne Rindl

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|---|--------------|---|
| Pop-up banners for the Watford and Three Rivers Refugee Partnership | £350 | These banners are gratefully used by the Refugee Partnership during charity and fundraising activities to promote their work. |
| Goalkeepers' kit for West Herts Hockey Club | £590 | Donation to this local sports club to purchase a goal keepers outfit. |
| Bird feeders for the Friends of Cassiobury Park | £197.96 | The Friends of Cassiobury Park support the maintenance and enhancement of the Park in many ways. The 4 squirrel-proof bird feeders are used to feed the birds during winter. Visitors can observe the birds attracted by the contents of the feeders. |
| Grit bin for Grove Mill Lane/Heath Farm Court | £79.50 | Cllr Mehta received requests for the grit bin since the last few winters, Grove Mill Lane is closed due to ice and snow. The box will provide better access to the residents' homes. |
| Footballs, equipment and kit for Cassiobury Rangers FC | £100 | Donation to this neighbourhood sports club so they could buy 10 footballs, a carry bag for the balls and a pack of 10 bibs for their young players. |

Signed: Councillor Anne Rindl

Date: 31 May 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Stanborough
Membership: Councillors Keith Crout, Derek Scudder and Tim Williams

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs |
|---|--------------|
| Entertainer for Kingswood Residents Association's children's Christmas party | £200.00 |
| Kingswood Residents Association activities for elderly and vulnerable residents | £250.00 |
| Gazebo for North Watford District Scouts to encourage adult volunteering | £985.00 |
| Installation of a traffic bollard on St Albans Road to prevent through traffic | £224.24 |
| Replacement tree planting | £840.00 |

Signed: Councillor Keith Crout
Councillor Derek Scudder
Councillor Tim Williams

Date: 24 May 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Tudor

Membership: Councillors Stephen Johnson, Sean Silver and Darren Walford

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|-------|--|
| Purchase of tents for 53rd Watford South Scout Group | £300 | The 53rd Watford South Scout Group is a long established, well respected group that has helped in the development of youngsters in the local community. The tents will help them to continue outside activities. |
| Purchase of the Brownie Adventure Book for 21 st Watford Brownies | £200 | Brownie Adventure Book is a resource which can be used all through their time as a Brownie either within the pack or on their own. The book can be used to work towards a number of adventure challenge badges and it is something which they have looked to do in the past, but have never had the funds to do it. |
| Contribution towards the refurbishment of the Peace Hospice shop | £500 | The shop is the main meeting place for a large number of Tudor residents. It was in need of an upgrade. It is one of very few places on the estate residents can meet and share information. It is the only contact many elderly residents have with the local community. The ability of local residents to use this resource with better |

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|---|--------|---|
| | | access will be of great benefit. They will also be able to rationalising the storage space in the new design. |
| Street furniture on the frontages of 170-180 Bushey Mill Lane | £1,500 | Local residents were keen to see an improvement of the street scene on this side of the road. They were keen that we mirror as closely as possible the improvements that have been obtained the other side of the parade. These include resurfacing the frontage, wooden posts, cycle rings, and planters. Residents we have spoken to have been very pleased with the results. |

Signed Councillor Steve Johnson
 Councillor Darren Walford

Date: 16/6/2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Vicarage
Membership: Councillors Jagtar Dhindsa, Mo Mills and Nasreen Shah

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|--|--------|---|
| Repair hinges and replace a security lock on an alley gate | £65 | £65.00 was sent to repair hinges and replace a security lock on an alley gate in Pretoria Road. |
| Repositioning an existing alley gate | £300 | £300.00 was spent on repositioning an existing alley gate on Southsea Avenue which serves the alley way on the back of Whippendell Road. This is to stop people urinating and dumping rubbish in the alley way. |
| Donation towards the redesigned playground at Chater Infant School | £1,100 | £1,100.00 was given as a donation towards the much needed improvements on the playground at Chater Infant School. |
| Purchase of playground equipment for Chater Junior School | £1,035 | £1,035.00 was spent on the purchase of playground equipment for Chater Junior School. |

As Vicarage ward Councillors we feel the money was spent on the much needed projects in the ward and it will benefit the residents of Vicarage and beyond.

Signed Councillor Jagtar Singh Dhindsa
 Councillor Mo Mills
 Councillor Nasreen Shah

Date: 22 May 2016

**Neighbourhood Forum
Community Engagement Fund
Annual Report 2015/16**

Ward: Woodside
Membership: Councillors Ian Brown, Tony Rogers and Karen Collett

Activities during 2015/16

| Project / meeting | Costs | Comments |
|---|-----------|---|
| Payment for Christmas party entertainer for the Leavesden Community Group | £150.00 | This event is growing each year and provides fun and social engagement for children and local mums and dads. |
| Purchase of a tea urn and microwave for Leavesden Community Group | £100.00 | The Leavesden Community Group is very active and does many indoor and outdoor events - these items help provide refreshments/food for the community. |
| Donation towards activities at the Orbital Community Centre youth club | £388.34 | Our young people made place mats, keyrings, decorations and Easter cards with our elderly residents at Lancaster Court. In addition they set up a stall for an outdoor soup kitchen, using utensils outside St Mary's Church. |
| Repair of the 9 th North Watford Scouts' hut roof | £661.66 | Provided a roof that was free from leaks and protection from the elements. |
| Donation to the Lemarie Centre to support several separate charities | £1,200.00 | Provided resources for all user groups within. |

Signed Councillor Karen Collett
 Councillor Ian Brown
 Councillor Tony Rogers

Date: 28/05/16