



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**



COUNCIL MEETING

19 July 2022

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Contact

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For information about attending meetings please visit the [council's website](#).

Publication date: 11 July 2022

11 July 2022

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Tuesday, 19 July 2022 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 2022 to be submitted and signed.

4. Official Announcements

5. Mayor's Report (Pages 6 - 11)

Report from Mayor Taylor

6. Questions by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 10.0

7. Questions by Members of the Public under Council Procedure Rule 11.0

8. Petitions presented under Council Procedure Rule 12.0

9. Business especially brought forward by the Chairman or the Head of Paid Service which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered as a matter of urgency.

10. Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 (Pages 12 - 21)

Report of the Senior Democratic Services Officer

11. Neighbourhood Locality Fund Annual Report 2021/22 (Pages 22 - 25)

Report of the Democratic Services Officer (IS)

12. Council Pay Policy Statement - August 2022 (Pages 26 - 67)

Report of the Executive Head of Human Resources and Organisational

Development

13. Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24 (Pages 68 - 146)

Report of Cabinet and the Managing Director

14. Shared Services (Pages 147 - 402)

Report of Cabinet and the Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation

Please note the appendices to the Cabinet report are exempt under paragraph 1, Part 1 Schedule 12A, as they contain information that enable the identification of individuals.

15. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 13.0

1. The following motion has been proposed by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Pattinson –

This Council notes that:

On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54 per cent.

In light of the increased energy price cap, the average standard tariff energy bill will increase by £693 per year. The average pre-pay meter energy bill will increase by £708 per year (Ofgem, 2022).

On 6 April 2022, the Government increased National Insurance by 1.25 percentage points, which is projected to cost the average family in Watford an additional £600 a year.

The Government has suspended the pensions 'triple lock' for 2022/3, meaning Watford's 16,325 pensioners will see a rise of 3.1 per cent this year (instead of 8.3 per cent under the triple lock formula). This year, this will cost pensioners in Watford hundreds of pounds.

In 2021/22 Watford Foodbanks distributed food parcels at a rate of 9533 per 100,000 people (Trussell Trust, 2022). There are also many independent foodbanks also operating in Watford which means that this figure is likely to be much, much higher. We recognise the amazing work of the people operating food banks throughout our town and know they are supporting people to be able to feed their families at this time.

Council notes the decision taken in June 2022 to impose a 'Windfall Tax' on the super-profits of oil and gas companies and to redistribute this as a one-

off payment of £400 to households later this year. Council notes that the Windfall Tax was first proposed by Sir Ed Davey MP, leader of the Liberal Democrats, in May 2022. Though the Windfall Tax is welcome, Council believes it does not go nearly far enough and the Government should be doing much more to support local people through the Cost of Living crisis.

The Council is currently working with all relevant partners and stakeholders in our town to come together to understand the impact of the crisis on them / their clients and how we can all work together to maximise the support outcomes from our combined activities. But we recognise that this is not enough.

This Council therefore declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency' and calls on the Government to:

Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20 per cent to 17.5 per cent for one year, saving the average household in Watford a further £600 this year

Immediately re-introduce the pension's triple lock to support Watford's pensioners.

Immediately restore the Universal Credit supplement of £20, which was cancelled by the Government in September 2021.

Finally the Council calls on the Elected Mayor of Watford to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to express the Council's demands for VAT to be cut to 17.5%, for the re-introduction of the pension's triple-lock and for the £20 Universal Credit supplement to be restored in response to this crisis.

2. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Bell, the seconder to be advised –

The pandemic brought into sharp focus the imbalance of power in the workplace that Trades Unions and the Labour Party have long sought to rectify.

Wages have stagnated for over a decade and work is becoming increasingly insecure.

Since the Conservatives came to power 12 years ago, In-Work poverty, low pay and financial insecurity have become rampant.

Incomes have stagnated and many workers have experienced real terms pay

decline.

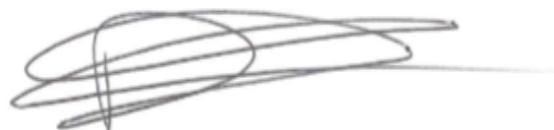
This Council fully supports ending the pernicious practice of 'Fire and rehire' and banning 'Zero contracts' and we will make sure Watford Council has a family friendly policy balancing work home, community and family life.

This Council calls on Watford's M.P. to stand up for these principles and support them in Government.

16. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Chair to move: that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for aspects of previous items of business as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during consideration of the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1) of the Act for the reasons stated in terms of Schedule 12A.

Note: if approved, the Chair will ask members of the press and public to leave the meeting at this point.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Donna Nolan', written in a cursive style with a vertical line through the middle of the name.

Donna Nolan, Managing Director

Agenda Item 5

Elected Mayor's Report July 2022

As I write my report, residents and businesses in Watford are increasingly dealing with a cost of living emergency. Families are experiencing large increases in their household energy bills and facing fuel and food price hikes. As a council, we are working hard with partners and in our town to provide what support we can to help minimise the impact of the cost of living crisis. We are also making information available on the council website to signpost people to other help where it is available. The Liberal Democrat group will also be raising a motion to full council addressing the crisis and calling on the government to use its powers to improve the lives of local residents.

The summer holidays can be a difficult time when money is tight and the council has done what it can to provide free events including our popular Wat's on programme. Wat's On takes place in July and August and provides sessions in areas as diverse as photography, acting and coding as well as various sports opportunities. I know that many of us are also looking forward to other free events such as Imagine Watford and our big screen events in Knutsford Playing Fields and Woodside Playing fields this summer.

Standing Up for Watford

My Liberal Democrat administration is ambitious for Watford and I am working hard with my cabinet to deliver my manifesto and invest in our town, creating a Watford that has thriving businesses, a strong community and a council that continues to innovate to provide excellent services for residents.

My cabinet recently approved plans to create a Town Hall Quarter which will boost jobs, create spaces for the community and help meet our zero carbon targets. When complete it will create a vibrant and thriving hub in the heart of the town, and contribute to our town's prosperity and success.

The key focus of these plans is the transformation of the Town Hall and the Colosseum. Both of these buildings are important parts of the town's heritage. It is a priority of mine to protect our heritage, while building a town fit for the future. The plans for the Colosseum will see the much loved venue undergo a comprehensive refurbishment, allowing it to be used by local performers and creative and arts groups. As we undergo the building work we will also be looking for an experienced operator to work with us to make the project a success, support local jobs and create volunteer opportunities when it reopens in 2023.

The Town Hall improvements will see the council make the most of the changes in work habits following the pandemic to reduce its footprint and use the opportunity to create a community and business hub. The plans for the scheme will protect and enhance the art deco history of the building and create a wonderful location for Watford's museum. It will also see the creation of the dedicated space for entrepreneurs and business start-ups, helping to increase local job opportunities and provide additional spaces to support local cultural organisations and charities in the town.

Standing up to unfair housing targets

I have continued in my efforts to lobby the government for a cut in Watford's unfair housing target and at the end of May wrote to the then Minister for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP, to impress upon him the danger of government continuing with its plan and the need to consider existing population density statistics when setting these targets.

As Watford is already a dense borough and has relatively little land to develop, a high target from central government will inevitably lead to more high-rise developments instead of delivering the homes we need in order to meet the hopes of families in the borough. In my letter I conveyed my strong objections to the current methodology for calculating targets. At the moment the system is unfair, placing the burden of fixing the housing crisis on the shoulders of places that are already well developed, with no regard for the size of the area or the availability of land.

The upcoming change in government is an opportunity for ministers to reset their relationship with local authorities and create a fairer system that allows development to happen sustainably. I will continue to push government to respect Watford's identity as a Hertfordshire town and set more realistic housebuilding targets.

Standing up for businesses in Watford

After such a difficult and challenging time during the pandemic, it has been reassuring to see most parts of Watford's economy well on the path to recovery. Throughout the crisis, we put great focus on targeting grant funding, tax reliefs and other support towards the businesses in Watford who needed it. We are very pleased as a Council to hear from businesses that this really helped them keep afloat during the pandemic.

Over the last year we have also been able to target funding to business support projects that will have a long term positive impact. This support includes the Watford Business Growth Grant which helped over 300 small businesses with their expansion plans and two Watford Young Entrepreneurs Projects which will help over 80 young people start up their own businesses in Watford. In addition, we have supported businesses on neighbourhood parades as well as the town centre, charity and voluntary organisations, creative organisations and women in business. Overall, over 1000 businesses in Watford have benefited from the wide range of projects we have put in place.

As we continue to see growth in town centre footfall and spend, albeit not yet at pre-pandemic levels, we can be proud of the investment the council has made and the offer Watford presents to residents and visitors. Places like Cineworld, Hollywood Bowl and Put shack, along with our great range of cafes and restaurants, are bringing people back out into the town centre, which helps retailers too. Investors see the town centre as attractive for investment, and we have comparatively low vacancy rates and good demand for units. It's also great to continue to see more new businesses coming into the town centre. Moving forward we will be using the Shared Prosperity Fund to help ensure that previous EU funded business support and skills services, which help Watford businesses and residents, are maintained, as well as provide some funding for new local projects.

Standing up to provide support for refugees

Watford continues to provide refuge for those fleeing the war in Ukraine and we are working with our partners and the County Council to ensure that the resettlement of refugees is as successful as possible.

I am grateful for all those families in Watford who have given up space in their homes to provide a safe and supportive place to live. I am also grateful to all of those who registered to provide support but who have not yet matched with refugees. Many of these volunteers are now agreeing to take in refugees where the initial placement has come to an end for whatever reason. The council and its partners are working closely with sponsor families to ensure that they feel supported throughout the process with the aim of making sure as many placements are as successful as possible.

Providing accommodation is only the first step in ensuring that our new Ukrainian neighbours feel welcome in Watford. The Council, Hertfordshire County council and the voluntary sector are working closely together to make sure that all the necessary support is available. One area of growing need is ongoing mental health support to help deal with their traumatic experiences over the last year. Where this is needed people are being signposted and where gaps in available provision are identified, the council is being proactive in working with Hertfordshire County Council to make this available.

Building a Sustainable Watford

New Neighbourhood Grants

As a Liberal Democrat council we believe that local residents should be empowered to make a difference to their local area. That is why I am pleased that we have had great engagement in our Neighbourhood Grant consultation. We worked with one of our partners, Commonplace, to create a new consultation platform which allows residents to give their views in innovative ways.

The Neighbourhood grant offers residents the opportunity to access funding ranging from a couple of hundred pounds to up to £20,000. The funding, generated from CIL, is aimed at local projects that will improve the local area and benefit residents. This may include environmental improvements such as landscaping or enhancing open spaces, funding new or improved play facilities, public art or street theatre.

To increase engagement by local residents, the council are working with commonplace, an online platform that uses interactive maps where local residents can engage in polls, and give comments and feedback on other people's ideas. This will ensure that we are funding projects that are supported by residents and puts the power to shape the local area in their hands. The public consultation will be repeated annually and we will continually review the engagement strategy so that we can ensure we hear from all residents. There is more information about this at <https://watfordneighbourhoodgrant.commonplace.is>

Supporting businesses to become more sustainable

As we give support for business to grow, be successful and help our local economy thrive, we cannot forget the climate emergency.

We will work with businesses to access any funding opportunities the government provides to help with this, and we will continue to focus on sustainability across our town, helping businesses connect with the guidance available as we all take the path towards a net zero carbon future.

Locally, we have funded projects to help Watford businesses become more sustainable. For example, working with Sustainable X we have supported 95 local businesses, with a reach of over 2800 employees. To achieve accreditation from Sustainable X, businesses nominate a sustainability officer, receive training on how to create a sustainability plan, and then are guided through the implementation of the plan to enable the business to reduce their environmental impact. This could, for example, include reducing waste, improving energy efficiency and creating more sustainable supply chains. We will continue to do the best we can to support business but we will also need more funding from government to ensure that the whole of Watford can achieve its climate change goals.

Investing in our parks and facilities

Last week I opened a new storage hub in Oxhey Activity Park. The building was joint funded by Watford Borough Council, Sport England, British Cycling and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and will improve what is already one of the best skate parks in the UK.

The new facility will enable the council to ensure it effectively utilises all available resources, bringing an offer together to provide facilities and services that make it easier for wheeled activity participants.

ABC Skateboarding will be working with the council to improve and expand their service to visitors at the site, as well as being a base for minor repairs. With the hub becoming a focal point in the park, it will also raise awareness of the many sessions that the team run for people of all ages and abilities, to help people become more skilled riders.

News and Events

The new Elton John mural at the Library unveiled

I am pleased that the council was able to support the painting of a new Sir Elton John mural at the side of the library and was honoured to unveil it to coincide with Sir Elton John's Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour. This new mural, which features the iconic "rose tinted" photo will be a draw for residents and tourists for years to come.

Sir Elton has contributed so much to our community, especially his work with Watford Football Club but has also raised millions for charitable causes across the world. This mural is our way of showing Sir Elton that he will forever be a part of Watford.

I would like to thank the talented team at MurWalls, Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst, and Hertfordshire County Council for working with Watford Borough Council for making the mural happen.

Celebrating the service of Her Majesty The Queen

In June we were able to celebrate and pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's reign which has been a foundational part of our national life for 70 years. The Queen has served tirelessly for our country and has been an inspiration to many in public life, including myself.

It was wonderful to watch some of the coverage of the events near the palace on the BBC but what made me particularly happy was seeing the number of street parties and small celebrations organised by residents here in Watford. At national events such as these, I am reminded of the great community spirit in this town and it makes me immensely proud to be able to represent Watford as Mayor.

Events for our Centenary Celebrations

We have also been celebrating our centenary year since being awarded borough status by Royal Charter. The day started off with a brilliant community-led parade through the town centre, complete with a group of colourful dancers and performers. We were then treated to great local musical and dance talent at the bandstand in Cassiobury Park and local businesses showcased their work in the arts and crafts village. To finish the day, we held our centenary concert featuring a DJ and a range of Watford artists.

Thank you to our partners and sponsors One Local, Watford Area Arts Forum, Stage in the Park, The Pump House, Murrill Construction, The Chamber of Conscience, Berkley Group, and Warner Bros. Studio Tour for making this event possible. I would also like to pay tribute to the volunteers who helped to organise that day and the team who worked tirelessly to ensure that the park was clean throughout the event.

Armed Forces Day was an opportunity to thank those who serve

I was honoured to pay tribute once again this year to Britain's service men and women during Armed Forces week. This important week reminds us of the risk many people from across our country take to defend our nation and protect our interests abroad. We also remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their country.

This year, I was particularly pleased that Deputy Mayor Cllr Aga Dychton was able to represent the Watford Borough Council at a ceremony at Hertfordshire County Council where she signed the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant signalling our commitment to the armed forces community here in Watford all year round.

In Watford, I raised the flag on Armed Forces Day on the 25th June and attended a special event at the town hall, organised by Luther Blissett, Lauren Fox and Elizabeth Burns.

Celebrating Pride in Watford

As June approached we were pleased to raise the pride flag outside the town hall to show support to our LGBTQ+ community here in Watford. Every year we join residents and companies across the town to celebrate the many advances in LGBT rights that have been secured in recent years, but also recognise that there is more that needs to be done for all

people to be treated equally. We are also looking forward to supporting Herts Pride in Cassiobury Park on 20th August this year.

New Sunday markets are off to a successful start.

I am already proud of the great market we have here in Watford but it has recently become even bigger and better with the introduction of our Sunday Speciality markets. This latest initiative builds on some of the other improvements to the market including the introduction of Market Lates.

Each of the Sunday Markets have a specific focus and provide the opportunity for residents and visitors in Watford to experience a wide range of products and services. The first Sunday Market was held on 22 May and specialised in providing space to new businesses, young traders and start ups. Upcoming markets will specialise in antiques and vintage (24 July), vegan and green (21 August) and Continental (18 September). Following that we will have a market to coincide with the Great Big Green Week (25 September).

I hope that the Sunday markets continue to go from strength to strength and provide a boost to both existing and new traders, as well as the surrounding shops and venues.

Agenda Item 10

Part A

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: 17 July 2022

Report author: Senior Democratic Services Officer

Title: Scrutiny annual report 2021-22

1.0 Summary

1.1 The constitution requires that a report be presented to Council annually on the work of scrutiny during the preceding year. This report describes the work and process of the council's scrutiny committees and task groups during 2021-22.

2.0 Risks

2.1 There are no risks identified from this report.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That Council notes the scrutiny annual report for 2021/22.

Further information:

Jodie Kloss

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Tel: 01923 278376

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

4.0 Scrutiny at Watford Borough Council in 2021-22

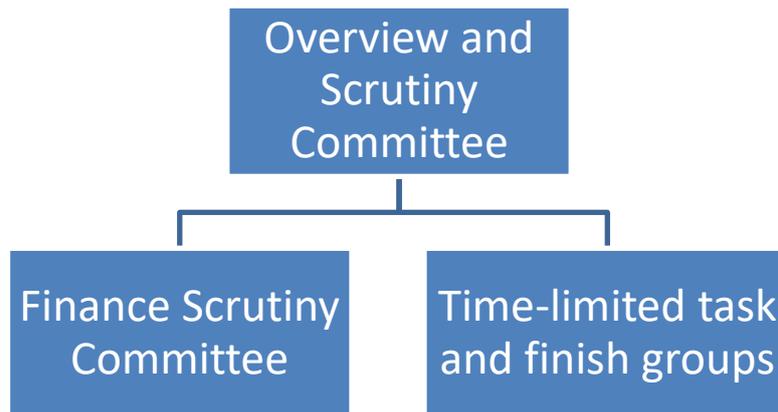
4.1 Purpose and structure of scrutiny at Watford Borough Council

4.1.1 Scrutiny is part of Watford Borough Council's democratic structure. It is led by non-executive councillors who check and challenge executive decision making to ensure that it is carried out in the best interests of Watford's residents. With a focus on optimising services for the local community, scrutiny members undertake three key areas of work:

- Reviewing and developing council policies to help shape the delivery of public services

- Scrutinising decisions to check that the actions being taken are correct and that services are operating effectively
- Examining external partners providing services which impact on the local community.

4.1.2 Watford Borough Council has two main scrutiny committees: Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Finance Scrutiny Committee. In addition, there is provision for up to three time-limited task groups per year:



4.2 Scrutiny in numbers

4.2.1 During 2021-22:

- 19 out of the 30 non-executive councillors attended at least one scrutiny meeting or one of the two scrutiny task and finish groups
- There were 15 attendances by portfolio holders to a scrutiny committee or task group meeting to respond to questions on behalf of the Executive
- 20 substantive issues were scrutinised by members
- 14 public scrutiny meetings were held, covering Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Finance Scrutiny Committee
- 2 in-depth task and finish groups were completed
- 7 partners and stakeholders provided evidence to scrutiny
- In total more than 200 hits were made to the website to view part or all of a scrutiny meeting across the year, representing an increase on the 150 hits made in the previous year.

4.3 Scrutiny training

4.3.1 Scrutiny training is compulsory for councillors sitting or substituting on scrutiny committees. It must be repeated every two years.

- 4.3.2 15 councillors attended the training session run by Tony Jackson, a trainer from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS). Following this, a further session was organised with the CfGS focusing on questioning skills which was attended by 11 councillors. In addition, the Head of Finance held a bespoke training session on the role of the Finance Scrutiny Committee ahead of its first meeting as well as a session on treasury management later in the year.
- 4.3.3. External training on chairing skills for scrutiny meetings was also offered to scrutiny chairs and vice chairs, including those who had recently or were currently chairing scrutiny task and finish groups.

4.4 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

4.4.1 **Membership**

The council's overarching scrutiny committee comprised nine councillors:

Councillor Amanda Grimston (Chair)

Councillor Jagtar Singh Dhindsa (Vice Chair)

Councillors Simon Feldman, Peter Hannon, Tom Osborn, Maggie Parker, Glen Saffery, Bill Stanton and Matt Turmaine

The following portfolio holders also attended meetings during the course of the year:

- Portfolio Holder for Commercial Property, Planning and Housing Services, Councillor Stephen Johnson
- Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability, Councillor Ian Stotesbury
- Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Tim Williams
- Portfolio Holder for Community, Councillor Aga Dychton.

4.4.2 **Committee's work programme for 2021/22**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on nine occasions during the year. No Executive key decisions were called in. The following summarises discussions on the substantive items considered by the committee:

- **Council performance updates.** Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook quarterly reviews of the council's performance against a range of indicators in order to monitor and challenge results. Members kept a watching brief on the performance of the Revenues and Benefits service, challenging the performance as appropriate. The impact of staff secondments to test and trace was noted and a full briefing paper was provided by the Head of Revenues and Benefits during the course of the year. The levels of targets in a number of areas were also questioned to ensure that they were driving improvement.

- **Council’s Strategic Framework.** In July 2020, the council agreed a new Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22; Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24; and the refreshed Covid-19 Road to Renewal Plan. Scrutiny members undertook regular reviews of this strategic framework with the aim of checking progress and providing feedback. During the year, members paid particular attention to ongoing work on staff wellbeing and recognition as well as the development of agile working approaches. Members retained a focus on consultation in their review of the strategic framework, seeking reassurance in a number of areas that views of a wide range of groups had been incorporated into different projects and initiatives.
- **Hospital redevelopment plans.** Representatives from West Hertfordshire Hospital Trust made a presentation to the committee on the Trust’s plans. Members sought clarity on the rationale behind retaining all three sites as part of the plans. Questions were also raised about whether an inter-site transport service would be beneficial to patients.
- **Homelessness Strategy.** Officers from the housing team made a presentation to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy. Members commended the best practice model that had been established, the success of the Everyone In programme and the reduction in families in temporary accommodation. Reassurance was sought that appropriate resources were being put in place to ensure that targets continued to be met in times of high demand.
- **CCTV in Watford.** Following a petition to Council, Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the CCTV provision in Watford. Considering the forthcoming CCTV review, members made suggestions for locations that could benefit from additional provision. Responding to residents’ concerns around privacy, more data was requested around how CCTV had contributed to arrests and the reduction of crime and disorder in Watford. The committee expressed an intention to review the move of the CCTV control room to the new police station in the future.
- **Sustainable Transport Contracts – Beryl Bike Scheme.** The committee received an update on the bike hire scheme that had been in operation since March 2020. Given the council’s investment into the scheme, members suggested that increasing the council branding on the scheme would be desirable. The committee also provided feedback on the visual impact of the bays to ensure they were tidier. It had previously been agreed that consideration of the ArrivaClick demand-responsive bus service would be undertaken by the committee in summer 2022.

- **Impact of the changes to waste collections (Veolia).** Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited Veolia to attend one of its meetings to review the changes to the waste and recycling service. The committee noted the uptake of the chargeable green bin service and the increase in recycling levels under the new service provision. Members queried the fee levels, including concessions, and how these compared with other authorities. Officers undertook to provide figures for the income generated from the service.
- **Scrutiny task and finish groups.** Overview and Scrutiny Committee established and oversaw completion of two task and finish groups reviewing issues relating to:
 - The Sustainable Transport Strategy
 - Electric Vehicles

Further details are provided below.

- **Responding to the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford's BAME communities and street name policy review task group recommendations update.** Scrutiny members examined progress on the outstanding recommendations from this task group undertaken in late 2020. Many of the recommendations had been completed and others were in progress. The committee noted the intention to finalise the council's new Equalities Policy during 2022.
- **Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) task group recommendations update.** Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed progress on the recommendations of its October 2020 task group. The recommendations were reviewed alongside those made in a parallel piece of work on the voluntary sector strategy. Representatives from W3RT attended to speak to the report. Members welcomed all that had been achieved and focused on engagement with key groups including young people, older people and the business community. The committee agreed to review the work on the voluntary sector again in the future.
- **Community Safety Partnership 2021/22.** As part of the council's statutory duty to undertake a review of the local community safety partnership, this item included a summary of the performance in 2021 and the proposed priorities for 2022. The scrutiny committee supported the proposed priority to 'reassure and inform' residents, intended in part to address the mismatch between perceived and actual crime levels. Members welcomed the work to ensure that the Police and Crime Commissioners' precept reflected the demand in Watford. Officers supported the proposal for meetings with new police officers in Watford to aid their orientation. The partnership remained strong and effective in Watford.

- **Executive Decision Progress report.** In order to maintain transparency, scrutiny members regularly received details of all proposed and pending Executive key decisions.
- **Hertfordshire County Council’s Health Scrutiny Committee.** The Chair updated the committee on the work carried out by the county’s Health Scrutiny Committee including data on Covid 19 and flu vaccinations. Members expressed some frustration with these meetings being cancelled and the nature of the items on the agenda. Full details of the Health Scrutiny Committee are available on the [County Council’s website](#).
- **Updates from Finance Scrutiny Committee.** Updates were provided as required from Finance Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of Finance Scrutiny Committee was also present to provide feedback as required.
- **Work programme reviews.** Regular reviews of the rolling work programme enabled members to add items to the forward programme and to amend sequencing to meet with changing priorities. As a result, a number of changes were made to the work programme during the year and several items were proposed for the 2022/23 scrutiny programme.

The reports and minutes for Overview and Scrutiny Committee are available on the [council’s website](#).

4.5 Finance Scrutiny Committee

The scrutiny committee comprised:

Councillor Matt Turmaine (Chair)

Councillor Peter Kloss (Vice chair)

Councillors Karen Clarke-Taylor, Asif Khan, Rabi Martins, Maggie Parker, Glen Saffery, Bill Stanton and Darren Walford

The portfolio holder responsible for Resources and Customer Services, Councillor Mark Watkin, also regularly attended meetings.

Finance Scrutiny Committee met on five occasions during the year. The following items were discussed:

- **The final outturn for 2020/21.** Finance Scrutiny Committee considered in particular: the revised net revenue and capital budgets, the council’s reserves, identified losses of income, emergency funding granted to the council due to Covid 19 and the ongoing impact of Covid 19. The minutes of the discussion were forwarded to Cabinet.

- **Croxley Business Park.** Scrutiny members reviewed the performance of the Croxley Business Park after the council's acquisition. Particular attention was paid to vacancy rates, income/cashflow management and the effect of the pandemic. A further Part B discussion took place to consider the topic in more detail.
- **Property Investment Board.** The committee received a presentation on the current activities of the Property Investment Board. Members were informed by Lambert Smith Hampton Investment Management about the diversification of the council's portfolio since 2016 and how this affected the impact of pandemic on the core portfolio. A further Part B discussion took place to consider the work of the Property Investment Board more closely.
- **Impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.** Members discussed the council's finances as a result of Covid 19. Updates were provided on identified loss of income, additional expenditure, emergency funding and the distribution of grants to local businesses. The committee discussed whether it was possible to predict the return to pre-Covid financial activity and details on the take up of Covid grants by local businesses. The Portfolio Holder reported that in 2020/21 7930 grants were paid out to local businesses totalling £28 million and circulated the data to the committee.
- **Financial planning.** Members considered the latest working version of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and an update on the income charging policy with fees and charges for the following year. There was also detail on the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management strategy. Particular attention was drawn to the increase in funeral costs and a discussion was had and a vote taken on freezing these costs; the motion was lost. There was also discussion of an increase in council tax rates and information on grants received by central government due to the pandemic.
- **The Finance Digest Budget Monitor** was reviewed regularly by the committee who sought clarification on various issues, including those relating to the council's commercial income, capital investments, staff vacancies and the potential impact of the Ukraine crisis. Members also sought clarification on updated expenditure of Covid grants from central government. The Portfolio Holder requested that a report detailing the usage of grants received during the pandemic be brought to the committee in a future meeting.
- **Budget proposals.** The committee Chair, Councillor Turmaine, brought a report to the committee detailing a list of budget proposals from the Labour group to be considered by the administration. After discussion, three proposals were agreed to be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration. These related to 'happy to chat' benches, fly-tipping and developing an age-friendly town.

- **Additional items** during the year included a Treasury Management training session delivered by the Head of Finance and a presentation delivered on the government's Levelling Up white paper.
- **Work programme.** Finance Scrutiny Committee's work programme was agreed at the start of the year, but remained open for new suggestions from members. The Portfolio Holder requested that a report detailing the usage of grants received during the pandemic be brought to the committee in a future meeting.

Details of the committee's agendas and minutes are available [here](#).

4.6 Task Groups

During the year, two task and finish groups were set up. One reviewed the forthcoming Sustainable Transport Strategy and the other focused on the council's approach to electric vehicles.

4.6.1 Sustainable Transport Strategy Task Group

Following a scrutiny proposal from the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Transport, a cross-party task group met in November and December 2021 to review the draft strategy. Membership comprised Councillors Simon Feldman, Amanda Grimston (Chair), Tom Osborn, Glen Saffery and Dennis Watling.

Given the substantial nature of the draft strategy, the task group agreed to focus on the following areas:

- **Neighbourhoods** including street traffic filters and mini transport hubs
- **Travel schemes** including the HERT link, uses for the Croxley rail line, the DRT and park and ride.
- **Community engagement** including reward schemes and wider engagement plans.
- **Monitoring** including oversight of the implementation of the strategy.

Members received presentations from officers from Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council. The task group undertook its work at pace, holding four meetings in a short time period to ensure the final report would be presented to Cabinet alongside the draft strategy.

Drawing its conclusions, the task group highlighted areas that should be considered priorities for the successful implementation of the strategy. These included a focus on minimising car use for journeys under 2 miles, ongoing joint working with neighbouring districts, developing travel plans for schools and the importance of

building confidence in travelling by alternative means than private cars. The [final report](#) and recommendations were presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 31 January 2022. It was then forwarded to Cabinet, who accepted the task group's recommendations in full.

4.6.2 Electric vehicles task group

This scrutiny proposal was also made by the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Transport and it sought to explore how the council could continue to support and enable electric vehicle use in the borough. Membership comprised Councillors Simon Feldman (Chair), Mark Hofman, Glen Saffery, Jessica Stiff and Dennis Watling.

The task group undertook its work during January 2022. At the first meeting, officers provided a presentation on the charging infrastructure programme. The task group was also provided with case studies of innovative projects to enable EVs as well as key work streams from across the council which supported electric vehicles. The second meeting included officers working on sustainability and transport more widely and allowed members to make conclusions and recommendations.

Drawing together the findings into a report, the task group highlighted a number of key areas, these included:

- Communications. This would ensure that residents could access pertinent information about facilities available to them as well as making the case for using EVs.
- Collaborative working. To continue to develop the charging infrastructure, particularly on-street, joint working with Hertfordshire County Council was vital to enable the needs of residents living in all areas of the borough were met.
- An electric vehicle strategy. This programme would benefit from a strategy to consider charging needs across the borough, capitalising on land owned by the council and other partners and to review the approaches to funding models and participating in trials of alternative technologies.

The task group's [final report](#) and recommendations were agreed in full by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by Cabinet in February 2022.

4.6.3 Implementation of the two task groups' recommendations will be monitored by Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2023/24.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.3.1 There are no equalities, human rights or data protections implications as a result of this report.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications as a result of this report.

5.5 Accommodation

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications as a result of this report.

5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.6.1 The council has a statutory duty to scrutinise the local crime and disorder partnership and this took place in March 2022 and is scheduled again for February 2023.

5.7 Sustainability

5.7.1 There are no sustainability implications as a result of this report.

Appendices

None

Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Reports and minutes of scrutiny committees are available on the [council's website](#).

Agenda Item 11

Part A

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: Tuesday, 19 July 2022

Report author: Democratic Services Officer (IS)

Title: Neighbourhood Locality Fund Annual Report 2021/22

1.0 Summary

1.1 This document provides the annual report for the Neighbourhood Locality Funds in accordance with the fund's protocol. It includes information about the overall budget and types of projects the wards have supported during 2021/22.

2.0 Risks

2.1 There are no identified risks as a result of this report.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the Neighbourhood Locality Fund annual report be noted.

Further information:

Ian Smith

ian.smith@watford.gov.uk

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

4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The wards spent a combined total of £32,391.47, equating to 90%* of the overall budget. Wards spent within a range of 65%* to 100% of the budget available to them, an average of £2,699.29 each. This is broken down by ward as follows:

Ward	Starting budget	Number of projects	Expenditure
Callowland	£3,000.00	3	£2,401.04
Central	£3,000.00	6	£2,484.00

Holywell	£3,000.00	5	£3,000.00
Leggatts	£3,000.00	3	£2,439.00
Meriden	£3,000.00	6	£2,581.00
Nascot	£3,000.00	3	£2,857.44
Oxhey	£3,000.00	3	£1,936.99
Park	£3,000.00	2	£3,000.00
Stanborough	£3,000.00	5	£2,920.00
Tudor	£3,000.00	4	£3,000.00
Vicarage	£3,000.00	1	£3,000.00
Woodside	£3,000.00	7	£2,772.00

4.2 The full breakdown of expenditure by ward is available on the [council's website](#). The different types of expenditure have been reviewed to identify the most popular, including the amount spent and the percentage this equated to in relation to the overall budget. The breakdown of the expenditure into different categories is as follows:

- Environmental improvements (£8,187.91 equalling 25% of the budget).
- Local community groups and organisations (£7,461.99 equalling 21% of the budget).
- Community clean up and skips (£3,557.00 equalling 10% of the budget).
- Charities and charitable donations (£3,340.00 equalling 9% of the budget).
- Highways improvements (£3,214.43 equalling 9% of the budget).
- Culture and heritage (£1,525.00 equalling 4% of the budget).
- Faith groups (£1,467.14 equalling 4% of the budget).
- Sports groups (£1,000 equalling 3% of the budget).
- Schools and play groups (£935.00 equalling 3% of the budget).
- Youth groups including scouts (£930 equalling 3% of the budget).
- Residents' groups (£773.00 equalling 2% of the budget).

*All percentages quoted have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

4.3 Comparison of expenditure with 2020/21

4.3.1 Environmental improvements (primarily tree planting) made up a substantial 25% of the expenditure, thus enhancing Watford's green credentials (although this is slightly down by 3% from last year). The second largest percentage of expenditure shows the importance that members place on community, with eight of the 12 wards providing 21% of their total budget for community groups, a notable increase from 8% last year.

4.3.2 The three categories of: school and playgroups, youth groups, and sports groups, only received 3% each of the total budget. In 2020/21 this was 9% of the total spend with, sports clubs receiving no funding in 2020-21.

- 4.3.3 Community clean up and skips, saw a significant increase from last year, growing from 2% to 10% expenditure.
- 4.3.4 Charities (9%, down 1%) and residents' groups (2%, no change) remained at a broadly similar level to last year.
- 4.3.5 One ward, Oxhey sought approval from the Director of Finance to carry forward £1,063 of their previous year's budget for a specific project. Officers are in the process of confirming ward councillors' intentions with regard to this project.
- 4.3.6 In response to a recommendation by the auditor, the total number of projects completed for 2021-22 and the number of evaluation forms received back from members relating to those projects are shown below. 48 projects were completed, a decrease of 8 from last year. There were 25 evaluation forms completed by members, which is rate of 52%.

Ward	Number of projects	Evaluation forms received
Callowland	3	0
Central	6	4
Holywell	5	2
Leggatts	3	0
Meriden	6	2
Nascot	3	2
Oxhey	3	2
Park	2	2
Stanborough	5	4
Tudor	4	1
Vicarage	1	0
Woodside	7	7

4.4 **Neighbourhood Locality Fund working group**

There was a review of the Neighbourhood Locality Fund process and the working group produced a report for Cabinet on 28 February 2022. The decision of Cabinet was that a new application process should be developed whereby applications could be made by organisations wishing to benefit from funds through the council's website and this was to be introduced in 2023/24 at the earliest.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the implications of the report are within current budgets.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that council has agreed criteria for the spending of the Neighbourhood Locality Funds.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 There are no risks associated with equalities or human rights as a direct result of this report.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications as a direct result of this report.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications as a direct result of this report.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no community safety or crime and disorder implications as a direct result of this report.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 There are no sustainability implications as a direct result of this report.

Appendices

None.

Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

- Applications and expenditure sheets for the individual wards and projects.
- Spreadsheet for analysis of expenditure.

Agenda Item 12

Part A

Report to: Full Council

Date of meeting: 19 July 2022

Report author: Executive Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Title: Updated Council Pay Policy Statement 2022

1.0 Summary

1.1 Council approved the Watford Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement on 15 March 2022. Since that time, a new senior management structure has been put in place and this report updates the information previously provided and agreed, taking account of the restructure.

2.0 Detail

2.1 The Council's success relies on the talent and contribution of its workforce enabling and ensuring it meets its objectives. The Council's Pay Policy Statement seeks to ensure the Council is able to attract, recruit, retain and engage the right people in order to achieve this.

2.2 The Pay Policy Statement pulls together all the elements that make up the Council's financial reward practices. It provides assurances of our consistency, fairness and transparency and gives clarity to all our stakeholders about how and what our people are rewarded for. It defines the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.

2.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish its position on 1 April each year in relation to specific areas of chief officers pay as follows: - remuneration levels, all other payments, incremental progression, performance related pay, bonus payments, redundancy, severance/ compensation, and retirement payments, and the Council's policy on the re-engagement of chief officers. In the event that a council wishes to change these during the course of the year to which the Pay Policy Statement relates the statement must be revised and approved by a full council meeting.

2.4 Cabinet approved a restructure of senior management in the Council at its meeting on 13 June 2022 and the Chief Officer Pay Panel on 20 June 2022 and Functions Committee on 14 June 2022 agreed changes to the pay scales for Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. In order to be able to implement those changes a revised Pay Policy Statement needs to be agreed and published. This report therefore seeks Council approval to a revised Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

2.5 The recommendation of the Hutton Report into "Fair Pay in the Public Sector" as recognised by the Government in the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, was that a pay ratio of the salary of the Chief Executive compared to the median average salary in the organisation should be published. This is set out in Section 18 of the Pay Policy Statement, which shows the ratio to be 1:3.7. The Council does not have a

policy on maintaining or reaching a specific pay multiple but is conscious of the need to ensure that the salary of the highest paid employee is not excessive but is consistent with the needs of the Council as expressed in this policy statement.

2.6 The Hutton report raised concerns about multiples in the order of 1:20 or higher between the lowest and highest paid employees in local authorities. The Council's current lowest to highest ratio, including apprenticeships, is 1:6.5, which, is considerably lower. Including apprenticeship posts, the lowest pay in use by Watford Borough Council is within Band 4 paying £11.93 per hour excluding LW. This is above the real living wage of £9.90 per hour for 2021/22.

3.0 Risks

3.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Council does not fulfil requirements of Localism Act 2011 in publishing the pay policy	Localism Act not complied with	The Council Pay Policy Statement is published	treat	2

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 That Council approve the updated Council Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

Further information:

For further information on this report please contact: Terry Baldwin, Executive Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development: telephone extension: 8133 email: terry.baldwin@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Terry Baldwin

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the financial implications of the Pay Policy are already built into the Revenue Budget.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments:-

As stated in the body of the report the changes to senior management structure and the revised pay grades can only be implemented if council approves a revised Pay Policy Statement for this financial year.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 There are no implications.

Appendices

Appendix A - Council Pay Policy Statement - 01 August 2022



**WE ARE
WATFORD**

**COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT
August 2022**



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's success relies on the talent and contribution of its workforce enabling and ensuring it meets its objectives. Our Pay Policy seeks to ensure the Council is able to attract, recruit, retain and engage the right people in order to achieve this.
- 1.2 The Pay Policy pulls together all the elements that make up the Council's reward practices. It provides assurances of our consistency, fairness and transparency and gives clarity to all our stakeholders about how and what our people are rewarded for. It defines the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers, and all senior staff, in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish its position in relation to specific areas of chief officers pay as follows : - remuneration levels, all other payments, incremental progression, performance related pay, bonus payments, redundancy, severance/ compensation, and retirement payments, and the Council's policy on the re-engagement of chief officers. This Pay Policy statement sets out the Council's position in these areas.
- 1.4 The Council employs 240 officers, which represents a full time equivalent based on a 37 hour week of 218.99.
- 1.5 The gross salary expenditure for the Council for the financial year 2022/23 is estimated to be £12,430,103.
- 1.6 Best practice recommends the Council consults a remuneration committee on all proposals relating to pay and reward for Senior Officers thus ensuring openness and accountability. This responsibility is delegated by Full Council to the Council Functions Committee and Chief Officer Pay Panel.
- 1.7 This policy will be reviewed and approved at least annually or as required by Full Council, and may be accessed via the Council's external web site.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

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

Head of Paid Service	Chief Executive
Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)	Director of Finance (Three Rivers District Council)
Chief Officers - Executive Director/Executive Heads of Service	*Monitoring Officer and Corporate Governance *Executive Director of Corporate, Housing and Wellbeing Services *Executive Director of Place *Executive Head of Strategy and Initiatives (Communications, Partnerships and Community) *Executive Head of Strategy and Initiatives (Sustainability and Culture) * Executive Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development (interim)
Deputy Chief Officers - Associate Directors	*Associate Director of ICT and Shared Services *Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services *Associate Director of Housing and Wellbeing *Associate Director of Planning, Infrastructure and Economy *Associate Director of Property and Asset Management *Associate Director of Environment *Head of Finance (Three Rivers District Council) *Head of Revenue & Benefits (Three Rivers District Council)

See organisation structure chart and role profiles in appendix 1.

- 2.4 The remuneration of the Executive Directors/Executive Heads of Service was determined by the Chief Officer Pay Panel in June 2022 and that of the Chief Executive in 2019/20 when recruiting to the post.
- 2.5 The Council's Director of Finance/ Section 151 Officer is directly employed by Three Rivers District Council and remunerated in accordance with Three Rivers District Council Chief Officer pay rates for Directors. The Head of Finance and Head of Revenue & Benefits are also directly employed by Three Rivers District Council and remunerated in accordance with the Shared Services, Head of Service pay band.
- 2.6 Pay bands are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.
- 3.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**
- 3.1 The Council's Chief Officers, i.e. the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, and Executive Directors/ Executive Heads of Service are engaged on Joint National Council (JNC) national terms and conditions of service.
- 3.2 The Council's Deputy Chief Officers, i.e. the Associate Directors, who report directly to Executive Directors/Executive Heads of Service, are engaged on National Joint Council (NJC) national terms and conditions.
- 3.3 It should be noted that different national negotiating machinery applies across the senior management team.
- 4.0 PRINCIPLES**

-
- 4.1 The Pay Policy reflects the aspirations of the Council Plan and Council Delivery Plan 2022-2026 and defines the Council's approach to managing reward that is guided by the following principles:-
 - 4.2 All Council officer jobs are job evaluated using an analytical job evaluation scheme to allocate points to posts and establish relativity between all posts in the organisation.
 - 4.3 The Council reviews appropriate external pay market information to ensure remuneration levels are consistent with Local Government, provide value for money for the taxpayer, and support the Council to remain competitive as an employer in areas of skills shortage.
 - 4.4 If appropriate, market factors are applied to hard to fill posts. Where applied these supplements are reviewed annually in accordance with the market factor policy.
 - 4.5 The Chief Executive receives a spot salary the level of which was reviewed in 2020.
 - 4.6 Cost of living inflation increases for the Chief Executive and Chief Officer pay scales are awarded in accordance with the Joint National Council (JNC) for Chief Executives and the Joint National Council (JNC) for Chief Officers. Chief Officers are remunerated according to the pay scale applicable to their job. Progression within each grade is time based, subject to satisfactory performance and where appropriate awarded annually to the top of the grade, effective from 1 April (see appendix 2).
 - 4.7 Cost of living inflation increases for Deputy Chief Officers, i.e. Associate Directors of Service, are awarded in accordance with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authorities. Deputy Chief Officers are remunerated according to the pay scale applicable to their job. Progression within each grade is time based, subject to satisfactory performance and where appropriate awarded annually to the top of the grade, effective from 1 April (see appendix 2).
 - 4.8 The remuneration of a Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer on appointment will be at a point on the relevant pay scale for the job appropriate to their experience and salary level in their previous job.
 - 4.9 It is not the policy of the Council to award bonuses to its Chief Officers. However, due to the extreme difficulty in filling the Associate Director of Property and Asset Management, a bonus payment is paid to this post as an exceptional case.
 - 4.10 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness; is clear about what people are being paid for, and is consistent, systematic and transparent when applying reward practices. Pay models have been developed based upon appropriate pay market information and ensure that the ratio of pay levels between the highest paid officer and the median/ mean average/ low paid earnings in the Council remains consistent and is not distorted as a result of pay awards.
 - 4.11 The Council's lowest paid employees are those post holders whose jobs are graded in the lowest pay band, which is Band 4 in a 14 band pay model. Jobs are evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation scheme.
 - 4.12 Resignation. The Chief Officer's last entitlement to pay will be the last day of service, taking into account notice period and any period of pay in lieu of notice.

Redundancy or early termination in the interests of the service and Pension Benefits of Chief Officers will be made in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Early retirement and early termination compensation policies however please see paragraph 9.6 below.

5.0 EQUALITIES

-
- 5.1 The Council is committed to equality of opportunity. All members of staff will be treated fairly based on ability, performance and contribution irrespective of their employment or contractual status and personal circumstances, i.e. part time, fixed term. The Council monitors equalities data and this policy shall be applied fairly, consistently and equitably for all employees irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, offending past, caring or dependency status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity or gender identity and it is incumbent on those managing this policy to ensure that this is the case.
- 6.0 **GRADING**
- 6.1 **Chief Officers – Chief Executive and Executive Directors/Executive Heads of Service**
- 6.2 **Job Evaluation** – posts were assessed on data received relating to the external recruitment market and in conjunction with guidance received from the East of England LGA with regard to the Senior Manager job evaluation scheme.
- 6.3 **Deputy Chief Officers – Associate Directors of Service**
- 6.4 **Job evaluation** - posts were assessed on data received regarding the external recruitment market, in conjunction with guidance received from the East of England LGA and taking into account the council's job evaluation scheme, ensuring relativity between all Council posts covered by NJC terms and conditions.
- 6.5 **Pay model** - The pay model is presented in appendix 3
- 6.6 **Labour market information** – Comparative East of England Local Authority pay information, Croner Reward Job Evaluation system and the Croner Market Pay analysis for Public Services provides the source of comparative pay information when there is a requirement for a role to be reviewed for example when it is hard to fill or are in areas of skills shortages within the council and are reviewed annually. There are currently no Market supplements applying to Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer roles, although as noted in paragraph 4.9 above, a bonus payment is paid to the Associate Director of Property and Asset Management as an exceptional case.
- 6.7 **All other posts in the Council**
- 6.8 All other officer posts are job evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation Scheme (LGJES), and graded within one of the pay Bands in the 14 grade pay model in Appendix 3. No Council post is graded below Band 4, and the minimum pay for Band 4 is £22,269 plus £914 London weighting allowance, (see 8.1 below). Where appropriate posts attract a market supplement and the market forces payments policy should be consulted for further information.
- 6.9 Market factor supplements apply to the following non Chief Officer posts in the Council
- Electoral Services Manager
 - Senior Infrastructure Engineer
 - Senior Project Manager (Road to Renewal)
 - Programme Manager
 - Economic Development Manager
 - Senior Transport & Infrastructure Project Officer
 - Compliance & Maintenance Officer
 - Transport & Infrastructure Manager
 - Traffic Regulation Order Manager

7.0 INCREMENTS

- 7.1 Posts receive annual time based increments effective on 1 April until remuneration reaches the top of the grade.
- 7.2 On appointment, all posts will normally be remunerated at the lowest incremental spinal column point within the grade, (unless 4.8 applies above).
- 7.3 The Council will apply the annual cost of living percentage increment as negotiated by the NJC national agreement to the values of incremental spinal column points as appropriate. At the time of writing this statement the April 2022 pay award has yet to be agreed.

8.0 ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS

- 8.1 London Weighting (LW) – is the inner fringe London Weighting Allowance and is negotiated as part of the national framework. LW is an additional payment that is made to all officers in the Council, and the rate is negotiated nationally by NJC.
- 8.2 The Head of Paid Service receives additional payment for duties as Clerk to the West Herts. Crematorium, and fees for Returning Officer duties during elections as and when appropriate.

9.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS)

- 9.1 All officers are eligible to join and contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Officer contribution rates are a percentage of their earnings. Levels of contribution are stated by the scheme, and are based on the whole time equivalent value of all contractual pay excluding any travel allowance payments. The employer's contribution to the scheme is 19%.
- 9.2 The table below provides the proposed Member contribution table for 2022/23.

Pay Bands	Contribution Rates
Up to £15,000	5.5%
£15,001 - £23,600	5.8%
£23,601 - £38,300	6.5%
£38,301 - £48,500	6.8%
£48,501 - £67,900	8.5%
£67,901 - £96,200	9.9%
£96,201 - £113,400	10.5%
£113,401 to £170,100	11.4%
Over £170,101	12.5%

- 9.3 The normal retirement age for the LGPS is State Pension Age, or age 65 (whichever is the higher).
- 9.4 With the exception of early retirement for the reason of permanent ill health (to which no age restrictions apply), the earliest age an officer can retire and receive pension benefits is 55.
- 9.5 Early retirement may be granted in the following circumstances:

Early termination of employment for the reason of redundancy
On ill health grounds

On compassionate grounds
Efficiency of the service
Request to go

9.6 The Council's Redundancy, early retirement and early termination compensation, pension discretions policy should be consulted as appropriate for further information.

10.0 **REDUNDANCY**

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

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

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

11.0 **EARLY RETIREMENT FOR THE REASON OF ILL HEALTH**

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

12.0 **EARLY RETIREMENT ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

14.0 **EARLY PAYMENT OF PENSION BENEFITS ON REQUEST TO LEAVE (ASK TO GO)**

14.1 **Criteria**

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

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

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

14.2 **Benefits**

Under 55

- Not available

Over 55

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

Employees can elect to retire and receive pension benefits from age 60, but there are no added years awarded and accrued pension benefits are actuarially reduced.

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

15.0 **FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT**

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

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

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

16.0 **RE-EMPLOYMENT POST SEVERANCE OR REDUNDANCY**

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

- What is the nature of the work to be undertaken?
- How similar is the work to that formally undertaken by the individual?
- Is it work that the individual could have been redeployed to?
- The work should be a specific project or task where the skills/ knowledge set required is unique to that individual

- The work should be such that it could not be undertaken by anyone else currently employed in the Council

17.0 OFFICERS WHO HAVE RETIRED AND ARE IN RECEIPT OF PENSION

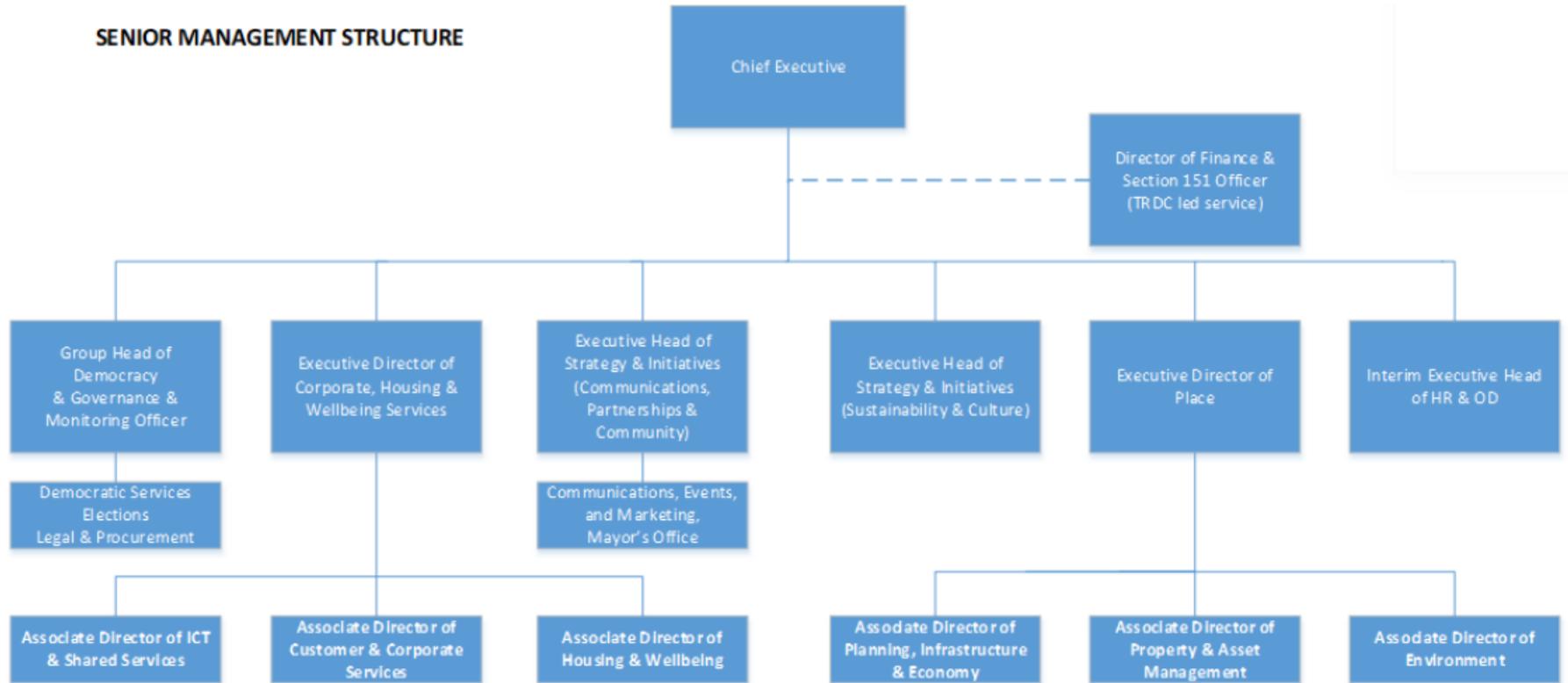
- 17.1 If an officer is in receipt of their Local Government Pension and returns to work for the Council an abatement of their pension will apply if the pay for the new post plus the LGPS pension they receive exceeds the value of the salary for the post from which they retired. LPFA should be consulted for advice.
- 17.2 Flexible retirement subject to agreement by the Council provides an option for an officer to continue in employment post retirement age and to take some or all their pension working on reduced hours or reduced pay. The flexible retirement policy should be accessed for full information.

18.0 PAY RELATIVITY AND LOWER PAID STAFF

- 18.1 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness when setting pay levels for all officers. All jobs are job evaluated meaning each has an analytical score providing its relative value in the organisation and each job is linked to a defined pay model.
- 18.2 The Council defines its lowest paid staff as those whose posts are graded on the lowest grade in the pay model. Pay rates are based on whole time equivalent salaries.
- 18.3 Including apprenticeship posts, the mean average earnings in the Council are £37,068 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:3.8. The median earnings in the Council are £37,568 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:3.7. Including apprenticeships, the lowest earnings in the Council are £23,023, giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:6.5. Excluding apprenticeship posts, the lowest earnings in the Council are also £23,023 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:6.5.
- 18.4 The lowest pay band on the pay model (Band 1) is not in use by Watford Borough Council whose lowest remunerated post is within Band 4 paying £11.93 per hour excluding LW. This is above the real living wage of £9.90 per hour for 2021/22.
- 18.5 Cost of living pay increases in the Council are awarded consistently in line with those negotiated nationally by NJC. An analysis of pay awards for the previous 5 years is provided at Appendix 4.

Appendix 1

SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE





Job Description / Person Specification

Job Title:	Chief Executive
Service/ Department:	Corporate Services
Salary band:	Chief Executive Band
<p>Purpose of Role:</p> <p>Work with the Elected Mayor to provide effective leadership to the Council, developing and ensuring delivery of the Council's vision and objectives.</p> <p>Take overall responsibility for the effective management of the Council's resources, ensuring efficient, effective and high quality service delivery is provided.</p> <p>Working with the Elected Mayor to lead the Council's strategic partnership working, engaging with stakeholders to support a sustainable, prosperous town.</p> <p>To sustain a bold and progressive culture, embedding a customer focused, digitally enabled, and commercially minded approach across all of the council's function.</p>	
<p>Key Accountabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the delivery of the Mayor's and the council's strategies and policies • Assuring understanding, acceptance and support for the Mayor's Executive role • Transacting the Mayor's, Cabinet and Council decisions • Advising the Mayor and Members • Ensuring the effective delivery of the Council's various projects through Programme Management, objective setting for senior Leadership Team and reviews with key stakeholders. • Managing the Officer/Member/Political interface • Aligning corporate values with Political direction • Aligning strategic direction, corporate planning and resource allocation • Budget strategy and delivery of agreed budget • Leading Structural and Cultural change • Engaging with Strategic Partnerships • Ensuring effective performance management • Ensuring effective personal communication – up, down and outwards. 	
<p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All duties and responsibilities as defined in Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act (1989) • Delivering the Mayoral and Cabinet objectives through the Leadership Team • Articulating the Mayor and Cabinet agenda in corporate and service objectives • Providing managerial leadership to the Leadership Team • Alignment of cross-cutting programmes with substantive plans 	

- Management of Executive Directors/Executive Heads of Service – Appraisals/PDRS, Agreement of objectives, Reviewing performance

Personal attributes:

- Able to work constructively and effectively both internally and externally
- Able to lead by example
- Able to promote Watford
- Able to enhance Watford's influence locally, regionally and nationally
- Able to articulate a vision on how the Council's services can be better configured, embracing modern ways of working

Key Relationships:

- The Elected Mayor and Members
- Executive Directors/Executive Heads of Service
- Associate Directors of Service and senior leadership team
- External partners and stakeholders
- Peers in other Local Authorities within Hertfordshire, including Hertfordshire County Council and Herts CEO group and also other Local Authorities regionally and nationally

Important Notes Relating to Duties:

In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that s/he:-

- Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the Council's constitution, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Officer Code of Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time;
- Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and
- Seeks advice from the Head of Democracy & Governance or an officer with specialism in the subject area if in any doubt about the proper course of action.

Person Specification

Knowledge/Skills:

- Relevant professional and/or post graduate management qualification
- Detailed knowledge of a number of specialist areas within local government.
- Detailed knowledge of legislation governing local authority activities, including contracts and procurement/tendering
- Ability to develop effective strategic partnerships to enable the council to achieve its objectives
- Ability to influence and persuade a wide range of audiences on complex, sensitive and contentious matters
- Commercial nous to advise on long term investments and major financial deals

Experience

- Senior Local Government experience (minimum of 5 years at Chief Officer or equivalent)
- Extensive experience of public sector service delivery, both directly and via commissioning
- Experience of working with a wide range of partner organisations and professionals to deliver outcomes
- Experience of presenting effectively and persuasively to diverse audiences
- Experience of delivering services through Joint Ventures
- Experience of collaborative working with businesses and the third sector to enhance service delivery

ICT/Technical Expertise

- Strategic understanding of the application of ICT to local government operations
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications

Personal Qualities

- Personal and professional credibility
- Capacity to build effective relationships with partner organisations and stakeholders
- Political sensitivity
- Capacity to work outside office hours and manage a demanding workload

Politically Restricted Posts

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended), posts that are either specified under that Act or posts that are defined as sensitive under the Act because the post holder is required to either give advice on a regular basis to the executive or any committee of the Council, or speak on behalf of the Council on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters are 'Politically Restricted'. This means that the post holder is restricted in terms of public political activity. For further information with regard to this please contact Human Resources.

This post is a Specified Post and is politically restricted.

Job Share:

Job Share will not be considered for this post.

Equal Opportunities:

The Council fully supports the terms of The Equality Act 2010. We are an equal opportunities employer and do not discriminate on any grounds. We want a diverse workforce which reflects our community and welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and marital or civil partnership status.

We are also committed to improving opportunities for people with disabilities, and are a registered 'Disability Confident' employer. If you have a disability and demonstrate that you fulfil the essential person specification criteria for the role on your application form, you will be invited for an interview. If you feel that you could carry out this post with some adjustments, please let us know. If you require particular arrangements made for interview etc (e.g. signing, access), please indicate this on your application form.

Job description:	Name	Date
Written by (Manager)	Manny Lewis	Feb 2019
Reviewed by (Human Resources)	Terry Baldwin	Feb 2019

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

Job Title:	Director of Finance		Post Reference No:
Post Number:			RG0101
Service/ Department:	Corporate Resources and Governance	Section:	Finance
Grade:	Chief Officer		
Location:	You will normally be based at Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth and Watford Town Hall, Watford or any such other place of employment within the remit of the service as may be required.		
Hours per week:	37 hours per week. The post holder is expected to work the hours required to meet the demands of the role.		
Driver's licence requirements:	Casual. The post holder will be expected to travel as necessary to achieve the requirements of the role.		
Responsible to:	Joint reporting to Chief Executive Three Rivers District Council and Chief Executive, Watford Borough Council		
Responsible for:	Direct management responsibility for Finance and Revenue and Benefits; relationship role for Human Resources and ICT (which are directly managed by Watford)		

Purpose of Role:

- To act as Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council statutory, section 151, Officer providing advice to members and senior management on:
 - Financial Planning
 - Financial Control
 - Financial reporting
- To lead and manage the Finance and Revenue and Benefits Service

Important Notes Relating to Duties:

In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that she/he:-

Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the councils' constitutions, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Code of Official Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time;

Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and

Seeks advice from a more Senior Officer if in any doubt about the proper course of action.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To act as the joint statutory section 151, Officer to both Councils, ensuring an even spread of time is available to each Authority. In this role you will provide key strategic and financial advice to both authorities whilst recognising that they are separate and independent bodies and may well have different aims and priorities.
- To play a key role in the successful achievement of major regeneration projects at both authorities.
- To provide accurate medium term financial strategies to both authorities to enable future service delivery to be planned in a controlled environment.
- To identify opportunities to realise efficiency savings over the short and medium term which could include in house re-structuring or potential outsourced, partnership arrangements.
- To play an active role in guiding and advising the Senior Management Teams and key elected Members in achieving the vision of best performing authorities.

- To chair and coordinate the Management Team meetings
- To oversee the operation of Revenues and Benefits and Financial Services to both authorities. This role will necessitate a continuous review of both services to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, provide value for money and strive to be 'best in class' service providers. Every opportunity should be taken to harmonise processes within the overall constraint that the two authorities may wish to apply different policies.
- To be a lead client officer for the Internal Audit Service provided by Herts. County Council and the provision of an ICT outsourced service (Capita);
- To provide impartial advice to elected members at all key decision taking and scrutiny committees.
- To represent both councils at countywide and national forums.
- To undertake any other duties, commensurate with the grade and seniority of the post, as may reasonably be required.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

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



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Role title: Executive Director of Corporate, Housing & Wellbeing Services

Accountable to: Chief Executive

Role purpose

Our future leaders will be collaborative, open, influential, strategic and creative, able to build coalitions to drive a culture of innovation and achieve excellent results.

This role will have an impact on every aspect of the Council's activities. You will:

- Work to enhance organisational expertise in performance, programme and contract management;
- Review and develop our existing shared-service arrangement, as well as identifying and delivering new shared service opportunities;
- Deliver the Council's Commercial Strategy to identify and pursue opportunities to develop new income streams, convert new opportunities, maximise partnerships and access external funding;
- Develop and lead implementation of the Council's new Continuous Improvement Framework;

- Develop and implement a corporate approach to excellence in customer services;
- Ensure our services are integrated and easily accessible to all customers and that we are clear in how we manage and engage all those who come into contact with us;
- Bring together and transform services such as strategic housing, housing needs, homelessness, housing support, community cohesion and community protection;
- Enhance our commercial and operational performance to ensure a sustainable and self-sufficient organisation, fuelling our capacity to deliver better outcomes for our community;
- Align our people, project-management and performance strategies with the Council Plan and to meet our carbon neutral 2030 ambitions, ensuring people understand how their contribution matters and are clear on expectations.

As a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team, you will be required to demonstrate exceptional strategic leadership skills, inspiring and motivating people to succeed. You will have highly developed relationship skills that will enable you to build successful and effective partnerships to ensure we maintain and enhance our reputation as one of the best district councils in the country.

Through an integrated strategic approach, you will progress a range of programmes and projects that will meet our 2030 carbon-neutral commitments and deliver a number of high-profile commercial projects.

Main accountabilities of the role

Deliver and drive forward organisational expertise through the provision of high-quality and sustainable services/outcomes

- Work collaboratively with partners and develop new partnerships to deliver shared-services opportunities.
- Proactively identify opportunities to advance the Council Plan through continuous improvement initiatives that will deliver measurable performance and business improvement and culture change, embedding Reimaging Watford and our new Behaviours Framework.
- Drive the objectives of Reimaging Watford and a new Behaviours Framework.
- Be the senior responsible officer for major transformation and commercial investment programmes and projects across the Council.
- Lead the preparation and delivery of the borough's Nominations Policy, Housing Strategy, Tenancy Strategy and Private Sector Renewal Policy.
- Work collaborate with the Section 115 Officers to develop and manage a commercial risk mitigation and opportunity tracker across the Council's Capital Programme.

Provide robust corporate governance and assurance

- Empower officers to work within a risk-management and governance framework that sets out decision-making parameters (including budget) and the Council's appetite for risk.
- Maintain overall budgetary responsibility for the Corporate, Housing & Wellbeing Services Directorate.
- Ensure the efficient, effective and economic design, use and deployment of all resources across the Council.
- Ensure that the Directorate's financial resources are maximised to secure the best outcomes for residents within financial restraints, and achieve balanced budgets.
- Ensure that the Directorate has adequate management arrangements for Health and Safety, in accordance with the Council's policy, allowing it to meet legal obligations and demonstrate effective governance.
- Ensure full compliance with all appropriate legislation and statutory obligations.

Set strategy, delivering success and long-term transformation

- Lead and develop the Council's corporate and commercial strategies and delivery plans, working with, and influencing, a range of key stakeholders across Watford, Hertfordshire, the UK and the wider global economy, to ensure that Watford influences extensively, and develops its profile and accesses opportunities and funding.
- Develop and implement a Commercial Strategy and delivery plan to balance commercial opportunities against good governance and sound financial principles.
- Lead, develop and deliver the borough's Housing Strategy, Tenancy Strategy and Private Sector Renewal Policy.
- Lead and direct the development of a robust, strategic, continuous improvement framework that enables the delivery of council-wide, high-performing, customer-focused services for Watford.
- Lead the development and implementation of the Council's digital strategy, balancing technology, processes and people to deliver efficient, effective customer and community-focused services across the Council.
- Lead and promote a customer-focused approach to Council and service planning and improvement, leading the development and implementation of our Customer Experience Strategy.
- Lead the development and implementation of a robust contract-management framework to strengthen financial assessment and the monitoring of suppliers.
- Develop a risk-management and governance framework with the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer that sets out decision-making parameters (including budget) and the Council's appetite for risk.
- Work in partnership with the management team to develop a thorough approach to risk management that underpins all that we do, and ensure that Elected Members can make decisions on commercial projects that are well informed and evidence based.
- Develop and implement effective communication and engagement arrangements with service users, stakeholders and partnership agencies, in order to develop a high-level understanding of the roles and delivery of services and to facilitate input to the development of related strategies and plans.
- Formulate and implement corporate strategies and policies promoting a strong performance, transparent, risk and governance culture across the Council.
- Lead the delivery of the Council's Organisational Development Strategy, including a new Pay and Reward Strategy, to ensure the Council can attract and retain a high-calibre workforce to support the delivery of high-performing and customer-focused services.
- Develop and implement corporate services strategies for the provision of corporate services that are dynamic and respond to client needs.

Provide strategic leadership

- Provide strong strategic leadership and support to the Chief Executive, the Elected Mayor, Portfolio Holders and Elected Members, ensuring they receive high-quality advice on strategy and policy issues in the development and implementation of commercial projects to underpin the Council's financial resilience.
- Provide inspirational, constructive and decisive leadership to the Corporate, Housing & Wellbeing Directorate and create the conditions for a high-performance, networked operating model and culture across the Council, encouraging innovation and hybrid working
- Sit as a Director on a number of Boards of the Council's joint ventures.
- Continuously horizon scan for opportunities to improve services, deliver efficiency savings and develop commercial opportunities.
- Support the democratic process, providing advice to elected members on the appropriate response to local, national, European and international matters that have implications for the services.
- Demonstrate a commitment to own personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the role.

- Provide strategic leadership to the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion journey to deliver for both residents and staff. Driving through Equality, Diversity & Inclusion improvements/change across all services.

Support a collaborative and inclusive culture

- Play a key role in the collective and corporate leadership of the Council, setting strategic direction and personally providing the constructive leadership and vision needed to create the conditions for success within a supportive and transparent Strategic Leadership Team.
- Promote an organisational culture that is positive, forward-looking and embraces change, is outcomes orientated and community focused, in an environment that is fair, supportive and open, enabling employees to feel empowered and valued.
- Ensure effective and open communication and good working relations with the Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team, Members, Directorates, Groups, external agencies and partnerships, to eliminate silo working and support delivery of the Council's strategic aims.
- Take on corporate duties in connection with elections, emergency resilience and response and other cross-cutting responsibilities.
- Support all organisational development activities and embed through service engagement.
- Support the development of individuals and teams to develop career pathways to ensure a talent pipeline for the Council.

Portfolio of services

- Business Intelligence and GIS
- Community Protection
- Customer Experience
- Environmental Health Services, including food safety, pest control and sustainable energy and homes
- Enterprise Project Management Office
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- ICT
- Homelessness
- Housing, including private sector
- Licensing
- Mailroom and print
- Performance Management
- Shared Building Control and Planning Enforcement (contract management of shared service)
- Shared Finance (relationship management of the shared service)
- Shared Legal (after a shared-services model with our partner St Albans District Council has been implemented)
- Shared Revenues and Benefits (relationship management of the shared service)

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this post. The post holder may be required to carry out any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive that are commensurate with the level of the post.

The accountabilities outlined in the job description will be supplemented by annual key objectives, which will be developed and reviewed with the post holder as part of the annual appraisal process.

Person specification

Part one

Knowledge, experience and qualifications

- Relevant degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant management and leadership discipline.
- Strong and recent experience of driving and enhancing organisational performance and capability, with a solid track record of leading complex change and transformation at pace and scale, and developing/delivering organisational strategies.
- Experience of developing and embedding a commercial strategy, tools and approach across a complex, service-delivery-based organisation.
- Experience leading on procurement and contract management activities/organisational approach.
- Experience of identifying and working within shared-service arrangements.
- Substantial experience of operating in a senior leadership role and providing clear leadership, direction and advice within a complex, regulated environment.
- Proven leadership and people-management experience with the ability to empower and develop great managers
- Strong, political awareness and commercial and financial acumen.
- Background in a relevant sector, with sound knowledge of local government and the environment in which it operates.
- Experience of financial planning and budgeting and oversight and control of public funds.
- Experience of engaging with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Strong and recent experience of building and developing effective working relationships with partners and working in collaboration to ensure high-quality and seamless service delivery.

Part two**Skills and abilities**

- Well-developed strategic and critical thinking.
- Acknowledged as role model, expert and thought leader.
- Ability to identify opportunities for change and execute a new path forward.
- Ability to lead and manage change to deliver significant and continuous improvement.
- Sound decision making and leadership judgement.
- Ability to work in a highly complex, dynamic environment and deal with ambiguity.
- A strong community focus, with a reputation for getting things done.
- A proven flair for building positive, productive and influential relationships.
- Agile, adaptable and resilient; able to prioritise a large workload.
- Compelling communication and influencing skills.
- Collaborative, supportive team player.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continued professional development.

Part three**Behavioural competencies**

The council is currently working on a framework to reflect the competencies and behaviours we expect from our officer leaders and senior managers. This draws on the views of all staff who have been invited to participate in a series of focussed workshops.

The emerging draft framework encapsulates a range of key behaviours, which will be critical for our officer leaders and senior managers, including:

- **Working Together** – collaborating with one another, engaging with our stakeholders (both customers and partners), problem solving to achieve results and ensure performance and delivery;
- **Empowerment** – being agile and adaptable, resilient to pressure and change, accountable for our actions and creative in how we find solutions to any problems we encounter;
- **Developing our people** – guiding, motivating and developing staff to achieve high performance and deliver our ambition;
- **Organisational awareness** – understanding and being sensitive to organisational dynamics, culture and politics across and beyond the council and shaping our approach accordingly;
- **Strategic** – being visionary, seeing the big picture and balancing risks and opportunities whilst being aware of the context of the challenge, applying innovative thinking to issues to achieve results;
- **Underpinning** – communicating information clearly and convincingly, demonstrating leadership and ensuring sound, evidence based decision-making.



Role title: Executive Director of Place

Accountable to: Chief Executive

Role Purpose

Our future leaders will be collaborative, open, influential, strategic and creative, able to build coalitions to drive a culture of innovation and achieve excellent results.

This role is for the leader who will be the champion for our place. You will:

- Enhance and protect Watford, lead and enable growth, development, inward investment, and regeneration across the borough;
- Lead our approach to the economic development of Watford;
- Maintain an attractive, sustainable and well run town for residents, business and visitors through the effective management of waste and recycling services;
- Ensure all strategies deliver accessible and excellent parks, open spaces and public realm;
- Ensure that our services are integrated and easily accessible to all customers and that we are responsive and efficient in how we manage and engage with all who come into contact with us.

As a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team, you will be required to demonstrate exceptional strategic-leadership skills, inspiring and motivating people to succeed. You will have highly developed relationship-building skills that will enable you to build successful and effective partnerships that will ensure we continue to maximise the enormous potential in Watford.

Through an integrated, place-based approach, you will progress a range of programmes and projects that will protect and enhance our borough, develop our economy, meet our 2030 carbon neutral commitments and deliver a number of our high-profile regeneration projects.

Main accountabilities of the role

Drive forward 'our place' through delivery of high-quality and sustainable outcomes

- Lead the sustainable development of Watford's economy and physical infrastructure to realise the Council's vision for the borough.
- Work collaboratively with existing partners and develop new partnerships to secure major investment and sustainable growth in the borough.
- Through an integrated strategic approach, progress a range of programmes and projects that will meet our 2030 carbon neutral commitments and deliver a number of our high-profile, place-shaping projects.
- Be the senior responsible Officer for all major capital programmes and projects for capital delivery across the Council, and ensure they are delivered within the Council's project-management methodologies, and at pace.
- Lead the identification of regeneration projects and ensure they are delivered within the Council's project-management methodologies, and also at pace.
- Lead the delivery of the Council's Sustainable Transport Strategy, Local Plan, Town Centre Strategy and Planning Framework for Watford town centre.
- Scope and develop a plan to assess the viability of the Watford to Croxley link.
- Lead the delivery of the Neighbourhoods Project as part of the Town Hall Quarter Programme.
- Lead the delivery the Council's ambitions in relation to the provision of affordable rented homes.
- Lead the Council's response to the Environment Act 2021.
- Drive the objectives of Reimagining Watford and a new Behaviours Framework.

Provide robust corporate governance and assurance

- Empower officers to work within a risk-management and governance framework that sets out decision-making parameters (including budget) and the Council's appetite for risk.
- Maintain overall budgetary responsibility for the Place Directorate.
- Ensure that the best use is made of the Council's resources corporately to secure the best outcomes for residents within the resources available.
- Ensure that the best use is made of the Directorate's financial resources to optimise outcomes for residents within financial restraints and achieve balanced budgets.
- Ensure that the directorate has adequate management arrangements for Health and Safety, in accordance with the Council's policy, allowing it to meet legal obligations and demonstrate effective governance.
- Ensure full compliance with all appropriate legislation and statutory obligations.

Set strategy, delivering success and long-term transformation

- Lead and develop the Council's growth and economic development strategies and plans, working with and influencing a range of key stakeholders and businesses across Watford, Hertfordshire, the UK and the wider global economy to ensure that Watford influences extensively, develops its profile and accesses opportunities and funding.
- Advise the Council on strategic property (community, operational, regeneration and investment) matters, taking steps to ensure that assets both in the Council's ownership, and beyond, are utilised to best effect and exploit appropriate opportunities for growth and income.

-
- Be responsible for all strategic matters regarding planning and land use, and the protection and enhancement of the environment.
 - Together with stakeholders, be responsible for all strategic matters in relation to economic development and the provision of leisure, art, culture and heritage across the borough.
 - Develop and implement effective communication and engagement arrangements with service users, stakeholders and partnership agencies, in order to develop a high-level understanding of the roles and delivery of services and to facilitate input to the development of related strategies and plans.

Provide strategic leadership

- Provide strong strategic leadership and support to the Chief Executive, the Elected Mayor, Portfolio Holders and Elected Members, ensuring they receive high-quality advice on strategy and policy issues in the development and implementation of growth, regeneration and economic development.
- Provide inspirational, constructive and decisive leadership to the Place Directorate and create the conditions for a high-performance, networked operating model and culture across the Council, encouraging innovation and hybrid working.
- Sit as a Director on a number of Boards of the Council's joint ventures.
- Continuously horizon scan for opportunities to improve services, deliver efficiency savings and develop commercial opportunities.
- Support the democratic process, providing advice to elected members on the appropriate response to local, national, European and international matters that have implications for the services.
- Demonstrate a commitment to own personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the role.
- Provide strategic leadership to the Council's Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion journey to deliver for both residents and staff. Driving through Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion improvements/change across all services.

Support a collaborative and inclusive culture

- Play a key role in the collective and corporate leadership of the Council, setting strategic direction and personally providing the constructive leadership needed to create the conditions for success within a supportive and transparent Strategic Leadership Team.
- Promote an organisational culture that is positive, forward-looking and embraces change, is outcomes orientated and community focused, in an environment that is fair, supportive and open, enabling employees to feel empowered and valued.
- Ensure effective and open communication and good working relations with the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team, Members, Directorates, Groups, external agencies and partnerships, to eliminate silo working and support delivery of the Council's strategic aims.
- Take on corporate duties in connection with elections, emergency resilience and response and other cross-cutting responsibilities.
- Support all organisational development activities and embed through service engagement.
- Support the development of individuals and teams to develop career pathways to ensure a talent pipeline for the council.

Portfolio of services

- Building Control
- Cemeteries
- Development Management
- Economic Development
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Facilities Management
- Museum and Heritage
- Leisure Services
- Parking Services
- Planning Policy
- Planning Enforcement
- Property & Regeneration

- Waste & Recycling
- CCTV
- Street Scene & Market
- Transport

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this post. The post holder may be required to carry out any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive that are commensurate with the level of the post.

The accountabilities outlined in the job description will be supplemented by annual key objectives, which will be developed and reviewed with the post holder as part of the annual appraisal process.

Person specification

Part one

Knowledge, experience and qualifications

- Relevant degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant management and leadership discipline.
- Strong and recent experience of place shaping, with a solid track record of leading complex change and transformation at pace and scale.
- Substantial experience of operating in a senior leadership role and providing clear leadership, direction and advice within a complex regulated environment.
- Proven leadership and people-management experience with the ability to empower and develop great managers.
- Strong, political awareness and commercial and financial acumen.
- Background in a relevant sector, with sound knowledge of local government and the environment in which it operates.
- Significant experience of financial planning and budgeting and oversight and control of public funds.
- Experience of engaging with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Strong and recent experience of building and developing effective working relationships with partners and working in collaboration to ensure high-quality and seamless service delivery.

Part two

Skills and abilities

- Well-developed strategic and critical thinking.
- Acknowledged as role model, expert and thought leader.
- Ability to identify opportunities for change and execute a new path forward.
- Ability to lead and manage change to deliver significant and continuous improvement.
- Sound decision making and leadership judgement.
- Ability to work in a highly complex, dynamic environment and deal with ambiguity.
- A strong community focus, with a reputation for getting things done.
- A proven flair for building positive, productive and influential relationships.
- Agile, adaptable, and resilient; able to prioritise a large workload.
- Compelling communication and influencing skills.
- Collaborative, supportive team player.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continued professional development.

Part three

Behavioural competencies

The council is currently working on a framework to reflect the competencies and behaviours we expect from our officer leaders and senior managers. This draws on the views of all staff who have been invited to participate in a series of focussed workshops.

The emerging draft framework encapsulates a range of key behaviours, which will be critical for our officer leaders and senior managers, including:

- **Working Together** – collaborating with one another, engaging with our stakeholders (both customers and partners), problem solving to achieve results and ensure performance and delivery;
- **Empowerment** – being agile and adaptable, resilient to pressure and change, accountable for our actions and creative in how we find solutions to any problems we encounter;
- **Developing our people** – guiding, motivating and developing staff to achieve high performance and deliver our ambition;
- **Organisational awareness** – understanding and being sensitive to organisational dynamics, culture and politics across and beyond the council and shaping our approach accordingly;
- **Strategic** – being visionary, seeing the big picture and balancing risks and opportunities whilst being aware of the context of the challenge, applying innovative thinking to issues to achieve results;
- **Underpinning** – communicating information clearly and convincingly, demonstrating leadership and ensuring sound, evidence based decision-making.



Role title: Executive Head of Strategy & Initiatives (Communications, Partnerships & Community)

Accountable to: Chief Executive

Role Purpose

Our future leaders will be collaborative, open, influential, strategic and creative, able to build coalitions to drive a culture of innovation and achieve excellent results. They will show an affinity to our new values, and take pride in making our borough an inspiring, thriving and creative place to live, work and visit.

This dynamic role is for the leader who will help support the Chief Executive to champion our future, as a borough and Council. You will work closely with the Executive and Associate Directors to deliver the strategic objectives set out in our Council Plan. You will have the skills to adapt and respond to growing external complexity. Strong corporate knowledge and local understanding will be critical to inform and assist the transition of the Council's services to the new operating model, and ensure the overall successful and effective delivery of all Council services. You will have exceptional leadership skills enabling you to lead, or matrix lead, a range of cross organisational initiatives and to deputise for the Chief Executive in her absence.

Main Accountabilities

You will you will lead, or matrix lead, a range of initiatives including, but not restricted to:

- Developing and embedding the strategies required to deliver the commitments made in our Council Plan 2022-2026;
- Our new marketing service to promote Watford's profile and embed the borough's new place brand narrative to galvanise stakeholders and ensure the brand is part of the fabric of our place;
- The development of our communication, engagement and events services to ensure they can successfully deliver the Council's ambitious agenda, and that effective channels are in place with different stakeholders to promote and protect the Council's reputation;
- Promoting and embedding the Council's cultural and organisational changes enshrined in Reimagining Watford to support our ambitions for the future;
- The transformation of the Council's relationship with our community-based partnerships, by the development of a Community Framework to prioritise and define the value of these relationships;
- Leading the development of a Community Asset Strategy to ensure we make best use of our land and property portfolio to support community and voluntary sector organisations, whilst ensuring that financial and community benefits are maximised for the benefit of residents;
- Ensuring that our new Community Framework, Community Asset-Management Strategy, Commissioning Framework and Grants Programme are complementary, and that we understand the value of the support we provide to the community and voluntary sector;
- Supporting our response to the macro drivers impacting the Council such as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic; the cost of living crisis, inflation and the implications for the community and Council service delivery; levelling up and devolution; public service reform (including shared services) in areas such as waste and planning; and optimising approaches needed to implement reform in the health and care sectors;
- Ensuring that Council strategies, policies and protocols are developed, integrated and embedded in a consistent, timely and holistic fashion;
- Increasing the Council's effectiveness in partnership working, including the implementation of a framework to coordinate service activities, making more effective use of resources and ensuring the Council reaches the full potential of partnership working;
- Delivering White Ribbon accreditation as part of our commitments to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls;
- Leading a programme of celebrations commemorating 100 years since the formation of the borough of Watford;
- Working with the Council's partners to represent and maintain the cohesiveness of the community, supporting debate and ensuring all voices are heard around key focus areas, including mental health and wellbeing, veterans, young people, pensioners and those with disabilities;
- Developing and maintaining effective, but proportionate, systems of consultation, community involvement and engagement;
- Working closely with the Mayor to ensure his office provides him with proactive support, underpinned by excellent customer and community support.

As a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team, you will be required to demonstrate exceptional strategic leadership skills, inspiring and motivating people to succeed. You will have strong relationship skills that will enable you to build successful and effective partnerships that will ensure we maintain and enhance our reputation as a Council that places the community at the heart of everything we do.

Build strong, vibrant and sustainable communities

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- Work with the Executive Director of Place and members of the Corporate Management Team to deliver a new vision and strategy for the town to ensure its continued future success.
 - Work with members of the Corporate Management Team to ensure the delivery of an integrated, whole-system approach to developing and supporting sustainable communities.
 - Work across multiple relationships within the Corporate Management Team and within the senior relationships of multiple organisations across Watford and Hertfordshire to ensure that our town centre and the surrounding area remain resilient and vibrant.
 - Work with the Council's partners to represent and maintain the cohesiveness of the community, support debate and ensure all voices are heard around key focus areas, including mental health and wellbeing, veterans, young people, pensioners and those with disabilities.
 - Develop and maintain effective, but proportionate, systems of consultation, community involvement and engagement and partnership working.

Provide robust corporate governance and assurance

- Ensure that the financial resources of Strategy & Initiatives Group are maximised to secure the best outcomes for residents within financial restraints and achieved balanced budgets.
- Maintain joint overall budget responsibility for the Strategy & Initiatives Group.
- Ensure the efficient, effective and economic design, use and deployment of all resources across the Council.
- Ensure that the Group has adequate management arrangements for Health and Safety, in accordance with the Council's policy, allowing it to meet legal obligations and demonstrate effective governance.
- Formulate and implement corporate strategies and policies promoting a strong performance, transparent, risk and governance culture across the Council.
- Ensure full compliance with all appropriate legislation and statutory obligations.

Set strategy, delivering success and long-term transformation

- Lead the delivery of the Public Service Reform Agenda and develop and implement associated Council plans and policies.
- Lead and direct the strategic and general management of the service-planning process, and service-performance monitoring.
- Work collaboratively with partners to secure external funding to deliver agreed partnership outcomes.
- Work with the political leadership to advise, support, challenge and deliver their vision.
- Support the Chief Executive with strategic overview of the Council's political priorities, developing the Council's role as a place leader and pursuing the best collective interests of our residents, communities and businesses.
- Develop and implement a community and commissioning framework, managing the appropriate service-delivery options and the effective implementation of services, programmes and policies.
- Develop and implement an asset-based community strategy, working to ensure that they have the tools that will support vibrant and involved communities.
- Use existing and emerging channels to deliver and effectively target the Council's marketing activities to ensure optimum visibility and impact.
- Develop and implement a partnership framework to define the Council's approach to partnership working to strengthen accountability, governance, manage risks and rationalise working arrangements.
- Develop and implement effective communication and engagement arrangements with service users, stakeholders and partnership agencies, in order to develop a high-level understanding of the roles and delivery of services and to facilitate input to the development of related strategies and plans.

Provide strategic leadership

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- Provide strong strategic leadership and support to the Chief Executive, the Elected Mayor, Portfolio Holders and Elected Members, ensuring they receive high-quality advice on strategy and policy issues generally.
 - Provide inspirational and constructive, decisive leadership to the Strategy & Initiatives Group, creating the conditions for a high-performance, networked operating model and culture across the Council, encouraging innovation and hybrid working.
 - Support the development and maintenance of strategic relationships with key external stakeholders to optimise opportunities for collaboration with other service providers, or to utilise alternative methods of service delivery.
 - Take responsibility for the Elected Mayor's Office, ensuring that the Mayor receives proactive support, underpinned by excellent stakeholder and customer engagement.
 - Support the democratic process, providing advice to Elected Members on the appropriate response to local, national, European and international matters that have implications for the services.
 - Demonstrate a commitment to own personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the role.
 - Provide strategic leadership to the Council's Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion journey to deliver for both residents and staff. Driving through Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion improvements/change across all services.

Support a collaborative and inclusive culture

- Play a key role in the collective and corporate leadership of the Council, setting strategic direction and personally providing the constructive leadership and vision needed to create the conditions for success within a supportive and transparent Strategic Leadership Team.
- Promote an organisational culture that is positive, forward-looking and embraces change, is outcomes orientated and community focused, in an environment that is fair, supportive and open, enabling employees to feel empowered and valued.
- Ensure effective and open communication and good working relations with the Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team, Members, Directorates, Groups, external agencies and partnerships, to eliminate silo working and support delivery of the Council's strategic aims.
- Take on corporate duties in connection with elections, emergency resilience and response and other cross-cutting responsibilities.

Portfolio of services

- Communication and Engagement Services
- Marketing, Events and Filming Services
- The Elected Mayor's Office

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this post. The post holder may be required to carry out any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive that are commensurate with the level of the post.

The accountabilities outlined in the job description will be supplemented by annual key objectives, which will be developed and reviewed with the post holder as part of the annual appraisal process.

Person specification

Part one

Knowledge, experience and qualifications

- Relevant degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant management and leadership discipline.
- Strong and recent experience of working with partners to deliver services and developing strategic relationships/partnerships to support the delivery of organisational objectives and priorities.
- Experience of developing and embedding strategy and frameworks that work holistically across and within an organisation.
- Demonstrable experience of operating in a senior leadership role and providing clear leadership, direction and advice within a complex regulated environment.
- Proven leadership and people-management experience with the ability to empower and develop great managers.
- Strong, political awareness and commercial and financial acumen.
- Background in a relevant sector, with sound knowledge of local government and the environment in which it operates.
- Demonstrable experience of financial planning and budgeting and oversight and control of public funds.
- Experience of engaging with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Strong and recent experience of building and developing effective working relationships with partners and working in collaboration to ensure high-quality and seamless service delivery.

Part two

Skills and abilities

- Well-developed strategic and critical thinking.
- Acknowledged as role model, expert and thought leader.
- Ability to identify opportunities for change and execute a new path forward.
- Ability to lead and manage change to deliver significant and continuous improvement.
- Sound decision making and leadership judgement.
- Ability to work in a highly complex, dynamic environment and deal with ambiguity.
- A strong community focus, with a reputation for getting things done.
- A proven flair for building positive, productive and influential relationships.
- Agile, adaptable, and resilient; able to prioritise a large workload.
- Compelling communication and influencing skills.
- Collaborative, supportive team player.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continued professional development.

Part three

Behavioural competencies

The council is currently working on a framework to reflect the competencies and behaviours we expect from our officer leaders and senior managers. This draws on the views of all staff who have been invited to participate in a series of focussed workshops.

The emerging draft framework encapsulates a range of key behaviours, which will be critical for our officer leaders and senior managers, including:

- **Working Together** – collaborating with one another, engaging with our stakeholders (both customers and partners), problem solving to achieve results and ensure performance and delivery;
- **Empowerment** – being agile and adaptable, resilient to pressure and change, accountable for our actions and creative in how we find solutions to any problems we encounter;

- **Developing our people** – guiding, motivating and developing staff to achieve high performance and deliver our ambition;
- **Organisational awareness** – understanding and being sensitive to organisational dynamics, culture and politics across and beyond the council and shaping our approach accordingly;
- **Strategic** – being visionary, seeing the big picture and balancing risks and opportunities whilst being aware of the context of the challenge, applying innovative thinking to issues to achieve results;
- **Underpinning** – communicating information clearly and convincingly, demonstrating leadership and ensuring sound, evidence based decision-making.



Role title: Executive Head of Strategy & Initiatives (Sustainability & Culture)

Accountable to: Chief Executive

Role Purpose

Our future leaders will be collaborative, open, influential, strategic and creative, able to build coalitions to drive a culture of innovation and achieve excellent results. They will show an affinity to our new values, and take pride in making our borough an inspiring, thriving and creative place to live, work and visit.

This dynamic role is for the leader who will help support the Chief Executive to champion our future, as a borough and Council. You will work closely with the Executive and Associate Directors to deliver the strategic objectives set out in our Council Plan. You will have the skills to adapt and respond to growing external complexity. Strong corporate knowledge and local understanding will be critical to inform and assist the transition of the Council's services to the new operating model, and ensure the overall successful and effective delivery of all Council services. You will have exceptional leadership skills enabling you to lead, or matrix lead, a range of cross organisational initiatives and to deputise for the Chief Executive in her absence.

Main Accountabilities

You will you will lead, or matrix lead, a range of initiatives including, but not restricted to:

- Developing and embedding the strategies required to deliver the commitments made in our Council Plan 2022-2026;
- Leading the Council's response to the sustainability/climate emergency, ensuring it is intrinsic to everything we do. You will translate the global ambitions of COP26 to local ambitions and inspire the workforce, delivery partners and stakeholders to reach our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. You will lead and develop the Council's Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (Watford 2030), working with and influencing a range of key stakeholders and businesses across Watford, Hertfordshire and the UK to ensure that Watford develops its profile and accesses opportunities and funding;
- Leading, operationalising and performance managing the Council's commitment to sustainability;

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- Leading the rejuvenation of the Town Hall and Watford Colosseum, delivering solutions which will see these buildings maximised for civic, community, business and cultural use;
 - Enhancing Watford's reputation as a regional centre for culture and the arts, and leading the appointment of a new operator for the Colosseum;
 - Developing business cases and delivering new commercial opportunities to deliver a financial return to support the Council's activities, including those that contribute to net carbon zero;
 - Leading and delivering a local Blue Plaque scheme, a new local lottery scheme and installation of a public memorial recognising Covid-19;
 - Leading the development and delivery of our Values and Behaviours Programme. Developing and promoting a Competency Management Framework to embed the Council's values and behaviours, ensuring these values and behaviours become rooted in the Council's culture and ethos securing the continuous improvement of Council services;
 - Leading a one team approach across the council by championing the development of cross-service and corporate working to improve the Council's capacity and ability to deliver;
 - Leading the Council's response to the cost of living crisis, working across stakeholders to develop a locally focused and targeted action plan;
 - Leading the implementation and ongoing monitoring and review of the Council's business continuity, resilience and emergency-planning strategies and arrangements. Preparing for and leading the Council's response to all black swan events;
 - Supporting our response to the macro drivers impacting the Council such as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic; the cost of living crisis, inflation and the implications for the community and Council service delivery; levelling up and devolution; public service reform (including shared services) in areas such as waste and planning; and optimising approaches needed to implement reform in the health and care sectors.

As a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team, you will be required to demonstrate exceptional strategic-leadership skills, inspiring and motivating people to succeed. You will have strong relationship skills that will enable you to build successful and effective partnerships that will ensure we maintain and enhance our reputation as a Council that places the community at the heart of everything we do.

Build strong, vibrant and sustainable communities

- Work with the Executive Director of Place and members of the Corporate Management Team to deliver a new vision and strategy for the town to ensure its continued future success.
- Work with members of the Corporate Management Team to ensure the delivery of an integrated, whole-system approach to developing and supporting sustainable communities.
- Work across multiple relationships within the Corporate Management Team and within the senior relationships of multiple organisations across Watford and Hertfordshire to ensure that our town centre and the surrounding area remain resilient and vibrant.
- Work with the Council's partners to represent and maintain the cohesiveness of the community, support debate and ensure all voices are heard around key focus areas, including mental health and wellbeing, veterans, young people, pensioners and those with disabilities.
- Establish and implement methods to bring about culture change and organisational development with a focus on building a confident, energetic and customer focused organisation by:
 - connecting the vision to action and providing clear accountability to all levels,
 - encouraging and supporting personal development across the organisation,
 - providing the managerial leadership and vision that will enable the development and implementation of innovative, flexible and community focussed approaches to service delivery,
 - ensuring services are delivered around the needs and choices of individuals and the wider community, are targeted on improving outcomes and are provided in a culturally sensitive way.

Provide robust corporate governance and assurance

- Ensure that the financial resources of the Strategy & Initiatives Group are maximised to secure the best outcomes for residents within financial restraints and achieved balanced budgets.
- Maintain joint overall budget responsibility for the Strategy & Initiatives Group.
- Ensure the efficient, effective and economic design, use and deployment of all resources across the Council.
- Ensure that the Group has adequate management arrangements for Health and Safety, in accordance with the Council's policy, allowing it to meet legal obligations and demonstrate effective governance.
- Formulate and implement corporate strategies and policies promoting a strong performance, transparent, risk and governance culture across the Council.
- Ensure full compliance with all appropriate legislation and statutory obligations.

Improving performance, delivering success and long-term transformation

- Support the Chief Executive with improving the overall performance management of the Council by:
 - monitoring the Council's effectiveness and efficiency by setting and monitoring performance targets, and ensuring targets reflect Council priorities
 - ensuring the Council complies with the benefits of its procurement, purchasing and commissioning arrangements, and that there are robust arrangements for supervising contracts, where services have been outsourced or commissioned from another agency, and monitoring the quality and timely delivery of those services
 - ensuring strategies for continuous improvement are in place
 - establishing benchmarks for service development and customer service, monitoring progress against them and taking remedial action when required
 - ensuring there are clear and appropriate accountability arrangements in place to scrutinise the work of services
 - ensuring there are systems in place to deal with poor performance by Council provided services and those provided by partners, contractors and other agencies
 - ensuring information requested by the Government, regulatory bodies and other national agencies is provided, management of the service-planning process, and service-performance monitoring.
- Work collaboratively with partners to secure external funding to deliver agreed partnership outcomes.
- Work with the political leadership to advise, support, challenge and deliver their vision.
- Support the Chief Executive with strategic overview of the Council's political priorities, developing the Council's role as a place leader and pursuing the best collective interests of our residents, communities and businesses.
- Develop and lead policies to realise the Council's net zero carbon commitment, influencing internal and external stakeholders to deliver measurable results which will meet our sustainability targets.
- Lead and deliver the Council's Town Hall Quarter transformation programme, providing solutions to see the buildings maximised for civic, community, business and cultural use.
- Develop and implement a competency management framework, embedding the Council's values and behaviours and securing the continuous improvement of Council services.
- Develop and implement effective communication and engagement arrangements with service users, stakeholders and partnership agencies, in order to develop a high-level understanding of the roles and delivery of services and to facilitate input to the development of related strategies and plans.

Provide strategic leadership

- Provide strong strategic leadership and support to the Chief Executive, the Elected Mayor, Portfolio Holders and Elected Members, ensuring they receive high-quality advice on strategy and policy issues generally.

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- Provide inspirational and constructive, decisive leadership to the Strategy & Initiatives Group, creating the conditions for a high-performance, networked operating model and culture across the Council, encouraging innovation and hybrid working.
 - Support the development and maintenance of strategic relationships with key external stakeholders to optimise opportunities for collaboration with other service providers, or to utilise alternative methods of service delivery.
 - Support the democratic process, providing advice to Elected Members on the appropriate response to local, national, European and international matters that have implications for the services.
 - Demonstrate a commitment to own personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the role.
 - Provide strategic leadership to the Council's Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion journey to deliver for both residents and staff. Driving through Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion improvements/change across all services.

Support a collaborative and inclusive culture

- Play a key role in the collective and corporate leadership of the Council, setting strategic direction and personally providing the constructive leadership and vision needed to create the conditions for success within a supportive and transparent Strategic Leadership Team.
- Promote an organisational culture that is positive, forward-looking and embraces change, is outcomes orientated and community focused, in an environment that is fair, supportive and open, enabling employees to feel empowered and valued.
- Ensure effective and open communication and good working relations with the Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team, Members, Directorates, Groups, external agencies and partnerships, to eliminate silo working and support delivery of the Council's strategic aims.
- Take on corporate duties in connection with elections, emergency resilience and response and other cross-cutting responsibilities.

Portfolio of services

- Sustainability
- With the Chief Executive, the strategic leadership of the Town Hall Quarter Programme, the Behaviours Framework, and other staff delivering key strategic initiatives

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this post. The post holder may be required to carry out any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive that are commensurate with the level of the post.

The accountabilities outlined in the job description will be supplemented by annual key objectives, which will be developed and reviewed with the post holder as part of the annual appraisal process

Person specification

Part one

Knowledge, experience and qualifications

- Relevant degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant management and leadership discipline.
- Strong and recent experience of working with partners to deliver services and developing strategic relationships/partnerships to support the delivery of organisational objectives and priorities.

- Experience of developing and embedding strategy and frameworks that work holistically across and within an organisation.
- Demonstrable experience of operating in a senior leadership role and providing clear leadership, direction and advice within a complex regulated environment.
- Proven leadership and people-management experience with the ability to empower and develop great managers.
- Strong, political awareness and commercial and financial acumen.
- Background in a relevant sector, with sound knowledge of local government and the environment in which it operates.
- Demonstrable experience of financial planning and budgeting and oversight and control of public funds.
- Experience of engaging with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Strong and recent experience of building and developing effective working relationships with partners and working in collaboration to ensure high-quality and seamless service delivery.

Part two

Skills and abilities

- Well-developed strategic and critical thinking.
- Acknowledged as role model, expert and thought leader.
- Ability to identify opportunities for change and execute a new path forward.
- Ability to lead and manage change to deliver significant and continuous improvement.
- Sound decision making and leadership judgement.
- Ability to work in a highly complex, dynamic environment and deal with ambiguity.
- A strong community focus, with a reputation for getting things done.
- A proven flair for building positive, productive and influential relationships.
- Agile, adaptable, and resilient; able to prioritise a large workload.
- Compelling communication and influencing skills.
- Collaborative, supportive team player.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continued professional development.

Part three

Behavioural competencies

The council is currently working on a framework to reflect the competencies and behaviours we expect from our officer leaders and senior managers. This draws on the views of all staff who have been invited to participate in a series of focussed workshops.

The emerging draft framework encapsulates a range of key behaviours, which will be critical for our officer leaders and senior managers, including:

- **Working Together** – collaborating with one another, engaging with our stakeholders (both customers and partners), problem solving to achieve results and ensure performance and delivery;
- **Empowerment** – being agile and adaptable, resilient to pressure and change, accountable for our actions and creative in how we find solutions to any problems we encounter;
- **Developing our people** – guiding, motivating and developing staff to achieve high performance and deliver our ambition;

- **Organisational awareness** – understanding and being sensitive to organisational dynamics, culture and politics across and beyond the council and shaping our approach accordingly;
- **Strategic** – being visionary, seeing the big picture and balancing risks and opportunities whilst being aware of the context of the challenge, applying innovative thinking to issues to achieve results;
- **Underpinning** – communicating information clearly and convincingly, demonstrating leadership and ensuring sound, evidence based decision-making.

Appendix 2

Chief Officer Pay Structure - Watford Borough Council

WBC Chief Officer Pay 1st August 2022

Chief Executive	£140,794.
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Note:

1. The above Pay band is reviewed in line with the annual pay review.

Monitoring Officer and Corporate Governance	1	£80,301
	2	£81,108
	3	£83,383
	4	£84,920
	5	£85,831

Executive Directors	1	£100,000
	2	£105,000
	3	£110,000
	4	£115,000

Executive Heads of Service	1	£76,640
	2	£78,204
	3	£79,770
	4	£81,334
	5	£82,979

Associate Directors (Extended Pay Band, Grade 12)	1	£70,000
	2	£72,500
	3	£75,000
	4	£77,500
	5	£80,000

Note:

1. The above Pay bands exclude the London Weighting Fringe Allowance of £914, which is paid for these roles.
2. Pay bands are reviewed in line with the annual pay review.

Director of Finance (Shared with TRDC)	1	£84,234
	2	£87,212
	3	£90,045

	4	£92,950
	5	96,127
	6	£99,359

Note:

1. The above Pay band is reviewed in line with the annual pay review.

Heads of Shared Services Finance and Revenues & Benefits (TRDC)	1	£71,011
	2	£72,557
	3	£74,110
	4	£75,654

Note:

1. The above Pay bands exclude the London Weighting Fringe Allowance of £914, which is also paid for these roles.
2. Pay bands are reviewed in line with the annual pay review.

Appendix 3

WBC Payscale as at 1 April 2021

Band	New SCP	Basic (inc. LWF at £914 per annum)	Per hour (exc. LWF)	Per week (exc. LWF)	Per month (exc. LWF)	Basic Salary (exc LWF)
Band 1	1	£19,247.00	£9.50	£351.59	£1,527.75	£ 18,333
	2	£19,430.00	£9.60	£355.10	£1,543.00	£ 18,516
Band 2	3	£19,801.00	£9.79	£362.22	£1,573.92	£ 18,887
	4	£20,178.00	£9.99	£369.45	£1,605.33	£ 19,264
Band 3	5	£20,564.00	£10.19	£376.85	£1,637.50	£19,650.00
	6	£20,957.00	£10.39	£384.39	£1,670.25	£20,043.00
	7	£21,358.00	£10.60	£392.08	£1,703.67	£20,444.00
	8	£21,766.00	£10.81	£399.90	£1,737.67	£20,852.00
Band 4	9	£22,183.00	£11.02	£407.90	£1,772.42	£21,269.00
	10	£22,609.00	£11.25	£416.07	£1,807.92	£21,695.00
	11	£23,043.00	£11.47	£424.39	£1,844.08	£22,129.00
	12	£23,485.00	£11.70	£432.87	£1,880.92	£22,571.00
	13	£23,937.00	£11.93	£441.54	£1,918.58	£23,023.00
Band 4+	14	£24,398.00	£12.17	£450.38	£1,957.00	£23,484.00
	15	£24,867.00	£12.42	£459.37	£1,996.08	£23,953.00
	16	£25,346.00	£12.66	£468.56	£2,036.00	£24,432.00
	17	£25,834.00	£12.92	£477.92	£2,076.67	£24,920.00
Band 5	18	£26,333.00	£13.18	£487.49	£2,118.25	£25,419.00
	19	£26,841.00	£13.44	£497.23	£2,160.58	£25,927.00
	20	£27,360.00	£13.71	£507.18	£2,203.83	£26,446.00
	21	£27,889.00	£13.98	£517.33	£2,247.92	£26,975.00
	22	£28,428.00	£14.26	£527.67	£2,292.83	£27,514.00
	23	£29,140.00	£14.63	£541.32	£2,352.17	£28,226.00
Band 6	24	£30,088.00	£15.12	£559.50	£2,431.17	£29,174.00
	25	£31,009.00	£15.60	£577.17	£2,507.92	£30,095.00
	26	£31,898.00	£16.06	£594.21	£2,582.00	£30,984.00
	27	£32,809.00	£16.53	£611.69	£2,657.92	£31,895.00
	28	£33,712.00	£17.00	£629.00	£2,733.17	£32,798.00
Band 7	29	£34,400.00	£17.36	£642.20	£2,790.50	£33,486.00
	30	£35,287.00	£17.82	£659.21	£2,864.42	£34,373.00
	31	£36,250.00	£18.32	£677.68	£2,944.67	£35,336.00
	32	£37,285.00	£18.85	£697.53	£3,030.92	£36,371.00
	33	£38,482.00	£19.47	£720.48	£3,130.67	£37,568.00
Band 8	34	£39,467.00	£19.98	£739.37	£3,212.75	£38,553.00
	35	£40,485.00	£20.51	£758.90	£3,297.58	£39,571.00
	36	£41,492.00	£21.03	£778.21	£3,381.50	£40,578.00
	37	£42,505.00	£21.56	£797.64	£3,465.92	£41,591.00
	38	£43,828.00	£22.24	£823.01	£3,576.17	£42,914.00
Band 9	39	£44,484.00	£22.58	£835.59	£3,630.83	£43,570.00
	40	£45,538.00	£23.13	£855.80	£3,718.67	£44,624.00
	41	£46,562.00	£23.66	£875.44	£3,804.00	£45,648.00
	42	£47,576.00	£24.19	£894.89	£3,888.50	£46,662.00
	43	£48,579.00	£24.71	£914.12	£3,972.08	£47,665.00
Band 10	44	£49,602.00	£25.24	£933.74	£4,057.33	£48,688.00
	45	£50,628.00	£25.77	£953.42	£4,142.83	£49,714.00
	46	£51,656.00	£26.30	£973.14	£4,228.50	£50,742.00
	47	£52,691.00	£26.84	£992.98	£4,314.75	£51,777.00
	48	£53,735.00	£27.38	£1,013.01	£4,401.75	£52,821.00
Band 11	49	£54,775.00	£27.92	£1,032.95	£4,488.42	£53,861.00
	50	£55,866.00	£28.48	£1,053.88	£4,579.33	£54,952.00
	51	£56,926.00	£29.03	£1,074.20	£4,666.67	£56,012.00
	52	£57,970.00	£29.57	£1,094.23	£4,754.67	£57,056.00
	53	£59,038.00	£30.13	£1,114.71	£4,843.67	£58,124.00
Band 11+	54	£61,282.00	£31.29	£1,157.74	£5,030.67	£60,368.00
	55	£62,914.00	£32.14	£1,189.04	£5,166.67	£62,000.00
	56	£64,545.00	£32.98	£1,220.32	£5,302.58	£63,631.00
Band 12	57	£66,177.00	£33.83	£1,251.62	£5,438.58	£65,263.00
	58	£70,914.00	£36.28	£1,342.47	£5,833.33	£70,000.00
	59	£73,414.00	£37.58	£1,390.41	£6,041.67	£72,500.00
	60	£75,914.00	£38.87	£1,438.36	£6,250.00	£75,000.00
	61	£78,414.00	£40.17	£1,486.30	£6,458.33	£77,500.00
	62	£80,914.00	£41.47	£1,534.25	£6,666.67	£80,000.00

Fringe Weighting Allowance: £914 per annum

Essential Car User (where applicable): Lump sum allowance

Up to 999 cc: £846.00 per annum

1000 cc and above: £963.00 per annum

Stand by duty allowance (where applicable): £30.15 per session

Appendix 4

Summary of JNC/ NJC national pay awards previous 5 years

2018	2.0% pay award
2019	2.0% pay award
2020	2.75% pay award
2021	1.75% pay award
2022	TBC

* note that there are no posts in the Council that are currently remunerated below spinal column point 13 – (£11.93 excluding Local Weighting) which is above the Real Living Wage threshold of £9.90 per hour for 2020/21.

Current Real Living wage rate

Real Living wage £9.90 for 2021/22.

Agenda Item 13

Report to Council 19 July 2022

Report of Cabinet 13 June 2022

Cabinet met on 13 June 2022. The full minutes are published on the council's website.

The following members were present at the meeting:

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)
Councillor Dychton (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Community)
Councillor Pattinson (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing)
Councillor Stotesbury (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability)
Councillor Williams (Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services)

Also present: Councillor Nigel Bell, Leader of the Labour Group

The following was a recommendation to Council:

6. Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24

Cabinet received a report of the Managing Director setting out the new Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24.

The Mayor introduced the report and commended officers for the speed the plans had been produced following the elections in May. The big changes affecting the community are reflected in the Council Plan, including Covid and the cost of living. It was underpinned by the council's core values and showed the council was not scared of the big issues.

There were four themes –

- A council working for our community and serving our residents – this was extremely important ensuring residents received value for money.
- A greener, brighter future – the environment was at the forefront of the plan. It was the greenest plan the council had ever produced.
- An inspiring, thriving and creative town – supporting the local economy, for example the incubation hub to be based at the Town Hall in the future.

- A diverse, happy and healthy town – this was reflected in the investment in parks and supporting the wellbeing of all residents.

The Delivery Plan was a critical part of the Council Plan, which was very detailed and the regular monitoring would ensure progress was being made. The Mayor invited the Managing Director to add further detail.

The Managing Director endorsed the Mayor's comments about the team. She informed Cabinet that the team had worked on the documents to ensure there was clarity following the new mayoral term. The plan recognised that success for Watford was not always in the council's remit to progress, but the council would carry out its role as place leader and use its voice locally and nationally for the Watford community. There would be a quarterly report to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny on the progress of delivering the plan. There would also be an annual report to residents.

The Portfolio Holders welcomed the plan, particularly that green issues had been made more prominent. Each member mentioned some of the highlights within their individual responsibilities and looked forward to progress being made.

Councillor Bell referred to a comment made by Councillor Williams about recycling and flatted developments. He considered that something needed to be done to improve this as more flats were due to be built. He asked whether individual Portfolio Holders would attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee to respond to questions about the progress within their responsibilities.

The Mayor advised that Overview and Scrutiny Committee would decide who to invite to its meetings as reports were considered. He added that the plan was not just about the council meeting its statutory obligations. As an example on page 23 it referred to lobbying the government.

Councillor Williams responded to the question about recycling. The relevant service was investigating a food waste project which would then be actioned next year. Veolia provided responses on planning applications to the planning team. At a previous waste conference, he had expected to hear ideas that the council could trial, however it appeared that all councils were doing the same thing. In developments consisting of flats, the recycling area needed to be made more accessible and better lighting.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Council Plan 2022-2026 be recommended to Council for approval.

2. that the Delivery Plan be recommended to Council for approval.
3. that Cabinet recommends to Council that the Managing Director be authorised to make minor amendments to the Council Plan 2022-2026 and the Delivery Plan 2022-2024 in consultation with the Elected Mayor.
4. that Cabinet notes progress on delivering the Council Plan 2022-2026 will be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with an annual report to the community of Watford being published.
5. that Cabinet notes the aspirations and outstanding activities of the council's Renewal Plan 2020, which was aligned to the previous Council Plan, are now incorporated into the refreshed Council Plan and Delivery Plan, noting the council's achievements in delivering a range of renewal activities across our community, economy and businesses, the organisation and our own financial resilience.

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 13 June 2022

Report author: Donna Nolan – Managing Director

Title: Council Plan – 2022-2026 / Delivery Plan – 2022-24

Nature of Report: For approval

1.0 Summary

1.1 Watford Borough Council is an ambitious and forward looking local authority. Over the last two years, its Council Plan, and associated Delivery Plan, have set the strategic direction for the organisation, linking the council’s ambitions to our commitments to our residents, community, businesses, visitors and workforce.

1.2 With the start of a new Mayoral term to 2026, the council has taken the opportunity to review and refresh the Council Plan, building on the successful delivery of the programme of work set in the Delivery Plan 2020-22 and reflecting the new opportunities and challenges identified for the organisation and the town to 2026.

1.3 The Council Plan 2022-26 and the Delivery Plan 2022-24, therefore, are presented to Cabinet for approval and recommendation to Council on 19 July as the foundation for the council’s strategic framework and its focus of delivery over the next two years.

1.4 The plans are supported by other key parts of this framework:

- Our budget, which reflects the alignment of resource to delivery of the commitments contained within the Council Plan, ensuring our limited resources are directed to areas most important to our residents, community, businesses and staff.
- Our Organisational Development Strategy, which shapes how we support our staff and the operations of the organisation.

1.5 The successful delivery of the Council Plan 2022-26 is critical to the council’s success and to making sure we harness our resources to focus on what is important to the town and our residents. The report proposes regular monitoring of the Plan and Delivery Plan, with quarterly reports to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an annual report to our community on our progress and achievements.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Failure to agree the Council Plan and Delivery Plan	<p>Potential for the council to be deflected from what is important to the town and residents. Lack of clear direction for the organisation and staff and failure to set clear expectations for delivery. Lack of clarity for residents, our community and partners on the council's future direction, ambitions and priority areas of work.</p>	<p>A plan based on intelligence and understanding of the town and what matters to residents.</p> <p>Clear timetable and sign off processes.</p>	Treat	<p>4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4</p>
Failure to identify key themes and commitments in the Council Plan and associated Delivery Plan actions / areas of work	<p>Failure to respond to what is important to the town and residents and to focus on less important areas of work.</p> <p>Lack of clarity on priorities.</p> <p>Resources not allocated to the right areas that deliver our</p>	<p>A plan based on intelligence and understanding of the town and what matters to residents.</p> <p>Clear timetable and sign off processes</p>	Treat	<p>4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4</p>

	ambitions and what is important. Potential for the Council to be deflected by non-priority areas. The plans fail to drive the Council forward.			
Failure to link the Council Plan and Delivery Plan to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial planning effectively.	Risk of insufficient financial resourcing for areas of work identified.	Early engagement and discussions so the links are established and agreed.	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4
Failure to identify the staff resources needed to deliver the plans	Risk of insufficient staff resource or lack of skills / experience in key areas.	Ensuring the council's OD Strategy clearly links and supports delivery.		4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4
Failure to identify dependencies between areas of work effectively	Risk to delivery / slippage	Early understanding across the organisation of where work requires support from a number of teams to allow	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6

		this to be built into service business plans.		
Slippage on delivery	Failure to deliver our commitments resulting in poorer outcomes for our town and residents. Potential impact on the reputation of the Council.	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet. Robust project and programme management.	Treat	4 (severity) x 1 (likelihood) = 4

3.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 3.1 Recommend to Council the approval of the Council Plan 2022-2026, at Appendix 1 to this report
- 3.2 Recommend to Council the approval of the Delivery Plan 2022-2024, at Appendix 2 to this report
- 3.3 Recommend to Council that the Managing Director be authorised to make minor amendments to the Council Plan 2022-2026 and the Delivery Plan 2022-2024 in consultation with the Elected Mayor.
- 3.4 Note that progress on delivering the Council Plan 2022-2026 will be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with an annual report to the community of Watford being published.
- 3.5 Note that the aspirations and outstanding activities of the council's Renewal Plan 2020, which was aligned to the previous Council Plan are now incorporated into the refreshed Council Plan and Delivery Plan, noting the council's achievements in delivering a range of renewal activities across our community, economy and businesses, the organisation and our own financial resilience.

Further information:

Donna Nolan

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Kathryn Robson
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Tel: 01923 278077

Report approved by: Donna Nolan

4.0 Detailed proposal and focus

- 4.1 The council's current Council Plan 2020-24 was developed during the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic and acknowledged the significant challenges the council faced at that time, whilst also reflecting the council's drive to maintain its momentum to deliver more for its residents and the town. The associated Delivery Plan 2020-22, set out a significant programme of work, linking to the council's COVID-19 Road to Renewal Plan 2020, both of which have been monitored throughout the last two years to make sure the council maintains a robust focus on achieving what it set out to do.
- 4.2 As the town and our community emerge from the immediate impact of the pandemic, and with a new four year Mayoral term, we have reviewed our Council Plan so it reflects how we will steer the town and the organisation through current emerging opportunities and challenges, building a successful, resilient future for Watford.
- 4.3 The refreshed Council Plan, which covers the period 2022–2026, is designed to be strategic, high level and outward-facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. It describes to the workforce, our community and our partners how we see the council and the town progressing by resetting our strategic themes, commitments and areas of activity.

4.4 The New Council Plan – Overview

- 4.5 Within the Council Plan 2022-26, we present our four strategic themes and the commitments that outline the high level actions that will deliver them successfully. The Plan provides a key element of the council's 'golden thread' or organisational alignment, setting the overarching strategic basis for all other council strategies and policies, including the budget and Organisational Development (OD) Strategy, connecting them to our overall aspirations and priority activities.
- 4.6 The Plan has been developed to provide the council with an opportunity to further demonstrate its role as a leader of place, and show its strategic and operational excellence.
- 4.7 By resetting our strategic commitments, the new Plan will guide us over the next four years through this renewed strategic focus. It will mean that we can ensure our limited resources are directed to those areas most important to our

community, businesses and staff.

4.8 The Plan is underpinned by a range of information, intelligence and data including the Elected Mayor's manifesto pledges and feedback following engagement with internal and external stakeholders. It demonstrates how the council is responding to issues of national importance, such as climate change and the cost of living crisis as well as those that reflect what matters to Watford, protecting and promoting what makes Watford special and what we know our residents value.

4.9 The Plan has been developed to demonstrate two key objectives:

- What we are trying to achieve - our themes
- What we are going to focus on over the next four years - our commitments

4.10 The proposed themes for 2022-26 are:

- A council working for our community and serving our residents
- A greener, brighter future
- An inspiring, thriving and creative town
- A diverse, happy and healthy town

The theme 'a greener, brighter future' represents a new area for this Council Plan, indicating our focus on tackling climate change, the ambition for the council to achieve net carbon zero by 2030 and the significance of providing greener, more sustainable options and choices for our residents and businesses.

4.11 The bold design of the previous plan has been continued for the refreshed Plan, signifying it is an outward facing document for our community, conveying a clear statement of the council's intentions. The design is built on the council's corporate identity (the 'bold' shield). Elements from the shield have been woven through the design including the hart of Hertfordshire, the shells from the Earl of Clarendon's coat of arms and the colour blue to represent the 'ford' in Watford .

4.12 Delivering the Council Plan – Delivery Plan

4.13 The Delivery Plan at Appendix 2 sets out in greater detail how the council will focus on activities that will bring the Council Plan to life, making sure we deliver

what we said we would over the next two years.

4.14 Keeping focused on delivery

- 4.15 Under each theme and commitment, we set out our key priority areas of actions, which we are committed to achieving by 2024. Every activity will be assigned to a lead officer and aligned to a Portfolio Holder to enable regular updates on progress. In addition, the Delivery Plan will be monitored and a report on progress will be presented to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee quarterly, and, annually, we will prepare a report for residents, businesses and partners
- 4.16 The scope of the work covered in the Delivery Plan and the successful delivery of the council's Renewal Plan 2020, which was developed as a direct response to the pandemic in 2020, means we have incorporated the next phase of renewal into the 2022-24 plan, ensuring it is mainstreamed across all our service areas. We have maintained a steadfast focus on helping our community, businesses and staff, building on the support we gave during the pandemic and we have used this experience to inform and shape the activities we have identified for delivery in 2022-24.
- 4.17 As the Council Plan and Delivery Plan have been developed, they have been shared with staff from Management Team and our Staff Ambassadors Group and Agile Pathfinders. Feedback and comments have been incorporated into the final plans.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 Whilst the council's budget underpins the whole of the Council Plan and Delivery Plan, the importance is recognised under the theme 'A council working for our community and serving our residents' with the related commitment: 'Focus and challenge how we manage our budget so it is concentrated on delivering our commitments and securing greater investment for Watford'.
- 5.1.2 By setting out our commitments and associated activity areas, we have linked our budgets to the delivery of the council's priorities.
- 5.1.3 For 2022/23 the targets set out in the Council Plan are within budget and reflected in the later years of the MTFs. Moving forward The Council Plan and Delivery Plan will form the focus of our budget strategy for the years covered by the Plan. Some targets will require budget commitment from our partners in order to be fully achieved.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the Council Plan is one of the policy framework documents listed in the constitution that has to be approved by Council. The Plan will be presented to Council on 19 July.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

- 5.3.1 The Council 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. An overall equality impact analysis has been undertaken on the Council Plan (Appendix 3) and impact analyses will be undertaken on specific projects/programmes where relevant.

The equality impact analysis takes into account that under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the Council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

The EIA will be reviewed and updated during the life of the Plan, particularly when data and information from Census 2021 is received

Having had regard to the Council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 **Staffing**

- 5.4.1 The Council Plan sets the council's strategic direction, and is, therefore, a key document for our staff, enabling them to understand our commitments and priorities and allowing them to contribute fully to our success and achievements. As the overarching plan for the council, it provides the framework for all our strategies and policies and links, through the Delivery Plan, to service plans and individual staff objectives and outcomes.

5.4.2 The council recognises the importance of the workforce in the delivery of the Council Plan and has identified a range of activities to support the recruitment and retention of staff as well as their development and wellbeing. The commitment, ‘Lead by example, securing our reputation as a forward thinking, caring and inspiring organisation where staff can thrive and achieve their best for our residents and businesses’ sets out how we will continue to demonstrate how we value our staff and invest in their future.

5.5 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to give due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on crime and disorder in its area and to do all it reasonably can to prevent these. Our theme: ‘A diverse, happy and healthy town’, is underpinned by our commitment ‘Promote our welcoming and respectful town’. A range of activities support the delivery of the commitment, including the council’s pledge to become a White Ribbon organisation, tackle violence against women and girls and reduce the impact of enviro crime.

5.6 **Sustainability**

5.6.1 The council’s commitment to sustainability, achieving net carbon zero by 2030, improving biodiversity and providing more options for people in the town to choose greener options is recognised in the theme ‘A greener, brighter future’, with four commitments to support the achievement of this theme. These range from pushing forward with delivering greener ways to travel in Watford to promoting Watford’s transition to a low-carbon economy and a keen focus on biodiversity.

Appendices

Appendix 1:	Watford Borough Council: Council Plan 2022-26
Appendix 2:	Watford Borough Council: Delivery Plan 2022-24
Appendix 3:	Watford Borough Council: Council Plan 2022- 26 – Equality Impact Analysis

Background papers

Watford Borough Council: Council Plan 2020-24, Delivery Plan 2020-22.



Watford Together

UNITED BY POSSIBILITY

COUNCIL PLAN 2022-2026



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

Welcome to our new Council Plan

Seizing Opportunities

Page 81



FOREWORD BY
OUR
ELECTED MAYOR

THE DIFFERENCE IS NO ORDINARY TOWN

Watford is a place that thinks differently. We're always ready to challenge perceptions and the accepted way of doing things. We're a town and a council that believes anything is possible when it comes to achieving the best for Watford, our residents and our community.

Over the last two very challenging years, we've continued to think bigger for Watford, setting the right direction to help us make the most of our opportunities, to fully grasp the vibrancy and commitment of our town and steer a clear course for great things in the future.

As we look forward, now is the right time to harness that creativity and flair for innovation, maximise our leadership role and make the most of our passion for delivering big ideas. We seek to do this with the energy and dedication of our

community, which underpins Watford's success and gives our town its heart and strong sense of character. We are a town that cares, and our kindness, as well as our boldness, is woven throughout our new Council Plan; uniting to show what Watford can achieve.

Our town is uniquely positioned as a gateway to London, but also enjoys the benefits of its own strong identity and heritage as a market town. This makes us extremely popular and successful as a place not just to live, work or visit, but above all, to thrive. People beyond our borders look to Watford as their 'go-to' town and we have an exceptional pull, with 'Greater Watford' serving a population of over half a million people.

We also pride ourselves on being 'no ordinary town'. This plan sets out what makes us far from ordinary

and how we'll focus on what really matters to our residents, our businesses and our community, particularly in these uncertain times. We've achieved a lot since our last plan but, as both a dynamic and a pioneering council, there is still more we can achieve: responding to the big challenges of our time and looking at new ways to deliver more for our residents and our community.

We recognise that, as well as setting the council's path for the next four years, this plan also needs to support our wider agenda and vision for Watford. Part of my role as Elected Mayor is representing and providing a voice for Watford nationally, regionally and locally - putting Watford first and standing up for what's most important for our town.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Taffer".

We are a council that delivers

Achieving more

AND HARNESSING SUCCESS

We are a council that delivers. We set ourselves a highly ambitious agenda in our last Council Plan and, in just two years, have achieved so much for our town and community. This goes far beyond our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, where we supported and worked alongside our residents, businesses and partners, creating the right foundation for our town and council to flourish - from ground-breaking major projects, to shaping a more modern, agile council to serve our community into the future.



Keep **rises in council tax** to below inflation



Reduced number of people **Sleeping rough**



Launched **Our agile ways of working**

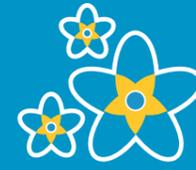
Achieved **17** green flags



Refurbished **Watford Market** and launched 'Market lates'



Recognising our **Unsung local heroes** who contribute to the life of the town



Champion a more **dementia-friendly town**



Opened award-winning **Oxhey Activity Park**



Delivered **Public Realm Improvements**



Launched **'transforming travel in Watford'** to deliver a step change in how people travel



Biggest increase in recycling rates in Hertfordshire

A new council plan

Watford together

We are proud of our successes, but we are ready to do more.

Tackling matters that really matter

We are ambitious for our town, our residents and our businesses, and we want to see them flourish, now more than ever. We want Watford to be a place for people to enjoy, from childhood to old age, and for our residents to lead happy and healthy lives in a safe, clean and green town. At the same time, we want our businesses to thrive and prosper, and to make an important contribution to a strong economy that provides jobs for local people.

A new plan gives us the chance to refresh our commitments to our community and town for the next four years.

It sets out our roadmap for the future, so everyone can be clear about our plans and ambitions and feel confident we are addressing the things that really matter to Watford; embracing opportunities and harnessing our energy and resources to tackle both the global and the national issues that affect us at a local level. A clear and focused plan is fundamental in making sure the council's budget is directed where it can make the biggest impact, driving our planning and delivery of services and effectively linking the work our staff do to make a real difference to the people of Watford.



UNITED BY POSSIBILITIES

A confident council and a town best placed for the future

A global pandemic and a war in Europe, combined with the ongoing challenges of climate change, inequality, the rising cost of living and a post-Brexit UK are all reshaping the national and local landscape in a way that we could not have envisaged.

The last two years have made the world a very challenging place, with many of the certainties we once took for granted now being called into question. We have had to adapt and respond quickly but, having been tested as never before, we know we can rise to the challenge, pivot our focus quickly and put in place any measures that may be needed. Our staff have welcomed new ways of working, becoming more agile and continuing to bring their best to work and serving our community. Our town's response has been impressive, and we know our community is as enthusiastic and dedicated as we are to grasp any opportunities the future may hold.

This means getting our plans right is more important than ever. We remain unapologetically ambitious for Watford and understand our success will be achieved through:

- ▶ The dedication of our councillors, building on their strong links to the community and our partners;
- ▶ The commitment of our staff going that extra mile, searching out innovation and creative ways to deliver for our community and bringing our new values to everything we do;
- ▶ The energy and backing of our outstanding partnerships across the private, public and voluntary sectors;
- ▶ The support of our residents and businesses, celebrating our diversity and uniting through our shared aspirations for our town.

Putting Watford first



Success for Watford is not always in our hands as a council - some of our goals will be achieved through using our voice to make sure areas of national, regional and local importance for Watford are also heard.

We recognise the vital importance of our wider relationships and networks as effective platforms we can use to advocate for Watford and our community, applying influence where it is in the town's interest and making the most of the right partnerships to help make things happen.

- ▶ Championing West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust's ambitions to secure the investment for improved hospital facilities at Watford General.
- ▶ Lobbying government to recognise, with our limited land supply, the challenges the town faces and why we need a different approach to meeting housing targets.
- ▶ Supporting Watford Football Club's goals for improvements to its Vicarage Road stadium.
- ▶ Pressing at national, regional and county level for better, affordable and reliable public transport for our residents, including bus and rail services.
- ▶ Backing our community safety partners to make sure we have strong, well-resourced local policing to keep the town safe and welcoming.
- ▶ Representing our residents' real concerns and anxiety at government level about the steep rise in the cost of living and the impact on people's finances, particularly those on lower incomes.
- ▶ Influencing our health partners to deliver better health outcomes for Watford.
- ▶ Working for 20mph to be the default speed limit on our residential roads, improving safety and encouraging greener, healthier travel options.
- ▶ Ensuring Watford's interests are fully represented in any devolution discussions or deals.

**SOME OF OUR GOALS WILL BE
ACHIEVED THROUGH USING OUR
VOICE TO MAKE SURE AREAS OF
NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL
IMPORTANCE FOR WATFORD
ARE ALSO HEARD**



Our themes: 1

Be bold

We thrive on delivering the big ideas that help us stand out, knowing this will ensure our continued success as a council and our prosperity and happiness as a town.

A COUNCIL WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND SERVING OUR RESIDENTS



OUR PLAN IS UNDERPINNED BY OUR FOUR THEMES

Our plan is underpinned by our four themes. These outline our ambitions and inspire us to continue to push forward towards our goals for Watford and our community.

We are a different kind of council - we champion bold values and free thinking, striving for better answers and looking for innovative ways to work and transform everything we do.

We pride ourselves on never settling for the status quo, and embracing new opportunities.

Our staff recognise that being part of 'Team Watford' means being up for the challenge, and always seeking to do things differently to improve outcomes for our residents and our community.

They have welcomed our approach to agile working, stepping up to embrace new ways of working that deliver for Watford and make a difference to the lives of our residents. Building and inspiring our talent remains a key goal for the council.

Our councillors play a pivotal role in leading and supporting the community and we will continue to support them in their important role.

We will focus on: leadership; agile, collaborative working; growing our own talent; innovative thinking and learning; being bold and best in field; recognising success and achievements.

Our commitments

- ▶ Make sure we deliver an outstanding customer experience and the high-quality services our community expects.
- ▶ Pioneer new ways of working that challenge us to innovate, transform and consistently improve.
- ▶ Focus on and challenge how we manage our budget, so it is concentrated on delivering our commitments and securing greater investment for Watford.
- ▶ Lead by example, securing our reputation as a forward-thinking, caring and inspiring organisation where staff can thrive and achieve their best for our residents and businesses.

theme 2:

A greener, brighter future

Our commitments

- ▶ Encourage people to make greener travel choices, reducing congestion and improving the health and well-being of the town.
- ▶ Promote improvements to Watford's biodiversity to enhance the range of habitats, plants and wildlife in the town.
- ▶ Work alongside our community and businesses to find the right ways to reach net carbon neutral, seeking not just to learn from others, but to explore innovative solutions that will work for Watford.
- ▶ Encourage residents and businesses to recycle more, reusing materials and reducing waste and what they throw away.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE, GLOBALLY, NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY

Climate change is the biggest challenge we face, globally, nationally and locally.

We believe that to be part of the solution, we must think and act as a town and a community, to make Watford a beacon for greener and more sustainable ways to live, do business and travel.

We have pledged to become a carbon-neutral council by 2030, which means we will work to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve environmental benefits in everything we do.

We will also engage with our residents and businesses to fully embed the concept of a greener town, working together to have a real impact on our local environment: from greater opportunities for biodiversity and recycling, to less polluting and healthier ways to travel.



theme 3:

An inspiring, thriving and creative town

**AN OUTSTANDING
PLACE FOR
EVERYONE**

We are a successful town



Build on our connections, creativity and community and recognise how vital it is for our town to flourish and achieve its maximum potential for everyone.

We want Watford to continue to be an outstanding place for everyone: residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Watford has a rich history, and we want to protect our town's strong local identity, successfully blending our past with our future and putting in place the plans that will shape Watford in the years ahead.

Our experience shows that standing still is not an option. We need to consistently strive to do more: to focus on what really matters and build a town where no one gets left behind; a town where everyone benefits from well-planned growth and opportunity; and a town that leads the way in creativity, opportunity and enterprise.

We will focus on:

progress made possible by people; valuing business and entrepreneurial success; creating opportunities; a town with a living heart; connecting to where you need to be; high-quality design and development.

Commitments

- ▶ Position Watford as a town where start-ups and business innovation can thrive, supported by strong local skills, generating a range of job opportunities, including for our young people.
- ▶ Tell Watford's story as a great location for businesses where they can invest, grow and succeed as part of our flourishing business community and networks that connect people.
- ▶ Create a distinctive and successful neighbourhood at the heart of our town, providing space and time for residents, businesses and the community to enjoy and experience.
- ▶ Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments, to create successful, well-designed new communities.
- ▶ Make sure we have quality homes to meet the needs of residents, including housing that is affordable through direct ownership, private rental and social rent housing.

theme 4:

A diverse, happy and healthy town

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**WE ARE
AMBITIOUS FOR
OUR RESIDENTS**



Watford is a united town that is quick to grasp opportunities that reflect our creativity and diversity and add to our sense of pride and belonging.

Over the last two years, our community has stepped up to care for each other and get involved whenever and wherever they have been needed. This spirit reflects our belief that everyone should share in Watford's opportunities to succeed, and enjoy what the town has to offer, and is a catalyst for even greater success.

We are ambitious for our residents and community and recognise that not everyone shares the same life experiences.

But our town should be a place where people feel they can reach their potential - whatever their age or interest, or if they need that bit of extra help.

People value Watford's openness, as well as all the fantastic things there are to do in the town. We are a place with the energy, choice and diversity of a city, but with the community spirit and welcome of a village. We want our 'Watford welcome' to continue to attract people to our town and help them continue to feel that this is a place where they belong.

We will focus on: what makes Watford special; culture; leisure and heritage; engaging and listening to our community; health and well-being; tackling homelessness; challenging inequalities.

Commitments

- ▶ Continue our investment in our outstanding parks and open spaces, so they remain the best in the area.
- ▶ Celebrate and promote our town's rich and diverse culture and creativity.
- ▶ Promote our welcoming and respectful town.
- ▶ Listen to, and hear, the diverse voices of Watford.
- ▶ Support improved health and well-being across the town.
- ▶ Bring together ways to help our residents who might be struggling financially.



Our purpose and direction

Keeping our commitments

Our plan will be translated into action through everything we do. It forms the basis for a detailed Delivery Plan (2022-24) setting out what we will do to make sure our commitments are delivered.

We will rigorously monitor this plan and measure how well we are doing, and we will report back to our residents and communities.

**Watford Together,
United by possibility**





**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

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Watford Together

UNITED BY POSSIBILITY

COUNCIL PLAN 2022-26: **DELIVERY PLAN 2022-24**



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL



Tackling the matters that really matter

SHAPING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR WATFORD



We pride ourselves on thinking beyond the ordinary for Watford.

Watford is a place that thinks differently. We're always ready to challenge perceptions and the accepted way of doing things. We're a town and a council that believes anything is possible when it comes to achieving the best for Watford, our residents and our community.

Elected Mayor of Watford, Peter Taylor
Watford Borough Council Plan 2022-26

Watford is a council that not only thinks beyond the ordinary for Watford, we make sure our big, and bold, ideas become a reality, focusing on translating our ambitions into delivery.

Our Council Plan 2022-26 sets out our ambitions and our overarching themes for Watford over the next four years - a council working with and for our community and serving our residents, a greener, brighter future, an inspiring, thriving and creative town, and a diverse, happy and healthy town. We know that our plans are ambitious, but we are driven by our shared purpose to make Watford even better for everyone.

This Delivery Plan 2022-24 shows how we will focus our work to bring the Council Plan to life over the next two years, making sure we deliver what we said we would to achieve.

Under each theme, we clearly set out our priority actions, which we are committed to achieving by 2024. These actions cut across and support the delivery of our themes, linking together to shape a bright future for Watford.

At Watford, we work as 'one team', with everyone, including our partners, playing their part in the success of this Delivery Plan. We thrive on achieving more and welcome regular checks on how well we are doing on delivering our achievements. We will report our progress every quarter to our Elected Mayor, Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will also publish an annual update for our residents and community, so they can be confident that we are keeping our promises.

Whilst not everything we do is captured in this plan, we apply the same rigour and high standards to all our work and the many services and projects we deliver. Sitting alongside both our Council Plan and Delivery Plan is our Organisational Development Strategy, which shows how we will support our staff to reach their potential and rise to the challenges of working at Watford, and our Financial Plan, which makes the vital link between our budget and our ambitions.



Theme 1:

A council working for our community and serving our residents

COMMITMENT

Make sure we deliver an outstanding customer experience and the high quality services our community expects

Our actions

What we'll do

- 1. Provide an excellent customer experience for everyone who engages with the council**
 We will prepare and deliver a new Customer Experience Strategy to transform how we engage with our customers over the next four years, delivering a real step change across all our services, embracing innovation and embedding a first class experience our customers will value.
- 2. Champion a greener and more sustainable council that strives to reduce our carbon footprint**
 We will embed our ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030 by continuing to deliver our organisational Sustainability Action Plan so that it intrinsic to everything and ensures we reduce our carbon footprint in line with our green goals.
- 3. Focus the right resources in the right places to secure future success**
 We will review how we employ our resources (including staff and finances) to make sure they are focussed on the areas which are most important to the council and support the delivery of this Plan.
- 4. Explore opportunities to share services with other councils where it delivers best value and better customer outcomes**
 We will work with other authorities to develop and implement business cases that explore opportunities to share more services where this will deliver improvements for our customers.
- 5. Make sure the council continues to hold successful and well run elections**
 We will support and prepare for the implementation of the Elections Act 2022 so that our elections continue to be effectively managed and voters are well informed on elections and how to exercise their right to vote.

COMMITMENT

Pioneer new ways of working that challenge us to innovate, transform and consistently improve

Our actions

What we'll do

- 1. Adopt the right digital technology that matches and supports our ambition for excellent service delivery for our residents**
 We will develop and deliver a new four-year ICT strategy to drive forward how we use ICT and digital technology to deliver our ambitions, seeking opportunities to innovate to meet the needs of the council and our community.
- 2. Deliver a step change in how we use our data and information so it strengthens our drive for constant improvement**
 We will improve how we use our data and information to challenge our decisions, enhance performance and support excellent customer experience, using our information to monitor service delivery and to drive action if something needs improving.
- 3. Strengthen our approach to contract management to ensure we are making the most of our contracts and that they are delivering for us and the town**
 We will implement a robust contract management framework to ensure we deliver expected outcomes and excellent value for money from our contracts, providing the best service for our customers.
- 4. Embed social value through our procurement process**
 We will update our Procurement Strategy to strengthen our approach to evidencing economic, social and environmental outcomes when procuring, awarding and delivering contracts.



Theme 1:

COMMITMENT

Focus and challenge how we manage our budget so it is concentrated on delivering our commitments and securing greater investment for Watford



Our actions	What we'll do
1. Ensure our investment portfolio is ambitious and effectively managed to deliver maximum value to the council	We will ensure that we are actively managing our investment portfolio, including exploring new opportunities to protect our income, manage risk and maximise value over the longer term, so that we can continue to provide high quality services to our residents and businesses.
2. Assess the feasibility of a Growth Fund and its benefits for Watford	We will explore where our financial strength can support start-up and growth opportunities delivering a positive investment return for the council and renewed prosperity for the town.
3. Manage and direct the council finances effectively	We will ensure that our budgets align with our priorities and that budget management is robust, forward-looking and supports the best possible service outcomes from available resources, enabling us to keep council tax increases below inflation.
4. Identify new commercial opportunities that align with our ambition	We will look for new and innovative commercial opportunities that will align to our values, whilst ensuring a financial return that can be used to support the council's activities for the benefit of the borough.
5. Manage our ambitious capital programme so that it supports our aspirations	We will develop a commercial risk and mitigation strategy for our capital programme to protect the council against turbulence in global markets, whilst still delivering our ambitious programme of improvements.
6. Invest our Croxley Park funds in ethical investments	We will make sure the funds we receive from Croxley Park are invested in a sustainable way to deliver financial goals and better future for us all.

COMMITMENT

Lead by example, securing our reputation as a forward thinking, caring and inspiring organisation where staff can thrive and achieve their best for our residents and businesses

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Build on our innovative approach to agile working, realising the benefits for our staff and our community	We will ensure our staff are able to provide timely high quality and efficient services to customers by opening up opportunities for staff to work in an agile way in a modern, collaborative and inspiring workplace, helping the council to become an employer of choice.
2. Secure robust succession planning, making sure we value and manage our talent to recruit and retain the best for Watford	We will open up opportunities for our staff to grow and develop, building their skills and knowledge to achieve. Where we do recruit, we will appoint the best, ensuring we recruit people with the right experience and behaviours to be part of 'team Watford'.
3. Embed our values and behaviours so they inspire our staff to achieve even more and underpin how we work	We will collaboratively develop meaningful corporate values and behaviours with our staff and use these as the foundation to implement a behaviours framework. This will help develop the skills of our people at all levels, and from all backgrounds, to recognise individual contributions, expertise and knowledge and to improve the resident and customer focused services we deliver.
4. Refresh our Organisational Development approach so that it effectively underpins and supports our Council Plan	We will ensure we develop, motivate and inspire our staff so they are supported and empowered to do their best for our residents and businesses by refreshing our Organisational Development approach.
5. Seek and implement opportunities for people to have fulfilling local government careers	We will create apprenticeship opportunities for local people at the beginning of their working life, providing them with experience, skills and knowledge from across the council to help kick start their careers.
6. Protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our staff	We will ensure that we protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our staff by developing their resilience and providing opportunities for genuine two-way engagement.



Theme 2:

A greener, brighter future

COMMITMENT

Encourage people to make greener travel choices, reducing congestion and improving the health and wellbeing of the town

Our actions

What we'll do

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Investigate greener travel and transport solutions that work for Watford | We will continue to investigate the potential for a low-carbon transport hub in Watford town centre to encourage more use of public transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality for everyone. |
| 2. Promote ways of to travel that support people make greener choices | We will explore initiatives such as secure cycle parking and school travel plans to give people options other than using their car for every journey. |
| 3. Champion sustainable travel initiatives and greener vehicles options | We will introduce initiatives such as electric vehicles, e-cargo bikes, electric charging points and e-car clubs to encourage more use of green transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality. |
| 4. Work with our partners to improve our cycling and walking network, including designing and implementing a green loop | We will work with Hertfordshire County Council and our cycling and walking communities to improve the cycling and walking network across our town so more people choose to cycle and walk. |
| 5. Champion proposals for a sustainable transport option for Watford Junction to Croxley | We will work closely with Hertfordshire County Council on the Watford to Croxley Link, examining the feasibility of options to secure the best transport system for our town, offering greater choice for our residents, visitors and commuters to travel sustainably. |

COMMITMENT

Promote improvements to Watford's biodiversity to enhance the range of habitats, plants and wildlife in the town

Our actions

What we'll do

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Set out our commitments to improving Watford's biodiversity | We will develop our Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan, recognising the importance of our range of habitats across the town and setting out how we will improve and enhance these for future generations. |
| 2. Enhance and extend our green canopy, through our proactive tree planting initiative | We will work with our community to plant 20,000 trees across the town by 2026, increasing our green canopy, making Watford a more pleasant place to live, work and enjoy recreation time. |
| 3. Rediscover the River Colne to enhance the river, the river corridor, as a place for our community to enjoy | We will improve the River Colne through Watford to make it a more appealing place for local people to enjoy and a better environment for plants and wildlife to flourish. |
| 4. Reinvigorate the Cassiobury Wetlands as an important part of our natural environment | We will improve the wetland and habitat of the former watercress beds on the River Gade in Cassiobury Park to enhance biodiversity, water quality and preserve and protect relevant elated historical features. |
| 5. Celebrate and enhance Whippendell Woods as a site of special scientific interest | We will protect Whippendell Woods, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), in order to preserve its 'favourable condition' status. |
| 6. Promote healthy and sustainable gardening across the town | We will continue compost give-aways using our green waste recycling to bring back the organic material as free, nutrient-rich compost for Watford residents to grow plants and vegetables. |
| 7. Provide clear guidance on improving biodiversity in the town | We will set out guidance for developers on how to improve and enhance biodiversity in developments so they contribute to the town's goals for better habitats and environmental diversity. |

Theme 2:

COMMITMENT

Work alongside our community and businesses to find the right ways to reach net carbon neutral, seeking not just to learn from others but to explore innovative solutions that will work for Watford

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Develop and implement our new Sustainability Strategy	We will work with our community and businesses to develop and implement our new Sustainability Strategy which will set out how together, we can contribute to our target to be a net carbon neutral borough by 2030.
2. Prepare for legislative changes to help protect our environment	We will respond to the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 to ensure we deliver on our role in improving air quality, tackling waste, improving biodiversity and making other environmental improvements.
3. Explore opportunities that will contribute financially to our green commitments and goals	We will explore innovative, economically viable ideas that contribute to net carbon zero tapping into emerging trends, including investigating the possibility of green bonds to raise funds for planned projects.
4. Investigate generating energy from renewable sources	We will examine including sustainable energy generation in council developments so we lead by example and demonstrate how it can work effectively.
5. Improve the energy performance of the Town Hall and Watford Colosseum	We will carry out extensive de-carbonisation works to our Town Hall and Colosseum to improve their energy efficiency and ensure they have a reduced carbon footprint.
6. Ensure the council's own buildings are energy efficient	We will explore ways to improve the energy performance of all properties within our portfolio.
7. Promote sustainable construction in our own developments	We will actively encourage the use of sustainable materials in any of our new developments so we can role model to others who develop in our town.



We will build on the success of our waste and recycling scheme to boost household recycling rates across the borough

COMMITMENT

Encourage residents and businesses to recycle more, reusing materials and reducing waste and what they throw away

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Increase how much our residents recycle and reduce the waste we throw away as a town	We will build on the success of our waste and recycling scheme to boost household recycling rates across the borough, introducing the opportunity for food waste collections for all households and setting targets that reflect our sustainability ambitions.
2. Support our partners to reduce waste and increase recycling	We will work with our partners, including our environmental services provider and leisure services provider to deliver the next step change in reducing waste and increasing recycling, particularly through campaigns and changing behaviours.



Theme 3:

An inspiring, thriving and creative town

We will use our Shared Prosperity Fund to boost our ambitions for prosperity, jobs and skills, spreading opportunities and building our sense of community pride



COMMITMENT

Position Watford as a town where start-ups and business innovation can thrive, supported by strong local skills, generating a range of job opportunities, including for our young people

Our actions	What we'll do
<p>1. Deliver our Innovation and Incubation Hub</p>	<p>We will provide a new Innovation and Incubation Hub, as part of our Town Hall Quarter, which will support start-up businesses in the town and give our key sectors a boost, tapping into the significant opportunity provided by the flourishing creative sector and drawing businesses into the borough.</p>
<p>2. Develop a skills and employment plan for Watford that supports the current, and future, needs of our local businesses and life chances of residents</p>	<p>We will work with our business community and education partners, linking to the Hertfordshire LEP Skills and Employment Plan to develop and deliver a Watford Skills and Employment Plan, connecting local skills to business needs.</p>
<p>3. Maximise economic potential and harness new opportunities from Watford's future growth sectors</p>	<p>We will engage with our successful business sectors and partners at local, county and regional levels, building on the economic drive our sectors provide for Watford's economy, promoting clustering where it makes sense for our town to create greater growth and encourage inward investment.</p>
<p>4. Make the most of our Shared Prosperity Fund allocation</p>	<p>We will use our Shared Prosperity Fund to boost our ambitions for prosperity, jobs and skills, spreading opportunities and building our sense of community pride.</p>

Theme 3:

COMMITMENT

Tell Watford's story as a great location for businesses where they can invest, grow and succeed as part of our flourishing business community and networks that connect people

Our actions	What we'll do
<p>1. Promote what makes Watford a great location for business, connecting to building pride in the town and our profile as a great place to visit</p>	<p>We will work with partners to shape our place narrative and brand, sharing what is great about Watford, attracting more visitors and supporting our local economy, putting the town on the map as a great place for business.</p>
<p>2. Ensure there is a strong voice for local businesses by fostering effective business networks and forums</p>	<p>We will engage with Watford businesses, encouraging an empowered business community that can be a strong voice for the town, making the most of opportunities and new ventures and encouraging vibrant networks and forums that bring businesses together in a meaningful and effective way.</p>
<p>3. Engage with wider economic, business and planning partnerships to make sure Watford's interests are represented</p>	<p>We will work closely with our partners in Hertfordshire LEP, Herts Growth Board and the South West Herts Joint Strategic Partnership to shape and influence wider discussions on our economic role and impact.</p>

COMMITMENT

Create a distinctive and successful neighbourhood at the heart of our town, providing space and time for residents, businesses and the community to enjoy and experience

Our actions	What we'll do
<p>1. Progress our transformational plans for the Town Hall Quarter</p>	<p>We will take forward plans to revitalise the north end of Watford High Street to create a vibrant and attractive neighbourhood within our Town Hall Quarter for our residents to enjoy, as well as establishing a new area in the town for culture to flourish.</p>
<p>2. Secure the future of Watford Colosseum, improving the heritage building and attracting a new operator</p>	<p>We will refurbish the Watford Colosseum so it remains a first-class entertainment venue, attracting a new operator to bring an exciting and diverse range of performances and creative events to boost the town's cultural offer and local economy.</p>
<p>3. Enhance a sustainable town centre with a mixed economy that will have a broad appeal to all ages and interests</p>	<p>We will develop our Town Centre Strategy and Town Centre Framework to ensure that our vibrant and diverse town centre continues to attract residents, businesses and visitors to live, work, shop, eat, drink and enjoy spending time</p>
<p>4. Enhance our outdoor public spaces to make them welcoming and attractive</p>	<p>We will improve a number of our public spaces to provide excellent, safe and attractive outdoor spaces that support a greener Watford. This work will include the enhancement of key areas of our town such as St Mary's Churchyard, Market Street, Queens Road and St Albans Road.</p>
<p>5. Promote the appeal of our town centre and all it has to offer</p>	<p>We will continue to deliver our 'Shop and Eat Local' campaign to attract people to our town centre, supporting our local businesses and their unique appeal.</p>
<p>6. Promote Watford Market and our offer as a market town</p>	<p>We will support our local traders by continuing to run our popular 'Market Late' events, showcasing the great range of food and drink stalls in the market and trialling specialist markets.</p>



Theme 3:

COMMITMENT

Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments to create successful, well-designed new communities

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Take forward plans for the Watford Junction Quarter	We will bring landowners together so we can progress with our long-term plans to create a new Watford neighbourhood that successfully combines new homes, station facilities, jobs, public space, school provision and community facilities for both our existing and new residents.
2. Continue our transformation of Watford Business Park	We will complete the Gateway development at Watford Business Park to continue our plans to create new and high quality business space to maximise local employment opportunities and generate income for the council to support its wider priorities.
3. Continue to deliver the neighbourhood at Riverwell	We will continue to develop the Riverwell scheme to deliver a high quality mix of new homes, jobs, open spaces and community facilities, maintaining an income source for the council to support its wider priorities. The work at Riverwell will support the opportunity for West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust to deliver its ambition for an acute hospital in Watford.
4. Achieve the right long-term balance of development, services and transport links for our town	We will adopt our new Local Plan for Watford which will shape how the town will develop sustainably over the next 30 years and make sure that key development sites are underpinned with creative, sustainable and well-considered planning frameworks.



We will provide guidance to inform how new homes and buildings should be designed



COMMITMENT

Make sure we have quality homes to meet the needs of residents, including housing that is affordable through direct ownership, private rental, affordable and social rent housing

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Deliver a new Housing Strategy for Watford	We will deliver a Housing Strategy that sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in Watford for the next five years. The delivery of housing growth, bringing inward investment into the borough, ensuring existing homes are of good quality, and preventing homelessness will all contribute to meeting the housing challenges faced by our residents.
2. Review and refresh our Nominations Policy	We will deliver a new Nominations Policy for Watford to help our residents apply to our housing register, how we manage the register, your choice about where you live, how we assess applications and allocate properties.
3. Improve housing provision for those local families who need homes that are affordable	We will work with partners to deliver high quality new homes for social rent, for local families who need them the most and support the housing needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.
4. Develop planning guidance to ensure developers provide new homes that support local needs	We will provide guidance to inform how new homes and buildings should be designed so they meet the needs of Watford and are built to a high standard.
5. Deliver a refreshed Private Sector Renewal Policy	We will review and refresh our Private Sector Renewal policy to support the improvement of Watford's housing stock, setting out how we can help the private sector improve and maintain housing quality in the town.

Theme 4:

A diverse, happy and healthy town



COMMITMENT

Continue our investment in our outstanding parks and open spaces so they remain the best in the area

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Deliver improvements to Meriden Park	We will, in consultation with our residents, improve the popular and well-loved Meriden Park, including providing new paths, planting and landscaping, for the whole community to enjoy.
2. Continue our programme of investment and improvements in Watford's parks	We will carry out a range of improvements across our award winning parks and open spaces, including improving footpaths, refurbishing grass tennis courts, and carrying out cycling path repairs. In addition, we will promote the 'cycling code of conduct' and associated engagement programme to support considerate cycling.
3. Enhance Woodside Playing Fields so it offers improved facilities and opportunities for leisure and sport	We will invest in Woodside Playing Fields to enhance the activities on offer, including improvements to both the current boxing and cricket facilities.
4. Complete our work in partnership for a new crematorium for south west Hertfordshire	We will complete the new crematorium and agree future running arrangements, with our partner local authorities, to deliver enhanced facilities, including a remembrance chapel and gardens.

COMMITMENT

Celebrate and promote our town's rich and diverse culture and creativity

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Reimagine our Museum and its place in telling the history of our town	We will develop proposals for a modern, inspiring Heritage and Museum service based in our historic Town Hall that engages and educates our residents and visitors by telling the story of our town and its rich and diverse history, including ensuring that the service and sacrifice of fallen service men and women is recognised.
2. Celebrate 100 years of Watford Borough, building a legacy for future generations	We will lead a programme of celebrations across the town commemorating 100 years since the formation of the borough of Watford.
3. Bring our local heritage to life for our community	We will create a new innovative heritage trail across the town to recognise Watford's rich culture and past.
4. Enhance the town's creative and cultural appeal through a new Public Art Strategy	We will develop a Public Art Strategy for Watford, to explore how art in all its forms, can animate and enhance our public spaces, building on Watford's strong sense of identity and creativity and linking to improved wayfinding across the town.
5. Commemorate the town's links to our past	We will introduce a Blue Plaque scheme which will commemorate links between our historic buildings and famous residents, events or former buildings.
6. Mark and reflect on Watford's response to COVID-19	We will install a public memorial providing a place for reflection and commemoration to build on the community spirit and recognising the outstanding work across the town during the COVID-19 pandemic.
7. Enhance our town's historical features and character	We will develop a series of conservation management plans to enhance and protect the historical features, and character, of different areas across the town.



Theme 4:

COMMITMENT

Promote our welcoming and respectful town

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Ensure everyone feels welcome, included and safe in Watford	We will continue to make sure people feel welcome and safe in Watford, working closely with our partners to bid for funding that will support ways to have a positive impact on levels of violence against women and girls.
2. Establish our commitment to the wellbeing of women and girls	We will deliver 'White Ribbon' accreditation for Watford Borough Council as a part of our ongoing commitment to tackle violence against women and girls, and continue our productive engagement with our One Watford partnership, which is bringing together all strands of this work across the town.
3. Make sure our town remains clean and free from litter	We will trial a new mobile CCTV approach, as part of our overall CCTV review, which allows us to target litter and fly-tipping hotspots and obtain evidence so that we can prosecute offenders, helping to keep our streets clean and litter-free.
4. Develop a range of information and signposting to create a 'welcome to Watford' resource	We will develop a digital 'welcome to Watford' resource for new residents, setting out how they can be fully involved in the life of the town and make the most of Watford and all it has to offer.

Establish our commitment to the wellbeing of women and girls

COMMITMENT

Listen to and hear the diverse voices of Watford

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Engage with our community to support better outcomes for our town and residents	We will develop our strategic approach, setting out how we will proactively work and engage with our community and our voluntary and community sector.
2. Continue to engage with our community so we actively listen to their views and ideas	We will continue to run our Pensioners Forum to provide support, guidance and companionship for our older residents, who contribute so much to the life of our town.
3. Understand and support specific groups within our community	We will introduce a new Veterans Forum for ex-forces personnel, who have done so much for our town and country, building on our commitment to the Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant, which provides support between our civilian community and local Armed Forces community.
4. Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for our residents	We will develop a new Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework and work in partnership with charitable, community and voluntary organisations focused on helping our residents live healthy, happy and independent lives, understanding and meeting their needs through initiatives such as opening up the Town Hall to wider community use.
5. Ensure our community buildings benefit local residents	We will work with our community tenants to ensure our community buildings are well maintained, and, that our buildings maximise the benefits for local people.
6. Deliver our Equality and Diversity policy so it underpins what we do and how we engage with our community	We will develop an Equality and Diversity policy for Watford, making sure it reflects our diverse town and our commitment to being a place where everyone can thrive.
7. Work with partners to end rough sleeping on the streets of Watford	We will continue to deliver our Homelessness Strategy for Watford, reviewing this on an annual basis and adapting it regularly to ensure that it remains innovative and effective, supporting our target of minimising rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.

Theme 4:

COMMITMENT

Support improved health and wellbeing across the town

Our actions	What we'll do
1. Encourage Watford to develop as an age friendly town	We will work towards making Watford an age-friendly town which residents and visitors of all ages can enjoy, ensuring local services are accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.
2. Tackle digital isolation so residents can effectively engage using new technology	We will work with our partners, volunteers and community groups to support residents who do not have access to technology, choose not to do so or do not currently have the skills to use IT so that they have the same opportunities as others in our town.
3. Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing	We will work closely with our partners to develop a mental health strategy for Watford, ensuring the right support is available for residents who need it. Watford's Healthy Hub will provide a pivotal link to assistance and guidance, including opening up conversations about the menopause and for those needing help with mental health issues.
4. Engage with health partners to improve public health and health inequalities for our residents	We will engage across our health partners to make sure the health and wellbeing needs of Watford are represented in new health structures and commissioning of services.
5. Support single homeless people to access accommodation and support	We will continue to establish and embed our single homelessness pathway, focusing on the root causes of homelessness and working closely with our partners to support individuals on every part of their journey into independent living.

We will continue to offer our young people exciting things to do during the Easter and summer holidays



COMMITMENT

Bring together ways to help our residents who might be struggling financially



Our actions	What we'll do
1. Make sure residents are aware of what help we offer to support them manage their finances	We will promote our council tax discount scheme so residents know support might be available to help them pay their bills.
2. Coordinate advice in the town for those seeking information on how to cope with the cost of living crisis	We will work with partners to ensure people can access the advice and information they need when they face financial difficulties, particularly those who are vulnerable or are dealing with debt.
3. Use innovative ways to support our local community financially	We will build upon the success of our COVID-19 Fund, Ukraine Community Funds and Watford Community Fund to investigate a new local lottery to support our local community so that they can continue their good work in our town.
4. Welcome the whole town and visitors to our Big Events	We will deliver our exciting, free programme of Big Events across the town, including our Big Screen, Big Beach and Fireworks, bringing our community together regularly in our town centre and parks.
5. Provide an appealing and lively programme of holiday activities for young people	We will continue to offer our young people exciting things to do during the Easter and summer holidays so they can be engaged and involved in an enjoyable range of free activities.
6. Improve private sector housing across the town, focusing on how it can contribute to both environmental and community benefits	We will support the sustainability of the town's privately owned homes making use of Energy Company Obligation funding to improve the energy efficiency and warmth of those who are vulnerable or on low incomes.
7. Help our community better access the benefits of Watford's economic growth	We will explore ways to create a resilient and inclusive economy that benefits our community, building on foundations from the Hertfordshire Community Wealth Building project, linking local people with opportunities and supporting our voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector link to make a greater economic contribution.



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Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Council Plan 2022-26 (and associated Delivery Plan 2022-24)
Lead officer	Donna Nolan – Managing Director
Person completing the EIA	Kathryn Robson
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) New/Proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Version	v.01- 15 May 2022 v-2 – 30 May (updated)

1. Background

Council Plan 2022-26 – Watford Together – United by Possibility.

Watford Borough Council has developed a bold and ambitious new Council Plan for 2022-26, reviewing its previous Council Plan (2020-24). This is underpinned by a more detailed Delivery Plan with a timeframe 2020-22. The development of this refreshed Plan builds on the achievements of the previous Plan, recognising the fast moving environment in which the council operates and the opportunities and challenges this brings. It also recognises we are in a new Mayoral term, following the elections in May, and this is the right time to align the Council Plan with the pledges in the Mayoral manifesto.

It has been designed to reflect the council's ambitions and commitments for our community, businesses, visitors and workforce and to make sure the town has a successful and resilient future. The plan is strategic, high level and outward-facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments.

The Plan out the direction for the council to 2026 and guides how we use our resources and how we will measure our achievements. It also provides a framework for all our strategies, plans and directs everything we do as a council.

As our key strategic document, the Plan's impact on the town and community is fundamental to ensuring we meet our commitment to equalities and diversity and our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the Council Plan 2022-26 on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

3. What we know about the Watford population

We are currently waiting the outcomes of the Census 2021, which will provide a more up to date picture of the town’s population. We are expecting the first findings to be released by the ONS in June 2021 and this EIA will, therefore, be updated as the information becomes available.

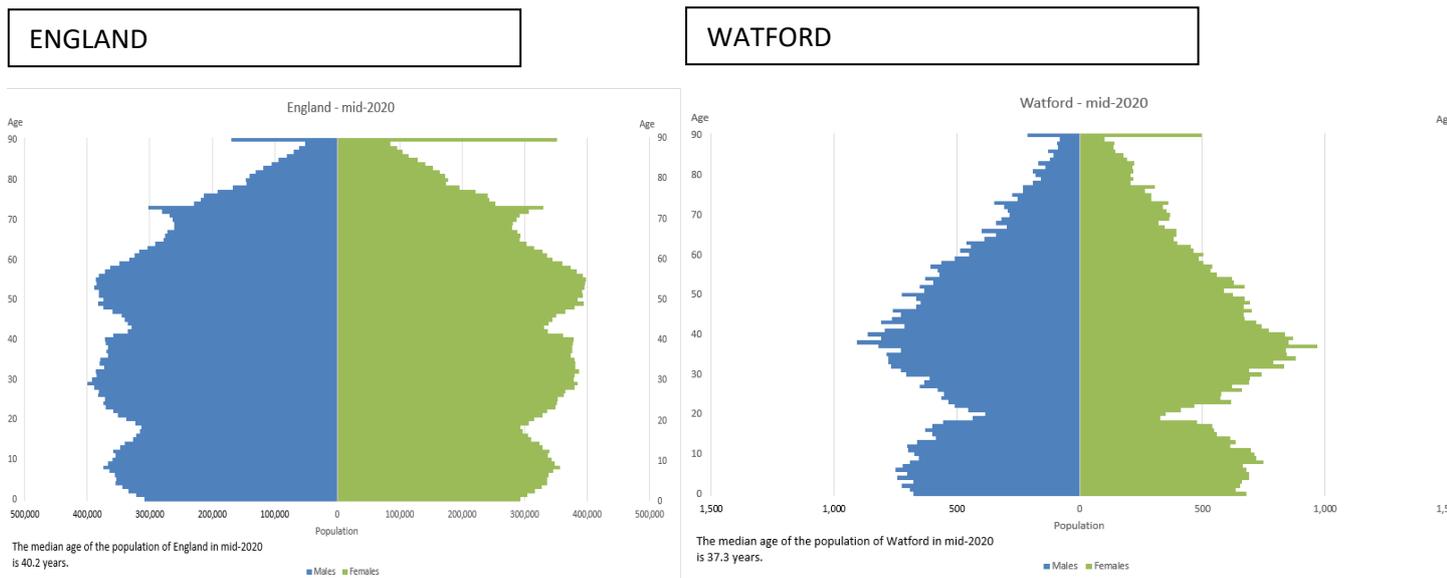
At the present time, we are basing our analysis of the Watford population on data and information that we are able to access.

Population

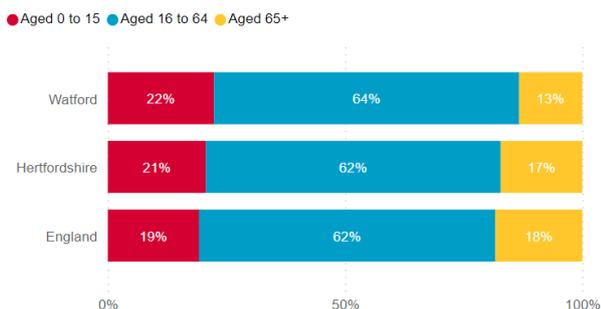
The current population of Watford is 96,600 (ONS mid-2020 estimate).

Watford’s population is currently projected to increase to 105,000 by 2025 and 110,300 by 2035, a rise from 2016 of 14.2%. This growth will be a challenge for Watford, given our tight borough boundaries and is recognised within the Council Plan, shaping a number of our commitments and areas for action in the Delivery Plan.

The graphs below show a comparison between the sex and age profile of England’s population with that of Watford. (ONS 2020). The comparison shows that, overall, Watford has a younger population profile than the country overall, also indicated by the median age for England in 2023 (40.2 years) being nearly three years higher than that for Watford (37.3 years). This means that we are a town which is popular with families and, whilst we are a town for all, we recognise that our plans need to reflect our large number of younger people and families.



Comparison of age structures: Watford / Hertfordshire / UK - 2020



Population density

The population density for Watford is circa 4,515 people per square kilometre (2019). This makes it the most densely populated district area in Hertfordshire and in the country. This is a reflection that we are an urban district with no open space 'hinterland', with many characteristics of a metropolitan borough. In comparison with many metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, our density is relatively low.

Ward level populations (mid-year 2018 estimates)

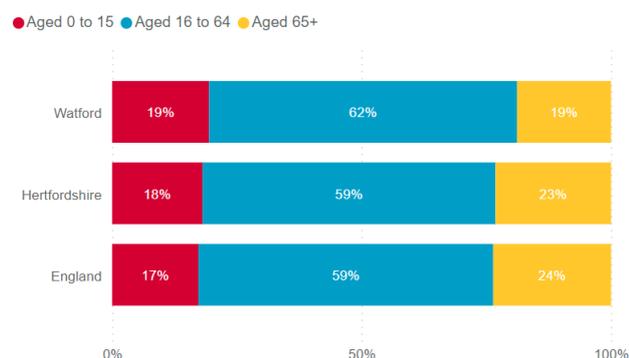
The ONS publishes experimental data on ward level populations. The last release date was for mid-year 2020. This showed Central ward had the highest population (9,863) and Tudor the lowest (6,920). Further analysis shows that Nascot ward had a significantly higher number of elderly residents than other wards (120 90 years plus), whilst Central the highest number of under 30s.

Ward	Mid-year 2020
Callowland	8,109
Central	9,863
Holywell	8,765
Leggats	7,705
Merden	7,844
Nascot	8,707

Ward	Mid-year 2020
Oxhey	6,738
Park	8,592
Stanborough	7,384
Tudor	6,720
Vicarage	8,707
Woodside	7,669

ONS experimental data (Ward Level Mid-Year Population Estimates (experimental), Mid-2020)

Comparison of age structures: Watford / Hertfordshire / UK – projected by 2043



Households

Number of households

The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of the Census; as of 31 May 2022 the figure was 43,416.

The average household size in Watford is currently 2.44 (2018). This is currently slightly higher the region and for England (2.37). Nationally, there is downward trend in household size projected over the next 25 years. The Watford average household size is envisaged to drop to 2.3 person household in 2043, which this is larger than that projected for the English average (2.24 in 2043) and just above the Hertfordshire average (2.28 in 2043). These projections have implications for Watford in terms of our households and community.

Household size

The 2018 projections estimate that, between 2018 and 2043:

- Watford's average household size will decrease from 2.44 to 2.3
- Hertfordshire's average household size will decrease from 2.44 to 2.28
- England's average household size will decrease from 2.37 to 2.24

Household Composition

From the 2018 projections, one person households see the biggest increase in household growth in Watford.

Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of our town and what makes us such a vibrant and diverse town.

For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following main breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%), Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%), British other Asian (4.4%) and African (3.5%), White Irish (2.3%) and Caribbean (1.7%).

The full breakdown from Census 2011 is at Appendix A.

In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by ethnicity. This did not report ethnicities to the level of granularity that the Census reported ethnicity. The estimates for 2016 were: White British (59% - 57,000 residents), Asian / Asian British (19% - 19,000 residents), All Other White (12% - 12,000 residents), Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4% - 4,000 residents), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group (4% - 4,000 residents) and Other Ethnic Group (1% - 1,000 residents).

National insurance registration: Census information is now over 10 years old and it is extremely likely the ethnic profile of the borough has changed during this time. For example Census 2011 would not have captured more recent EU arrivals to the borough (EU2 countries – Romania and Bulgaria, who were given residency rights in 2014). We know from other data such as National Insurance Registration that Watford has experienced a relatively high increase in nationals from the EU2 countries applying for National Insurance registrations as Watford residents. This follows a period of a high number from EU8 countries (including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania) who were given freedom of movement to the UK from 2004. Throughout the period the arrival of new residents from south Asia (e.g. Pakistan / India) has remained relatively constant.

The National Insurance Registrations for the 12 months ending June 2021 shows there were 999 registrations in Watford, of which 114 were from Romania and Bulgaria, 504 from South Asia and 86 from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden. 80 came from sub Saharan Africa and 21 from North Africa.

The most recent breakdown (June 2021) is at Appendix B. These figures are lower than in previous captures because of the impact of COVID-19 on people's movements around the world.

Language spoken at home: Other data sources, including Hertfordshire's school language survey on the languages spoken by Watford school children at home, endorse the National Insurance findings that Watford remains a town with a diverse community with English still the predominant language (at around 60%) followed by (in order of self-selection by Watford families): Urdu, Polish, Tamil, Romanian, Gujarati, Pahari, Gujarati and Hindi. The most selected African language spoken is Arabic (113 families – although not spoken exclusively in Africa) and Akan/Twi-Fante (78 families).

The full breakdown for 2018 is at Appendix C.

Births and origin of parents: In 2020, 64% of children born to Watford based parents, had one or both parents born outside of the UK, with 47% having both parents born outside of the UK. 58% of new mothers in Watford were born outside of the UK (1305 births in total, with 545 to mothers born in the UK and 760 born outside of the UK. Of these 230 mothers were born in the 'new' EU countries – those that had joined since 2004), 304 to EU countries and 277 in the Middle East and Asia. 105 mothers were born in Africa.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) quarterly statistics (28 August 2018 to 31 March 2022) – experimental

data: The Government has issued data on the number of applications made to the EUSS from 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2022, and applications concluded during the same time period. This shows that up to March 2022, 20, people in Watford had applied for EUSS. Of these the following were the highest number of nationalities who had applied: Romanian (6,470), Polish (3,130), Portuguese (1,600), Italian (1,170), Bulgarian (920) and Spanish (840).

The full analysis is at Appendix D.

Age

The largest populations by age band in Watford are:

- 35-39 years (8,424)
- 30-34 years (7,690)
- 40 -44 years (7,686)
- 5 -9 years (7,018)

Compared with other districts in Hertfordshire, Watford has fewer 65+ years residents. The age profile of the borough is more comparable with cities who have younger populations and where younger people are attracted by lifestyle opportunities, affordable housing and good transport links.

Median age: the median age in Watford is 37.3 years. This compares to 40.3 for England (mid-year 2020 population estimates)

Disability / Health

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have ‘good health’ and just under 14% record a disability. We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairment (Census 2011).

The 2019 NHS Health Profile’s summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is ‘varied’ compared with the England average. About 12% (2,300) of children live in low income families – this is an improvement on 2016 (14% / 2,700). Life expectancy for men at 65 is similar to the England average but for women it is significantly worse (2016-18).

The profile also shows that Watford is below average for a number of important health indicators, which may have had some impact on the town’s rate of deaths from COVID-19. These include: residents eating the recommended 5 a day portions of fruit and vegetables, over-18s who are obese and physically active adults. All reported cancer screenings were below average for Watford and emergency admissions for falls from the age of 65 plus were worse than for the England average.

Religion / belief

The religious breakdown in the Census 2011 of the main religions in Watford was: Christian (54.1%), Muslim (9.8%), Hindu (4.8%), with no religion stated at 21.4%.

In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by religion. This took an estimated population of 94,000 for Watford and the main religions identified through the estimates were: Christian (53%), Muslim (10%), Hindu (9%) with no religion at 26%.

Sexual orientation / Transgender

Watford has no specific data on the transgender community within the borough or for the sexual orientation of its community. These questions were included in the Census 2021.

Education, skills and employment

A skilled workforce supports the economic development and employment aspirations for Watford.

There has been a mostly increasing trend in educational attainment in Watford over the last few years.

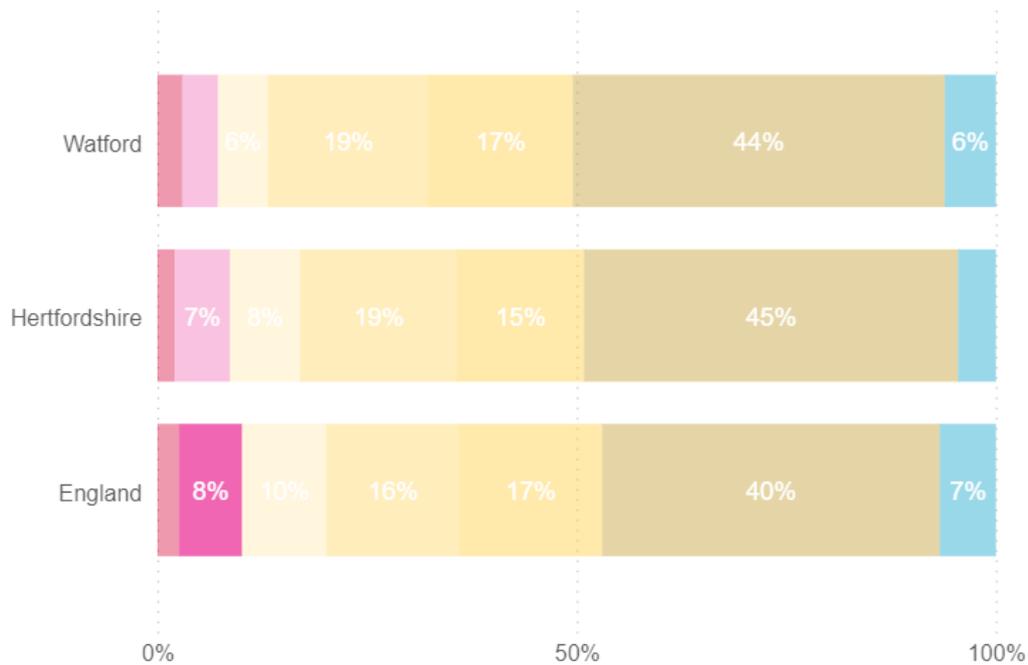
Watford’s working age population has the fourth highest percentage (44.4%) in Hertfordshire of those with qualifications at NVQ 4 and above (Three Rivers is the highest with 63.5%, St Albans the second highest at 58.5% and East Herts third highest with 45.7%); this is close to the Hertfordshire average of 42% average

but higher than the Great Britain average of 40.3%.

83.7% of Watford residents have achieved 5 A*-C or equivalent. This is better than the England average of 75.6 (Jan – Dec 2019)

Qualifications profile, December 2019

● Apprenticeship ● None (NVQ) ● NVQ1 only ● NVQ2 only ● NVQ3 only ● NVQ4+ ● Other (NVQ)



Employment

As of March 2022, the claimant count for Watford was:

Current number and rate of claimants

Area	Number	Proportion of working aged residents
Watford	2,419	3.9%
Hertfordshire	22,091	3.0%
England	1,457,826	4.3%

Homelessness

Whilst this is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the council recognises that the particular circumstances of people without their own home might be a factor in their taking an active role in our community. As of December 2021, we had 8 statutory homeless and 82 households in temporary accommodation.

Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019 were published by the Government in September 2019, and updates the previous 2015 Indices. The Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas, in England

The IoD2019 is based on 39 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

In the IMD 2019, Watford is ranked 195 out of 317 authorities, putting it in the 7th decile nationally. This means that, overall, Watford is less deprived than half the authorities in England.

Watford is the third most deprived authority in Hertfordshire. (Stevenage and Broxbourne are the most deprived.) However, three Hertfordshire authorities are among the 10% least deprived authorities in England (Three Rivers, East Herts and St Albans).

Overall, Watford is not an area with significant deprivation issues and the majority of the LSOAs within the town are in the bottom 50% of LSOAs nationally for deprivation; the borough's position has improved relative to that of 2015.

The combined deprivation index, which weights income and employment more heavily than the other domains, obscures the more deprived areas in Watford, which are affected by crime, living environment deprivation, health and disability, and education, skills and training deprivation in particular. This is, at least in part, because income and employment deprivation are less of an issue for Watford than for other areas.

The ten most deprived LSOAs in Watford, as ranked in the IMD 2019 are as follows (the ranking for the last IMD data in 2015 is shown in brackets in the first column). Deprivation has also been identified as an indicator for poorer COVID-19 outcomes so understanding our areas of deprivation, particularly if we apply greater granularity around health and income deprivation. The LSOA, which contains some of Whippendell Road, Chester Road and Durban Road West is within the second most deprived health and disability quartile does not feature in the top 10 most deprived LSOAs

Watford rank	Ward	LSOA code	Hertfordshire		England	
			Rank	Decile in Herts (1st = most deprived)	Rank	Decile (1st = most deprived)
1 (1)	Central (Water Lane, Gladstone Road, Grosvenor Road, part of Radlett Road, Brockleberry Close, Raphael Drive, top part of Queens Road)	E01023860 (009B)	5 (5)	1st (1st)	5055 (5005)	2nd (2nd)
2 (3)	Holywell (Caractacus Green, part of Charlock Way, Moor View, Jellicoe Road, Stripling Way, Rose Gardens)	E01023865 (011C)	21 (22)	1st (1st)	7239 (7800)	3rd (3rd)
3 (2)	Meriden (Garsmouth Way, Aldbury Close, Harvest End, part of York Way)	E01023876 (003D)	26(19)	1st (1st)	7924 (7590)	3rd (3rd)
4 (4)	Holywell (Ascot Road, Greenhill Crescent, Caxton Way, Croxley View)	E01023866 (011D)	27 (30)	1st (1st)	8294 (9203)	3rd (3rd)
5 (7)	Woodside (Haines Way, Queenswood Crescent, Sheriff Way, Nottingham Close)	E01023906 (001C)	61 (41)	1st (1st)	10719 (10062)	4th (4th)
6 (10)	Oxhey (Deacons Hill, Blackwell Drive, Riverside Road, Eastbury Road, Thorpe Crescent)	E01023883 (012B)	62 (49)	1st (1st)	10758 (10710)	4th (4th)
7 (13)	Callowland (Maude Crescent, St George's Road, Breakspere Close, Nicholas Close)	E01023857 (006C)	67 (56)	1st (1st)	10894 (10812)	4th (4th)
8 (9)	Meriden (Gaddesden Crescent, Bovingdon Crescent, Garston Lane)	E01023877 (003E)	73 (75)	2nd (2nd)	11225 (11837)	4th (4th)
9 (12)	Leggatts (The Harebreaks, Chestnut Walk, Foxhill, Brushrise, Elm Grove)	E01023870 (004C)	78 (52)	2nd (1st)	11515 (10734)	4th (4th)
10 (5)	Stanborough (Clarke Way, Rushton Avenue, Orbital Crescent, Harris Road)	E01023891 (002B)	92 (31)	1st (1st)	11970 (9377)	4th (3rd)

MOSAIC profile

Our MOSAIC profiling of the borough enhances our understanding of our population and provides valuable context for our decision-making as well as underpinning our communications and engagement. It confirms we are a young and diverse borough.

Type Label	Type Description	2020 Households
Career Builders	Professional singles and couples in their 20s and 30s progressing in their field of work from commutable properties	5257
Cafés and Catchments	Affluent families with growing children living in upmarket housing in city environs	3660
Culture & Comfort	Thriving families with good incomes in diverse suburbs	3575
Flexible Workforce	Successful young renters ready to move to follow worthwhile incomes from service sector jobs	2927
Solid Economy	Stable families with children, renting higher value homes from social landlords	2701
Community Elders	Established older households owning city homes in diverse neighbourhoods	2574
Primary Ambitions	Families with school-age children, who have bought the best house they can afford within popular neighbourhoods	2434
Thriving Independence	Well-qualified older singles with incomes from successful professional careers in good quality housing	1949
Ageing Access	Older residents owning small inner suburban properties with good access to amenities	1731
Premium Fortunes	Asset-rich families with substantial income, established in distinctive, expansive homes in wealthy enclaves	1448
	Total (Top 10)	28256
	Total Households in Watford	39675

Watford's MOSAIC profile (2020)

Key issues identified from our borough profile for our Council Plan 2022-26:

- A young population with a higher proportion of those under 50, which, given the higher proportion of under 20s indicates Watford is a town with a high number of families
- A growing population where there will be more smaller households but where there will still be a need for family homes
- A very diverse population and a town that continues to attract people from across the globe and with a high proportion of minority ethnic communities
- Some underlying health related issues, particularly around preventative health measures and healthy living
- Areas where residents are experiencing less positive outcomes – often as a result of multiple issues but which could be impacting on life chances and opportunities

4. What local people have said is important to them

Our regular Community Survey is one way we test what we are doing and our future plans. The Community Survey 2018 received over 1,100 responses, which indicates the level of interest our residents have in the town and its future. A new survey will be conducted later in 2022, to provide additional insight into the council's planning and the development of the next phase of its Delivery Plan.

HEADLINE RESULTS

Views on the council

- 77% of respondents are satisfied with the way the council runs things
- 80% agree the council is working to make Watford a better place to live
- 82% think we provide value for money and the same percentage are satisfied with the way we spend our proportion of your council tax
- 85% agree we are working to make Watford economically successful

Top council services

These are the services that local residents think we do really well:

- Waste and recycling
- Parks and open spaces
- Sports and leisure facilities

Views on Watford

- 74% of respondents are satisfied with Watford as a place to live
- 80% are proud to be a Watford resident
- 84% think that where they live people from different backgrounds get on well together
- 91% agree Watford is a safe town

Top five things that respondents said make somewhere a good place to live

- Feeling safe in my home and the local area
- Good quality hospital and health services
- Cleanliness and tidiness of the town
- Good access to public transport
- Rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis

Where we need to do even better

- Ensuring that new homes are supported by good infrastructure such as school places, GP surgeries, better transport links
- Keep local people informed about decisions
- Provide more opportunities for people to find out what is going on and share their views
- Explaining why well-planned growth is important to the town
- Explaining housing targets and the need for new homes

Key issues identified from our resident feedback:

Priorities for the borough

The survey also asked people about their priorities for the borough.

The top choices were:

Ensuring a vibrant and prosperous local economy that offers a range of jobs and opportunities for local people	48.5%
Keeping the town clean and our streets free from litter	38.6%
Working with community safety partners to tackle issues and make Watford even safer for our communities	38.0%
Creating a well-connected borough with good infrastructure such as better transport links	37.4%
Supporting our more vulnerable residents so that they can live independent lives	35.5%
Protecting and enhancing our parks and open spaces	31.5%
Helping to provide a range of new homes that meet local needs, including more affordable homes	30.2%

Total responses: 1,095

Residents were also able to provide their views on other priority areas for Watford not identified within the answer choices. Of the comments received, the most commonly cited issues were **parking and congestion**.

5. The impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the world, the UK and on our town. Whilst all areas have been affected by the virus, Watford experienced a higher number of deaths and rate of deaths than many other places. Our Council Plan 2022-26 acknowledges that we are in a very changed world from the one before the pandemic hit and even since our last Plan was published. We are now facing the impact of a more unstable world with the recent events in Ukraine and the rising cost of living, fuelled by energy and food price increases. COVID-19 highlighted the disparity in health outcomes for different populations and Public Health England (PHE) has concluded that the unequal impact of COVID may be explained by social and economic inequalities, racism, discrimination and stigma, differing risks at work and inequalities in the prevalence of conditions such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and asthma, which can increase the severity of COVID-19

The report recommendations were strongly focused on the health sector but there are lessons we can adopt and support our health partners to address.

Key for us are:

- Better data collection about ethnicity and religion
- Improve engagement and participation of minority ethnic communities
- Producing culturally sensitive campaigns to help people access services
- Support health partners to target health messages

We also know that the significant majority of those who requested support during COVID-19 lockdown were 60+, reflecting their potential vulnerability.

6. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the Council Plan 2022-26 and associated Delivery Plan

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the Council Plan:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

The Council Plan 2022-26, as the council's main strategic planning document, underpins all other council strategies and plans and everything we do. Therefore, it is fundamental to our meeting our equality duty but, more importantly, to creating a town and community where everyone is valued and can reach their potential, irrespective of their background or any protected characteristic.

Our Council Plan 2022-26 makes a clear statement that our strategic direction is: Watford Together – United by Possibility, emphasising that we are ‘one town’ and that all our community has a share in our future success.

The plan is designed to be strategic, high level and outward-facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. It describes the Council’s post COVID-19 era to the workforce, our communities and our partners by resetting our strategic commitments.

The Plan has been developed around two key objectives:

- What we are trying to achieve - our themes
- What we are going to focus on over the next four years - our commitments

The proposed themes are as follows:

- A council working for our community and serving our residents
- A greener, brighter future
- An inspiring, thriving and creative town
- A diverse, happy and healthy town

The Council Plan is underpinned by a robust and focused Delivery Plan 2022-24, which shows how the Council will focus our work to bring the Council Plan to life, making sure we deliver what we said we would over the next two years

Through the Delivery Plan, specific projects and areas of work are identified that set the corporate work programme and demonstrate how we will deliver against the three themes priority to 2024

All of our commitments, and the work set out to deliver them, impact on our community to some extent. Indeed, the underlying driver for the plan is to ensure we are working in a way that benefits all our community; we seek to identify where the council can contribute to improving the town and make a difference to issues that matter to local people.

EIA commitment

As part of its commitment to the Equality Act 2010, Watford BC expects EIAs to be undertaken on all new strategies and policies and where a strategy or policy has been reviewed and significantly revised. Therefore, there are a number of areas of work identified in the Delivery Plan where separate EIAs will be carried out. The councils Leadership Team will oversee the delivery commitment to ensure EIAs are undertaken and equalities impacts considered.

How our priorities will support our public sector equalities duties under the Equality Act 2010 is described below, with some of the individual projects /areas of work identified:

1. A council working for our community and serving our residents

We recognise that the talent and commitment of our staff are the engines that drive us forward. We want our people to be the best they can be and to stretch themselves to achieve even more. We know how proud they are to work for Watford; they want to make a difference, deliver for our residents and businesses, and blend all that is best about public service, while embracing learning from the private-sector. Our councillors have been called on to provide leadership for our communities as never before. They have risen to this brilliantly and we will continue to support them in their important role.

We will focus on: leadership; agile, collaborative working; growing our own talent; innovative thinking and learning; being bold and best in field; recognising success and achievements..

Our commitments

- Make sure we deliver an outstanding customer experience and the high-quality services our community expects.
- Pioneer new ways of working that challenge us to innovate, transform and consistently improve.
- Focus on and challenge how we manage our budget, so it is concentrated on delivering our commitments and securing greater investment for Watford.
- Lead by example, securing our reputation as a forward-thinking, caring and inspiring organisation where staff can thrive and achieve their best for our residents and businesses.

What this means for equalities

This theme focuses on our people and we will look to be an employer of choice in our community that treats our staff with dignity and respect and offers everyone opportunities to succeed, build their careers and flourish. We will focus on our customers, meeting their individual needs, and ensuring there is no barrier to enjoying our services or enjoying what our town has to offer. We want to use new technology to open up our council and to provide all our community with the opportunity to engage and become involved in the life of the town

2. A brighter, greener future

Climate change is the biggest challenge we face, globally, nationally and locally.

We believe that to be part of the solution, we must think and act as a town and a community, to make Watford a beacon for greener and more sustainable ways to live, do business and travel.

We have pledged to become a carbon-neutral council by 2030, which means we will work to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve environmental benefits in everything we do. We will also engage with our residents and businesses to fully embed the concept of a greener town, working together to have a real impact on our local environment: from greater opportunities for biodiversity and recycling, to less polluting and healthier ways to travel.

We will focus on: greener travel; biodiversity; achieving net carbon neutral as a council and town; recycling and reducing waste.

Our commitments

- Encourage people to make greener travel choices, reducing congestion and improving the health

and wellbeing of the town.

- Promote improvements to the town's biodiversity to enhance the range of habitats, plants and wildlife in the town.
- Work alongside our community and businesses to find the right ways to reach net carbon neutral, seeking not just to learn from others, but to explore innovative solutions that will work for Watford.
- Encourage residents and businesses to recycle more, reusing materials and reducing waste and what they throw away.

What this means for equalities

Ultimately, a cleaner, greener environment has positive benefits across all the protected characteristics but it has a big impact on health outcomes. What we achieve through the life of this Council Plan should support healthier life styles, which will benefit all ages but particularly those with disabilities where clean air can make a real difference to the quality of life.

3. An inspiring, thriving and creative town

We are a successful town, built on our connections, creativity and community and recognise how vital it is for our town to flourish and achieve its maximum potential for everyone. We want Watford to continue to be an outstanding place for everyone: residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Watford has a rich history, and we want to protect our town's strong local identity, successfully blending our past with our future and putting in place the plans that will shape Watford in the years ahead.

Our experience shows that standing still is not an option. We need to consistently strive to do more: to focus on what really matters and build a town where no one gets left behind; a town where everyone benefits from well-planned growth and opportunity; and a town that leads the way in creativity, opportunity and enterprise.

We will focus on: progress made possible by people; valuing business and entrepreneurial success; creating opportunities; a town with a living heart; connecting to where you need to be; high-quality design and development.

Commitments

- Position Watford as a town where start-ups and business innovation can flourish, supported by strong local skills, generating a range of job opportunities, including for our young people.
- Tell Watford's story as a great location for businesses where they can invest, grow and succeed as part of our flourishing business community and networks that connect people.
- Create a distinctive and successful neighbourhood at the heart of our town, providing space and time for residents, businesses and the community to enjoy and experience.

- Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments, to create successful, well-designed new communities.
- Make sure we have quality homes to meet the needs of residents, including housing that is affordable through direct ownership, private rental and social rent housing

What this means for equalities

Jobs and homes are important to all backgrounds at some point in their life. This theme highlights how important these are to the town and how a flourishing local economy supports all our community. Jobs are particularly critical for those of working age but all ages and backgrounds benefit if there are employment opportunities that allow families to settle and grow here and the town benefits from the prosperity they bring.

Many of those needing a home in our town are young people or those with families and so we need to ensure we are a town that offers housing choices for our residents. We want new homes to be high quality and affordable.

Another area where we need to focus is private rented accommodation, which data tells us is an extremely important sector in our town. Whilst this is the right solution for many local people we know that the role of the private landlord in the town is critical to our community and population. A significant amount of the rental sector is accessed by those aged 20 -35 years and so the work we do with the town's landlords has an important impact on this age group.

We recognise successful neighbourhoods need good infrastructure such as public transport, active transport links, schools and GP surgeries. Facilities and services like good public transport links are important to all the community but particularly for those too young to drive or with a disability or age-related impairment that means driving is not an option.

4. A diverse, happy and healthy town

Watford is a united town that is quick to grasp opportunities that reflect our creativity and diversity and add to our sense of pride and belonging. Over the last two years, our community has stepped up to care for each other and get involved whenever and wherever they have been needed. This spirit reflects our belief that everyone should share in Watford's opportunities to succeed, and enjoy what the town has to offer, and is a catalyst for even greater success.

We are ambitious for our residents and community and recognise that not everyone shares the same life experiences. But our town should be a place where people feel they can reach their potential – whatever their age or interest, or if they need that bit of extra help.

People value Watford's openness, as well as all the fantastic things there are to do in the town. We are a place with the energy, choice and diversity of a city, but with the community spirit and welcome of a village. We want our 'Watford welcome' to continue to attract people to our town and help people continue to feel that this is a place where they belong.

Watford has a rich history and we want to protect the strong local identity of our town, successfully blending our past with our future.

We will focus on: what makes Watford special; culture; leisure and heritage; engaging and listening to our community; health and wellbeing; tackling homelessness; challenging inequalities.

Commitments

- Continue our investment in our outstanding parks and open spaces, so they remain the best in the area.
- Celebrate and promote our town's rich and diverse culture and creativity.
- Promote our welcoming and respectful town.
- Listen to, and hear, the diverse voices of Watford.
- Support improved health and wellbeing across the town.
- Bring together ways to help our residents who might be struggling financially

What this means for equalities

This theme recognises the diversity of our town and how important our community, from every background, is to the vibrancy and success of Watford. We recognise how important it is for all our community to have a voice, to feel safe and welcome in the town and make the most of the town and their own potential. We also highlight that our community will be facing the pressure of the rising cost of living and that we will look at ways to support them during the next two years.

A. Positive impacts

Potential positive effects

Our Council Plan and Delivery Plan are designed to move our town and council to the next level. They are influenced by what we know about Watford from data and intelligence and feedback from residents, staff and partners. These have come together to shape ambitious plans for the town and to make a difference in those areas that matter to our residents, businesses and community,

Through the commitments and associated actions in the Delivery Plan the council will continue to ensure it embraces and promotes its equality duty through taking into account how we can advance equalities in everything we do.

Some of the positive impacts identified include:

- Our focus on our staff's development and on innovative and focused recruitment will support us meet our duties as an employer and promote us as a place to work where equalities and diversity is taken seriously and championed
- Our ambition to provide customer excellence will mean the needs of those with protected characteristics will be understood through the way we engage with our customers, ensuring people recognise that we are a council who are serious about delivering high quality services that matter to people
- All equality groups should benefit from activities to strengthen the local economy through attracting and supporting local businesses, which supports job opportunities and ensures local businesses thrive

- The work to deliver new homes, including affordable homes, in attractive, well-designed neighbourhoods will have a positive impact on young adults and families.
- We recognise the importance of health and wellbeing, including mental health and our committed to making Watford an age friendly town
- We want people to participate in the life of Watford, to feel welcome when they arrive and to have opportunities to engage and share their views

Recommendation 1: Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and engagement and updating the Watford context on a regular basis, particularly through the Census 2021 information we expect this year.

Recommendation 2: Ensure EIAs are undertaken on all relevant Council Plan / Delivery Plan commitments and actions and that they are underpinned with quality data and intelligence and community feedback / engagement

Recommendation 3: Ensure our consultation and engagement with our staff and community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work, strengthening our explanation of why we need to collect this and explaining how the information is used to support our work and better community outcomes

Recommendation 5: Deliver our new equality and diversity policy to ensure it reflects our ambitions and commitments and our staff and community has an opportunity to shape the policy

Recommendation 6: Use the information released from Census 2021 to build our understanding of our community and for shaping how we deliver our services, work with partners and the community and respond to our opportunities

B. Negative impacts

Potential negative effects

These would arise if equalities and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are not considered through the delivery of the Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24. We would also want to go beyond our legal responsibilities so that the diversity of Watford is recognised across everything we do and people feel listened to, welcomed and involved.

The main ways of mitigating these potential negative effects:

- Training and communication – an online training programme is offered to all staff; this addresses both the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the council’s own commitment to equalities and diversity. This training will be reviewed within the year
- Staff Ambassador Group – provides feedback and support to the organisation and can be asked to champion equalities within their services

- Leadership Team to receives reports on equalities to inform of progress and any issues
- Our website has a facility that allows information to be translated into a range of languages and provides audio services too
- Actively working with our community either through established groups or making new connections if necessary, find out what is important to them and to hear their views

Recommendation 6: Review staff equalities training and make sure this is rolled out to staff and members

Recommendation 7: The need to conduct EIAs has been outlined in Recommendation 1 above – the council needs to ensure staff are confident to undertake robust EIAs and it is recommended that additional training be undertaken to support staff in this area if needed

Recommendation 8: Ensure the council’s project and programme management frameworks identify equalities as an area for consideration to highlight where necessary

Recommendation 9: Promote the council’s website facilities that supports those with protected characteristics both internally and externally

Recommendation 10: Ensure the council is responsive and listens to its community, opening up channels of engagement and giving people an opportunity to have their voice heard and influence outcomes for local people

6. Overall conclusion

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

This EIA has taken into account the council’s public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to assist the council in meeting its duty.

The information within this report and an assessment of both the positive and negative impacts together indicate that the Council Plan and Delivery Plan will, overall, deliver positive impacts for the Watford community. This is because the ambitions and strategic direction set out in the plans seek to make Watford an even better to live, work, enjoy life and visit. We want Watford to be a place where people, businesses and the community can grow and thrive and have set out a programme of work that will deliver this.

We will make sure we meet our equalities duty, champion diversity and address any issues our community identifies which prevent people making the most of what our town has to offer or which prevent them reaching their potential.

Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
Delivery of the Council Plan through the Delivery Plan commitments and actions to improve outcomes across all equality groups / protected characteristics	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and engagement and updating the Watford context on a regular basis, particularly through the Census 2021 • Ensure EIAs are carried out and are effective and support decision making • Continue to identify equality issues within committee reports and highlight where EIAs have been completed • Deliver a robust and meaningful Equality and Diversity Policy • Ensure learning from COVID-19 is built into our planning and that we respond to what emerges from research in terms of inequalities and impact on protected characteristics
Ensure our consultation and engagement with our staff and community continues to collect relevant equalities data so we have a better understanding of the impact of our work	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consultations seek feedback from our communities in terms of their demographics and protected characteristics, where relevant • Ensure feedback is considered in decision making where relevant and appropriate • Make sure we explain why we are collecting information on protected characteristics and show how it can make a real difference

Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
Potential if individual areas of work do not fully consider equality impacts as part of planning and delivery	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective training so staff and members understand the importance of considering the equality impacts of decision making and the council’s public sector equality duty • Leadership to champion equalities and challenge decisions and proposals in the context of equalities and diversity
Lack of understanding of the community and issues that are affecting those with a protected characteristic	All (potentially) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnicity - Age - Disability - Sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and updating the Watford context on a regular basis • Ensure learning from COVID-19 is built into our planning and that we respond to what emerges from research in terms of inequalities and impact on protected characteristics • Work closely with our community to understand from them about issues and what matters to them • Build greater understanding through engagement with our community and work with them to support

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure EIAs are carried out, are effective and support decision making

This EIA has been developed by:

Kathryn Robson

..... **Date31.05.ww**

Version control:

1. Draft EIA to support report to Cabinet (13 June 2022)

Appendix A:

Census 2011: Watford Borough ethnicity data

	WATFORD 2011
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	61.9% (55,875)
White Irish	2.3% (2,063)
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.1% (61)
White: Other White	7.7% (6,947)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	1.1% (990)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	0.5% (412)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	1.0% (939)
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	0.8% (763)
Asian/Asian British: Indian	5.5% (4,923)
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	6.7% (6,082)
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.4% (362)
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.9% (822)
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	4.4% (3,981)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	3.5% (3,142)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	1.7% (1,558)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	0.6% (529)
Other ethnic group: Arab	0.3% (294)
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	0.6% (558)

Appendix B:

National Insurance registrations – Hertfordshire – 12 months ending June 2021

		European Union				Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Asia				Rest of the World					Unknown
	TOTAL	European Union EU15	European Union EU8	European Union EU2	European Union Other	Other Europe	Middle East and Central Asia	East Asia	South Asia	South East Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	North Africa	North America	Central and South America	Oceania	Unknown
Broxbourne	236	24	8	76	..	55	7	..	17	5	35	..	8
Dacorum	342	73	7	56	..	23	13	8	82	12	46	10	5	11	..	5
East Hertfordshire	263	114	18	11	6	22	..	6	19	14	25	6	7	15	5	..
Hertsmere	386	51	10	74	..	42	21	7	60	24	58	9	14	6	5	..
North Hertfordshire	160	24	9	7	..	7	5	8	45	11	25	7	5	5
St Albans	356	79	12	30	5	26	8	10	60	20	41	9	33	13	11	..
Stevenage	513	32	12	51	..	13	9	5	145	110	103	21	6	5
Three Rivers	166	28	7	22	..	8	..	9	55	..	13	..	10	8	5	..
Watford	999	86	18	114	..	36	7	11	504	75	80	21	20	23	..	5
Welwyn Hatfield	1,391	68	29	137	6	36	22	11	629	28	383	7	22	6	5	..

World area reporting structure - subgroups and nationalities.

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Asia	East Asia	China
Asia	East Asia	Hong Kong
Asia	East Asia	Japan
Asia	East Asia	Macau
Asia	East Asia	Mongolia
Asia	East Asia	North Korea
Asia	East Asia	South Korea
Asia	East Asia	Taiwan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Afghanistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Bahrain
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Iran
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Iraq
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Israel
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Jordan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kazakhstan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kuwait
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Kyrgyzstan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Lebanon
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Oman
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Qatar
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Saudi Arabia
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Sharjah
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Syria
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Tajikistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Turkmenistan
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	United Arab Emirates
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Uzbekistan

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Asia	Middle East and Central Asia	Yemen
Asia	South Asia	Bangladesh
Asia	South Asia	Bhutan
Asia	South Asia	British Indian Ocean Territory
Asia	South Asia	India
Asia	South Asia	Maldives
Asia	South Asia	Nepal
Asia	South Asia	Pakistan
Asia	South Asia	Sri Lanka
Asia	South East Asia	Brunei
Asia	South East Asia	Burma
Asia	South East Asia	Cambodia
Asia	South East Asia	East Timor
Asia	South East Asia	Indonesia
Asia	South East Asia	Laos
Asia	South East Asia	Malaysia
Asia	South East Asia	Philippines
Asia	South East Asia	Sabah
Asia	South East Asia	Sarawak
Asia	South East Asia	Singapore
Asia	South East Asia	Thailand
Asia	South East Asia	Vietnam
European Union	European Union EU15	Austria
European Union	European Union EU15	Belgium
European Union	European Union EU15	Denmark
European Union	European Union EU15	Finland
European Union	European Union EU15	France
European Union	European Union EU15	Germany
European Union	European Union EU15	Greece

World region	Sub group	Nationality
European Union	European Union EU15	Ireland
European Union	European Union EU15	Italy
European Union	European Union EU15	Luxembourg
European Union	European Union EU15	Netherlands
European Union	European Union EU15	Portugal
European Union	European Union EU15	Spain
European Union	European Union EU15	Sweden
European Union	European Union EU2	Bulgaria
European Union	European Union EU2	Romania
European Union	European Union EU8	Czech Republic
European Union	European Union EU8	Estonia
European Union	European Union EU8	Hungary
European Union	European Union EU8	Latvia
European Union	European Union EU8	Lithuania
European Union	European Union EU8	Poland
European Union	European Union EU8	Slovakia
European Union	European Union EU8	Slovenia
European Union	European Union Other	Croatia
European Union	European Union Other	Cyprus
European Union	European Union Other	Malta
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Albania
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Andorra
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Armenia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Azerbaijan
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Belarus
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Bouvet Island
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Faroe Islands
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Georgia

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Greenland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Iceland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Liechtenstein
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Macedonia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Moldova
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Monaco
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Norway
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Russia
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	San Marino
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Serbia & Montenegro
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Switzerland
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Turkey
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Ukraine
Non-European Union (Other Europe)	Other Europe	Vatican City
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Anguilla
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Antigua
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Antilles (Netherlands)
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Argentina
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Aruba and Curaçao
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bahamas
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Barbados
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Barbuda
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Belize
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bermuda
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Bolivia
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Brazil
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Cayman Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Chile
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Colombia

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Costa Rica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Cuba
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Dominica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Dominican Rep
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Ecuador
Rest of the World	Central and South America	El Salvador
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Falkland Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	French Guiana
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Grenada
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guadeloupe
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guatemala
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Guyana
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Haiti
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Honduras
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Jamaica
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Martinique
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Mexico
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Montserrat
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Nicaragua
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Panama
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Paraguay
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Peru
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Sint Maarten (Dutch Part)
Rest of the World	Central and South America	South Georgia & South Sandwich Island
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Kitts and Nevis
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Lucia
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Pierre & Miquelon
Rest of the World	Central and South America	St Vincent & Grenadines
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Suriname

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Trinidad & Tobago
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Turks & Caicos Islands
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Uruguay
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Venezuela
Rest of the World	Central and South America	Virgin Islands (British)
Rest of the World	North Africa	Algeria
Rest of the World	North Africa	Egypt
Rest of the World	North Africa	Libya
Rest of the World	North Africa	Mauritania
Rest of the World	North Africa	Morocco
Rest of the World	North Africa	Sudan
Rest of the World	North Africa	Tunisia
Rest of the World	North Africa	Western Sahara
Rest of the World	North America	Canada
Rest of the World	North America	Puerto Rico
Rest of the World	North America	United States
Rest of the World	North America	Virgin Islands (USA)
Rest of the World	Oceania	American Samoa
Rest of the World	Oceania	Antarctic Territories (British)
Rest of the World	Oceania	Australia
Rest of the World	Oceania	Christmas Island
Rest of the World	Oceania	Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Cook Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Fiji
Rest of the World	Oceania	French Polynesia (inc. Tahiti)
Rest of the World	Oceania	French Southern Territories
Rest of the World	Oceania	Heard Island & McDonald Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Micronesia (Sub Region)
Rest of the World	Oceania	New Caledonia

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Oceania	New Zealand
Rest of the World	Oceania	Niue
Rest of the World	Oceania	Norfolk Island
Rest of the World	Oceania	Papua New Guinea
Rest of the World	Oceania	Pitcairn
Rest of the World	Oceania	Samoa
Rest of the World	Oceania	Solomon Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tokelau
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tonga
Rest of the World	Oceania	Tuvalu
Rest of the World	Oceania	US Minor Outlying Islands
Rest of the World	Oceania	Vanuatu
Rest of the World	Oceania	Wallis & Futuna
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Botswana
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Burkina Faso
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Burundi
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Cameroon
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Cape Verde
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Central African Republic
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Chad
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Comoros
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Congo
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Congo (Democratic Republic)
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Djibouti
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Equatorial Guinea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Eritrea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ethiopia

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Gabon
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Gambia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ghana
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Guinea
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Guinea-Bissau
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Ivory Coast
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Kenya
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Lesotho
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Liberia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Madagascar
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Malawi
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mali
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mauritius
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mayotte
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Mozambique
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Namibia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Niger
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Nigeria
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Reunion
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Rwanda
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sao Tome and Principe
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Senegal
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Seychelles
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sierra Leone
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Somalia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Africa
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	St Helena
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Swaziland
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Tanzania

World region	Sub group	Nationality
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Togo
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Uganda
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Zambia
Rest of the World	Sub-Saharan Africa	Zimbabwe

Appendix C:

Languages spoken at home from Watford school survey

Language	Total	Percentage
English*	8751	59.10%
Urdu	980	6.62%
Polish	501	3.38%
Tamil	456	3.08%
Romanian	380	2.57%
Gujarati	373	2.52%
Pahari (Pakistan)	265	1.79%
Hindi	226	1.53%
Other than English*	150	1.01%
Portuguese	150	1.01%
Panjabi	121	0.82%
Malayalam	117	0.79%
Arabic	113	0.76%
Sinhala	97	0.66%
Italian	96	0.65%
Telugu	81	0.55%
Akan/Twi-Fante	78	0.53%
Bulgarian	77	0.52%
French	75	0.51%
Spanish	74	0.50%
Albanian/Shqip	64	0.43%
Nepali	61	0.41%
Turkish	58	0.39%
Bengali	56	0.38%
Hungarian	55	0.37%
Russian	49	0.33%
Filipino	48	0.32%
Chinese	44	0.30%
Chinese (Cantonese)	41	0.28%
Marathi	38	0.26%
Dari Persian	35	0.24%
Somali	34	0.23%
Portuguese (any other)	33	0.22%
Lithuanian	32	0.22%
Panjabi (Mirpuri)	32	0.22%
Romanian (Romania)	32	0.22%
Pashto/Pakhto	31	0.21%
Persian/Farsi	31	0.21%
Slovak	31	0.21%
Shona	30	0.20%
Wolof	30	0.20%
Akan (Twi/Asante)	29	0.20%
Japanese	29	0.20%

Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua)	28	0.19%
Refused*	28	0.19%
Yoruba	28	0.19%
Czech	27	0.18%
Portuguese (Brazil)	24	0.16%
Farsi/Persian (any other)	24	0.16%
Tagalog/Filipino	24	0.16%
Tagalog	21	0.14%
Classification pending	21	0.14%
Bengali (Sylheti)	19	0.13%
Panjabi (any other)	19	0.13%
Greek	18	0.12%
Kashmiri	18	0.12%
Panjabi (Gurmukhi)	17	0.11%
Kannada	16	0.11%
Akan (Fante)	15	0.10%
Dutch/Flemish	15	0.10%
Bengali (any other)	14	0.09%
German	14	0.09%
Swahili/Kiswahili	13	0.09%
Thai	13	0.09%
Igbo	12	0.08%
Believed to be other than English*	11	0.07%
Vietnamese	11	0.07%
Kikuyu/Gikuyu	10	0.07%
Other language	10	0.07%
Katchi	9	0.06%
Korean	9	0.06%
Macedonian	9	0.06%
Swahili (any other)	9	0.06%
Ukrainian	9	0.06%
Danish	8	0.05%
Guarani	8	0.05%
Arabic (Algeria)	7	0.05%
Ewe	7	0.05%
Konkani	7	0.05%
Kurdish	7	0.05%
Lingala	7	0.05%
Serbian	7	0.05%
Latvian	6	0.04%
Panjabi (Pothwari)	6	0.04%
Believed to be English*	5	0.03%
Ga	5	0.03%
Hebrew	5	0.03%
Manding/Malinke	5	0.03%
Bosnian	5	0.03%
Sindhi	5	0.03%
Afrikaans	4	0.03%

Arabic (any other)	4	0.03%
Caribbean Creole English	4	0.03%
Chinese (any other)	4	0.03%
Chichewa/Nyanja	4	0.03%
Fula/Fulfulde-Pulaar	4	0.03%
Ndebele	4	0.03%
Slovenian	4	0.03%
Berber (Tamashek)	4	0.03%
Finnish	3	0.02%
Greek (any other)	3	0.02%
Krio	3	0.02%
Norwegian	3	0.02%
Pahari/Himachali (India)	3	0.02%
Romanian (Moldova)	3	0.02%
Croatian	3	0.02%
Swedish	3	0.02%
Amharic	2	0.01%
Arabic (Morocco)	2	0.01%
Caribbean Creole French	2	0.01%
Idoma	2	0.01%
Luganda	2	0.01%
Manding/Malinke (any other)	2	0.01%
Bambara	2	0.01%
Ndebele (South Africa)	2	0.01%
Romany/English Romanes	2	0.01%
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	2	0.01%
Tibetan	2	0.01%
Adangme	1	0.01%
Assyrian/Aramaic	1	0.01%
Bemba	1	0.01%
Burmese/Myanma	1	0.01%
Bengali (Chittagong/Noakhali)	1	0.01%
Chinese (Hakka)	1	0.01%
Welsh/Cymraeg	1	0.01%
Ebira	1	0.01%
Esan/Ishan	1	0.01%
Estonian	1	0.01%
Greek (Cyprus)	1	0.01%
Ilokano	1	0.01%
Kisi (West Africa)	1	0.01%
Kurdish (Kurmanji)	1	0.01%
Lusoga	1	0.01%
Malay/Indonesian	1	0.01%
Malay (any other)	1	0.01%
Mauritian/Seychelles Creole	1	0.01%
Ndebele (Zimbabwe)	1	0.01%
Romani (International)	1	0.01%
Sotho/Sesotho	1	0.01%

Tiv		1	0.01%
Berber/Tamazight (any other)		1	0.01%
Uzbek		1	0.01%
Venda		1	0.01%
Xhosa		1	0.01%
Zulu		1	0.01%
14808	100.00%		

Appendix D:

EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2022 (Countries A-K)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

	Total	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Italy
Broxbourne	11,230	40	40	900	*	160	50	30	20	20	200	160	230	340	*	10	1,820
Dacorum	12,400	30	110	690	10	20	140	80	30	20	390	340	240	460	*	20	990
East Hertfordshire	10,320	40	30	470	20	30	140	60	30	50	370	330	310	350	10	30	1,670
Hertsmere	13,600	50	110	560	30	70	140	50	30	40	410	340	380	430	*	30	850
North Hertfordshire	6,150	10	50	270	10	30	70	70	30	50	400	280	120	260	10	20	890
St Albans	10,640	60	120	450	40	50	180	110	30	90	680	480	510	410	20	30	1,360
Stevenage	7,590	30	60	380	50	30	60	20	20	20	190	240	110	350	*	10	460
Three Rivers	6,720	30	30	240	20	10	60	40	10	40	270	200	90	170	*	10	400
Watford	20,520	40	150	920	30	20	150	50	30	50	590	380	370	800	*	30	1,730
Welwyn Hatfield	15,260	30	100	750	40	110	120	50	30	40	280	280	350	900	10	30	880

* = 1 to 9

EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2022 (Countries L-R)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

	Total	Latvia	Liechtenstein	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania
Broxbourne	11,230	190	0	670	*	10	110	*	2,160	330	2,720
Dacorum	12,400	190	0	310	*	20	210	30	1,770	540	4,040
East Hertfordshire	10,320	100	0	260	*	20	200	40	1,650	1,140	1,550
Hertsmere	13,600	80	0	330	*	20	240	30	1,430	640	5,550
North Hertfordshire	6,150	80	0	220	0	10	180	20	1,140	230	780
St Albans	10,640	60	0	180	*	20	280	40	1,470	610	1,310
Stevenage	7,590	100	0	240	0	*	120	20	1,560	290	2,330
Three Rivers	6,720	60	0	240	*	20	130	40	820	1,090	1,940
Watford	20,520	170	0	350	20	20	360	30	3,130	1,600	6,470
Welwyn Hatfield	15,260	130	0	400	*	20	200	30	3,080	860	4,850

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EU Settlement Scheme: applications by nationality, region and local authority, 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2022 (Countries S-Z)

Hertfordshire Districts and Borough comparisons

	Total	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerl and	Non-EEA **
Broxbourne	11,230	90	*	290	50	*	560
Dacorum	12,400	210	*	460	80	30	940
East Hertfordshire	10,320	110	20	740	110	40	400
Hertsmere	13,600	300	20	420	100	30	900
North Hertfordshire	6,150	100	10	360	90	30	350
St Albans	10,640	210	*	980	150	70	650
Stevenage	7,590	120	*	280	40	20	450
Three Rivers	6,720	100	10	220	110	30	300
Watford	20,520	200	20	840	150	20	1,810
Welwyn Hatfield	15,260	210	10	490	80	40	860

* = 1 to 9

** = People from outside of the European Union and European Economic Area (EEA) can be described as “third country” or “non-EEA” nationals. Direct family

members are: **spouse, civil partner, dependent children and grandchildren**, of either partner, up to age 21, as well as dependant parents and grandparents of either partner

Report to Council 19 July 2022

Report of Cabinet 13 June 2022

Cabinet met on 13 June 2022. The full minutes are published on the council's website.

The following members were present at the meeting:

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)
Councillor Dychton (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Community)
Councillor Pattinson (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing)
Councillor Stotesbury (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability)
Councillor Williams (Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services)

Also present: Councillor Nigel Bell, Leader of the Labour Group

The following was a recommendation to Council:

8. Shared Services

Cabinet received a report of the Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation which included the business cases for the proposed shared services. It was noted that the business cases were exempt from publication due to the commercially sensitive nature of the content. The Mayor reminded members that if they wished to discuss any of the individual business cases and the details were not contained in the officer's report then the motion to exclude press and public would need to be moved.

The Mayor informed Cabinet that he and Councillor Watkin had been involved in the discussions about the new shared services. He referred to the success of the existing shared services with Three Rivers District Council which had provided resilience and a cost effective way of delivering services. He stated that Three Rivers District Council could join the new shared services at a later date if they wished. The format provided a clear governance structure by using the lead authority model.

The Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation added that a lot of work had taken place to get to this stage. It was hoped that shared services could be expanded further in the future.

The Mayor emphasised that although cost was part of the reason for doing shared services, it was also about the resilience of a service.

Councillor Stotesbury commented that it was also about ensuring officers were available throughout the year. A big positive of shared services was the robustness of a service. The council already had examples of good experiences of the existing shared services with Three Rivers District Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Bell about the estimated savings, the Mayor advised that the information in the report was a conservative estimate. The Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation said that once the teams were working together it may be possible that additional savings could be identified, through more efficiencies. There was a small saving in year 2 and this would build as the teams gained more resilience and they identified potential revenue raising opportunities.

There were no direct questions regarding the business cases for each of the new shared services.

RESOLVED –

that Cabinet unanimously recommends to Council:

1. the creation of a shared Planning Enforcement service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with Watford Borough Council as the lead authority.
2. the creation of a shared Building Control service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with Watford Borough Council as the lead authority.
3. the creation of a shared Legal service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 January 2023, subject to the appointment of a Head of Legal Service, with St Albans City and District Council as lead authority.

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 13 June 2022

Report author: Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation (WBC)

Title: Shared Services

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This paper has been developed in the context of the Council's existing shared service initiatives, and the ambition across all Hertfordshire councils to build upon our collaborative foundations by exploring opportunities for greater sharing of services. This has resulted in an opportunity for Watford Borough Council (WBC), Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and St Albans District Council (SADC) to consider the development of a number of shared services with the purpose of providing efficient, resilient and high quality services to our residents.
- 1.2 WBC and TRDC already share a number of services. The three neighbouring authorities therefore wish to build on this success and widen the scope, creating resilience to meet the challenges ahead and benefit from a greater ability to deliver efficiencies through economies of scale, increased capacity revenue generation and greater opportunity to re-design services to meet the future needs of residents. Further opportunities lie ahead in terms of greater staff resilience, efficiency savings and opportunity to generate greater revenues to support core services. During 2021, the three authorities agreed to investigate the possibility of sharing additional services. All expressed a desire to share Legal services whilst WBC and SADC sought to additionally explore shared Planning Enforcement and Building Control services.
- 1.3 Business cases have been developed for all three services, testing various scenarios. The conclusion from this work is that it is not currently possible to find a model that works for all three authorities for Legal services due to differences in the way they operate. Therefore it has been agreed that TRDC will not join the shared service in this initial phase but will look to join at a later date. The business cases for Planning Enforcement, Building Control and a revised business case just for SADC and WBC have been developed which demonstrate that, on the basis of the assumptions made, there is a small

financial benefit for both councils by entering into these shared services before further efficiencies are made.

- 1.4 Local Partnerships have been consulted in the development of the business cases and their feedback has been reflected.
- 1.5 This report therefore recommends the implementation for shared services for Legal, Building Control and Planning Enforcement services between WBC and SADC. The sharing of these services is intended to allow more resilient and financially sustainable services whilst seeking to improve the service for customers and embrace further opportunities for commercialisation. The successful delivery of the existing shared services over the past decade between WBC and TRDC, as well as widespread adoption of shared services between local authorities across the country, provide confidence that such a model can allow high quality services to residents, businesses and the community to be retained whilst improving their daily operation, building resilience, providing additional career opportunities to attract and retain staff and potentially delivering revenue savings.
- 1.6 This would build upon the existing shared services model between WBC and TRDC which includes Human Resources, IT, Finance, Revenues and Benefits services, Procurement and Environmental Protection.
- 1.7 The new shared services will have a strong governance and performance management framework which will monitor the shared services regularly. This will link closely to the Council Plan, EPMO reporting processes and contract management good practice. Whilst the duration of the arrangement is intended to be five years as a minimum, both councils recognise that changes may be necessary and that these will be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <small>(treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)</small>	Risk Rating <small>(combination of severity and likelihood)</small>
Staff unrest/unease at the changes, key staff members may leave and lose that	This may impact on the quality of the service	Continue to communicate with staff and unions, emphasising the benefits to all councils and them	Treat	Likelihood = 3 Severity = 3 Total risk = 9

resilience/corporate memory		of the new shared service Ensure that the business cases are robust and bear scrutiny		
Transformational change does not happen	Efficiencies and wider benefits are not realised	Bring in a new Shared Services Managers / Leads to each service instigate change combined with a programme of activity to move towards new ways of working	Treat	Likelihood = 2 Severity = 4 Total risk = 8
IT issues with data migration	This may impact on the quality of service if historical data records from the non- host council cannot be loaded or easily accessed when shared service starts It may also increase the cost of the shared service if there are issues with the data migration which require additional support	Ensure there is a plan in place as a back up Regular communication with the IT consultants to monitor the costs and issues relating to the data migration	Treat	Likelihood = 3 Severity = 4 Total risk = 12

Political risk of a change of direction for shared services due to members' dissatisfaction with proposals	This will mean the service will not be able to progress as a shared service	Regular updating of leaders and members and temperature checks of their views. Member reporting to emphasise the benefits of the shared service	Treat	Likelihood = 1 Severity = 3 Total risk = 3
One of councils decides to withdraw from the shared service	Both councils will revert to in-house delivery with the associated disruption, cost and reduced efficiency	Constant review of each council's position via the regular Partnership Boards and political oversight, negotiating where necessary	Treat	Likelihood = 2 Severity = 4 Total risk = 8
Financial and non-financial benefits not realised	This will mean that the service will cost more than was originally planned in the business case	Constantly review the emerging financial benefits from the shared service and raise with senior management if these are not going to be delivered	Tolerate and keep under review	Likelihood = 2 Severity = 3 Total risk = 6
Insufficient oversight of the shared service	Benefits not fully realised and may give rise to challenge/desire to exist by one or both councils	Ensure that robust governance procedures are in place and that the shared service is regularly and actively monitored	Treat	Likelihood = 2 Severity = 4 Total risk = 8

3.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations to Council:

- The creation of a shared Planning Enforcement service between WBC and SADC with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with WBC as the lead authority.
- The creation of a shared Building Control service between WBC and SADC with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with WBC as the lead authority.
- The creation of a shared Legal service between WBC and SADC with the aim to go live from 1 January 2023, subject to the appointment of a Head of Legal Service, with SADC as the lead authority.

Further information:

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4.0 Shared Services – Background and Principles

4.1 Shared services involves joint provision of either front or back office services between local authorities. They are underpinned by a Shared Services Agreement and associated documents rather than the procurement of contracted services. The use of shared services is common amongst district councils and is often used to deliver services to facilitate resilience as it provides strength in scale with flexibility to adapt. The principles of sharing have been agreed between the councils and will underpin the development of the shared services business cases. These include:

- Seeing each other as natural neighbours with common interests geographically, economically and environmentally. By working together we

will create a culture of collaboration and become stronger, and more influential, locally, regionally, and nationally.

- Taking an approach which is strategic in intent, and will position the councils collectively in the best way to support and consolidate our mandates.
- Retaining own constitution and identities.
- Ensuring no one will be more influential than the other.
- Seeking new collective opportunities but with no obligation to participate.
- Agreeing principles for levelling up and devolution in a joined-up way.
- Building resilience into existing services through scale efficiencies driven by further service sharing, contract consolidation and sharing of staff.
- Strengthening finances more widely through income generating opportunities.
- Sharing an ambition to extend collaboration and horizon scan for new opportunities.

4.2 The objectives for the proposed shared services are set out below:

- Transform services – to develop transformed, digitally enabled, proactive, solution focused and cost effective services which will deliver a better customer experience for all customers and better value for money for both councils.
- Best practice service improvements - to allow for the sharing of best practice in service processes to improve the service for residents, customers and businesses and have a consistent approach across the geographical area.
- Build resilience – to develop services which have a greater depth and breadth of resource to maintain high quality service delivery as workloads peak and during periods of staff absence, including annual leave and sickness.
- Provide staff development opportunities – to provide greater opportunity for staff progression, skills transfer and job satisfaction, allowing the councils to attract and retain experienced staff in a challenging recruitment market.
- Achieve financial savings – although not a primary driver, to reduce the overall revenue cost of services or drive more commercial opportunities.

4.3 The following different potential options for delivery have been considered:

Delivery model	Key features	Key advantages	Key disadvantages
Option 1 – Do Nothing	Continue to provide in-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal disruption • Existing management approach and structures can be maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity for scale improvements • Service more at risk from external factors
Option 2 - Shared Service (Transformation Approach)	Collaboration through a Shared Services Agreement, whereby an organisation-wide approach is taken, carrying out corporate transformation to achieve efficiencies, with either staff retained by their respective council or with one council as host authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services remain in direct/close control of the councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for savings more limited than more arm's length models as the services remain within direct control • Significant organisational disruption and additional resource required
Option 3 – Shared Service (Organic Approach)	Shared service whereby options are considered where opportunities arise on an ad-hoc basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services remain in direct/close control of the councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for savings more limited than more arm's length models as the services remain within direct control
Option 4 - Local Authority Trading Company (LATC)	Commercial company set up with the relevant councils as shareholders. Staff would transfer to the company which would contract with the councils to deliver services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils retain strategic control • Company has freedoms to act in a commercial setting to generate revenues • Company has freedoms to set its own staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entails significant resource to set up and once set up is liable to tax therefore only suitable if a strong revenue generating opportunity exists

		terms and conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not an option for the Legal Shared Service without creating an ABS and it would need to be stand alone 	
Option 5 - Outsource	The councils let a contract to a third party (public or private sector) provider to run the service. Staff already involved in the service would TUPE transfer to the new provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunity to reduce costs • Risk transferred to a third party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils do not have direct control • Contract management may be challenging • No guarantee of reduced costs

4.4 Option 3 - shared services (organic approach) was selected as the preferred model for all the services under consideration as it creates the greatest opportunity to move to a more collaborative way of working and realise both financial and non-financial benefits, without the significant organisational disruption that a transformational approach would create. The detailed business cases are being developed with the aim of implementation in September 2022 for Building Control and Planning Enforcement services, and with the aim of implementation in January 2023 for Legal services.

5.0 Building Control

5.1 Both WBC and SADC currently deliver this service in house.

5.2 Each have similar functions in terms of nature and scale. The nature of the issues with the current model in both are summarised below:

Financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Building Control service is unusual in Local Government is that it has two areas of work – chargeable (which can be recovered by the local setting of fees) and non-chargeable (which cannot be recovered). Both councils face increasing pressure from reducing budgets and the general financial pressures on councils following the Covid-19 pandemic. There is a regulatory limit to the amount
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	of revenue that may be generated to support the services.
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both councils are finding staff recruitment and retention a challenge because there are limited people with these skills and there is strong competition from elsewhere in the market, in both public and private sector roles (such as Approved Inspectors). • The teams are under-resourced which exposes the services to risks of not being able to deliver the service. This has been exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic. • Because of the relatively small size of the councils, there is a limit to staff development and career opportunities.
Customer/Citizen service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Control provides a number of public and consumer protection activities which are at risk due to the limited resources at each council.

5.3 The business case recommending the bringing together of the SADC and WBC Building Control services is attached at Appendix 1 and recommends that WBC are the lead authority for the service, mutually agreed by both authorities. It is expected that the initial implementation of the new arrangements, including the transfer of staff, will be in place by September 2022.

6.0 Planning Enforcement

6.1 Both WBC and SADC currently deliver this service in house.

6.2 Each have similar functions in terms of nature and scale. The nature of the issues with the current model in both are summarised below:

Financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Enforcement teams at each authority are relatively small and the structure of the teams is not necessarily the best fit for the work being carried out which does not represent value for money
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teams are under-resourced which exposes the services to risks of not being able to deliver the service during peak periods. This has been exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic. • Because of the relatively small size of the councils, there is a limit to staff development and career opportunities.
Customer/Citizen service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Enforcement is customer-facing, providing services to the public which are at risk due to the

	limited resources at each council if not delivered correctly. It is a high profile service politically.
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6.3 The business case recommending the creation of a shared service for Planning Enforcement between SADC and WBC is attached at Appendix 2 and recommends that WBC are the lead authority for the service, mutually agreed by both authorities. It is expected that the initial implementation of the shared service, including the transfer of staff, will be in place by September 2022.

7.0 Legal

7.1 Both councils currently provide these services in-house, with external support from experienced law firms purchased as necessary.

7.2 The current issues for the legal services in each of the councils are:

Issue	Description
Financial constraints	The Legal service in both councils face increasing pressure from reducing budgets and general financial pressures on councils following the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing funding cuts.
	There is also pressure on the legal service of both councils as they look to make financial savings across other services in as that will involve provision of legal advice. They will need advice if they intend to implement projects for revenue generation or risk challenge.
Staffing	Both Councils are finding it more difficult to recruit staff to the service. Given each one's proximity to London they find it difficult to compete with the salaries which London firms can offer.
	The skills/capacity mix in current legal services is also an issue as this is forcing some councils to have to outsource work as they do not have the right mix of staff.
Procurement and contractual matters	There will potentially be more demand for legal support to enable the councils to be more robust and creative in dealing with procurement and contractual matters to ensure that they do business on the terms that are most advantageous. As councils seek to make more money due to funding gaps they may look to be more innovative and this will require careful legal advice.
Partnering arrangements	There could be a need for specialist advice on partnering arrangements with the public, private and other sectors as other organisations have become more innovative in their approach and willing to enter into such arrangements.
Council alternative delivery models	In the past few years councils have been more receptive to exploring more radical options for delivering Council services and to consider which functions it will no longer exercise, accordingly there has been greater need for corporate governance advice.

HR issues	There is potential for more demand for legal advice on human resource matters as services strive to be more efficient or if services have to be downsized. There is ever increasing amounts of legislation affecting councils that they need advice on across all services.
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- 7.3 Through the development of the business case, it has become apparent that it is not currently possible to bring TRDC into one shared service at this stage, due to the different mechanisms for recording data resulting in a financial disadvantage for one or more of the councils. It has therefore been mutually agreed that TRDC will not join the shared service at this stage, looking initially to implement the same case management system with a view to joining at a later date.
- 7.4 It has been agreed that a new post of Shared Head of Legal should be created which will oversee the new combined team and drive the change programme. It is intended that both councils will continue to retain monitoring officers that would be outside the shared service. This may change in due course.
- 7.5 The shared service will provide the opportunity to create a wider team allowing for specialisms which will enhance the in-house offer, reduce reliance on external support (and therefore cost) and create a platform for future transformational change including the ability to generate revenue from selling services.
- 7.6 The business case recommending the creation of a shared service for Legal between SADC and WBC is attached at Appendix 3 and recommends that SADC is the lead authority for the service, mutually agreed by both authorities. The ambition is to implement this shared service in January 2023, subject to a number of caveats including the successful recruitment to the newly created Shared Head of Legal post, hence the longer period of implementation.

8.0 Implications

8.1 Financial

- 8.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that business cases have been developed for all three services. The full business cases are appended to this report.
- 8.1.2 The business cases are based on the following key assumptions:
- Savings are calculated by comparing future costs with current costs, inflation is excluded to provide a like for like comparison.
 - Non salary costs are broadly in line with current costs, allowing for minimal IT implementation costs.

- There are no anticipated redundancy costs assuming that existing staff will transfer to the new structure or remain with their original authority.
- There are efficiency targets built into the modelling from year 3.
 - Legal Services c.£35k pa
 - Planning Enforcement c.£10k pa
 - Building Control c.£20k pa
- Some legal work currently outsourced is brought back in house but it is recognised that there will continue to be a need for specialist external advice.
- No costs have been included for senior management (i.e. Head of Service) oversight for Planning Enforcement and Building Control as these are expected to be the same as current costs.
- The future budgeted costs for Building Control are based on a 66% chargeable to 34% non-chargeable split.

8.1.3 The table below summarises the latest position in term of both authorities compared to current budgets. It can be seen that the savings and costs do not fall evenly and as a result there is likely to be some movement in the split of costs between the two authorities.

Service	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	£ pressure /(saving)	£ pressure/ (saving)	£ pressure/ (saving)	£ pressure/ (saving)	£ pressure/ (saving)
Legal					
WBC	(353)	(20,981)	(20,981)	(20,981)	(20,981)
SADC	40,416	16,992	2,328	2,328	2,328
Total	40,063	(3,989)	(18,653)	(18,653)	(18,653)
Building Control					
WBC	(8,226)	(16,403)	(18,336)	(18,336)	(18,336)
SADC	35,691	17,454	13,142	13,142	13,142
Total	27,465	1,051	(5,194)	(5,194)	(5,194)
Planning Enforcement					
WBC	7,410	(15,655)	(20,567)	(20,567)	(20,567)
SADC	53,303	30,178	25,266	25,266	25,266
Total	60,717	14,523	(4,699)	(4,699)	(4,699)

8.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

8.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that whilst Building Control and Legal services are executive functions, Planning Enforcement is a non-executive function. It is therefore recommended that all of these proposals are recommended to council for approval. SADC operates a committee model of governance so will also need to have the proposals agreed by its relevant committee and council. The arrangements will be documented in a shared services agreement between the councils.

8.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

8.3.1 Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

In order to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's commitment to equality and diversity, each business case includes an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). In the preparation of this report, an EIA has been completed and the main conclusions of that analysis are that each shared service would provide an enhanced and more resilient service for the residents of WBC and SADC no indication of negative impacts on those with protected characteristics.

8.3.2 As this is a change in service delivery involving processing likely to result in an impact to the rights and freedoms of individuals, a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be undertaken as part of the next stage of work to review the IT requirements for each service.

8.4 Staffing

8.4.1 There will be an impact on staff as a result of these proposals. TUPE provisions will apply when staff are moved from their current council to the lead council. However, there are not expected to be any redundancies arising. A joint HR Plan has been developed between WBC and SADC to facilitate collective management of the staff issues and formal consultation. This is complemented by a communications plan.

8.4.2 All staff impacted by the proposals outlined within this paper have been briefed on the context, as have the Union representatives. Formal consultation will follow formal approval.

8.5 Accommodation

8.5.1 Both councils have adopted a more agile way of working over the past two years and are committed to continuing this approach. Staff for each of the services impacted by the proposal within this paper will continue to be able to work flexibly, depending on their roles. They will have access to accommodation at both SADC and WBC. However, the policies of the Lead Authority for each service will prevail. This will mean that Legal services staff would be primarily based at SADC's offices.

8.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

8.6.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the council to give due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on crime and disorder in its area and to do all it reasonably can to prevent these. Consequently, the implications that the creation of these shared service will have on crime and disorder have been considered and it is noted that more resilient teams, particularly for the Legal service, will provide the councils will additional flexibility in dealing quickly and efficiently with matters of crime and disorder.

Part B

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Building Control Business Case
- Appendix 2 – Planning Enforcement Business Case
- Appendix 3 – Legal Business Case

The appendices are exempt under paragraph 1, Part 1 Schedule 12A, as they contain information that may enable the identification of individuals.