

## **Watford Borough Council Road to Renewal Plan**

### **Q4 2020/21 (Jan – Mar) Progress Update**

#### **1. Work Stream 1: Community**

##### **1.1 Key achievements over this period**

- Watford Council has been involved in the creation and testing of a new system devised by Hertfordshire County Council to track rough sleeper cases. The system having been trialled in Watford is now in use across all 10 districts in Hertfordshire.
- The Housing First project for rough sleepers which is funded through the Next Steps Accommodation Programme is continuing on target. Watford Community Housing has purchased ten self-contained one bedroom homes. Rough sleepers for all ten units have been identified and agreed through the Watford Rough Sleepers Taskforce. The first Housing First letting took place on 13 April 2021; the second took place on 15 April. The rest of the homes are due to be let by the end of May 2021. The Council is in discussion with MHCLG and Homes England regarding funding for a further 10 Housing First units.
- Eleven units of self-contained ‘move-on’ accommodation for ex-rough sleepers at Charter House, also funded by the Next Steps Accommodation Programme, began construction in March and will be completed and let by the end of June. A further 23 units of similar accommodation will be delivered in Charter House by the end of 2021.
- Work is underway to ensure that the Voluntary Sector Strategy and associated action plan approved by Cabinet on 9 November is delivered and the Council harnesses the great community spirit demonstrated throughout the first wave of Covid-19.
- Since the 9 February, ArrivaClick – the demand responsive minibus service subsidised by the council – has been supporting the local vaccination effort by offering free transport to and from vaccination appointments within the borough. The service is easy to book via a simple smartphone app which is freely available to download. Passengers are picked up by minibus at an agreed time from a ‘virtual stop’. The service operates to careful standards ensuring safety for passengers during Covid-19.
- Further Dementia Friendly Town activities have been taking place including a Zoom Coffee Morning designed to reach out to care home residents living with dementia; The Valentines Cream Tea Show and The Easter Variety Show which were both hosted by Radio Presenter Lee Partridge and broadcast via Zoom to a number of care homes in Watford. 27 Valentine’s day cards made by Cathartic were sent out to all Watford care homes and a number of partnership care homes in the local area from the Mayor.
- More than £170,000 raised for voluntary and community groups across the town supporting Watford residents, with plans underway to ensure that the fund helps to support groups long-term and in a sustainable way.

## 1.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/Initial activity outlined complete	5
	On track/revisit at end of each lockdown	23
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Recognise Watford's fantastic community					
Bring the community together following the lengthy period of isolation caused by Covid-19	Refresh Watford's Cultural Strategy to ensure that our cultural and creative sectors can flourish, help to bring our community together and provide a vibrant, diverse and exciting offer to residents and visitors	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 August – AEA commissioned to provide support in delivery of the council's existing cultural strategy, inc. work with the cultural sector</li> <li>✓ 6 October – Review of all strategic partnerships underway. Final outcome to be informed by AEA review</li> <li>✓ 4/11 November – Cultural Leaders Group to review AEA report and action plan</li> <li>✓ 18 January – AEA final report to Cabinet alongside THCQ Programme</li> <li>✓ Late January – Governance workshop to establish preferred governance model</li> </ul>	On track	The final recommendations for delivering AEA's Cultural Strategy were fed into the newly established Town Hall Quarter programme approved by Cabinet in January. A workshop at the end of January considered the governance arrangements for taking the work forward. Further insight on governance has been sought from other local authorities which is to be fed into the Town Hall Quarter Project around the end of May.

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Recognise Watford's fantastic community					
Commemorate Watford's response to Covid-19	Establish memorial and thank you events to recognise the community spirit across the town during the pandemic and to acknowledge the sacrifice made by key workers on behalf of the town, its residents and businesses	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have been unable to confirm a timeline for these events which are entirely subject to Government guidance and legislation. However, there is a clear commitment to celebrate the resilience of the town and great community spirit across the local area shown by Watford residents through the Covid-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>	On track	The staging of these events has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdown. However, some recent progress has been made, with vaccinations now underway nationally, the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, and the artist for the Covid-19 memorial having been selected. The aim is now for the events to be held from around June when the pandemic and government restrictions are due to end.
Review our relationship with the voluntary and charitable sector	We will produce and deliver a clear strategy on the ongoing relationship with the voluntary sector	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 21 August – Voluntary Sector Specialist recruited</li> <li>✓ 21 September – Review approach approved by Informal Cabinet and engagement underway</li> <li>✓ 8 October – Internal review of draft strategy</li> <li>✓ 9 November – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> </ul>	Complete	Volunteer Strategy approved by Cabinet. New milestones created to implement the Voluntary Sector Specialist's recommendations. Significant engagement with the voluntary and community sector has already taken place and will form the basis of the Council's ongoing strategy.

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Recognise Watford's fantastic community					
Identify the best way to work with volunteers in the future	Through a high level options appraisal, we will build upon the positive volunteer response to Covid-19 by identifying the options available for the long-term management of volunteers across the town, particularly encouraging young people whose education has been impacted by Covid-19 to volunteer within the community	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 21 August – Voluntary Sector Specialist recruited</li> <li>✓ 21 September – Review approach approved by Informal Cabinet and engagement underway</li> <li>✓ 8 October – Internal review of draft strategy</li> <li>✓ 9 November – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	Significant engagement with the voluntary and community sector has already taken place and will form the basis of the Council's ongoing strategy. Work ongoing in partnership with W3RT, Watford's Community and Voluntary Service to implement the Voluntary Sector Specialist's recommendations.
Ensure we are best placed to utilise volunteers to support community responses in the future	Using the experience of leading a collective community response to Covid-19, we will ensure that the use of volunteers, subject to the options appraisal recommendations, is included within business continuity plans	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 21 August – Voluntary Sector Specialist recruited</li> <li>✓ 21 September – Review approach approved by Informal Cabinet</li> <li>✓ 8 October – Internal review of draft strategy</li> <li>✓ 9 November – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	Work on how best to plan for the future use of volunteers, including making sure there are appropriate roles for volunteers to step into and a formal process for volunteer referrals to organisations to ensure both skills and motivations are considered is currently being undertaken in joint cooperation with W3RT.

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Recognise Watford's fantastic community					
Support our residents living with, or caring for someone living with, dementia	Working with businesses, partners, carers and residents living with dementia, we will champion Watford as a place where people living with dementia are understood, respected and supported	Watford Helps	Lots achieved to date with plenty of well received events, a raising of awareness and added support for those living with dementia, and a focus on the Council's Community Protection team working with residents and businesses on preventing the spread of the virus.	On track	Watford has built a strong reputation as a dementia-friendly town and accreditation has been achieved for a further two years. Dementia support and events over the last quarter include a Zoom Coffee Morning broadcast to care home residents living with dementia; the Valentines Cream Tea and the Easter Variety Shows broadcast via Zoom to care homes in Watford; Valentine's day cards from the Mayor sent out to all Watford care homes and a few partnership care homes in the local area. Dementia Champion Training with the Alzheimer's Society is being arranged, awaiting dates due to furloughed staff.
OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Engage our community in the renewal process					
Work with our community to reflect	We will engage with community, faith leaders and councillors to identify an appropriate memorial to mark the	Watford Together	✓ 28 October – Design for Cassiobury Peace Garden complete	On track	The completion of the design and construction work for the memorials has been re-

and commemorate Covid-19	pandemic and act as a place of reflection for our residents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 December - Engagement with Watford General Hospital on memorial commenced</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov’t roadmap published</li> <li>✓ 5 April – Artist selected to produce the Covid-19 memorial outside the hospital.</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones subject to the end of Government restrictions</p>		<p>profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdown, but is now well underway. With the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, the aim is now for the memorials to be completed and the events to be held from around June when the pandemic and Government restrictions are due to end.</p>
Ensure our residents remain supported after Covid-19	We will work with our partners to clearly understand the process to transition beneficiaries from the support they have received through Covid-19 to longer term support if necessary, to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community are not forgotten when lockdown ends	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 August – following closure of Operation Shield all beneficiaries transitioned to longer term support or self-sufficiency, where appropriate.</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov’t roadmap published</li> </ul>	Complete during first and second lockdowns. Required additionally at end of third lockdown	<p>This activity has been successfully completed through the transition of beneficiaries, as the Watford Helps incident cell closed after the first national lockdown with more than 1,500 Watford residents helped by the scheme. Additional lockdowns have required the revisiting of previous milestones to ensure beneficiaries are transitioned again and supported in the long-term.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Engage our community in the renewal process		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure our residents receiving support from partners continue to be	We will work with our partners to support mutual aid groups and online communities who have provided	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 August – following closure of Operation Shield all beneficiaries transitioned to longer term support</li> </ul>	Complete during first and second	<p>This activity has been successfully completed through the transition of</p>

supported after Covid-19	support throughout the crisis to ensure that those receiving support from these groups are able to access help over the medium to long term if they require it		or self-sufficiency, where appropriate. ✓ 15 February – Gov’t roadmap published	lockdowns. Required additionally at end of third lockdown	beneficiaries, as the Watford Helps incident cell closed after the first national lockdown with more than 1,500 Watford residents helped by the scheme. Additional lockdowns have required revisiting of previous milestones to ensure beneficiaries are transitioned again and supported in the long-term.
Continue to work closely with our community, voluntary and faith groups who contributed to the community response to Covid-19	We will ensure a seamless transition of the Volunteering Planning Group, chaired by the Elected Mayor so that they can contribute to the renewal of the town, including ensuring that our most vulnerable residents continue to receive the support they need	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 21 August – Voluntary Sector Specialist recruited</li> <li>✓ 21 September – Review approach approved by Informal Cabinet and engagement underway</li> <li>✓ 8 October – Internal review of draft strategy</li> <li>✓ 9 November – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	Work on how best to ensure that the positive joint working across the sector and with the Council throughout Covid-19 is harnessed and taken forward in the long-term is currently being undertaken in joint cooperation with W3RT.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Support and facilitate the ongoing welfare of residents who have suffered hardship, loss and trauma as a result of the pandemic		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure that support is in place for residents with mental health issues	We will work with our partners to ensure that support is in place for residents whose mental health has	Watford Helps	✓ 26 November – Gap analysis and funding proposal developed by Watford Community Housing to be	On track	Investigations underway to build upon the capacity provided by the Council’s Healthy Hub by engaging

	been impacted by Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown		<p>presented to the One Watford Strategic Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 December - Gap analysis and funding proposal presented to the One Watford Strategic Partnership</li> <li>✓ January 21 - Strategic Group to discuss a broader reaching Watford wide solution around mental health</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones will be subject to the outcome of the gap analysis and subsequent indication of where focus is required, in order to best serve Watford residents.</p>		with the 'New Leaf' project. A broader Watford-wide mental health solution has been raised to bring together key partners and organisations across the town.
Make the best use of online resources to maintain support for our residents	We will utilise the large amount of information collated during the pandemic to ensure that it remains accessible to those who may need support after lockdown and is available in the event of further waves of the virus or increase in the infection rate	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 July – Number of online resources available for residents, covering financial hardship, bereavement and mental health issues.</li> <li>✓ 15 September – Confirmation of approach to managing volunteers and supporting residents in the event of a second wave and online resources updated accordingly.</li> </ul>	Complete and ongoing	Significant amount of information remains online and accessible for residents. Continual updates ongoing subject to Government guidance
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Support and facilitate the ongoing welfare of residents who have suffered hardship, loss and trauma as a result of the pandemic		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Provide a shared space of remembrance for our residents	We will build upon the now well-recognised Watford Together brand to establish a shared place of reflection for residents following Covid-19	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 October – Design for Cassiobury Peace Garden complete</li> <li>✓ 1 December - Engagement with Watford General Hospital on memorial commenced</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> </ul>	On track	The completion of the design and construction work for the memorials has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdown, but is now well underway.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5 April – Artist selected to produce the Covid-19 memorial outside the hospital.</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones subject to the end of Government restrictions</p>		With the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, the aim is now for the memorials to be completed and the events to be held from around June when the pandemic and Government restrictions are due to end.
Ensure that resources are in place to support those specifically impacted by Covid-19	We will produce online resources to support residents who have suffered financial hardship, bereavement or mental health issues as a result of the pandemic	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 July – Number of online resources available for residents, covering financial hardship, bereavement and mental health issues.</li> </ul>	Complete and ongoing	Significant amount of information remains online and accessible for residents to provide ongoing support. As further support requirements become clear as the incident develops, further online resources will be added.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Put in place mechanisms to identify those with ongoing vulnerabilities and a strategy for addressing these needs		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure our most vulnerable residents remain supported after Covid-19	Following contact with all those receiving support through Watford and Three Rivers Trust throughout the Pandemic following a referral from the council, we will ensure that all those who have been supported during Covid-19 and lockdown either no longer require support or are referred to an appropriate partner organisation	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 August – following closure of Operation Shield all beneficiaries transitioned to longer term support or self-sufficiency, where appropriate.</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> </ul>	Complete during first and second lockdowns. Required additionally at end of third lockdown	This activity has been successfully completed through the transition of beneficiaries as the Watford Helps incident cell closed. Over 1,500 Watford residents were supported by the cell which will remain on stand-by in the event of a local lockdown. Additional lockdowns have required the revisiting of

					<p>previous milestones to ensure beneficiaries are transitioned again.</p>
<p>Address the issue of digital isolation that impacted many in our community as result of Covid-19</p>	<p>We will work with partners to tackle the issue of digital isolation in the community, using new partnerships to drive social value in this area</p>	<p>Watford Helps</p>	<p>✓ January '21 – Develop job descriptions for 'Digital Navigators'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May '21 – Develop eligibility criteria for devices</li> <li>• May'21 - Develop process for accessing, cleaning and distributing IT kit and Herts wide digital support map / database</li> <li>• June '21 – Recruit 'Digital Navigators' and develop corporate social responsibility and programme communications plans</li> <li>• August '21 – 'Digital Navigators' training</li> <li>• September '21 – Deploy approved approach</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Watford Borough Council is the district lead on the 'Staying Connected' project, which is a cross organisational Herts wide initiative that includes members from the CCG, HCC, CVS's, Age UK and HILS. The project aims to support people with accessing information technology devices/kit and assist with training to help get them digitally connected to reduce social isolation. The project will develop a training programme to train volunteers to go out into the community and support people with using a range of media devices including iPads, laptops, and smart phones, to help them get digitally connected and online using apps for grocery shopping and connecting with friends and family. It will also work to source digital devices for distribution to the community to support people to be digitally</p>

					connected in the community.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Put in place mechanisms to identify those with ongoing vulnerabilities and a strategy for addressing these needs		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Reduce the number of residents impacted by scams	We will ensure that the Council provides support and information in relation to financial abuse and online scams, which often increase during periods of economic hardship and so may be more prevalent post-Covid	Watford Helps	✓ 15 July – Additional information and signposting added to council website, specifically relating to financial abuse and online scams	Complete and ongoing	Working with the Elected Mayor's Volunteering Planning Group, lots of advice, signposting and guidance available on the Council website to support and protect residents from financial abuse and online scams. This will be added to as and when necessary as the incident develops.
Achieve and maintain zero rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.	Following approval of our new Homelessness Strategy for Watford, we will enact the specific actions outlined in the document, ensuring that the strategy is reviewed on an annual basis and adapted regularly to ensure that it remains valid and supporting those in our community to achieve and maintain zero rough sleepers on the streets of Watford	Rough Sleeping and Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 June - Medium Complex Intensive Support Service (MCISS) opens</li> <li>• 6 July – Homelessness Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• 14 July - Information shared on training, secondment and shared learning opportunities provided at Watford Strategic Homeless Forum</li> <li>• 14 July - Watford Rough Sleeping Taskforce was launched</li> <li>• 23 September – Next Steps Accommodation funding bid successful</li> <li>• 25 September - MHCLG funding of £101,000 for winter shelter and accommodation for rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds</li> </ul>	On track	It should be noted the Homelessness Strategy contains a significant number of initiatives, milestones and objectives – the list contained within this report is not exhaustive with more detailed reporting on delivery of Strategy provided to HPAG. However, this does provide an overview of the significant progress already made in this field over the last few months, where there has been a significant focus on supporting those who find themselves

			<p>obtained for the period October 2020-March 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 September - Application for 20 units of self-contained move-on accommodation submitted</li> <li>• Q3 2020 MHCLG Rough Sleepers Initiative funding application – submission May 2021 (MHCLG changed the timetable)</li> </ul> <p>✓ Q4 2020/21: NSAP short-term revenue funding spent by end March 2021</p> <p>✓ Q4 2020/21: NSAP capital funding spent by end March 2021</p> <p>✓ Q4 2020/21: Work with HCC re best use of housing related support funding by end March 2021</p> <p>✓ Q1 2021/22 - Open complex needs scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q3 2021/22: Have zero rough sleepers on streets of Watford</li> </ul>		<p>homeless and sleeping on the streets.</p> <p>The next phase of works will focus on the development and adoption of a single pathway for rough sleepers, working with partners from across the town to help achieve this commitment to achieve and maintain zero rough sleeping.</p>
Maintain the ability to remobilise resources in the event of a second wave of Covid-19	We will ensure that Watford Helps is able to remobilise as quickly as possible in the event of a second wave of the virus in order to support the most vulnerable residents in our community	Watford Helps	<p>✓ 6 July - Report to SLT on lessons learnt from first wave response</p> <p>✓ 14 September - Report to LB on second wave preparations</p> <p>✓ 21 September - Report to PHs on second wave preparations</p>	Complete	Arrangements were confirmed between borough councils, County Council and CVS, incorporating lessons learnt and previous planning works, and meant that the Council was able to work as effectively as possible for all residents and businesses, when the virus case numbers began to rise in Autumn. This was effectively completed

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Identify funding opportunities to assist in the renewal process					during the second wave of the virus and for the second and third lockdowns.
Support charities and the voluntary sector impacted by Covid-19	We will maintain the Council's Community Fund, established during the pandemic, to support charities and the voluntary sector across the town	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 November – Volunteer Sector Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May 2021 - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	More than £170,000 has been raised and allocated to local charities and voluntary groups serving residents across the town throughout the pandemic, thanks to a fantastic response to the Covid-19 appeal. Work on addressing the challenge of issuing continued support to charities and the voluntary sector impacted by Covid-19, including how best to manage the Community Fund over the medium to long term, is currently being undertaken in joint cooperation with W3RT.
Promote the Council's Community Fund	We will maintain links between the Council's Community Fund and Watford Together activities, or the Council's Big Events programme to provide ongoing promotion of the fund and therefore, the town's charities and voluntary organisations who support so many across our town	Watford Helps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 November – Volunteer Sector Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May 2021 - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	Throughout the pandemic, the Community Fund (now known as Watford Helps Covid-19 appeal), which has been supported and promoted closely by the Council, has grown to more than £170,000. Further activity and promotion of the

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>	
Deliver and support appropriate memorial and thank you events and initiatives				fund is due to take place over the coming months. The council and W3RT are jointly investigating the best ways to manage the Fund over the medium/long term, including diversifying sources of funding.	
Provide a shared space of remembrance for our residents	We will establish a Cassiobury Peace Garden where residents can collectively reflect on the pandemic and their own personal losses, as well as those of key workers who supported the town throughout Covid-19	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 October – Design for Cassiobury Peace Garden complete</li> <li>✓ 6 December - Tree specification decided &amp; memorial bench sourced for Peace Garden</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> </ul>	On track	The completion of the construction work for the Peace Garden has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdowns. With the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, the aim is now for the garden to be completed and the events to be held from around June when the pandemic and Government restrictions are due to end.
Commemorate Watford's response to Covid-19	We will work with the community to design and install a Public Arts Feature marking the pandemic and commemorating front line workers who continue to support residents and businesses through the pandemic	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entirely subject to Government guidance and legislation so unable to confirm timeline for this at the current time. However, there is a clear commitment to celebrate the resilience of the town and great community spirit across the local area</li> </ul>	On track	The completion of the design and construction work for the Covid Memorial has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdowns.

			<p>shown by Watford residents through the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>✓ 5 April – Artist selected to produce the Covid-19 memorial outside the hospital.</p>		<p>With the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, and the artist for the Covid-19 memorial having been selected, the aim is now for the memorial to be completed and the commemoration event to be held from around June when the pandemic and Government restrictions are due to end.</p>
<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b> Deliver and support appropriate memorial and thank you events and initiatives</p>		<p><b>Project</b></p>	<p><b>Key Milestones</b></p>	<p><b>'RAG' Rating</b></p>	<p><b>Update</b></p>
<p>Bring together and thank our community for the town's collective response to Covid-19</p>	<p>Subject to social distancing guidance and Government requirements, we will sponsor a Watford 'Thank You' Parade, bringing our community together following a period of physical isolation as a result of the pandemic and an opportunity to recognise the work of our key workers across the town</p>	<p>Watford Together</p>	<p>Entirely subject to Government guidance and legislation so unable to confirm timeline for this at the current time. However, there is a clear commitment to celebrate the resilience of the town and great community spirit across the local area shown by Watford residents through the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>The staging of these events has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdowns. However, some recent progress has been made, with vaccinations now underway nationally, the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, and the artist for the Covid-19 memorial having been selected. The aim is now for the events to be held from around June when the pandemic and</p>

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Deliver and support appropriate memorial and thank you events and initiatives					government restrictions are due to end.
Provide a shared space for reflection for our residents	We will restore the fountain in St. Mary's Churchyard so it can once again be a space enjoyed collectively by our community, as a place of reflection and remembrance	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 26 November - Fountain ordered for St Mary's Church Yard</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> <li>✓ 28 February - Commission survey for St Mary's Church Yard Fountain</li> </ul>	On track	The restoration of the fountain has been re-profiled in response to local Covid-19 restrictions and the national lockdowns. With the Government setting out its roadmap for ending lockdown, the aim is now for the fountain to be restored and the commemoration event to be held from around June when the pandemic and government restrictions are due to end.
Utilise volunteers to support our community	Subject to the Council's ongoing volunteering strategy, we will work with our volunteers to support Watford Together events and initiatives	Watford Helps/ Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 November – Volunteer Sector Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• May 21 - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> </ul>	On track	The response from the public to the appeal for volunteers during the first wave of the virus was overwhelmingly positive. The issue of how best to utilise volunteers in our community, including making sure there are appropriate roles for volunteers to step into is currently being undertaken

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Provide community reassurance through effective community leadership		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure we work with our partner organisations as effectively as possible to maintain a safe town for our residents	We will reimagine One Watford and our Community Safety Partnerships to ensure that there is a clear ongoing collective purpose which will allow us to maintain the momentum established through the response to the pandemic	One Watford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 July – Review approach, working with the LGA to undertake remote peer support, agreed</li> <li>✓ 12 October – All One Watford members notified in relation to review</li> <li>✓ 1-3 December – Desktop exercise completed</li> <li>• 1 July '21 – One Watford position statement paper drafted</li> <li>• September - review recommendations implemented – re-baselined from 1 April</li> </ul>	On track	Work is underway to deliver a long term vision for Watford which will be an important driver in shaping the future direction of the partnership, with One Watford reflecting the shared vision for the town. After discussions with the LGA, it was agreed that the review paper would be undertaken in line with the Brand Positioning work to ensure ongoing alignment.
Monitor the impact of economic turbulence on social cohesion	We will remain aware of the impact of economic turbulence on community cohesion and be ready to mobilise community based initiatives in response if necessary	One Watford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Community Cohesion cell remains in place</li> </ul>	On track	Ongoing awareness through the Community Cohesion cell and regular meetings of the One Watford Community Safety Partnership. This will continue to be monitored as the incident develops.

## **2. Work Stream 2: Business and Economy**

### **2.1 Key achievements over this period Q4 2020/21 (Jan – Mar)**

- A covid-safe High Street remained open (subject to a 3<sup>rd</sup> national lockdown), with ongoing advice and guidance for all businesses to ensure that they operated in line with legislation so that residents and visitors were kept safe. Covid and traffic marshal presence extended to ensure the safe operation of the Town Centre.
- A considerable public health and communication programme undertaken to ensure businesses were able to reopen safely in line with the lockdown easing roadmap, ‘welcoming the public back to Watford’ and encouraging them to shop locally. New Town Centre Ops Group (WCTOG) launched 13 January to prepare.
- New Town Centre Strategy Group launched 3 March to ensure Watford Town centre remains a regional leisure and shopping destination which supports the local economy and local people.
- Longer term traffic solution agreed by members for the Lower High Street to keep visitors to our town safe and help sustain the long term health of the Town Centre.
- Economic Growth Strategy progressed by consultants to provide a vision and strategy for economic development for Watford that embraces economic growth, environmental sustainability, social equity and inclusive growth - this is being reviewed and updated by officers.
- Inaugural ‘One Watford for Business’ forum introduced 11 February following the recommendations from the Business forums review that were implemented to allow us to understand the needs and concerns of our businesses and to support them accordingly.
- Initial business support partnership with social enterprise Wenta completed by end March, providing tailored offerings for all Watford businesses and the self-employed - 326 businesses have engaged with the programme, 232 businesses have had face-to-face discussions, 206 people booked onto webinars and 22 businesses has sought more in-depth and specialist advice. Programme extended until end May 2021.
- Successful BID ballot held and BID in place for a further 5 year period to continue to help establish new, stronger and more focused partnerships with businesses of all sizes across the town.
- Local Restrictions Grants (LRGs) allocated to local businesses, supporting the local economy during 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown - £ 6,098,915 paid out across 4,493 applications to end March 2021.
- Closed Business Payments (CBPs) paid out totalling £3,407,000.
- Additional Restrictions Grants (ARGs) to provide further one-off payment support to those businesses not covered by other grants – £1.9m pot allocated to Watford - £1.06m used to date, of which £560,000 paid in direct grants to 137 businesses. A further £977k will be available to support businesses in Watford if

we can account for spend against the original allocation by 30 June 2021. £191,500 of total ARG pot paid to 383 taxi drivers to support with licensing and cleaning and £69,000 to support market traders with rent.

- Town Centre Framework agreed with Leadership Board and Portfolio Holders to 'promote understanding and communicate local priorities through engagement and consultation with local residents and businesses' and will be progressed in May/June 2021.
- Third tranche of Key Accounts Programme launched to leaders using the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and meetings now being held, ensuring that our commitment to provide the town's largest employers with a strong voice within the town, and also to allow the council to better manage its ongoing relationships and support for businesses.
- Visit Watford project commenced to find the 'vision, purpose, branding & narrative for Watford' and promote the town effectively.
- Successful 'Generation Watford' careers fair held 9 March 2021 to ensure that there is a specific focus on employment and skills, supporting our residents to play a full role in the town's, region's and UK's economic revival. CRM used to correspond with businesses and supporting 'Generation Watford' website utilised.
- National Apprenticeship Week held in February and local employer support for KickStart programme helping young people at risk of long term unemployment get into the job market by providing government funding for employers to create six-month job placements.
- Watford Business Park development planning agreed and demolition commenced.

## 2.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/Initial activity outlined complete	15
	On track/revisit at end of each lockdown	21
	Planning underway	2
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>38</b>

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Create an economic and business revive and thrive strategy that is intelligence-led and informed by local businesses and partner organisations (BID, Chambers etc) to ensure an ongoing focus on business need					
Create our Economic Revive and Thrive Strategy	We will develop an Economic Revive and Thrive Strategy, which outlines the council's approach to revive our local economy so that it supports all our town post-Covid	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 17 July – Develop tender brief</li> <li>✓ 27 July – Tender documents finalised</li> <li>✓ 21 August – Tender closes</li> <li>✓ 10 September – Supplier interviews</li> <li>✓ 15 September – Supplier confirmed</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Final strategy received from consultant. The detailed Action Plan and aligning with the council's strategic framework is progressing prior to due governance and formal publication of strategy in July. This will help the council to support businesses and the local economy not just immediately following the successive lockdowns but over the medium to long term.
Develop our Economic Plan 2020-2024	We will develop an Economic Plan for the next five years (2021-25) which will set out our plans to support our local economy and businesses to thrive in the years to come	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 October – Strategy development initiation</li> <li>✓ 8 October - Initial stakeholder engagement event</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Design survey and questions</li> <li>✓ 19 October – Deliver survey and survey live period</li> <li>✓ 02 November – Review survey results</li> <li>✓ 06 November – Commence 1:1 stakeholder meetings</li> <li>✓ 27 November – Definition of strategic priorities</li> <li>✓ 23 December – First draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 21 January – Second draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 09 February – Review by Mayor/Cllrs</li> <li>✓ 11 February – Review by One Watford for Business</li> <li>✓ 18 February – Review by Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ 15 March – Final strategy received</li> <li>✓ 18 March – Final review by WBC Steering Committee</li> <li>✓ 27 April – Leadership Board update</li> </ul>		

OBJECTIVE Establish new, stronger and more focused partnerships with businesses of all sizes across the town	Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update	
Ensure big business has a strong voice in the town	We will review our forums for big businesses to ensure that they have a clear purpose, allowing business to have a strong voice in the town and are promoted effectively. This will include representatives of the major business groups in the town on our Business Stakeholder Group	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 30 April – Publishable docs and detailed working Action Plan complete</li> <li>• 07 June – Review and sign-off by Cabinet</li> <li>• July – Strategy published</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	<p>50 key accounts scheme launched and meetings underway. All businesses involved will have regular interactions with senior council officers, with contact recorded on the business CRM system.</p> <p>Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations were implemented to ensure that the town attracts and retains major employers for Watford residents.</p>
Understand the needs and concerns of our small businesses	We will review our forums for small and medium businesses to ensure that they have a clear purpose, allow business to have a strong voice in the town and are promoted effectively.	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 August – Review of existing forums</li> <li>✓ 24 August – Business forums recommendations approved by Informal Cabinet</li> <li>✓ 10 December – Developer’s forum resurrected</li> <li>✓ 31 December – Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations implemented</li> <li>✓ 11 February – Inaugural ‘One Watford for Business’ forum</li> <li>✓ March – Tranche 3 accounts allocated to leaders and briefs created using CRM</li> <li>✓ 27 April – Next ‘One Watford for Business’ forum held</li> <li>• 31 May – All tranche 2 &amp; 3 key account meetings held and relationships established</li> <li>• 31 May – All meeting feedback recorded on CRM</li> <li>• June – Next Developers’ forum</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work	Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations implemented to ensure that the council is best placed to

	This will allow us to understand the needs and concerns of our businesses and to support them accordingly and will include representatives of SME groups on our Business Stakeholder Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 8 October – Final virtual Covid-19 Forum</li> <li>✓ 10 December – Relaunch Developers’ Forum</li> <li>✓ 11 February – Inaugural ‘One Watford for Business’</li> <li>✓ 27 April – next ‘One Watford for Business’ forum held</li> </ul>	remains ongoing	support the many successful smaller businesses and business owners across the town. All first forums have been held with regular meeting schedule in the diary
Work with cultural bodies in the town to support their sustainability and business model(s) in the medium and longer term	We will work closely with the cultural sector to recast the council’s relationship with them so we can collectively develop a sustainable future for the sector	Watford Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 August – AEA commissioned to provide support in delivery of the council’s existing cultural strategy, including our work with the cultural sector</li> <li>✓ 6 October – Review of all strategic partnerships underway. Final outcome to be informed by AEA review</li> <li>✓ 4 / 11 November – Cultural Leaders Group to review AEA report and action plan</li> <li>✓ 18 January – AEA final report to Cabinet alongside THCQ Programme</li> <li>✓ Late January – Governance workshop to establish preferred governance model</li> <li>✓ June ’21 – Cultural Leaders Group to agree adoption of governance model</li> </ul>	On track	The workshop on governance was held in late January. It was agreed at the workshop that the Newcastle/Gateshead Cultural Trust could be used as a model to be adopted in Watford. That meeting took place in mid February and provided some very useful feedback on the experiences of Newcastle/Gateshead. The next steps will be to convene a further meeting of the CLG to agree the governance model we should adopt. Working is also underway with the Palace Theatre and the Pump House on their infrastructure plans and collaborating such that the council can support them as they seek funding for the plans.
Ensure that the council communicates	We will ensure that our corporate communications plan has a clear focus on communicating effectively with	Renewal Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 18 September - Draft Renewals Comms Plan produced</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete	Renewal Communications Plan has a specific focus on communications for

effectively with our businesses	businesses of all sizes across the town, promoting genuine and meaningful two-way engagement		✓ 12 October – Renewals Comms Plan approved by Renewal Coordination Board	but work remains ongoing	businesses of all sizes across the town to ensure genuine and meaningful two-way engagement.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Actively support initiatives intended to assist SMEs to survive and grow		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Support businesses to re-open safely	We will support businesses to re-open safely after Covid-19 and in line with government guidance relating to social distancing. We will provide public health advice, make any physical changes necessary to keep visitors to our town safe and support the Town Centre reopening with a Marshall and street angels scheme	Business Reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 10 July – Approach to high street stewards agreed</li> <li>✓ 15 July – Shop local campaign introduced</li> <li>✓ 22 July – Changes to pavement licensing</li> <li>✓ 15 September – Enhanced track and trace roll out</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Officer meeting re long-term strategy for High Street traffic control</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Traffic Marshals agreed to be in place until January 2021</li> <li>✓ 23 October – Long-term strategy for High Street traffic control considered at RCB</li> <li>✓ October – Winter planters in place to aid social distancing</li> <li>✓ 11 November – Social distanced Remembrance Day</li> <li>✓ 13 November – Christmas light switch-on</li> <li>✓ 02 December – Town centre re-opened after November lockdown – Transition to 'tier' system</li> <li>✓ 02 December – Covid Marshals introduced</li> </ul>	<p>Complete during first and second lockdown</p> <p>Ongoing work to prepare for exit from 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown</p>	<p>Local support to businesses, including in relation to public health, has continued.</p> <p>Revised governance structure introduced 13 January when Town Centre Operations Group took over responsibility to provide a real focus for the council to support the Town Centre through tactical interventions and projects. The Town Centre Strategic Forum has been established to provide the strategic direction for the town centre</p> <p>Programme of projects now tracked at Operations Group to support businesses and encourage the public back into the town in line with the published Government Roadmap.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 05 December – spectators return to Watford FC</li> <li>✓ December – comprehensive comms programme to reinforce tier messaging</li> <li>✓ 06 January – review of festive period in Town Centre</li> <li>✓ 13 January – new Town Centre Operations Group structure took over</li> <li>✓ 22 February – Gov’t roadmap published</li> <li>✓ 08 March – Gov’t roadmap – schools return</li> <li>✓ March – Market revamp programme commenced ahead of 13 April reopening</li> <li>✓ 29 March – Gov’t Roadmap – outdoor sport and leisure facilities open</li> <li>✓ 12 April – Gov’t Roadmap – outdoor hospitality, non-essential retail, gyms &amp; swims, close contact services open</li> <li>✓ From 17 April – street entertainers every Saturday</li> <li>• 17 May – Gov’t roadmap – indoor entertainment and indoor sport open, pilot public events</li> <li>• 21 June – Gov’t roadmap final step – nightclubs and large events open, no legal limits on social contact</li> </ul>		Public health advice and support for businesses across the Town, but particularly in the Town Centre, has been ongoing throughout.
Encourage residents and visitors to use our Town Centre	We will introduce a programme of communications for residents, encouraging them to support our local businesses and to 'shop local, stay safe'	Business Reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 25 July – Shop local, stay safe campaign introduced</li> <li>✓ 15 August – ‘Travel with confidence’ campaign underway</li> <li>✓ 02 October – Messaging aligned to “Hands, Face, Space”</li> <li>✓ December – Grant to support taxis agreed (licensing and cleaning)</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Revised governance structure introduced from 13 January.</p> <p>Council have employed a Town Centre Marketing &amp; Communications Officer to support this activity.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 19 November – Locally focussed Covid comms week</li> <li>✓ December – ‘Shop local’ campaign comms</li> <li>✓ 13 January – New Town Centre Operations Group structure takes over</li> <li>✓ 27 January – Marketing Comms Officer employed</li> <li>✓ 22 February – Gov’t Roadmap published</li> <li>✓ April – Shared comms plan between key partners (WBC/BID/Atria)</li> <li>✓ From 17 April – Street entertainers every Saturday</li> <li>• End May – Maze attraction on The Parade during half-term</li> <li>• July – First of 3 night markets</li> <li>• August – Big Beach</li> </ul>		<p>Programme of multi-media communications ‘welcoming the public back to Watford’ and encouraging them to ‘shop / eat locally’, in line with Roadmap.</p> <p>Events programme planned from 17 April onwards.</p>
Keep businesses informed	We will introduce a monthly business newsletter for our businesses, providing us with an opportunity to provide support, advice and guidance	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 24 July – First business newsletter sent</li> <li>✓ Programme of regular newsletters ongoing</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Business newsletters have been published on a monthly basis since July 2020 providing a direct link between local businesses and the council. These continue to be published on a regular basis with the latest key information e.g. grants, Covid restrictions, EU transition, support programmes etc
Understand business need	We will launch a Watford Business Survey so that we can understand business needs and the impact of Covid-19 on our local businesses and wider economy. This will inform our	Survive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5 June - Business survey launched</li> <li>✓ 15 July – Business survey closed</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work	Business survey was launched and received 232 responses, allowing the council powerful insight into the challenges faced by local

	Economic Review and Thrive Strategy so that it best meets the needs of our businesses			remains ongoing	businesses. This has set up the structure for further surveys in future to ensure the Council continues to understand changing business needs
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Actively support initiatives intended to assist SMEs to survive and grow		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
React to business need	Based on the Watford Business Survey results, we will develop a bespoke support scheme designed to match the needs of our local businesses	Revive	✓ Business results shared and used to inform content on the website, the Wenta programme and the key accounts programme	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Intelligence and feedback provided by the business survey used to inform a tailored approach to council-led support for local business, with the Wenta social enterprise programme and the Key Accounts programme. The final Economic Growth Strategy will be used to evolve the Council's support for businesses.
Ensure that our businesses are able to access information	We will improve the information for businesses on our website and establish a Business Information Hub so that businesses are able to find all relevant information and services in a single location	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 29 June - Business Information Hub launched and communications circulated</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Wenta support programme proposal approved by Renewal Coordination Board</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Wenta contract agreed</li> <li>✓ 16 October - Wenta press release and launch</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Business Information Hub launched and Wenta support programme extended to ensure we continue to provide further, tailored information for business and self-employed residents. Regular updates are made on the Hub e.g. grants, EU transition

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Actively support initiatives intended to assist SMEs to survive and grow		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Promote our businesses	Partnering with Whatsapp, we will use their business platform to promote our local businesses, promote entrepreneurs and boost growth across our local economy	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August – Intro letter to pilot businesses</li> <li>✓ 9 September – Training for pilot businesses</li> <li>✓ 23 September – Set-up of business profiles</li> <li>✓ 2 October – WhatsApp for business app launched.</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	<p>The new WhatsApp for Business launched on 2 October alongside a positive communications campaign and provides an innovative way for businesses to engage directly with their customers.</p> <p>The final Economic Growth Strategy will provide further information on how the council will continue to support businesses.</p>
Support businesses to work safely	We will support our local economy by producing and delivering a Safe Working initiative for taxis & other sectors	Business Reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August/September – taxi driver training and protective screens provided under Travel with Confidence (TwC) scheme</li> <li>✓ 30 September – TwC licensed for other LAs to use</li> <li>✓ 7 October – TwC marketing commenced</li> <li>✓ December – HSBC rank reopened</li> <li>✓ January – Grants agreed to support licence costs</li> </ul>	Initial activity outlined complete	<p>Successful Travel with Confidence initiative to keep Watford residents safe. The majority of Taxi drivers have completed training and obtained the TwC 'mark' throughout further lockdown periods. Grant has supported with licensing and cleaning costs.</p>

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Attract and retain big businesses to the town					
Develop our Key Accounts approach	We will identify 50 key businesses operating within the town and introduce a key accounts approach whereby we work closely on a one-to-one basis with businesses to understand their needs and concerns, ensuring that we both attract and retain them within the town, further supporting our local economy and residents	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 31 July – 50 key businesses identified</li> <li>✓ 10 August – Business CRM tender underway</li> <li>✓ 24 August – Approach approved by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ 4 September – Leadership Team account managers assigned to businesses</li> <li>✓ 14 September – CRM supplier appointed</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Existing contacts added to CRM</li> <li>✓ 09 October – CRM contract</li> <li>✓ 16 October – Introduction emails to initial 20 businesses</li> <li>✓ 16 October – Top 20 briefs produced</li> <li>✓ 02 November – CRM launched</li> <li>✓ 18 December – Initial meetings held</li> <li>✓ January – Agreed next phase of businesses to contact</li> <li>✓ March – Tranche 3 accounts allocated to leaders and briefs created using CRM</li> <li>• 31 May – All tranche 2 &amp; 3 key account meetings held and relationships established</li> <li>• 31 May – All meeting feedback recorded on CRM</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Key Accounts Programme and process launched and meetings with senior council officers being held with contact recorded on the business CRM system. The next tranche of meetings with key accounts is now underway.
Promote Watford effectively	We will develop a Brand Positioning strategy to establish a strong brand for Watford as the place to do business	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ February – brief developed</li> <li>✓ 8 February – BID ballot successful</li> <li>✓ February – 'Visit Watford' project commenced with third party</li> <li>✓ 24 February – Brand audit</li> </ul>	On track	Work continues to establish a strong brand identify which will set Watford apart and attract visitors to the Town supporting our local businesses as we emerge

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ March – cross-ref with draft Economic Growth Strategy</li> <li>✓ April – Stakeholder workshops</li> <li>• May - Undertake work</li> <li>• June – Agree brand positioning/ vision</li> </ul>		from Covid-19 restrictions. A number of stakeholder workshops have been undertaken with our Brand Coordinating Group and work to develop the final brand is now underway.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure Watford Town centre remains a regional leisure and shopping destination which supports the local economy and local people		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Allow our Town Centre to reopen safely	We will initiate social distancing arrangements in the High Street, including introducing physical changes to the space to attract residents back to the Town Centre in a safe and managed way	Business Reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 25 May – Temporary TRO and traffic marshals in place</li> <li>✓ 1 June – Relaxing of lockdown commenced and hand sanitizers in place</li> <li>✓ 5 June – Directional floor stickers in place</li> <li>✓ 8 June – High St stewards in place</li> <li>✓ 8 June – Summer planters used as natural social distancing</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Traffic marshals funded until January 2021</li> <li>✓ January 2021 – Vaccination programme begins nationwide</li> <li>✓ 22 February – Gov't published Roadmap</li> <li>✓ 08 March – Gov't Roadmap – schools return</li> <li>✓ 29 March – Gov't Roadmap – outdoor sport and leisure facilities open</li> <li>✓ 12 April – Gov't Roadmap – outdoor hospitality, non-essential retail, gyms &amp; swims, close contact services open</li> </ul>	<p>Complete during first and second lockdown</p> <p>Ongoing work to prepare for exit from 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown</p>	<p>Ongoing social distancing measures since May 2020. This has included planter arrangements, floor stickers, stewards and hand sanitiser stations, as well as additional advice and guidance for businesses.</p> <p>The easing of 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown has required revisiting of previous milestones to ensure the town centre reopens safely again, this time in line with Roadmap.</p> <p>Public Health Cell has continued to engage local businesses and to perform local track and trace to ensure all measures being</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ From 17 April – Street entertainers every Saturday</li> <li>• 17 May – Gov’t roadmap – indoor entertainment and indoor sport open, pilot public events</li> <li>• 21 June – Gov’t roadmap final step – nightclubs and large events open, no legal limits on social contact</li> </ul>		undertaken to allow the town to reopen safely.
Develop a Town Centre Strategy post Covid-19	We will use intelligence and best practice to evolve our Town Centre so that it has a good mix of recognised high street brands and independent retailers, including within the Market	Thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 August – Interim Town Centre Development Manager starts</li> <li>✓ 28 September - BID Business Plan reviewed</li> <li>✓ October – Visit Watford consultant review complete</li> <li>✓ 9 October – Registered interest with the High Street Taskforce for expert advice and support</li> <li>✓ October – Market strategy reviewed – speciality markets explored</li> <li>✓ 02 November - commence developing Town Centre plan</li> <li>✓ 02 December – new Town Centre Operations and Strategy Groups agreed</li> <li>✓ February – inaugural Town Centre Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ Town Centre framework agreed</li> <li>• Additional Place Shaping resource in place</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Ensuring that the Town Centre is well positioned for the challenges of the future.</p> <p>Draft diagnostic of Watford’s strengths and areas for development created.</p> <p>Town centre framework agreed.</p>

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure Watford Town centre remains a regional leisure and shopping destination which supports the local economy and local people		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Create co-working spaces in the town	We will support the creation of co-working / incubator spaces based on local requirements to support our small and medium businesses	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September – suitability of 'Makers' Space' explored at library</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Wenta support programme proposal approved by Renewal Coordination Board</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Wenta contract agreed</li> <li>✓ 16 October – Wenta press release and launched</li> <li>✓ November – Annex identified as a co-working space</li> <li>✓ 02 December – Co-working business case drafted</li> <li>✓ March – Innovation and Incubator Hub project to be taken forward as part of Town Hall Quarter programme</li> <li>✓ 22 February – 'Creator/meanwhile' space campaign restarted as Roadmap published</li> <li>✓ April - Determine future plans for Town Hall Annex during 2021</li> <li>• April – May – Find suitable creator/ maker space</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Incubation space to support the creation and flow of new businesses to be addressed within the Town Hall Quarter programme.</p> <p>18 expressions of interest from 'creator/makers' for space, ongoing challenge remains finding suitable cost-effective space.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Through links with partners, act as a conduit to central government and other bodies where there are unmet support needs for businesses		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Advocate for our local businesses	We will use the results of our Watford Business survey to influence the business support package delivered by	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September – Business Survey results used to determine Wenta programme content</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete	Business support package provided through the Wenta programme continues to

	Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Growth Hub		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ December – weekly Wenta dashboard to review success</li> <li>✓ March – initial survey of Wenta programme users held</li> <li>✓ March – Wenta programme extended</li> <li>• End May – review extended Wenta programme</li> </ul>	but work remains ongoing	<p>provide further tailored support for businesses and self-employed residents.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan.</p>
Work with partners to meet business needs	We will launch our Watford Thrives Stakeholder Group so members and council officers can work closely with local business groups such as the Business Improvement District, Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and Wenta so that we collectively meet business needs and establish genuine and meaningful two way engagement	Revive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 August – Review of existing forums</li> <li>✓ 24 August – Business forums recommendations approved by Informal Cabinet</li> <li>✓ December – ‘One Watford for Business’ ToR, stakeholders, roles agreed</li> <li>✓ 11 February – inaugural ‘One Watford for Business’ stakeholder group</li> <li>✓ 27 April – next ‘One Watford for Business’ forum held</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	‘One Watford for Business’ forum ongoing.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Support growth and development aspirations so that Watford remains an economic leader in the sub-region		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure our town develops sustainably to boost and support both the local and wider economy	We will produce and deliver a comprehensive new Local Plan for Watford which will shape how the town will develop sustainably over the next 30 years, boosting growth within the local economy	Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November ‘20 – Draft Local Plan to Cabinet</li> <li>✓ January ‘21 – Consultation underway</li> <li>✓ June ‘21 – Submission to Planning Inspectorate</li> <li>• February ‘22 – Local Plan adopted</li> </ul>	On track	New timetable agreed in October due to staff transition and need for additional evidence. Consultation has now concluded and will ensure that the town is developed in a sustainable way over the next 30 years.

Develop the Watford Junction Quarter	Recognising the importance of the Watford Junction area for so many of our residents and businesses, we will bring landowners together so we can move forward with our 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	Watford Junction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 - Supplementary planning document for site adopted</li> <li>✓ Q2 2020 – Submit funding bid to Herts Growth Board for infrastructure interventions</li> <li>✓ Q1 2021 – Complete strategic transport review work</li> <li>✓ Q1 2021 – Procure consultants to help deliver collaborative funding and development strategy</li> <li>• Q2 2021 – Work with landowners to prepare collaborative funding and development strategy</li> <li>• Q2/3 2021 – Prepare and consult on Supplementary Planning Document</li> </ul>	On track	The council continues to work closely with a range of stakeholders to support the development of the Watford Junction area. The procurement of a consultant for funding and development strategy work has been completed and work is underway with Herts Growth Board to seek funding for infrastructure. Work with Network Rail to promote progress on station improvement works and pedestrian link underway.
Ensure that the town's infrastructure supports and attracts local business and the wider economy	We will develop and continually update an infrastructure plan for Watford which matches the ambitions of the town and local economy	Local Plan/IDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Infrastructure delivery plan (IDP) preparation with external consultant support and engagement with HCC undertaken with consultation launched</li> </ul>	On track	On track to have infrastructure plan in parallel with Local Plan which will ensure that the town is developed in a sustainable way over the next 30 years.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Collectively pursue relevant opportunities for funding		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Maximise opportunities for the town and its businesses	We will ensure that we work with other local authorities to monitor opportunities for government and other public sector funding and pursue these as and when they emerge	Thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing monitoring at present. As and when opportunities emerge, the council will be in a position to pursue these.</li> </ul>	On track	Ongoing monitoring at present

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Deploy our investment to achieve appropriate commercial returns in conjunction with driving the economic growth potential of Watford		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Develop Watford Business Park	We will develop Watford Business Park to create new, high quality business space and employment opportunities	Watford Business Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3 2020 - Submit detailed planning application/commence intrusive surveys/demolition.</li> <li>• Q1 2021/22 – Tender for design and build contractor and secure Cabinet approval to appoint</li> <li>• Q2 2021/22 – Main contractor appointed</li> <li>• Q1-4 2021/22 – Construction and preletting campaign on Gateway Zone</li> <li>• Q4 2020/21 – Q4 2021/22 – Identify further regen/commercial activities and present outline business cases to the council's Commercial Income and Investment Board</li> </ul>	On track	In order to support businesses as much as possible, the council moved the vacant possession date, which was originally anticipated to conclude on 30 June 2020. With lockdown preventing businesses from making arrangements to relocate, this was re-programmed to January. However, the site has now been secured and demolition on site has commenced. Unilateral Undertaking has been executed and planning decision notice issued.
Continue to invest in Croxley Business Park	We will ensure that Croxley Business Park maintains its eminent position as a centre of employment in South West Herts	Croxley Business Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – business plan and strategy for the £92million refurbishment fund that the Council hold</li> <li>✓ 02 December – strategy for refurbishment agreed at Cabinet</li> <li>✓ Q1/Q4 2020 – Ensure regular marketing meetings are progressed to minimise voids</li> <li>✓ March 2021 – Building 1 completed</li> <li>✓ March – Cabinet approval received for delegated authority to secure deal with a tenant</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Building 1 work completed and seeking to let.</p> <p>Exploring additional re-gears as necessary.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2021 – Oversee the delivery of a new office building of 85,000sq ft. and endeavour to identify a pre let of this space</li> <li>Q1/4 2021 – delivery of 7,000sq m in Gateway Zone</li> </ul>		
Use our financial strength to support economic growth	Assess the feasibility of using our financial strength to support economic growth and an investment return through investing in opportunities	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November – Annex identified as a co-working space</li> <li>✓ 02 December – co-working business case drafted</li> <li>• Q4 2020 – Q4 2021 - working with our investment advisors to undertake programme of work</li> </ul>	On track	This work will form part of the commercial pipeline overseen by the Commercial Income and Investment Board. The council continues to investigate the feasibility of an Innovation and Incubation Hub in the town as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, which will help to support start ups.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Work with ‘anchor’ institutions in Hertfordshire to maximise the benefits of economic growth for local residents		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Focus on employment and skills for our local residents	We will ensure that there is a specific focus within our Economic Revive and Thrive Strategy on employment and skills, aligning this where possible to low carbon industries and new technologies, so that we can support our residents to play a full role in the UK’s economic revival	Thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 17 July – Develop Strategy tender brief</li> <li>✓ 27 July – Strategy Tender documents finalised</li> <li>✓ 21 August – Strategy Tender closes</li> <li>✓ 10 September – Strategy Supplier interviews</li> <li>✓ 15 September – Strategy Supplier confirmed</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Wenta support programme proposal approved by Renewal Coordination Board</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Completion of this activity is partly subject to the final Economic Growth Strategy which will provide the council with a clear medium to long term focus on supporting employment and skills for local residents.</p> <p>The Wenta programme continues to support businesses and owners that</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 October – Strategy development initiation</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Wenta contract agreed</li> <li>✓ 8 October – initial stakeholder engagement event</li> <li>✓ 16 October – Wenta press release and launch</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Design survey and questions</li> <li>✓ 19 October – Deliver survey and survey live period</li> <li>✓ 02 November – Review survey results</li> <li>✓ 06 November – commence 1:1 stakeholder meetings</li> <li>✓ November – KickStart jobs scheme launched</li> <li>✓ 27 November – definition of strategic priorities</li> <li>✓ 17 December - Careers Fair Q&amp;A session</li> <li>✓ 23 December – first draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 21 January – second draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ February – National Apprenticeship Week</li> <li>✓ 09 February – review by Mayor/Cllrs</li> <li>✓ 11 February – review by One Watford for Business</li> <li>✓ 18 February – review by Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ 09 March – Watford Careers Fair</li> <li>✓ 15 March – final strategy received</li> <li>✓ 18 March – final review by WBC Steering Committee</li> <li>✓ 27 April – Leadership Board update</li> <li>✓ 30 April – Publishable docs and detailed working Action Plan complete</li> <li>• 07 June – Review and sign-off by Cabinet</li> </ul>		<p>require new skills, knowledge, information and advice to ensure that their business can recover in more resilient ways, or grow.</p> <p>Local organisations and employers continue to be engaged and involved with the KickStart scheme.</p>
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			July – strategy published		
Ensure that the local economy works as a component of the wider local community	We will ensure that community value is positioned as a clear driver within the Economic Plan so that economic growth benefits local residents	Thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 17 July – Develop tender brief</li> <li>✓ 27 July – Tender documents finalised</li> <li>✓ 21 August – Tender closes</li> <li>✓ 10 September – Supplier interviews</li> <li>✓ 15 September – Supplier confirmed</li> <li>✓ 8 October - initial stakeholder engagement event</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Design survey and questions</li> <li>✓ 19 October – Deliver survey and survey live period</li> <li>✓ 02 November – Review survey results</li> <li>✓ 06 November – commence 1:1 stakeholder meetings</li> <li>✓ November – KickStart jobs scheme launched</li> <li>✓ 27 November – definition of strategic priorities</li> <li>✓ 17 December - Careers Fair Q&amp;A session</li> <li>✓ 23 December – first draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 21 January – second draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 09 February – review by Mayor/Cllrs</li> <li>✓ 11 February – review by One Watford for Business</li> <li>✓ 18 February – review by Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ 15 March – final strategy received</li> <li>✓ 18 March – final review by WBC Steering Committee</li> <li>✓ 27 April – Leadership Board update</li> <li>✓ 30 April – Publishable docs and detailed working Action Plan complete</li> <li>• 7 June – Review and sign-off by Cabinet</li> <li>• July – strategy published</li> </ul>	On track	Completion of this activity will be subject to the final Economic Growth Strategy and delivery plan and will ensure that the council’s medium to long term plan focuses on the benefits of economic growth for local residents.

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure there is the appropriate office space, industrial facilities and infrastructure to attract and retain businesses in the borough		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure that the Local Plan aligns with the council's ambition to attract and retain businesses in Watford	We will use our Local Plan and town-specific planning frameworks to ensure that we achieve the right mix of development across the town, matched with appropriate facilities and infrastructure	Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ January – Consultation underway</li> <li>✓ January – Draft Local Plan to Cabinet</li> <li>• Q3 2021 – Submission to Planning Inspectorate</li> <li>• Q1 2022 – Local Plan adopted (anticipated)</li> </ul>	On track	On track with new timetable which will ensure that the town is developed in a sustainable way over the next 30 years.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure there is the appropriate office space, industrial facilities and infrastructure to attract and retain businesses in the borough		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Work with developers and utilise our strong brand for Watford to attract business to the town	We will create a strong brand position for Watford as a place to do business and will work with developers to champion and support planning applications to attract and retain businesses within the town	Thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ February – brief developed</li> <li>✓ 8 February – BID ballot successful</li> <li>✓ February – 'Visit Watford' project commenced with third party</li> <li>✓ 24 February – Brand audit</li> <li>✓ March – cross-ref with draft Economic Growth Strategy</li> <li>✓ April – Stakeholder workshops</li> <li>• May - Undertake work</li> <li>• June – Agree brand positioning/ vision</li> </ul>	On track	Work continues to establish a strong brand identify which will set Watford apart and attract visitors to the Town supporting our local businesses as we emerge from Covid-19 restrictions. A number of stakeholder workshops have been undertaking with our Brand Coordinating Group and work to develop the final brand is now underway.
Ensure that our local transport infrastructure is sustainable	We will develop a sustainable Transport Strategy which ensures that Watford has the right infrastructure to support the local economy and to attract and retain businesses within the town	Sustainable Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September '20 – Board, PID and task developed</li> <li>✓ November '20 - Develop detailed project plan milestones</li> <li>✓ November '20 - Public engagement on vision</li> </ul>	On track	Current initiatives of Sustainable Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan are contributing to progression of WBC being named a

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May '21 - draft strategy presented to Portfolio Holders</li> <li>Sept '21 – Final Strategy approved</li> </ul>		<p>Sustainable Travel Town by HCC.</p> <p>Successful engagement to inform the Strategy with a draft underway and final sign off expected in September 2021.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Deliver transport improvements to support the retention of businesses and a flourishing town centre					
Champion proposals for a mass-rapid Transport Scheme for Watford	Working closely with Hertfordshire Growth Board, we will seek to secure the best mass rapid transport system for our town, providing a further option for our residents, visitors and commuters to travel sustainably whilst encouraging investment in Watford	Mass Rapid Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021/22 – HGB bid to Govt for funding *</li> <li>2021/22 – Feasibility Studies contribution to engaging consultation</li> </ul> <p><i>* dependent on opportunity</i></p>	On track	High Level early stage discussions held with HCC and their consultants. Further milestones will be developed as the project progresses.
Continue to investigate opportunities to create a low Carbon Transport Hub	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	Low Carbon Transport Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engagement with HCC colleagues and BID initiated</li> <li>Q1 2021/22 – Land acquisition discussions and proposals</li> <li>Q1 2021/22 – Consider funding options to progress</li> </ul>	On track	In line with the newly formed Sustainable Transport Board and the council's ongoing commitment to invest in sustainable transport for Watford residents, high level plans are continuing to investigate opportunities to create a low-carbon transport hub in Watford Town Centre. Key milestones in place over the next period which will help to establish future works.

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Deliver transport improvements to support the retention of businesses and a flourishing town centre					
Improve the cycling and walking network in Watford	We will work with Hertfordshire County Council and our cycling community on our Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan to improve the cycling and walking network across our town so more people choose to cycle and walk around the town. This will promote health and wellbeing, encourage residents and visitors to enjoy our public places and ensure that our town becomes greener and cleaner for everyone both now and for years to come.	LCWIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 April – LCWIP stage 3 &amp; 4 - Cycling Network and Walking Network review</li> <li>17 May – LCWIP Stage 5 - prioritisation complete</li> <li>Q2/Q3 2021 – Undertake public consultation</li> <li>03 September – Stage 6 - final joint LCWIP document</li> </ul>	Planning underway	Decided that Watford continues with Stage 4 and 5 elements separately from Three Rivers and both to catch up for the final LCWIP document (Stage 6) and present as a joint piece. This has impacted delivery although not to a major extent.
Implement a demand responsive transport scheme	We will launch the ArrivaClick on-demand bus service for Watford and make sure it links effectively with all of Watford's greener ways to travel so that we can reduce congestion, improve air quality and provide another sustainable but innovative way for our residents, visitors and commuters to get around	Demand Responsive Transport	✓ 1 July – ArrivaClick demand responsive transport system launched	Complete	Service launched and has responded to the impact of the pandemic over the last year. As the lockdown eases the service will respond as demand grows.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Deliver transport improvements to support the retention of businesses and a flourishing town centre					
Position Watford as a Sustainable Travel Town	We will consult with a range of stakeholders to develop a sustainable Transport Strategy. The Strategy will position Watford as a sustainable travel town that promotes greener	Sustainable Travel Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September – Board, PID and task developed</li> <li>✓ November - Develop detailed project plan milestones</li> </ul>	Planning underway	Comprehensive nature of Sustainable Transport Strategy and need for a thorough analysis of the draft strategy has resulted in

	<p>ways to travel, reduces congestion, helps people to make healthy travel choices and stimulates economic growth.</p>		<p>✓ 30 November - Public engagement on vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2021 – draft strategy presented to Portfolio Holders</li> <li>• Consultation Summer 2021</li> <li>• September/October – Final Strategy approved</li> </ul>		<p>review of key milestones with final sign-off now expected in September, rather than July. Current initiatives of Sustainable Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan are contributing to WBC being named a Sustainable Travel Town by HCC.</p>
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### 3. Work Stream 3: Organisational Renewal

#### 3.1 Key achievements over this period

- Town Hall Covid-safe measures implemented and regularly updated for staff, members and customers in accordance with government regulations and guidance.
- Mental Health Awareness Training for all managers arranged and completed. Health and Wellbeing guidance published via newsletters and website content has been regularly reviewed and updated in line with any changes to Government guidelines to ensure that staff continue to have access to the most beneficial info.
- HR Policies and HR Guidance documentation regularly reviewed, updated and published in line with any changes to Government guidelines to ensure that Council staff continue to be well informed and protected.
- Following the results of the Council's Covid-19 staff survey, an action plan designed to respond to the needs of Council staff affected by the virus has been successfully implemented, although this will remain ongoing as the incident continues to develop.
- Improved website content and customer journeys for key areas such as Coronavirus, parks and sports delivered. This has seen an improvement in customer satisfaction with our website and improved benchmarking of website satisfaction compared with other Councils using the GovMetric platform to measure satisfaction.
- New digitised processes delivered for services including: waste and recycling, community protection, Mayor's small grants, planning and Covid grants. Where digitised processes are available online through Firmstep, these are achieving 80% self-service take-up.
- Good progress made with the new Printmail solution which is now live across all services.

#### 3.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/ Initial activity outlined complete	15
	On track/revisit at end of each lockdown	14
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influence	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Restore service delivery to agreed business as usual in a planned way		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Open the Town Hall safely for our staff	We will ensure that the Town Hall and associated council buildings are able to open for staff whilst adhering to social distancing requirements by implementing a one-way system around the building, introducing a desk booking policy, increasing our cleaning regime and opening the buildings up in a gradual way, whilst ensuring that staff who wish and can continue to work from home are supported to do so	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 29 June – Town Hall reopened to staff.</li> <li>✓ 30 June - Risk Assessments for all staff complete and actions put in place; risk assessments also available for members</li> <li>✓ 1 September - Additional space (desk and meeting rooms) available for use as and when it is required including for councillors</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> </ul>	On track	The Town Hall was reopened to staff in July 2020 with social distancing and other Covid-safe measures having been put in place. Measures have subsequently been adapted and evolved to respond to further government guidance and lockdowns. Work is ongoing to safely re-open and enable a safe return to the Town Hall in accordance with the Government's roadmap and the council's future plans for agile / flexible working
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Restore service delivery to agreed business as usual in a planned way		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Open the Town Hall safely for our customers	We will ensure that the Town Hall and associated council buildings are able to open for customers whilst adhering to social distancing requirements by implementing a customer booking system, changing the physical layout of our Customer Service Centre and ensuring that all customers understand our new guidelines for a face-to-face service. We will also ensure that as many services as possible are available online.	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 August - Approach for opening Face-to-face drop-in service developed and agreed</li> <li>✓ 2 September - Drop-in service at Town Hall resumes in line with new approach</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> <li>• 12 April - Town Hall safely reopened to customers</li> </ul>	On track	The face-to-face service at the Town Hall opened in September 2020 with reduced opening hours. This stopped in November 2020 in response to the lockdown measures. Face-to-face services re-opened on 12 April 2021 in line with the Government roadmap with reduced opening hours and a new operating model focussed on supporting customers to self-serve, or where required to

					attend a pre-booked face-to-face appointment. This approach will be reviewed and adapted if necessary over the coming months.
Review our policies	We will review and amend our council policies to reflect the new 'business as usual' in terms of social distancing and smarter working	HR Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 31 July - HRBPs to review impact of social distancing on other policies and identify work required</li> <li>✓ 31 August - All interim policies / guidelines finalised and agreed</li> <li>✓ 17 July Interim Smarter Working Policy agreed by OLT and SLT</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov't roadmap published</li> </ul>	Work ongoing as the situation evolves	All relevant policies reviewed and updated to ensure staff are kept safe and informed. To be kept under review in line with changes to government guidelines
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Restore service delivery to agreed business as usual in a planned way		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Identify the projects underway at the time Covid-19 disruption commenced	We will collate a comprehensive singular view of corporate projects across the council so that we can ensure that we understand the overall impact of Covid-19 and reprioritise against the Council Plan	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 20 July - Centralised and consolidated list of corporate projects in agreement with Heads of Service created</li> <li>✓ 13 October – Service Planning process complete and Delivery Plan in place for delivery of Council Plan</li> </ul>	Complete	Corporate projects list created and impact of Covid-19 on delivery identified. This has fed into the Service Planning progress for 2020-22, covering the period of the approved Delivery Plan ensuring that the Council's strategic direction is translated into 'action on the ground' to benefit Watford residents.
Understand the impact of the pandemic on our projects	We will understand the impact of the pandemic on our projects by reviewing the timelines, budgets and alignment to the Council Plan or Renewal Plan	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 20 July - Centralised and consolidated list of corporate projects in</li> </ul>	Complete	Corporate projects list created and impact of Covid-19 on delivery identified. This has fed into the Service Planning progress

			<p>agreement with Heads of Service created</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 24 July - Mapping exercise of all corporate projects against the Council Delivery Plan</li> <li>✓ 15 February – Gov’t roadmap published</li> </ul>		<p>for 2020-22, covering the period of the approved Delivery Plan ensuring that the Council’s strategic direction is translated into ‘action on the ground’ to benefit Watford residents. Robust change control mechanisms implemented through the EPMO to address any subsequent impact of Covid restrictions.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Restore service delivery to agreed business as usual in a planned way		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Prepare for a second wave of the virus	We will review and amend our Business Continuity Plans, including in relation to our approach for a second wave of the virus and subsequent lockdown so that we can respond as effectively as possible to support our residents and businesses	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 31 July – Updated business continuity plans template agreed and instructions for review and second lockdown scenario planning circulated to all Heads of Service</li> <li>✓ 31 August – All Business Continuity Plans updated</li> </ul>	Complete	All Business Continuity Plans updated with specific reference to Covid-19, incorporating the lessons learnt from the first wave and ensured that the Council was able to respond as effectively as possible for residents during the second and third lockdowns.
Improve our internal decision making so that it is agile and effective	We will review our existing governance structure and the way in which we internally make decisions to ensure that we are able to make decisions in an agile but considered way, in light of the changing situation introduced by Covid-19	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 30 July – Internal engagement relating to governance processes complete</li> <li>✓ 1 September - New internal governance structure in place and corporate communications circulated</li> </ul>	Complete	New internal governance approach in place from September 2020 to ensure robust but agile decision making and a clear and renewed focus, particularly on the strategic direction of the organisation.
Ensure that we have sufficient resourcing to deliver on our	We will review our existing resource to ensure that we are able to deliver on the commitments of our Council Plan and	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 13 August – Approach to Service Planning agreed</li> </ul>	Complete	All corporate Service Plans completed. This will ensure delivery of the Council Plan over

Renewal Plan commitments	Renewal Plan, alongside continuing to deliver the usual services provided to our resident and businesses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 September – First draft of Service Plan submitted</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Cross service dependencies identified</li> <li>✓ 1 October – All Service Plans peer reviewed</li> <li>✓ 13 October – Service Plans reviewed and signed off by Leadership Board</li> </ul>		the next 18 month period with clear ownership of commitments and plans in place for all of the activities which will benefit residents and businesses across the town. This will be reviewed through the refresh of the plan
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Restore service delivery to agreed business as usual in a planned way		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand what was good about our response to Covid-19 and what we would do differently in the future	We will ensure that all our incident response cells are closed or transitioned to business as usual in a way which allows us to review what worked well in each cell and where we could apply learning in the future, particularly to help us prepare for a second wave of the virus	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 July - Report to SLT on lessons learnt from first wave response</li> <li>✓ 14 September - Report to LB on second wave preparations</li> <li>✓ 21 September - Report to PHs on second wave preparations</li> </ul>	Complete	Lessons learnt from across the incident management cells reviewed and consolidated, feeding in second wave preparedness plans enabling the Council to respond as effectively as possible through the second and third national local lockdowns.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure the consistent application of appropriate policies during the renewal phase		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Modernise our working practices	We will modernise our working practices through the revision of policies, including updating our smart working policy and the production of social distancing policy to ensure ongoing alignment with government restrictions and guidelines	Re mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 31 July - HRBPs to review impact of social distancing on other policies and identify work required</li> <li>✓ 31 August - All interim policies / guidelines finalised and agreed</li> </ul>	On track	All relevant policies reviewed and updated to ensure staff are kept safe and informed. To be kept under review in line with changes to government guidelines. The long-term modernisation of council working practices will form part of the Transformation

			✓ 17 July - Interim Smarter Working Policy agreed by OLT and SLT		project within the Town Hall Quarter programme.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure the consistent application of appropriate policies during the renewal phase		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure alignment in staff contracts with the new ways of working	We will review contracts for our new members of staff to ensure alignment with our new ways of working and policies, ensuring that these help us to deliver our democratic obligations and to respond as effectively as possible in a second wave of the virus	HR Policy	✓ 31 July - Contracts of employment for new starters reviewed and amended	On track	All Council contracts now reflect working from home requirements, ensuring that the current working arrangements are clearly conveyed to potential future employees in line with the organisation's obligations. The long-term modernisation of Council working practices will form part of the Transformation project within the Town Hall Quarter programme.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure the management of backlogs, identifying any extra resources required to restore normal services		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand the impact of Covid-19 on our projects	We will review the timelines for all of our projects and understand the impact of Covid-19, including ensuring that all projects continue to support the delivery of our Council Plan and priorities for our residents	Re-mobilisation	✓ 20 July - Centralised and consolidated list of corporate projects in agreement with Heads of Service created ✓ 24 July - Mapping exercise of all corporate projects against the Council Delivery Plan	Complete  May be required additionally at end of any further lockdowns	Corporate projects list created and impact of Covid-19 on delivery identified. This has fed into the Service Planning progress for 2020-22, covering the period of the approved Delivery Plan ensuring that the Council's strategic direction is translated into 'action on the ground' to benefit Watford residents. Robust change control mechanisms implemented through the EPMO to address any

					subsequent impact of Covid restrictions.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure the management of backlogs, identifying any extra resources required to restore normal services		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Update our Service Plans	We will ensure that our individual Service Plans are updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19 response and our new Council Plan so that we are focused on delivering our priorities for our residents and businesses	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 13 August – Approach to Service Planning agreed</li> <li>✓ 2 September – First draft of Service Plan submitted</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Cross service dependencies identified</li> <li>✓ 1 October – All Service Plans peer reviewed</li> <li>✓ 13 October – Service Plans reviewed and signed off by Leadership Board</li> </ul>	Complete	All corporate Service Plans completed, subject to final approval from Portfolio Holders, with a clear link from the Council Plan and the Delivery Plan, ensuring that the Council's strategic direction is translated into 'action on the ground' to benefit Watford residents.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Identify employee support needs and vulnerabilities and respond to these		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Support our front line colleagues	We will review and understand the needs of our colleagues working on the front line, including providing therapy and other support where necessary	Staff wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 April - Bereavement training by Cruise Bereavement was provided to front line staff</li> <li>✓ 13 July - Cari, an on-line AI health and wellbeing service launched across the Council</li> <li>✓ 13 October - Mental Health Training Awareness for Managers agreed. Training to be undertaken on-line with Remploy and dates are currently being sourced.</li> </ul>	On track	In addition to continuous updates to our Health and Wellbeing information pages, a staff Survey on Wellbeing continues to be sent out regularly to ensure that the Council continues to react to staff need. Specialist support has been provided to front line staff and a whole range of tools are now available to staff, including online new employee assistance programme for staff to have access to health and wellbeing

			✓ 11 December - Mental Health Awareness Training for all managers arranged and completed.		advice. Furthermore, in addition to the newly expended Mental Health First Aiders team, all Council Managers have undergone mental health training awareness. The support provided will be monitored as the incident develops.
Protect all colleagues	Whilst most staff will continue to work from home in the short term, in preparation for a return to office working, we will carry out risk assessments for all colleagues in advance of their return to the Town Hall (including specific risk assessments which recognise the increased risk of the virus for our BAME colleagues). We will review any requirements identified and ensure that these are actioned to provide a safe and supportive working environment	Staff wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 17 March – Initial risk assessments undertaken for all staff</li> <li>✓ 15 July – Additional risk assessments, including for BAME colleagues, relating to the return to the Town Hall</li> <li>✓ 25 September – Further risk assessments undertaken following changes to government guidance</li> </ul>	On track	Risk assessments carried out for all staff, including specific assessments for those staff recognised as being at higher risk from the virus. These have recently been reassessed in light of changing government guidance. Risk assessments were also rolled out to Members to ensure that they were able to return to the Town Hall safely and that the Council meets its legal obligations. Risk assessments will continue to be updated as the incident and restrictions change.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Identify employee support needs and vulnerabilities and respond to these		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand the impact of caring responsibilities on our colleagues	We will understand and remain mindful of the impact of caring responsibilities on colleagues and ensure that clear and supportive policies are in place for this	Staff wellbeing	✓ 17 March – Risk assessment carried out for all staff, specifically identifying those with caring responsibilities so this could form part of the consideration in relation to advice.	Complete	The impact of school age children remaining at home over an extended period, as well as those staff members with other caring responsibilities, was recognised immediately following the announcement of lockdown. This

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 March – Clear guidance provided to all Managers on the agreed approach for staff working from home with school age children or caring responsibilities.</li> <li>✓ 25 March – Watford Health and You updated to provide specific information to assist those working from home with caring responsibilities</li> </ul>		was specifically identified in the risk assessments undertaken by all staff and clear guidance was provided to all Managers in relation to the need for flexibility and to make local arrangements as appropriate. This was reinforced by a number of corporate communications, including 'In Touch' directly from the Managing Director.
Understand the impact of covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of staff	We will remain in regular contact with staff, understand the difficulties they have faced and provide support through 'Watford Health and You' for them depending on their own circumstances. We will develop and train more Mental Health First Aiders and Mental Health Champions to further support staff.	Staff wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 July - Meeting with current Mental Health Champions and First Aiders to review situation</li> <li>✓ 31 July - Advertise and actively seek additional Mental Health Champions and First Aiders</li> <li>✓ 30 September - Required training complete for all Mental Health Champions and First Aiders</li> </ul>	On track	WBC now has 14 Mental Health First Aiders, including a councillor representative and eight Mental Health Champions. As part of the council commitment to focus on mental health, the number of Mental Health first aiders and champions has grown in the past months and all Managers have received specific guidance in relation to keeping in touch with staff. Staff sickness absences have reached a very low level during the last year.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Identify employee support needs and vulnerabilities and respond to these		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure our policies are updated	We will review all our policies to reflect the new 'business as usual' in terms of social distancing, new starters and smart working	HR Policy	All required policies updated but situation to be kept under constant review	On track	All relevant policies reviewed and updated to ensure staff are kept safe and informed. To be kept under review in line with changes to government guidelines.

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Ensure that employees are supported, that efforts are acknowledged and that effective communications with employees is maintained					
Communicate effectively with colleagues	We will produce an employee Communications Plan with includes details of effective tools to ensure that key messages are cascaded whilst allowing our colleagues to feedback in a meaningful way	Staff wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 22 July - Additional online support for staff to be launched</li> <li>✓ 18 September - Draft Renewals Comms Plan produced</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Renewals Comms Plan approved by Renewal Coordination Board</li> </ul>	On track	Road to Renewal Communications Plan developed by the Communications and Engagement team. Fortnightly review of Communications Plan to ensure ongoing delivery and progress. This includes details of key tools to ensure the accurate cascade of corporate messages and has also formed part of the internal governance review.
Engage with colleagues on the future of the council	We will continue to engage regularly with the Staff Ambassador Group, including in relation to our Renewal Plan and wider Council Plan	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 June - Staff Ambassador Group review of Council Plan and Renewal Plan</li> <li>✓ 24 June – Final version takes into account feedback provided directly from staff.</li> </ul>	On track	Staff Ambassador Group continue to meet on a regular basis, with representatives from services across the council. Updates on delivery continue to be provided via regular In Touch updates from the Managing Director. This work will also form part of the Transformation project of the Town Hall Quarter programme as the council's long-term needs are considered.
Recognise the contribution of our colleagues to our response to Covid-19	We will evolve our Team Recognition Strategy to recognise the impact of Covid-19, including recognition for staff beyond June 2020	HR Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 3 August - Paper to SLT on Team Recognition Strategy, payments for 19/20 and decision for future delivery</li> <li>✓ Team Recognition Strategy discussed and agreed at LB on 28 Sept</li> </ul>	Complete	Team Recognition Strategy pilot review has been completed. It has been agreed that the budget for this year will be retained to reflect the additional effort of staff from across the organisation in supporting the Council's Covid-

			✓ 30 September – Final decision for budget for scheme to be retained for 20/21 to recognise staff efforts throughout Covid		19 response, but that a new scheme would not be pursued and the budget would not be transferred to the next financial year, but used as Covid savings to mitigate the pressure on budgets.
OBJECTIVE Capture learning through a process of debriefing, both single and multi-agency		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Understand what was good about our response to Covid-19 and what we would do differently in the future	We will ensure that all our incident response cells are closed or transitioned to business as usual in a way which allows us to review what worked well in each cell and where we could apply learning in the future, particularly to help us prepare for a second wave of the virus	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 July - Report to SLT on lessons learnt from first wave response</li> <li>✓ 14 September - Report to LB on second wave preparations</li> <li>✓ 21 September - Report to PHs on second wave preparations</li> </ul>	Complete	Lessons learnt from across the incident management cells reviewed and consolidated, feeding in second wave preparedness plans, ensuring that the council was able to respond as effectively as possible during the second and third national lockdowns.
OBJECTIVE Capture learning through a process of debriefing, both single and multi-agency		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Learn from other organisations to inform our future plans	We will work with our Local Resilience Forum partners to compare our approach to Covid-19 with what others have done in relation to incident to enable us to respond to a future incident and support our residents and businesses as effectively as possible	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ongoing link between the council's Resilience Officer and the Local Resilience Forum maintained. Council representatives remains on operational and strategic response groups to ensure ongoing alignment and opportunity for shared learning.</li> </ul>	Complete	Ongoing engagement between the Council and Local Resilience Forum via the HCC Resilience Officer. This allowed us to adapt and learn from our first response to the incident.
React to feedback from colleagues	We will report back on our recent Covid-19 staff survey with a clear action plan for	Re-mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 13 October - LB reviewed and agreed the Action Plan.</li> </ul>	Complete	Covid-19 staff survey undertaken to understand the impact on

	delivery, based on the feedback received from our colleagues		✓ 31 October – Action plan to be implemented		staff. A responsive Action Plan has now been implemented as BAU and action to be taken as needed.
Prepare for a second wave of the virus	Based on the above, we will review and amend our Business Continuity Plans, including in relation to our approach for a second wave or spikes in the infection rate of the virus and subsequent lockdown so that we can respond as effectively as possible to support our residents and businesses	Resilience	✓ 31 July – Updated business continuity plans template agreed and instructions for review and second lockdown scenario planning circulated to all Heads of Service ✓ 31 August – All Business Continuity Plans updated	Complete	All Business Continuity Plans updated with specific reference to Covid-19, incorporating the lessons learnt from the first wave which ensured that the council were able to react as effectively as possible during the second and third national lockdowns.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure that learning is used to identify opportunities and inform future changes, such as modernisation and transformation, linking to the existing programme		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure our values and behaviours reflect what we have learnt about the council during the Covid-19 response	We will refresh and co-design the council's expected behaviours and values over the next period to ensure that we have a supported workforce who work collectively for our residents and businesses	Re-mobilisation	No longer being undertaken as part of the Road to Renewal plan. Please see Appendix B for the full update on the delivery of the Organisational Development Strategy.	On track	Please see the Organisational Development update as per Appendix B.
Introduce a new Organisational Development approach	We will establish a people-focused and valuable Organisational Development Strategy so that we develop our staff and support them to feel satisfied and motivated to provide the best service for Watford's residents and businesses	Re-mobilisation	✓ 6 July – Organisational Development Strategy approved by Cabinet	Complete	An Organisational Development Strategy has been developed and is being delivered separately from the Road to Renewal plan due to being out of its scope. Please see Appendix B.
Digitise our processes	We will ensure that all council processes utilise existing council technology, such as the council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system so that	Digitisation	Digitisation relating to Community Protection and Revenues and Benefits remains outstanding. However, the teams'	Delivery re-profiled	Progress has been made on digitising priority Waste and Recycling, Community Protection, Covid support and Mayor's

	customers, whether residents or businesses, can transact with the council at a time that suits them, not just during the traditional opening hours		focus remain on Covid-19 response. Milestones therefore remain uncertain at the current time, meaning that the timeline for this commitment will require re-profiling.		Grants processes. Where a process is supported by a Firmstep form we are seeing 80% of interactions delivered via online self-service.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure that learning is used to identify opportunities and inform future changes, such as modernisation and transformation, linking to the existing programme		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand the impact of Covid-19 on our requirements for office space	Learning from the experience of Covid-19 and the extended period of colleagues working from home, we will understand what the needs of the council and colleagues are in the future, using learning from our Covid-19 staff survey to enhance feasibility work already underway in relation to the High Street North and Cultural Hub	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 July – Engagement with senior leaders from across the organisation to understand the impact of Covid-19 and future requirements for the organisation</li> <li>✓ 16 September – Potential Town Hall requirements fed directly into the Town Hall Quarter Business Case</li> </ul>	On track	Learning from Covid-19 captured, and engagement undertaken with all service heads to understand future requirements which have now fed into the wider Town Hall Quarter Programme.
Implement a new digital print and post solution	We will complete the implementation of the council's digital print and post solution to ensure a reduced need for on-site activities and to ensure that our internal processes are as efficient as possible, allowing us to focus on providing services for our residents and businesses	Digitisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 October – Test Benefits printmail</li> <li>✓ 16 October – Agree go-live subject to successful testing. Anticipate go-live w/c 19 October</li> <li>✓ 30 November - Go-live of Benefits Printmail solution completed for TRDC</li> <li>✓ 7 January - Go-live of Benefits Printmail solution completed for WBC</li> </ul>	Complete	Revenues printmail went live on 19 April. The project is now complete. With reduced in-house print requirements work has been undertaken to reduce the corporate MFD fleet. Additional reductions to the production print hardware will be realised going forward.

			✓ Revenues Printmail now live		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure that there are appropriate commemorative events for colleagues/Members		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Recognise the contribution made by our staff during the pandemic	Engaging with our Staff Ambassador Group we will identify appropriate and valuable events for colleagues which recognise their contribution to our Covid-19 response in supporting our town, residents and businesses, whilst respecting those who have been personally impacted by the virus and the subsequent lockdown	Staff wellbeing	No milestones in place as yet	Delivery re-profiled	There have been a number of initiatives for staff to ensure that their effort and dedication throughout the Covid-19 response has been recognised. This includes financial recognition where appropriate. Events will be planned when the government roadmap and pandemic situation allows.

## **4. Work stream 4: Financial Resilience**

### **4.1 Key achievements over period Q4 2020/21 (Jan – Mar)**

- 2021/22 Budget agreed at Council 26 January.
- Multiple businesses supported via Local Restrictions Grant, Additional Restrictions Grant, Special Christmas Support Payments ('wet-led' pubs) and Home Business Support Grant – *see section 2.1*.
- Fixed ground rent of £2m pa/£500k pq remains forthcoming from Atria (former intu) extension.
- Confirmed we will receive c.£420k from Atria in May as part of the John Lewis site premium - also forecast to receive an (unspecified) amount from the variable rent clause in last 2 quarters of the 2021/22 financial year.
- Practical completion of Croxley Business Park 'Building 1' 29 March - now under offer and freeholder consent being sought.
- Croxley Business Park - Cabinet approval received for delegated authority to secure deal with a tenant.
- £0.2m received from Herts County Council to extend the self-isolation payments of £500 per person.
- WBC took back operation of the Colosseum.
- Leisure Recovery Fund award of £181k received from Sport England to support leisure centre management contract.
- Additional £235k payment received from Government (Tranche 4) and £471k announced as part of the Local Authority settlement for first quarter of 2021/22.
- Additional Restrictions Grant scheme used to cover Market Trader rent for January-April.
- Agreed deed of variation for SLM (leisure) contract and leisure centres set to reopen from 12 April.
- Temporary NHS 'lateral flow' testing facility opened above Wilko's – all operational costs to be met by HCC – 12 month operational licence awarded from 6 April.
- Negotiations opened with Legal & General on consenting to a proposed Lidl on part of the Woodside car park site and to receive an agreed capital sum (tbc) to vary the lease in return.

## 4.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/Initial activity outlined complete	6
	On track/revisit during further lockdowns	3
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influence	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>9</b>

OBJECTIVE		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Quantify the budgetary impact of the pandemic on the council and identify and pursue external opportunities for funding					
Understand the impact of Covid-19 on our finances	We will ensure that the financial impact of Covid-19 is fully identified and recorded, including what we have spent responding to the crisis and the impact on our income	Financial Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 25 July – SLM Leisure Centres reopened</li> <li>✓ 31 July – Receipt of Gov't LA support package funds</li> <li>✓ 11 September – Market income impact paper</li> <li>✓ 30 September – Completed &amp; Submitted Gov't's Income Guarantee scheme forms to reclaim quarter 2 income</li> <li>✓ 2 October – Colosseum contract end notification letter</li> </ul>	Complete	2021/22 Budget agreed at Council 26 January

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 October – Review first month’s accounts since leisure centre reopening</li> <li>✓ 02 December – Leisure centres able to reopen following 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown</li> <li>✓ 16 December – expression of interest for DCMS Leisure Fund submitted for 75% loss of SLM income</li> <li>✓ 16 December – Tranche 4 of Gov’t funding received (£235k)</li> <li>✓ 24 December – Colosseum contract ended</li> <li>✓ January 2021 – budget setting process completed</li> </ul>		
Understand the wider impact of Covid-19 on the public sector	We will contribute fully locally and nationally to the work being carried out to identify the impact on district councils and lobby for additional resources to support our Road to Renewal Plan whilst continuing to deliver services for our residents and businesses	Financial Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 16 December – Impact of Covid recognised in Local Gov’t settlement</li> </ul>	Initial activity outlined completed but work ongoing	<p>Ongoing contribution to cross authority groups and to learn from others/share best practice. Where grants and additional financial support is available, bids have been made in order to support the council’s financial resilience. This includes for the High Street reopening scheme and for support for rough sleepers.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan. This will include work with neighbouring boroughs and the County Council.</p>

<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Quantify the budgetary impact of the pandemic on the council and identify and pursue external opportunities for funding		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Manage the impact of Covid-19 on our finances over the coming years	We will identify the longer term impact on the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and develop a strategy to close the gap so that we can continue to focus on our priorities	Investment Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 14 July - Budget reset discussions at Council</li> <li>✓ 10 September - Budget strategy review at Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service</li> <li>✓ 23 September - Review base budget adjustments</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Growth bids and savings proposals for 2021/22 due from services</li> <li>✓ November - assessment of growth bids and savings proposals in preparation for the budget setting cycle.</li> <li>✓ January 2021 – 2021/22 budget setting process completed</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Ongoing management of budgets and planning for impact of Covid on future financial years. This will continue as the incident develops and the final impact of Covid-19 remains uncertain at the current time.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Model the effects of disrupted revenue streams		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand the impact of the Covid-19 on our income	We will continue to identify and model the impact of the pandemic in relation to the council's property investment revenue streams and work with the council's investment managers to identify any action that can be taken to minimise risks and reduce the impact	Investment Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 July - Compare latest quarter rent/investment collections with pre-Covid quarters</li> <li>✓ 10 August – outstanding market rent letters sent</li> <li>✓ 15 August - Intu rent receipt not received</li> <li>✓ 7 September – Regus rent extension agreed at PIB</li> </ul>	On track	<p>A number of new leases and 're-gears' to the council's advantage agreed at Croxley Business Park. Refurbishments have also been agreed and on track.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of quarterly rent receipts and comparison with previous quarters. Ongoing successful management of the council's investment portfolio will</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 20 October - LSH quarterly update report to Commercial Income and Investment Board</li> <li>✓ 1 November – Additional occupation of CBP premises</li> <li>✓ 30 November – Ongoing monitoring of intu rent income</li> <li>✓ 02 December - Cabinet approval for the refurbishment of the Croxley Business park units</li> <li>✓ 16 December – CIIB approved Croxley Business park refurb</li> <li>✓ Croxley Business Park 'Building 1' practical completed 29 Mar</li> <li>✓ Croxley Business Park - Cabinet approval received for delegated authority to secure deal with a tenant.</li> <li>• Croxley Business Park - pursue freeholder consent.</li> <li>• April-May 2021 – ongoing management of portfolio</li> </ul>		allow budget to be focused on the delivery of the priorities outlined in the Council Plan.
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Ensure the prompt administration of national and local financial schemes during the renewal phase		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Manage financial hardship schemes	We will continue to ensure that national and local financial hardship schemes support those residents and businesses most affected by the crisis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 17 July - SME &amp; Retail Hospitality &amp; Leisure grant allocated and closed</li> <li>✓ 2 September - Discretionary Fund allocated and closed</li> <li>✓ December – Local Restrictions Grant and Additional Restrictions Grant opened</li> </ul>	Complete during first, second & third lockdowns. Required additionally throughout	Local Restrictions Grants (LRGs) allocated to local businesses, supporting the local economy during 3 <sup>rd</sup> lockdown - £ 6,098,915 paid out across 4,493 applications to end March 2021. Additional Restrictions Grant available to support more

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ December - Special Christmas Support Pymt provided to 'wet-led' pubs</li> <li>✓ 05 January – new grant announced to support Retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with one-off payment</li> <li>✓ January – agreed process/policy and allocated new grant to businesses</li> <li>✓ February – Market trader rent covered to end April</li> <li>• April – review of ARG by Cabinet/ Portfolio Holders and agree approach for remaining monies</li> <li>• April – agree process/policy and allocate new Roadmap One-Off Restart Grant</li> </ul>	any future lockdowns	<p>businesses during additional restrictions - £1.9m pot allocated to Watford - £1.06m used to date, of which £560,000 paid in direct grants to 137 businesses. Taxi drivers and market traders also received financial support. A further £977k will be available to support businesses in Watford if we can account for spend against the original allocation by 30 June 2021.</p> <p>. New Roadmap One-Off Restart Grant announced to help get businesses back up and running as lockdown eases. Ongoing need to review and progress as announced by Gov't.</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Develop draft local approaches to mitigating budget challenges		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the council by continuing to actively manage our budgets	We will develop options for reduced spend and increased borrowing to ensure that our budget can continue to support services provided to our residents. This budget management will include ensuring that grants are spent on time and that any projected spend impacted by the virus is re-profiled so that it supports our priorities	Manage the gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 14 July - Budget reset discussions at Council</li> <li>✓ 10 September - Budget strategy review at Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service</li> <li>✓ 23 September - Review base budget adjustments</li> <li>✓ 12 October – Growth bids and savings proposals for 2021/22 due from services</li> <li>✓ November - Assessment of growth bids and savings proposal</li> </ul>	Initial activity completed but work ongoing	<p>Ongoing management of budgets and planning for impact of Covid on future financial years. However, this will need to continue as the town emerges from future lockdowns or tiered restrictions.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan.</p>

			<p>underway in preparation for the budget setting cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 14 December – PH’s discussed budgets</li> <li>✓ January 2021 – Financial Scrutiny Cmte to review budgets (BAU)</li> </ul>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> Assess the impacts of supply chain disruption (including key contractors)		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Understand the impact of supply chain disruption on our projects and contracts (whether as a result of a second wave of the virus or EU Exit)	We will review all existing projects and contracts to assess the potential impact of supply chain disruption and other Covid-19 impacts so that we can continue to deliver the best possible service to our residents and businesses	Contractor Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 30 September – EU Exit and supply chain strategy shared with key Finance stakeholders</li> <li>✓ 07 October – Work stream risk register updated with EU Exit risk to supply chains</li> <li>✓ 02 November – final review undertaken by all services in relation to the impact on services as a result of EU Exit.</li> <li>✓ 31 December – transition period ended</li> </ul>	Initial activity outlined complete	<p>EU Exit and Supply Chain Strategy successfully completed. All Business Continuity Plans updated with specific reference to Covid-19, incorporating the lessons learnt from the first wave which allowed to council to respond as effectively as possible for residents in the second and third wave. Further review held to ascertain specific impact of the EU Exit in relation to supply chains. Post transition deal achieved with EU.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan.</p>
Support our local businesses to work with the council	We will review how the council works with local SMEs with a view to improving the opportunities for local SMEs to supply goods and services to the council so that we play an active role in supporting our local economy	Contractor resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 August – Interim Town Centre Development Manager starts</li> <li>✓ 28 September - BID Business Plan reviewed</li> <li>✓ October – Visit Watford consultant review complete</li> </ul>	Initial activity outlined complete	<p>Ensuring that the Town Centre is well positioned for the challenges of the future.</p> <p>Revised governance structure from January when Town Centre Strategy Group is introduced.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 October – Registered interest with the High Street Taskforce for expert advice and support</li> <li>✓ October – Market strategy reviewed – speciality markets explored</li> <li>✓ 02 November - commence developing Town Centre plan</li> <li>✓ 02 December – new Town Centre Operations and Strategy Groups agreed</li> <li>✓ January/February – inaugural Town Centre Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ January/February – employ Marketing Officer</li> </ul>		<p><i>Track via Business &amp; Economy work stream going forward</i></p>
<p>Ensure that our business continuity plans are realistic about the impact of supply chain disruption (whether as a result of a second wave of the virus or EU Exit)</p>	<p>We will review our business continuity plans to ensure that there is clarity on how services will be delivered in the event of contractor or supply chain failure and to ensure that we can continue to deliver the best possible service to our residents and businesses</p>	<p>Contractor resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 September – Business Continuity Plans updated</li> <li>✓ 02 November – final review undertaken by all services in relation to the impact on services as a result of EU Exit.</li> <li>✓ 31 December – transition period ended and deal agreed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Initial activity outlined complete</b></p>	<p>EU Exit and Supply Chain Strategy successfully completed. All Business Continuity Plans updated with specific reference to Covid-19, incorporating the lessons learnt from the first wave which allowed the council to respond as effectively as possible for residents. Further review held to ascertain specific impact of the EU Exit in relation to supply chains.</p> <p>Further activities to be determined through review and next iteration of renewal plan.</p>