

## **CABINET**

**10 July 2023**

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)  
Councillors A Dychton, G Saffery, I Stotesbury and T Williams

Officers: Chief Executive  
Group Head of Democracy and Governance  
(Shared Services) Director of Finance  
Executive Director of Place  
Director of Performance  
Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services  
Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead  
Strategic Initiatives Officer  
Democratic Services Manager

### **9 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Pattinson and Watkin.

### **10 Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **11 Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2023 were submitted and signed.

### **12 Conduct of meeting**

The Mayor informed Cabinet would consider the items as published in the agenda.

### **13 Focusing on Delivery: Performance and Progress Report Q4 2022/23**

Cabinet received a report of the Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services, Delivery Support Lead, Executive Head of Human Resources and the Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead which provided the update of performance for the final quarter of 2022/23 covering:

- The Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24;
- The Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24; and

- Key performance indicators for Q4.

The Mayor introduced the report. He commented that having attended the recent Local Government Association conference it was apparent that all councils were facing significant pressures with the current cost of living increases, rising inflation and budget constraints. However, it was impressive the amount this council continued to deliver despite these constraints. He highlighted some of the key points in the report:

- The 79 new on-street charging electric vehicle points;
- The Place Brand narrative, which was included on the agenda;
- The new crematorium, which had involved working with the neighbouring authorities;
- The proposals for the new Museum following the successful Heritage Lottery bid;
- The successful shared services with St Albans and City District Council covering legal services, building control and planning enforcement.

The Mayor invited the Associate Director for Customers and Corporate Services to provide additional information.

The Associate Director commented that it had been a positive quarter. Performance had improved since the previous quarter. With regard to the performance targets 28 out of 36 had met or exceeded the target. Most of the outstanding eight were almost on target and therefore none were a significant cause of concern. The next presentation to Cabinet would be for the first quarter of 2023/24 and would include the updated and refreshed list of performance indicators.

The Mayor acknowledged the work the Associate Director and Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead had put into the development of the new key performance indicators, which had included working with members through Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED –

1. that Cabinet notes the progress updates within the report relating to:
  - The Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2022-24 (Appendix A)
  - The Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 (Appendix B)
  - The key performance indicator results for Quarter 4 of 2022/23 (Appendix C)

2. that the report be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 July 2023.

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### **Watford Place Brand and Narrative**

Cabinet received a report of the Director of Performance which set out the details of the proposed place brand strategy.

The Mayor thanked the Director of Performance for all her work. Watford was a special place with great people and businesses. It had outstanding parks and a fantastic shopping centre. There was an energetic spirit. Working with others in the town, the place brand would be telling Watford's story, providing a clear and strong identity for the town. Moving forward the narrative would be developed to cover the town's three key audiences, business, community and visitors. It was recognised that successful place brands brought together organisations that would help embed and amplify the brand.

The Director of Performance added that it was important to involve others. Many successful towns had a brand strategy and Watford deserved the same. It would provide a cohesive voice across the council, organisations, partners and businesses. In response to a question from the Mayor, the concept had been well received and had support to move forward with it. Many businesses saw this as a gap and having one clear story would be useful. It had come through strongly that Watford was a town with a strong colour palette compared to other places.

The Mayor referred to a conversation he had had with a resident, who had told him that they had a relative who had returned to Watford after 20 years and had commented how vibrant the town was and how they were impressed by it.

Councillor Stotesbury commented that the council had a good relationship with community groups. This could only build on that connection. He also wished to thank officers for their work.

RESOLVED –

1. that the report and work undertaken to date on Watford's place brand strategy be noted.
2. that the place brand strategy (Appendix 1 of the report) be approved and the current elements that are contributing to delivery (Appendices 2, 3 and 4) be noted.

3. that Cabinet approves the Director Performance to continue to develop the brand strategy, including the brand narratives and visuals, with the key elements in place over the summer for launching in September 2023.
4. that Cabinet notes the place brand strategy will be integrated into other key areas of the council work (such as Economic Development, communications, engagement, strategic planning).
5. that Cabinet notes the brand strategy will be shared with partners and stakeholders to build wider interest and involvement so that it becomes a clear and consistent voice for Watford.

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### **Community Engagement and Participation Strategy**

Cabinet received a report of the Strategic Initiatives Officer which introduced the emerging Community Engagement and Participation Strategy. It also sought Cabinet approval to conduct consultation with Watford's Voluntary and Community Sector over the summer of 2023.

The Mayor noted that officers had put a lot of work into developing the draft strategy. He invited Councillor Dychton to introduce the report.

Councillor Dychton referred to the town's passionate and vibrant voluntary and community sector. The strategy would seek to celebrate the contributions made by organisations and groups on a daily basis. The strategy aimed to open a two-way conversation on how the council could support a strong and resilient community that ensured people's voices were heard, they felt valued, inspired and empowered. Throughout the recent crises, the voluntary sector had stepped up to deliver direct support wherever and whenever it was needed.

Councillor Dychton informed members that, if approved, the draft strategy would be taken out to consultation across the voluntary and community sector. The feedback received so far had been overwhelmingly positive. It aligned with their objectives. She advised that an inaugural community network event had been held and groups had provided feedback. They had welcomed the friendly atmosphere encouraged by the council, to hear about the council's plans and how the organisations could contribute to the development and delivery.

Finally, Councillor Dychton reported that following the consultation, the strategy would be reviewed, and the aim was to return to Cabinet later in the year with the finalised version.

The Mayor invited the Strategic Initiatives Officer to provide further details about the consultation. The Strategic Initiatives Officer explained that officers had

spoken to groups about the draft strategy, including at the community network event. The survey would go live on the website from 11 July. In addition, officers would provide one to one feedback sessions with groups if required. The survey would be open for six weeks and it was hoped the council would hear from a broad range of people. If there were groups who had not responded officers would contact them directly to ensure a broad range of voices had been involved.

The Mayor commented that he was aware there had been a lot of engagement already, but this provided an opportunity to take stock and see how the great work could be built on.

In response to a question from Councillor Saffery about members helping to deliver it, the Strategic Initiatives Officer advised that members could help by ensuring the message was spread to their contacts within the community. It was hoped to hear from groups that perhaps did not normally get involved with the council.

RESOLVED –

That the emerging Community Engagement and Participation Strategy be approved for consultation with the Voluntary and Community Sector, which will inform delivery of the finalised strategy later in 2023.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 7.20 pm