



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**



# **CABINET**

**13 June 2022**

**7.00 pm**

**Town Hall, Watford**

**Contact**

Sandra Hancock Democratic Services Manager

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01923 278377

**Publication date: 1 June 2022**

# Cabinet Membership

Mayor	P Taylor	(Chair)
Councillor	A Dychton	(Deputy Mayor)
Councillors	J Pattinson, I Stotesbury, M Watkin and T Williams	

## Agenda

### Part A – Open to the Public

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Disclosure of interests (if any)**

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 28 February 2022 to be submitted and signed.

**4. Conduct of meeting**

The Cabinet may wish to consider whether there are any items on which there is general agreement which could be considered now, to enable discussion to focus on those items where the Cabinet sees a need for further debate.

**5. Contract Exemption - Young Entrepreneurs Project 2 (Pages 4 - 9)**

Report of the Economic Development Consultant

**6. Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24 (Pages 10 - 85)**

Report of the Managing Director

**7. Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework (Pages 86 - 92)**

Report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services

**8. Shared Services (Pages 93 - 346)**

Report of the Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation

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

**9. Exclusion of press & 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 the following item 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 below 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.**

**10. Delivering the Council Plan 2022-2024 (To Follow)**

Report of the Managing Director

This report is considered Part B in accordance with Paragraph 1 Schedule 12A as it contains information about individuals.

# Agenda Item 5

Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** Monday, 13 June 2022

**Report author:** Economic Development Consultant

**Title:** Contract Exemption - Young Entrepreneurs Project 2

## 1.0 Summary

1.1 Under the council's Contract Procedure Rules an exemption agreed with a value over £100,000 should be reported to Cabinet for noting.

1.2 A contract exemption was sought for the delivery of a second Young Entrepreneurs project to enable young people to benefit from a programme of business seminars, 121 mentoring and grant funding. This is being delivered by the University of Hertfordshire which successfully delivered the first pilot project. The exemption provided continuity with a trusted supplier, clear synergies with the pilot project and enables the project to be delivered at pace.

1.3 Attached as Appendix 1 is the exemption, in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, agreed by the Group Head of Place Shaping and Managing Director and outlined with the Elected Mayor.

1.4 Cabinet is asked to note the exemption.

## 2.0 Risks

2.1

<b>Nature of risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	<b>Risk Rating</b> (combination of severity and likelihood)
Potential alternative suppliers challenge the council's decision to award this contract.	Limited due to the Award being Public Procurement Regulation compliant.	Award is compliant with Public Procurement Regulations using the Direct Award provision within the Pagabo framework; therefore there are	Tolerate	1

		no grounds for a challenge.		
Transparency in decision-making	Limited as mitigation steps have been taken.	Mitigated through seeking senior management approval then reported to cabinet.	Tolerate.	1

### 3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the exemption be noted.

**Further information:**

Emma Finn  
emma.finn@watford.gov.uk

**Report approved by:** Tom Dobrashian, Group Head of Place Shaping

### 4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The detail of the exemption and the reason for it can be found in the Appendix 1 of this report.

4.2 An exemption was sought as the University of Hertfordshire is a trusted supplier, they had delivered a highly successful pilot programme and for continuity purposes. It was imperative that the ARG Government grant, which had funded this project was spent prior to the end of March 2022. Therefore, for continuity an exemption was sought on the grounds of clear synergies with existing services.

## 5 Implications

### 5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that this project was entirely funded by Covid-19 Additional Restrictions Grant.

### 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. The exemption has been approved according to the Contract Procedure Rules.

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

5.3.1 There are no implications.

### **5.4 Staffing**

5.4.1 There are no implications.

### **5.5 Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no implications.

### **5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no implications.

### **5.7 Sustainability**

5.7.1 There are no implications.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – contract exemption.

## **Background papers**

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

# Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules - request form - Request Approved

## ECP408541282

### Your details

<b>First name</b>	Emma
<b>Last name</b>	Finn
<b>Email address</b>	emma.finn@watford.gov.uk
<b>Job Title</b>	Economic Development Consultant
<b>Section/Department</b>	Economic Development

### Exemption request details

<b>Exemption category</b>	Exceptional Circumstances
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**Details / Circumstances / Explanation of why an exemption was required**

The previous exemption for Young Entrepreneurs 2 didn't include the value of the grant element and VAT costs, which is required. In total this amounts to £114,999.20. The figure has been amended below. This month the University of Hertfordshire is due to complete a highly successful programme, on behalf of Watford Borough Council, supporting young entrepreneurs. This is funded through the Government's Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG). These are young people based in Watford aged between 18 and 30, a demographic that has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. This programme is designed to help them to start-up viable business models. It comprises Stage 1: a Bootcamp of seminars and workshops for eligible participants. Stage 2: an intensive programme of support for those with creative/green businesses and the opportunity to apply for a grant. An exemption was approved on 17th August 2021 of £51,769.20 because the market was limited, and we needed to proceed quickly. - 57 young people have taken part in the programme, against a target of 40-50. - 23 have taken part in the second part of the programme and been awarded grants, against a target of 20. - The University is providing an estimated £35k of in-kind support as part of this programme. As a result of this success we are looking to extend this programme to be delivered by the University of Hertfordshire. This would enable a further 30 - 40 young people to benefit from a programme which will run between mid-March 2022 and 31st August 2022 at a cost of £114,999.20 including £50k grant funding and VAT. We are seeking an exemption as the University of Hertfordshire is a trusted supplier, they have delivered a highly successful pilot, and for continuity purposes. It is imperative that the ARG government grant is spent by the end of March and therefore, for continuation of this important area of work, we are seeking an exemption on the grounds of clear synergies with existing services. Secondly there is a very limited market for this activity - there is unlikely to be another supplier who with limited time could develop and deliver such a programme. The synergies to the existing services delivered by the University of Hertfordshire and benefits in them delivering the new contract include: - Developing and delivering a bespoke Young Entrepreneurs programme tailored to those aged 18-30 years. - Providing knowledge and skills to young people through specially created seminars and workshops delivered by experienced business specialists. - Enabling one to one bespoke advice and support to help young people establish and grow their businesses. Benefits to the University of Hertfordshire delivering the new contract include: - Trusted Supplier: the University of Hertfordshire is an experienced, highly regarded organisation which works with partners to deliver a range of projects and has particular experience working with young people. - Programme Delivery: they have exceeded all targets for the Young Entrepreneurs, bringing to the programme a wealth of ideas, knowledge and expertise. - Continuity: the University of Hertfordshire, as a specialist contractor for the existing service, has proven that they can deliver the current contract highly effectively and have the knowledge, skills and contacts to deliver this additional programme. Therefore, we are seeking an exemption due to exceptional circumstances due to continuity, clear synergies with the existing service, the requirement to spend and create the programme at pace.

**Contract Title**

Young Entrepreneurs 2



<b>Vendor / Contractor</b>	Emma Finn
<b>Date Contract let</b>	21 March 2022
<b>Term / Duration of Contract</b>	5 months, 1 week
<b>End date</b>	31 August 2022
<b>Total Value of Contract</b>	Â£114,999.20
<b>Contract Manager name</b>	Emma Finn
<b>Contract Manager email</b>	emma.finn@watford.gov.uk
<b>Comments / Other Information</b>	
<b>Date</b>	21 March 2022

### Group Head of Service approval

<b>Decision</b>	Approve and forward to the Managing Director
<b>Date</b>	21 March 2022

### Managing Director decision

<b>Decision</b>	Approve the request
<b>Managing Director</b>	Donna Nolan
<b>Date</b>	21 March 2022
<b>Previous comments</b>	2022-03-21 14:25 - Tom Dobrashian: Approve due to limited market, need to deliver the programme and for continuity, recognise it has to be reported to Cabinet 2022-03-21 19:18 - Donna Nolan: Approved for the compelling reasons outlined in the exemption request

### Portfolio holder

<b>Name of the Portfolio Holder informed</b>	Peter Taylor
<b>Date the Portfolio Holder was informed</b>	17 March 2022
<b>Date reported to Cabinet (If over Â£100K)</b>	06 June 2022

# Agenda Item 6

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>

	<p>ambitions and what is important.</p> <p>Potential for the Council to be deflected by non-priority areas.</p> <p>The plans fail to drive the Council forward.</p>			
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

[donna.nolan@watford.gov.uk](mailto:donna.nolan@watford.gov.uk)

Tel: 01923 278185

Kathryn Robson  
[kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk](mailto:kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk)  
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

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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.



**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**

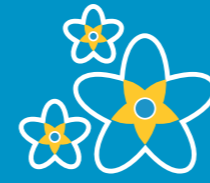
Achieved **17** green flags



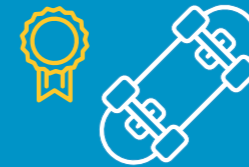
Refurbished **Watford Market** and launched 'Market lates'



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

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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

**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.

## 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.





**theme 2:**

# A greener, brighter future

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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.

## 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

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**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**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Investigate greener travel and transport solutions that work for Watford</b>   | 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.   |
| <b>2. Promote ways of to travel that support people make greener choices</b>   | 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.  |
| <b>3. Champion sustainable travel initiatives and greener vehicles options</b>   | 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.  |
| <b>4. Work with our partners to improve our cycling and walking network, including designing and implementing a green loop</b> | 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.   |
| <b>5. Champion proposals for a sustainable transport option for Watford Junction to Croxley</b>                                | 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**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Set out our commitments to improving Watford's biodiversity</b>  | 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.     |
| <b>2. Enhance and extend our green canopy, through our proactive tree planting initiative</b>                        | 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.                        |
| <b>3. Rediscover the River Colne to enhance the river, the river corridor, as a place for our community to enjoy</b> | 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.  |
| <b>4. Reinvigorate the Cassiobury Wetlands as an important part of our natural environment</b>                       | 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 related historical features. |
| <b>5. Celebrate and enhance Whippendell Woods as a site of special scientific interest</b>                           | We will protect Whippendell Woods, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), in order to preserve its 'favourable condition' status.   |
| <b>6. Promote healthy and sustainable gardening across the town</b>  | 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.                       |
| <b>7. Provide clear guidance on improving biodiversity in the town</b>   | 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. <b>Develop and implement our new Sustainability Strategy</b>	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. <b>Prepare for legislative changes to help protect our environment</b>	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. <b>Explore opportunities that will contribute financially to our green commitments and goals</b>	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. <b>Investigate generating energy from renewable sources</b>	We will examine including sustainable energy generation in council developments so we lead by example and demonstrate how it can work effectively.
5. <b>Improve the energy performance of the Town Hall and Watford Colosseum</b>	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. <b>Ensure the council's own buildings are energy efficient</b>	We will explore ways to improve the energy performance of all properties within our portfolio.
7. <b>Promote sustainable construction in our own developments</b>	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. <b>Increase how much our residents recycle and reduce the waste we throw away as a town</b>	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. <b>Support our partners to reduce waste and increase recycling</b>	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><b>1. Deliver our Innovation and Incubation Hub</b></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><b>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</b></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><b>3. Maximise economic potential and harness new opportunities from Watford's future growth sectors</b></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><b>4. Make the most of our Shared Prosperity Fund allocation</b></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><b>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</b></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><b>2. Ensure there is a strong voice for local businesses by fostering effective business networks and forums</b></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><b>3. Engage with wider economic, business and planning partnerships to make sure Watford's interests are represented</b></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><b>1. Progress our transformational plans for the Town Hall Quarter</b></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><b>2. Secure the future of Watford Colosseum, improving the heritage building and attracting a new operator</b></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><b>3. Enhance a sustainable town centre with a mixed economy that will have a broad appeal to all ages and interests</b></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><b>4. Enhance our outdoor public spaces to make them welcoming and attractive</b></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><b>5. Promote the appeal of our town centre and all it has to offer</b></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><b>6. Promote Watford Market and our offer as a market town</b></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
<b>1. Take forward plans for the Watford Junction Quarter</b>	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.
<b>2. Continue our transformation of Watford Business Park</b>	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.
<b>3. Continue to deliver the neighbourhood at Riverwell</b>	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.
<b>4. Achieve the right long-term balance of development, services and transport links for our town</b>	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
<b>1. Deliver a new Housing Strategy for Watford</b>	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.
<b>2. Review and refresh our Nominations Policy</b>	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.
<b>3. Improve housing provision for those local families who need homes that are affordable</b>	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.
<b>4. Develop planning guidance to ensure developers provide new homes that support local needs</b>	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.
<b>5. Deliver a refreshed Private Sector Renewal Policy</b>	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**

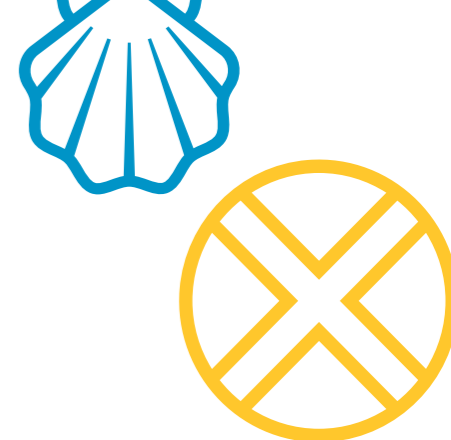
Continue our investment in our outstanding parks and open spaces so they remain the best in the area

Our actions	What we'll do
<b>1. Deliver improvements to Meriden Park</b>	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.
<b>2. Continue our programme of investment and improvements in Watford's parks</b>	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.
<b>3. Enhance Woodside Playing Fields so it offers improved facilities and opportunities for leisure and sport</b>	We will invest in Woodside Playing Fields to enhance the activities on offer, including improvements to both the current boxing and cricket facilities.
<b>4. Complete our work in partnership for a new crematorium for south west Hertfordshire</b>	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
<b>1. Reimagine our Museum and its place in telling the history of our town</b>	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.
<b>2. Celebrate 100 years of Watford Borough, building a legacy for future generations</b>	We will lead a programme of celebrations across the town commemorating 100 years since the formation of the borough of Watford.
<b>3. Bring our local heritage to life for our community</b>	We will create a new innovative heritage trail across the town to recognise Watford's rich culture and past.
<b>4. Enhance the town's creative and cultural appeal through a new Public Art Strategy</b>	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.
<b>5. Commemorate the town's links to our past</b>	We will introduce a Blue Plaque scheme which will commemorate links between our historic buildings and famous residents, events or former buildings.
<b>6. Mark and reflect on Watford's response to COVID-19</b>	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.
<b>7. Enhance our town's historical features and character</b>	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. <b>Ensure everyone feels welcome, included and safe in Watford</b>	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. <b>Establish our commitment to the wellbeing of women and girls</b>	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. <b>Make sure our town remains clean and free from litter</b>	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. <b>Develop a range of information and signposting to create a 'welcome to Watford' resource</b>	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. <b>Engage with our community to support better outcomes for our town and residents</b>	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. <b>Continue to engage with our community so we actively listen to their views and ideas</b>	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. <b>Understand and support specific groups within our community</b>	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. <b>Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for our residents</b>	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. <b>Ensure our community buildings benefit local residents</b>	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. <b>Deliver our Equality and Diversity policy so it underpins what we do and how we engage with our community</b>	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. <b>Work with partners to end rough sleeping on the streets of Watford</b>	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
<b>1. Encourage Watford to develop as an age friendly town</b>	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.
<b>2. Tackle digital isolation so residents can effectively engage using new technology</b>	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.
<b>3. Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing</b>	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.
<b>4. Engage with health partners to improve public health and health inequalities for our residents</b>	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.
<b>5. Support single homeless people to access accommodation and support</b>	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
<b>1. Make sure residents are aware of what help we offer to support them manage their finances</b>	We will promote our council tax discount scheme so residents know support might be available to help them pay their bills.
<b>2. Coordinate advice in the town for those seeking information on how to cope with the cost of living crisis</b>	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.
<b>3. Use innovative ways to support our local community financially</b>	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.
<b>4. Welcome the whole town and visitors to our Big Events</b>	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.
<b>5. Provide an appealing and lively programme of holiday activities for young people</b>	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.
<b>6. Improve private sector housing across the town, focusing on how it can contribute to both environmental and community benefits</b>	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.
<b>7. Help our community better access the benefits of Watford's economic growth</b>	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.



**WATFORD  
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COUNCIL**

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# Equality Impact Analysis

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

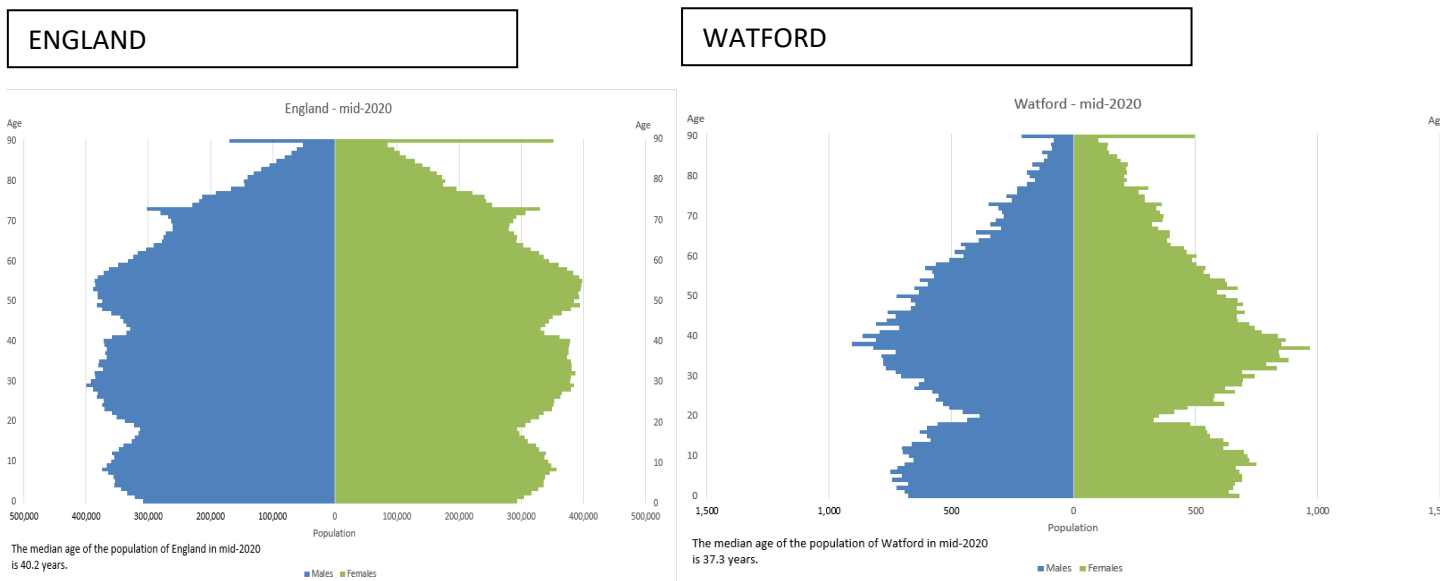
At the present time, we are basing our analysis of the Watford population on data and information that we are able to access.

#### Population

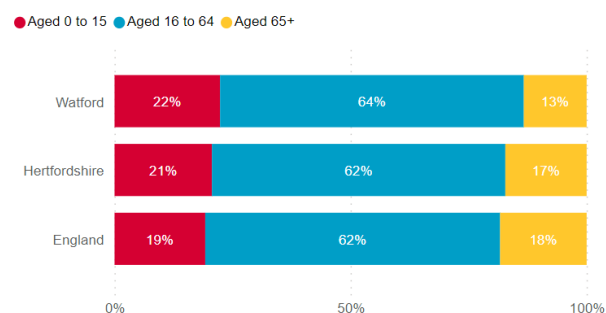
The current population of Watford is 96,600 (ONS mid-2020 estimate).

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)

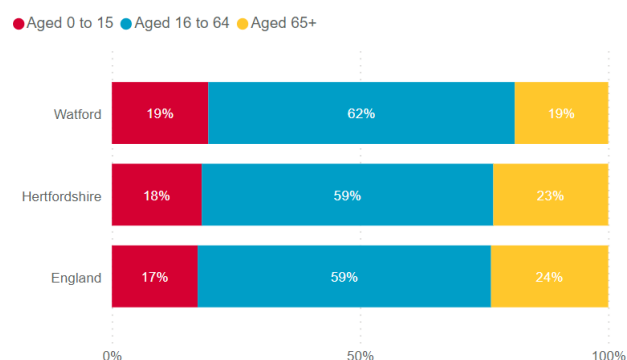
The ONS publishes experimental data on ward level populations. The last release date was for mid-year 2020. This showed Central ward had the highest population (9,863) and Tudor the lowest (6,920). Further analysis shows that Nascot ward had a significantly higher number of elderly residents than other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

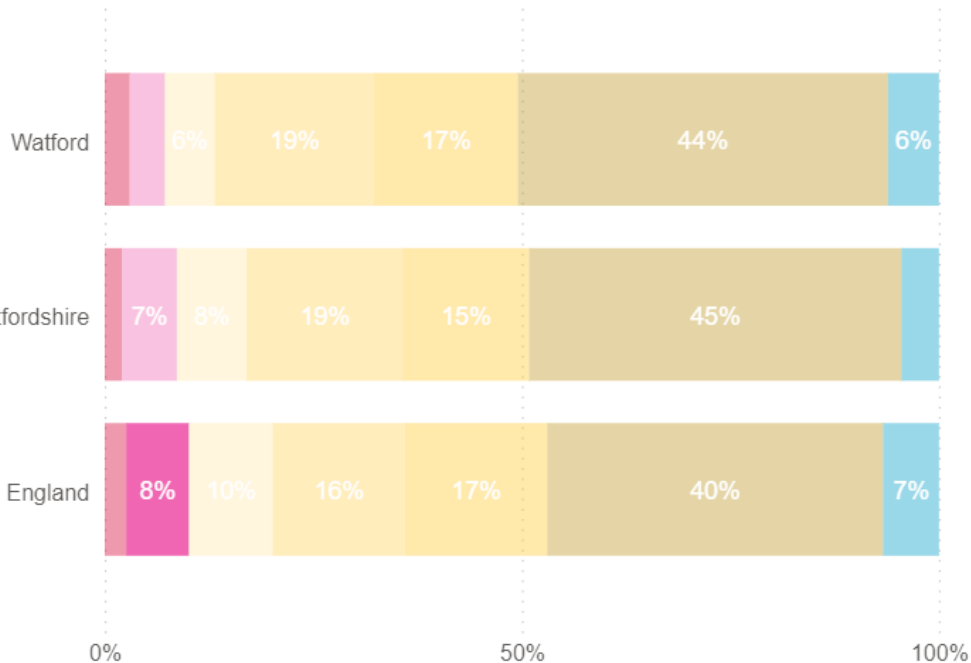


but higher than the Great Britain average of 40.3%.

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 7<sup>th</sup> 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)	<b>Central</b> (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)	<b>Holywell</b> (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)	<b>Meriden</b> (Garsmouth Way, Aldbury Close, Harvest End, part of York Way)	E01023876 (003D)	26(19)	1st (1st)	7924 (7590)	3rd (3rd)
4 (4)	<b>Holywell</b> (Ascot Road, Greenhill Crescent, Caxton Way, Croxley View)	E01023866 (011D)	27 (30)	1st (1st)	8294 (9203)	3rd (3rd)
5 (7)	<b>Woodside</b> (Haines Way, Queenswood Crescent, Sheriff Way, Nottingham Close)	E01023906 (001C)	61 (41)	1st (1st)	10719 (10062)	4th (4th)
6 (10)	<b>Oxhey</b> (Deacons Hill, Blackwell Drive, Riverside Road, Eastbury Road, Thorpe Crescent)	E01023883 (012B)	62 (49)	1st (1st)	10758 (10710)	4th (4th)
7 (13)	<b>Callowland</b> (Maude Crescent, St George's Road, Breakspere Close, Nicholas Close)	E01023857 (006C)	67 (56)	1st (1st)	10894 (10812)	4th (4th)
8 (9)	<b>Meriden</b> (Gaddesden Crescent, Bovingdon Crescent, Garston Lane)	E01023877 (003E)	73 (75)	2nd (2nd)	11225 (11837)	4th (4th)
9 (12)	<b>Leggatts</b> (The Harebreaks, Chestnut Walk, Foxhill, Brushrise, Elm Grove)	E01023870 (004C)	78 (52)	2nd (1st)	11515 (10734)	4th (4th)
10 (5)	<b>Stanborough</b> (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
	<b>Total (Top 10)</b>	<b>28256</b>
	<b>Total Households in Watford</b>	<b>39675</b>

*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:

<b>Ensuring a vibrant and prosperous local economy that offers a range of jobs and opportunities for local people</b>	48.5%
<b>Keeping the town clean and our streets free from litter</b>	38.6%
<b>Working with community safety partners to tackle issues and make Watford even safer for our communities</b>	38.0%
<b>Creating a well-connected borough with good infrastructure such as better transport links</b>	37.4%
<b>Supporting our more vulnerable residents so that they can live independent lives</b>	35.5%
<b>Protecting and enhancing our parks and open spaces</b>	31.5%
<b>Helping to provide a range of new homes that meet local needs, including more affordable homes</b>	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"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Ensure EIAs are carried out and are effective and support decision making</li> <li>• Continue to identify equality issues within committee reports and highlight where EIAs have been completed</li> <li>• Deliver a robust and meaningful Equality and Diversity Policy</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Ensure consultations seek feedback from our communities in terms of their demographics and protected characteristics, where relevant</li> <li>• Ensure feedback is considered in decision making where relevant and appropriate</li> <li>• Make sure we explain why we are collecting information on protected characteristics and show how it can make a real difference</li> </ul>

## 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"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Leadership to champion equalities and challenge decisions and proposals in the context of equalities and diversity</li> </ul>
Lack of understanding of the community and issues that are affecting those with a protected characteristic	All (potentially) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ethnicity</li> <li>- Age</li> <li>- Disability</li> <li>- Sex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to build a comprehensive picture of the Watford community through feedback from consultations and updating the Watford context on a regular basis</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Work closely with our community to understand from them about issues and what matters to them</li> <li>• Build greater understanding through engagement with our community and work with them to support</li> </ul>

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



**This EIA has been developed by:**

**Kathryn Robson**

..... **Date .....31.05.ww**

**Version control:**

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

**Appendix A:**

**Census 2011: Watford Borough ethnicity data**

	<b>WATFORD 2011</b>
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
	<b>TOTAL</b>	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.**

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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



<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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

<b>World region</b>	<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
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
<b>Broxbourne</b>	11,230	40	40	900	*	160	50	30	20	20	200	160	230	340	*	10	1,820
<b>Dacorum</b>	12,400	30	110	690	10	20	140	80	30	20	390	340	240	460	*	20	990
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	10,320	40	30	470	20	30	140	60	30	50	370	330	310	350	10	30	1,670
<b>Hertsmere</b>	13,600	50	110	560	30	70	140	50	30	40	410	340	380	430	*	30	850
<b>North Hertfordshire</b>	6,150	10	50	270	10	30	70	70	30	50	400	280	120	260	10	20	890
<b>St Albans</b>	10,640	60	120	450	40	50	180	110	30	90	680	480	510	410	20	30	1,360
<b>Stevenage</b>	7,590	30	60	380	50	30	60	20	20	20	190	240	110	350	*	10	460
<b>Three Rivers</b>	6,720	30	30	240	20	10	60	40	10	40	270	200	90	170	*	10	400
<b>Watford</b>	20,520	40	150	920	30	20	150	50	30	50	590	380	370	800	*	30	1,730
<b>Welwyn Hatfield</b>	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
<b>Broxbourne</b>	11,230	190	0	670	*	10	110	*	2,160	330	2,720
<b>Dacorum</b>	12,400	190	0	310	*	20	210	30	1,770	540	4,040
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	10,320	100	0	260	*	20	200	40	1,650	1,140	1,550
<b>Hertsmere</b>	13,600	80	0	330	*	20	240	30	1,430	640	5,550
<b>North Hertfordshire</b>	6,150	80	0	220	0	10	180	20	1,140	230	780
<b>St Albans</b>	10,640	60	0	180	*	20	280	40	1,470	610	1,310
<b>Stevenage</b>	7,590	100	0	240	0	*	120	20	1,560	290	2,330
<b>Three Rivers</b>	6,720	60	0	240	*	20	130	40	820	1,090	1,940
<b>Watford</b>	20,520	170	0	350	20	20	360	30	3,130	1,600	6,470
<b>Welwyn Hatfield</b>	15,260	130	0	400	*	20	200	30	3,080	860	4,850

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

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

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\* = 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



# Agenda Item 7

## Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 13 June 2022

**Report author:** Head of Leisure & Environmental Services

**Title:** Extension of the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework (VSCF) for 1 Year: 1 April 2023- 31 March 2024

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The current VSCF four year funding cycle is due to expire 31 March 2023. During the Covid 19 pandemic and the various government lockdowns (started on 23 March 2020) the majority of commissioned organisations had to close or part suspend their services. During this time the council continued to pay the grant money as directed by the Public Procurement Notice.
- 1.2 Due to the closure of the commissioned services over the last 18 months the council has not had the opportunity to fully review and evaluate the impact of the current Framework and decide on the future priorities, configuration and the appropriate level of funding going forward. The current revenue budget for the Framework is £822,771 and an accommodation grant In-kind of £109,550.
- 1.3 In the time since the last VSCF was approved (January 2019) a number of strategic and operational changes have occurred in the post Covid 19 environment for the voluntary and community sector and to the council's role and long term vision for the borough. In the past 18 months there has been some debate regarding the council's role and aspirations regarding the Community Development/Leadership continuum and who is best placed to deliver on this agenda. These changes will impact on the proposed review of the Framework to ensure that the relationship between WBC and the commissioned organisations helps to deliver the council's corporate plans and objectives.
- 1.4 In order to allow the council to conduct a comprehensive review of the VSCF an extension of the current Framework arrangements for an additional 12-month period ending 31 March 2024 would allow the authority to benchmark itself against other Herts LA's, define the future role, aspirations and requirements from the voluntary and third sector partners in delivering the council current and future priorities.
- 1.5 The review of the Framework could be led and conducted by Cabinet Working Group formed in the new municipal year 2022-2023.
- 1.6 The additional time would allow the council to provide adequate notice to organisations if they were to be deselected or receive a reduction in grant funding. This would allow these organisations to seek alternative grant aid or sponsorship that would not impact their ability to continue service delivery.

1.7 Appendix 1 below set out the budget profile of the Framework 2019-2023 and the grants awarded to the different organisations.

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)
Reduced funding to the VSCF sector during the review or period due to budget pressures from the MTFS	The facility or service is not available for residents and customers to use  Reputational risk to council	Regular communication to Cllrs and commissioned organisations on the review process	Treat	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6
Deselecting a current commissioned organisation post review exercise	The facility or service is not available for residents and customers to use  Reputational risk to council	Regular communication to Cllrs and commissioned organisations on the review process	Treat	Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6

3.0 **Recommendations**

- I. To agree to extend the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework for 1 Year until 31 March 2024 at the current funding levels detailed in Appendix 1 to allow the council to conduct a comprehensive review of the Framework going forward to meet the council priorities.

**Further information:** Chris Fennell – Head of Leisure & Environmental Services  
[Chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk), 01923 – 278317

**Report approved by: Alan Gough Group Head of Community & Environmental Services**

## 4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The council recognises that the voluntary and community sector has an important role in providing services within the borough which provide many positive benefits for those who live, work and visit Watford. The Framework is the council's strategic approach that sets out the priorities for a range of services on behalf of the council.

4.2 The council has long standing and positive relationships with third sector organisations and it deploys a significant proportion of its revenue budget to support a number of them in a variety of ways. The council adopted the first VSCF in January 2012-13, when the current set of commissioned organisation was first selected. The new Framework approach moved the council towards a commissioned approach with service delivery priorities identified, and a process to identify the preferred delivery partner rather than an "open grant application" approach. The council adopted the current framework in January 2019

4.3 The current framework configuration was agreed following a comprehensive review of grant aided organisations by WBC in circa 2009/2010. In January 2019 council adopted the forth Framework and added the Pump House Theatre and Home Start Watford/Three Rivers.

4.4 The services to be commissioned are:

- Infrastructure support to the voluntary sector – delivered by Watford and Three Rivers Trust (aka W3RT)
- Advice and support services – delivered by Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Mobility services – delivered by Watford Shopmobility
- Arts and culture services – delivered by Watford Palace Theatre & \*Pump House Theatre
- \*Advice and support services – delivered Home Start Watford/Three Rivers
- Mayor's Small Grants Fund – administered by the WBC

4.5 The authority also provides a management grant to support the following council owned community centres across the borough:

- Holywell Community Centre – managed by W3RT
- Orbital Community Centre – managed by One YMCA
- Meriden Community Centre – managed by Watford Football Club Sports and Education Trust (WFC Trust)
- West Watford Community Association (based in 15 Harwood's Rd)

4.6 The quality of services commissioned by the council are monitored on a regular basis by the Contract and Partnerships Manager. Should the services be considered below the quality expected or the need for the service reduce then the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the organisations commissioned can be reviewed or amended to enable the council to de-commission or reduce funding as appropriate.

## 5.0 The case for review and change

5.1 Although the previous Frameworks have served the council well, it is clear from an analysis of the post Covid 19 environment in which we are working, and feedback on the framework itself, that, in order to be fit for purpose for the challenges ahead, it needs to be reviewed.



- 5.2 With limited resources at the council's disposal, taking on board the feedback on the previous grant funding programme and the national and local context, the council may need to deploy an alternative approach. The new approach needs to be robust, open, fair; yet radical enough to ensure it meets its service delivery priorities efficiently and effectively.
- 5.3 In the context of the impact of the economic climate, and the significant impact of public sector finances, it is appropriate for the council to revisit its support for the Framework and ensure it has in place a clear understanding of its priorities and commissioning objectives.
- 5.4 In the light of the Covid 19 pandemic and its impact on residents and local charities there has been some debate regarding the council's future role regarding the Community Development/Leadership and who is best placed to deliver on this agenda. The review of the WBC commissioning process can be seen as a cycle of activity that works together to deliver the desired outcomes and the key steps proposed are detailed below in Section 6.0.

## **6.0 The Commissioning mechanism next steps**

- 6.1 The review of the Framework could be led and conducted by a Cabinet Working Group formed in the new municipal year 2022-2023. The results of the review and benchmarking exercise will form a detailed report with specific recommendations which can be used to shape and inform the new VSCF which would commence in 2024.
- 6.2 Having identified and agreed the council's future priorities from evidence provided, the commissioning process will ensure that quality services meeting these priority needs are provided by the best placed organisation to do so, at an affordable cost to the council.

The key steps to this process are:

1. Identify the finance and resources available to support the provision of services
2. Identify and specify what services are to be delivered through a *Service Level agreement*:
  - incorporating appropriate quality standards, including robust governance and finance systems
  - a sustainability plan including invest to save proposals and efficiencies required over the life time of the agreement
  - performance monitoring information required
3. Choose the best method to obtain that service:
  - identify suitable providers
4. Invite them to submit proposals:
  - to demonstrate their ability to prove they can deliver the service required to an agreed standard based on the outcomes outlined in the service specification
  - to demonstrate they have mechanisms in place to deliver the performance monitoring information at the outset
  - To demonstrate how they will work with service users to design and monitor their services to meet the Council's deliverables
5. Negotiate on the final service delivery plan and finance available

6. Agree the following:
  - grant to be provided over what period
  - service level agreement and service specification
  - performance monitoring information
7. Award funding
8. Commence monitoring
9. Review delivery of service – reports to Leadership Board, Portfolio Holders and Overview and Scrutiny

## **7 Implications**

### **7.1 Financial (Extract from January 2019 Cabinet report)**

7.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the baseline funding for this programme will be contained within the current budget for this area of activity. Financial support of the framework will be subject to the availability of funding during that period as set out in the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and annual budget setting process, any requirements to make savings or provide growth will be dealt with as part of this process.

### **7.2 Legal Issues**

7.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the council has a wide variety of legal powers that are available for it to provide both financial and physical assistance to the voluntary sector to enable them to undertake their functions. The priorities identified within the Commissioning Framework are all covered by these powers. There are no implications in extending the current framework for an extra year.

### **7.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

7.3.1 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.

7.3.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken as part of the Cabinet report in January 2019 to establish whether there are any emerging needs that are not addressed through the commissioning priorities. If there are emerging needs identified during the period of the Framework that are not currently met, consideration will be given as to whether these are a District Council responsibility, align with the council's corporate objectives and whether council funding or grant aid is required in order to commission the service.

### **7.4 Staffing**

7.4.1 There are no changes to staffing arrangements identified in this report.

## 7.5 **Accommodation**

7.5.1 There are no changes identified in this report relating to WBC offices/Town Hall accommodation.

7.5.2 All of the commissioned organisations occupy or deliver their services in WBC non-commercial leisure and community assets. These facilities and assets are subject to bespoke lease arrangements. The Community Facilities Review Board (CFRB) and the proposed Community and Operational Property Management Framework are gathering the baseline information regarding commercial/charity rental policies, landlord and compliance surveys alongside the planned preventative maintenance programmes for the different venue.

## 7.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

7.6.1 There are no Community Safety/Crime and Disorder issues identified in this report.

## 7.7 **Sustainability**

7.7.1 There are no Sustainability issues identified in this report.

## **Appendices**

1. Budget profile 2019/2023 (Below)

### Background Papers

- Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework: 2019 – 2023
- Cabinet report VSCF – 21 January 2019

## Appendix 1 – Budget profile

### VSC Framework 2019 - 2023 - Management Revenue Grant

Organisation	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Total
WPT	£244,844	£238,401	£231,957	£231,957	<b>£947,159</b>
Pump House Theatre	£12,886	£19,329	£25,773	£25,773	<b>£83,761</b>
CAB Watford	£204,190	£204,190	£204,190	£204,190	<b>£816,760</b>
Shop Mobility	£36,459	£36,459	£36,459	£36,459	<b>£145,836</b>
*W3RT	£79,173	£79,173	£79,173	£79,173	<b>£316,692</b>
Holywell CC	£76,680	£76,680	£76,680	£76,680	<b>£306,720</b>
West Watford Community Association	£23,415	£23,415	£23,415	£23,415	<b>£93,660</b>
Orbital CC	£72,965	£72,965	£72,965	£72,965	<b>£291,860</b>
Meriden CC	£72,159	£72,159	£72,159	£72,159	<b>£288,636</b>
Home Strat Watford and Three Rivers	N/A	£20,000	£30,000	£30,000	<b>£80,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£822,771</b>	<b>£842,771</b>	<b>£852,771</b>	<b>£852,771</b>	<b>£3,791,084</b>

### VS Framework 2019-2023 - Accommodation and Lease Grant Values

Organisation	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Total
WPT	£0	£0	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
Pump House Theatre	£0	£0	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
CAB –Watford	£39,500	£39,500	£39,500	£39,500	<b>£158,000</b>
Shop Mobility	£0	£0	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
*W3RT	£0	£0	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
Holywell CC	£21,000	£21,000	£21,000	£21,000	<b>£84,000</b>
WWCA CC	£4,300	£4,300	£4,300	£4,300	<b>£17,200</b>
Orbital CC	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	<b>£100,000</b>
Meriden CC	£19,750	£19,750	£19,750	£19,750	<b>£79,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£109,550</b>	<b>£109,550</b>	<b>£109,550</b>	<b>£109,550</b>	<b>£438,200</b>
<b>Notes</b>				<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£3,729,284</b>

- 0 = peppercorn rent/value
- \*W3RT are based in Holywell Community Centre

## 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 <b>Total risk = 9</b>

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 <b>Total risk = 8</b>
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 <b>Total risk = 12</b>

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 <b>Total risk = 3</b>
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 <b>Total risk = 8</b>
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 <b>Total risk = 6</b>
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 <b>Total risk = 8</b>



### 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.

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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
<b>Option 1 – Do Nothing</b>	Continue to provide in-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal disruption</li> <li>• Existing management approach and structures can be maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No opportunity for scale improvements</li> <li>• Service more at risk from external factors</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2 - Shared Service (Transformation Approach)</b>	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"> <li>• Services remain in direct/close control of the councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for savings more limited than more arm’s length models as the services remain within direct control</li> <li>• Significant organisational disruption and additional resource required</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3 – Shared Service (Organic Approach)</b>	Shared service whereby options are considered where opportunities arise on an ad-hoc basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services remain in direct/close control of the councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for savings more limited than more arm’s length models as the services remain within direct control</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4 - Local Authority Trading Company (LATC)</b>	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"> <li>• Councils retain strategic control</li> <li>• Company has freedoms to act in a commercial setting to generate revenues</li> <li>• Company has freedoms to set its own staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entails significant resource to set up and once set up is liable to tax therefore only suitable if a strong revenue generating opportunity exists</li> </ul>

		terms and conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is not an option for the Legal Shared Service without creating an ABS and it would need to be stand alone</li> </ul>	
<b>Option 5 - Outsource</b>	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"> <li>• More opportunity to reduce costs</li> <li>• Risk transferred to a third party</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councils do not have direct control</li> <li>• Contract management may be challenging</li> <li>• No guarantee of reduced costs</li> </ul>

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:

<b>Financial constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
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	of revenue that may be generated to support the services.
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Because of the relatively small size of the councils, there is a limit to staff development and career opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Customer/Citizen service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Control provides a number of public and consumer protection activities which are at risk due to the limited resources at each council.</li> </ul>

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:

<b>Financial constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Because of the relatively small size of the councils, there is a limit to staff development and career opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Customer/Citizen service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Enforcement is customer-facing, providing services to the public which are at risk due to the</li> </ul>

	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
<b>Financial constraints</b>	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.
<b>Staffing</b>	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.
<b>Procurement and contractual matters</b>	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.
<b>Partnering arrangements</b>	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.
<b>Council alternative delivery models</b>	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.

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



## 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.