

## Watford Borough Council Road to Renewal Plan Update

### Work Stream 1: Community

#### 1.1 Key achievements over this period

- A number of events were held during the second half this year to Commemorate Watford's response as well as provide opportunities for reflection to Covid-19 including the first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day during the summer and The 'Lights of Love' - Peace Hospice event held at the end of November 2021.
- 'Unsung Heroes' awards were successfully launched through 2021 to highlight the many people, organisations and charities in the town who quietly go about transforming people's lives all year round and make an incredible contribution to our communities during the pandemic and beyond.
- 16<sup>th</sup> Audentior awards launched on 30 September 21 with nominations now closed and the awards planned for 4 March 2022.
- Location of the Public Arts memorial at Watford General Hospital, to mark the pandemic has been agreed with the official opening being planned for August 2022.
- In December 2021 the COVID-19 vaccination programme reached its 1st anniversary with 28,262 Watford residents vaccinated with booster (data from 09 December 21). We are vaccinating a wider range of people in more venues than ever before and more than 50,000 boosters now issued in Watfor..
- 'Super Sunday' vaccination clinics held at Vicarage road this summer with approximately 3,000 vaccinations completed.
- Community Fund launched. Up until October 2021, 19 grants were approved and distributed via W3RT, totalling £78,716. Applications continue to be received and assessed.
- An additional £150k has been secured through a Health Protection Board bid for the Covid Community Grant fund with eligibility extended to Parent and Teacher Associations' and grant applications increased from £5k to £7.5k. Recent and planned fundraising activities will seek to continue to increase the value of this fund.
- During Q1 and Q2 of the financial year 2021-2022, W3RT completed 85 instances of support involving voluntary organisations active in Watford.
- From July 2021, this quarter saw the unlocking and lifting of lockdown restrictions which allowed voluntary section organisations to resume in person activities and some traditional fundraising activities.

- WBC are fully engaged with a cross county group, “Staying Connected” responsible for sourcing recycled digital devices into the scheme as well as providing digital training for residents through our partnership with W3RT. A soft launch of the Digital Isolation scheme was completed during July 2021.

## 1.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/Initial activity outlined complete	2
	On track/revisit at end of each lockdown	19
	Planning underway	2
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>

DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE				
Celebrate our diversity, heritage and culture to make Watford a place for people to succeed from childhood to old age				
Commitment				
Commemorate Watford’s response to Covid-19				
What we want to achieve	How we will do it	Key Milestones	‘BRAG’ Rating	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with our community to provide opportunities for reflection and commemoration of Covid-19.</li> <li>We will acknowledge the sacrifice made by key workers on behalf of the town, its residents and businesses.</li> <li>We will bring together and thank our community for the</li> </ul>	As part of the Queens’ Jubilee Green Canopy, we will establish a ring of trees in the Cassiobury Park around the Bandstand which can also act as a place of reflection for residents of all backgrounds and cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quote confirmed for planting ring of trees in the Cassiobury Park around the Bandstand.</li> <li>• Winter 2021-22 - Plant and officially open the ring of trees in the Cassiobury Park around the Bandstand Queens’ Jubilee Green Canopy.</li> </ul>	On track	<p><i>The Queen’s Green Canopy</i> is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to “Plant a Tree for the Jubilee”.</p> <p>The Ring of Trees in Cassiobury Park will consist of cherry trees and final planning is underway to</p>

<p>town's collective response to Covid-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will recognise the community spirit across the town during the pandemic.</li> <li>We will collectively reflect on the personal losses of the town's citizens.</li> </ul>				<p>establish a final plan, targeting planting in mid- January 22.</p>
	<p>Work with our community to design and install a Public Arts memorial to mark the pandemic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Artist selected with workshops and focus groups held.</li> <li>✓ Location of memorial agreed. Area outside of hospital, Vicarage Road entrance, chosen by artist and agreed with hospital.</li> <li>• Early May 22 - Finalise design of Public Arts memorial to mark the pandemic</li> <li>• June 22 - Submit planning application for Public Arts memorial</li> <li>• August 22- Hold Public Arts Memorial opening event.</li> </ul>	<p>Delivery reprofiled</p>	<p>The artist was chosen from a number of applicants via shortlisting with follow up interview completed.</p> <p>Workshops and focus groups delivered with Cathartic CIC and Peace Hospice, with their exhibition of collected works throughout pandemic tying into the sculpture. Grievance group, for those who lost someone during the pandemic, engaged as well.</p> <p>In conjunction with Watford General Hospital, it has been agreed that the memorial should be re-planned for the summer of 2022, given they are still dealing with the impact of the pandemic</p>
	<p>Partake annually in NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day, marking the service and sacrifice of all frontline workers who have served the town throughout the pandemic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 05 July 21 - the first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day successfully took place.</li> <li>• Planning to be agreed for 2022 event.</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>The first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day took place on Monday July 5 and involved a service of reflection, the NHS flag being flown on the council building, and the offices being lit blue in the evening.</p> <p>This event was an important moment to mark the service and sacrifice of the NHS and health workers, as well the amazing</p>

				community spirit of the town to come together to help each other.
	Launch and continue to promote our Community Hero scheme, recognising those who have contributed to the town's response to Covid-19 and those who are integral to supporting our renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 'Unsung Heroes' were recognised throughout the year with the final winners announced recently.</li> <li>✓ Nominees collated for Audentior awards.</li> <li>• 04 March 22 – Hold Audentior awards</li> </ul>	On track	The 'Unsung Heroes' initiative is no longer accepting nominations, however, Watford's 16th Audentior Awards will be recognising local people and organisations who are actively making Watford a better place to live and work in. The awards ceremony takes place on Friday 4 March 2022 at Watford Colosseum.
	Support the Watford BID 'above & beyond' awards to recognise the significant contribution made by individuals to support our town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 - WBC has extended an offer of support once BID are ready to plan these awards.</li> <li>• Await contact from BID</li> </ul>	Planning underway	<p>WBC has contacted the BID who previously held Service Excellence Awards (February/March), however this year they switched this to an October Ball to reconnect businesses following the lockdowns.</p> <p>BID has yet to confirm how they may approach future Awards but the council have confirmed their commitment to support.</p>
	Lead a town-wide remembrance event to bring our town together and recognise those residents who have list their lives throughout the pandemic and the families and communities that have been impacted by Covid-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 29 Nov 21, Lights of Love - Peace Hospice event held.</li> <li>• Plan and hold 2022 event.</li> </ul>	On track	Work underway to plan for a combined town-wide remembrance event in 2022 which can link in with Imagine Watford and the centenary celebrations.

<b>Commitment</b>				
Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing, including those with mental health issues				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will ensure that support is in place for residents whose mental health has been impacted by Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns.</li> <li>We will support our residents who are asked to self-isolate</li> <li>We will assist residents to make informed decisions about Covid-19 vaccinations</li> <li>We will continue to practically support the vaccine roll out across the town</li> <li>We will work to reduce health inequalities</li> </ul>	<p>Provide support for residents whose mental health has been impacted by Covid-19 through the Watford Healthy Hub and other measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Nov 21 - first re-launched Healthy Hub successfully. This event will be reviewed with lessons learned carried forward into future events in 2022.</li> <li>✓ GP's and Pharmacies within the Holywell Ward have been identified to support the Healthy Hub in 2022</li> <li>• Secure funding for the healthy hub beyond March 2022.</li> <li>• Progress Mental Health coordinator vacancy prior to end of March 2022.</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Holywell, Vicarage and Central Watford will be the focus of future Healthy Hubs with these events subject to ongoing government advice relating to latest variants.</p> <p>Future mental health coordinator role will focus on creating a portal as a one stop shop for all mental health issues.</p>
	<p>Continue to effectively and efficiently administer test and trace payments to those residents asked to self-isolate and provide targeted education to the community in order to address non-observance of self-isolation rules</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dedicated resources in the benefits team have continued to successfully administer track and trace payments throughout the year.</li> <li>• Confirm funding has been extended beyond March 2022.</li> </ul>	On track	<p>The team continues to monitor new and emerging policies, situations or changes from central government.</p> <p>The council continue to administer the payment schemes as required by central government and marshals continue to carry out home visits where required.</p>
	<p>Ensure accurate information on Covid vaccinations reaches all areas of our community by continuing to work closely with faith groups, community leaders and others across the town to relieve any winter pressure on our health and care services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly Public Health Cell report details progress against this deliverable</li> <li>✓ Community engagement leads have visited schools with strong barriers to vaccination to encourage partnership working ahead of the next Healthy Hub</li> <li>✓ 23 November 21 - Winter Health Guide released with advice on how to stay well this winter</li> <li>✓ First meeting held with W3RT to strengthen partnership working.</li> </ul>	On track	<p>The Public Health Cell has continued to support and facilitate the implementation of alternate ways to meet business, community and faith needs linking to the business support and wider communications and engagement undertaken by the council.</p>

	Facilitate the vaccination effort, including the booster jab programme, by utilising space at the Town Hall as a vaccination centre and continue to arrange walk in vaccination centres for residents of all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Town Hall has been successfully utilised as a vaccination centre including as a walk in centre throughout the period.</li> <li>✓ Successful 'Super Sunday' vaccination clinics held at Vicarage Road in June and August 2021</li> <li>• Booster programme being rolled out and promoted.</li> </ul>	On track	The vaccination effort is now a year old and we are vaccinating a wider range of people in more venues than ever before. The Town Hall continues to be used as a vaccination centre with 50,000 booster jabs given by January 2021.
	Collaboratively work with internal and external stakeholders to reduce health inequalities in relation to vaccine uptake, and engage with disadvantaged groups within our communities to address any issues that may be barriers to them being vaccinated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continuation of free transport within Watford to all vaccination clinics, working with our Arriva click partner.</li> <li>• 31 Dec 21 - Deliver Community Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• 31 March 22 - produce a final report with recommendations</li> </ul>	On track	The Health Inequalities project is focused on delivering a community outreach programme that focuses on conversations and providing accurate information about health and wellbeing services, with a specific focus on the vaccine, including door knocking, targeted communications, vaccinations clinics (including pop-ups) and housebound vaccinations.
	Continue our ambitious events programme, including utilising green spaces across the borough, to promote the use of award winning parks and contribute towards the health and wellbeing of our residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Summer 21 - 'summer of fun' events successfully held including Cassiobury Park bandstand events, Alzheimer's Memory walk and Race for Life.</li> <li>✓ Draft Events calendar for 2022 has been created.</li> <li>• Approve 2022 events calendar and track completion of targeted events</li> </ul>	On track	All proposed 2022 events, where health and wellbeing are linked to parks, including proposed summer bandstand events, are being reviewed so that these key events will be tracked as part of this plan
	Work with the County Council, Hertfordshire district and borough councils and other key partners, such as the Hertfordshire Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for this is being led by Head of Community and Environmental Services and the Portfolio Holder – plan to be agreed by end March 2022.</li> </ul>	Planning underway	Meetings planned with key partners in January 2022 to start to drive the shape of the shared health and wellbeing strategy.

	Board, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Police and NHS to develop a shared health and wellbeing strategy that will benefit all of our residents			
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<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>				
Work even more closely with the voluntary and community sector, to build a resilient community where people support each other				
<b>Commitment</b>				
Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for those in need				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will support charities and the voluntary sector impacted by Covid-19.</li> <li>We will strengthen our relationship with the voluntary and charitable sector.</li> <li>We will support the voluntary sector to remain sustainable</li> <li>We will harness the positive joint working across the sector and with the council throughout Covid-19.</li> </ul>	Support the Voluntary and Community Sector to build financial resilience and diversify income streams alongside traditional fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jan 22 - Budget council to meet to set annual budget.</li> <li>✓ Diversifying funding forms part of the Voluntary Sector Strategy and associated action plan</li> </ul>	On track	The Commissioning Framework (2019 – 2023) provides a strategic structure to take us forward and build a foundation for future resilience and financial sustainability. All commissioned organisations are required to provide evidence on how they are working to achieve future longer term financial sustainability.
	Work with Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) to create a proactive action plan to better engage with all parts of the Voluntary and Community Sector, particularly those that support underrepresented communities (including those from ethnic minority communities and those smaller groups that may not have their own physical spaces) to enhance community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Action plan is being tracked with W3RT through quarterly report submissions and contract meetings with the most recent series covering the period of (covering July - Sept 2021)</li> <li>✓ This activity is captured under the Voluntary Sector Strategy and associated action plan (Information Sharing)</li> <li>✓ Sept 21 - a virtual BAME Engagement event took place with 40 attendees from across Hertfordshire to highlight CVS support for the voluntary sector</li> </ul>	On track	The short term action plan resulting from the BAME event is published on the W3RT website, tracking delivery of immediate actions up until March/April 2022 when the 'you said, we did' update will be provided. Initial meetings have already been held with faith and cultural community leaders including attendance at Watford Interfaith Pilgrimage along with One Vision

		<p>and to discuss how CVS support can be more assessable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 22- Complete immediate actions for short term plan from BAME event.</li> <li>• Jan 22 - Create medium / long term action plan from BAME evaluation event.</li> </ul>		<p>remembrance event to meet with local faith leaders in attendance.</p>
	<p>Establish the Community Fund as a lasting pillar of support for Watford's voluntary sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aug 21 - Community Fund launched.</li> <li>✓ Up until Oct 21 - 19 grants were approved and distributed via W3RT, totalling £78,716.</li> <li>• Up until March 22 - Continue to receive and manage grants requests for this financial year</li> <li>✓ Nov 21 - An additional £150k was secured towards the Covid Community grant fund with eligibility extended to PTA's and the application threshold increased from £5k to £7.5k.</li> <li>✓ Cassiobury fireworks event successfully held. This was a key fundraising opportunity event for the Community Fund contributing @£5,900.00 to the fund (50% of collections).</li> <li>✓ Other funding opportunities have been confirmed as the Mayor's business event, 15th December 2021 and Annual Community Fund Quiz, 18th February 2022.</li> <li>• Jan 22 - Schedule remaining fundraising events including Golf Day.</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>In response to the unprecedented pandemic Watford Borough Council (WBC) established a Community Fund which is now administered by W3RT. There are two schemes :</p> <p><b>Watford Charity Support Grant</b> - There is a total of £97,500 available for charitable organisations based in Watford, with a maximum of £5k per organisation during the financial year 2021-22.</p> <p>This grant has been provided by Watford Borough Council for charitable organisations that have either closed or have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic</p> <p><b>Watford Covid Community Grant Fund-</b> There is a total of £95,000 available for charitable organisations based in Watford with a maximum of £7,500 per organisation during the financial year 2021-22.</p> <p>These funds are to support charitable groups with adapting to meet the needs arising from the</p>



				coronavirus pandemic
	Deliver our Voluntary Sector Strategy and associated action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CVS liaison meeting was held in October 21.</li> <li>• From January 2022, the Voluntary Sector action plan will be subject to BRAG reporting against the 24 point action plan.</li> <li>• April 22 - W3RT submit half year report to check progress against Voluntary Sector Strategy action plan</li> </ul>	On track	<p>There are 24 recommendations within the Voluntary Sector Strategy relating to Post-Covid Recovery and Renewal, Engaging Volunteers, Diversifying Funding and Information Sharing – much of this work is already reported elsewhere in this report.</p> <p>Items already delivered include tackling digital isolation, launched in the summer of 2021 with most up to date progress reported in the below section of this report; The W3RT launch of its new app Golden Volunteers to engage volunteers and creation of a proactive action plan to better engage with all parts of the Voluntary and Community Sector, particularly those that support underrepresented communities including those from BAME communities.</p>
	Building on the investment in our Colosseum and our focused support throughout the pandemic on our cultural organisations, engage with our Voluntary and Community Sector to ensure that their space requirements are understood and we work with them to find appropriate space across all of the community and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ This deliverable forms part of THQ, Culture project.</li> <li>• January 22 - Commence property list collation and review previous survey for appropriate questions</li> <li>• February 22 - CFRB to approve 'use list' and survey questions</li> <li>• March 22 - Commence survey</li> <li>• May 22 - Complete gap analysis</li> </ul>	On track	A Community Asset Assessment Review which will look at cultural space requirements across the town has been launched. Key partners, such as The Pump House and Watford Palace Theatre, will be engaged to understand what space they have to accommodate the Voluntary and Community sector.

	cultural assets so that they can best serve the residents of Watford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 22 - Report to CFRB (in parallel with Community and Operational Property Management Framework being taken to Cabinet)</li> </ul>		
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<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>				
Make sure our council is a caring and collaborative organisation that puts what matters to people at the heart of everything we do				
<b>Commitment</b>				
Address digital isolation				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will retain the strong volunteer network established during Covid-19 to help address the issue of digital isolation</li> <li>We will support those residents who do not have the skills to use digital devices</li> <li>We will support our residents from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not have access to digital devices</li> <li>We will ensure that information and advice in relation to the support is available</li> <li>We will ensure that we promote and champion digital device recycling</li> </ul>	Work with partners/volunteers/community groups to provide access to devices and digital training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ WBC are fully engaged with a cross county group, "Staying Connected" responsible for sourcing recycled digital devices into the scheme as well as providing digital training for residents through our partnership with W3RT.</li> <li>✓ Soft launch of this initiative completed in partnership with W3RT during the summer of 2021.</li> <li>✓ Regular reporting is now available from W3RT stating the effectiveness of soft launch to date including monthly KPI's</li> <li>• Jan 22 - Draft and launch communications plan to publicise this initiative by January 22</li> <li>• 31 March 22 - Hold formal evaluation of Digital Isolation initiative.</li> </ul>	On track	<p>This initiative was represented at the re launched healthy hub event in November 2021, with a plan to continue attendance into January events although these have now been postponed owing to rising Omicron cases.</p> <p>The communications plan will focus on promoting the scheme with businesses and residents as well as driving further volunteers who would like to become Digital Champions.</p>
	Develop a training programme to train volunteers to go out into the community and support people with using a range of digital devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Training was designed and completed in line with soft launch of this initiative in partnership with W3RT during the summer of 2021.</li> </ul>	Complete	Recent targets have been established in agreement with W3RT, with the goal of securing 40 champions by March 2023.

	including iPad, laptop, smart phone			
	Source digital devices for distribution to the community to support the delivery of getting people digitally connected	<p>✓ Promoted by W3RT in October 21 to request donations of laptops and tablets to drop off points in the borough.</p>	On track	<p>Donations of laptops and tablets can be made at the Holywell Community Centre, Monday – Friday between 9-5pm and at Watford Town Hall on Mondays between 9am-3pm, Wednesdays between 11am-5pm and Fridays between 9am and 3pm. Donations have been publicised through the W3RT webpages along with recently established regular social media posts. This social media activity has already resulted in some donations being received. There are currently 150 devices available to be used with this scheme.</p>
	Help people to become digitally connected online by training them to use apps for grocery shopping and connecting with friends and family	<p>✓ Digital Champions identified to date have been training people in these categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing monthly KPI's will help us measure ongoing success.</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Training of new volunteers is ongoing as they are on boarded through W3RT.</p> <p>Digital champions will be encouraged through the communications plan.</p>
	Support the development of a centralised database detailing resources available to support individuals	<p>✓ Database has been created and is owned by W3RT to detail resources (Digital Champions)</p>	Complete	<p>Potential beneficiaries are referred to W3RT using an online referral form. Eligibility is assessed against how equipment and/or the support of a W3RT Digital Champion will assist their health and wellbeing with services such as accessing online services such as</p>

				online shopping, attending medical appointments online, attending online classes/activities and communicating with friends and family through Zoom/Skype.
	Encourage businesses and organisations to contribute towards digital device recycling	✓ Promoted by W3RT in October 21 to request donations of laptops and tablets to drop off points in the borough.	On track	The recycling of devices will continue be promoted as another strand of the council's commitment to sustainability.

## Work Stream 2: Business and Economy

### 2.1 Key achievements over this period

- Watford Business Growth Grant launched to provide grants of up to £10,000, expert advice and support to local businesses of between 5 and 20 employees impacted by COVID-19 - 18 businesses have been awarded a total of £103,000 to date \*
- Watford Charity Support Grants of up to £5,000 awarded to registered charities and Community Interest Companies based in Watford who have been severely impacted by COVID-19, to help them resume, develop or innovate their business operations - 16 charities have shared a total of £61,508 to date \*
- Cultural Business Support and Development Grant launched to businesses, collective groups and individuals in the cultural and creative sectors affected by COVID-19, in partnership with Watford Palace Theatre. Grants of up to £5,000, or £10,000 in exceptional circumstances, is providing funding to access training, purchase equipment and software and fund specialist consultancy - 5 businesses have been awarded a total of £9,405 to date \*
- Young Entrepreneurs programme launched to support young people seeking to set up a business, in partnership with the University of Hertfordshire. The programme attracts 18 to 30 year olds, who due to COVID-19 have been particularly vulnerable to being made redundant, face challenges entering the labour market for the first time, or do not meet the criteria for other business support programmes due to their age profile. The programme is already providing young people with practical business knowledge, advice and support
- The Council 'match-funded' the BID Business Improvement Grants to enable BID members to apply for grants of up to £2,000 to help make improvements to their business, enhance the customer experience and enable more BID businesses to access grants
- A number of other projects have been agreed and allocated funding - Watford Sustainable Business (carbon reduction), Digital and Light Tough Business Support, Young Entrepreneurs – Hard to Reach, Wider Watford Business Improvement Grants – and will be launched in the next quarter to assist a broader range of cohorts across Watford
- The investment in a proactive telemarketing campaign and additional online promotion campaigns is significantly increasing the number of businesses that benefit from the grant funding programmes available, boosting the uptake of grant schemes, directly engaging with our business community and improving business intelligence to better inform future Council interventions
- Launched a programme of business engagement events to promote the ARG programmes, wider business support offers, valuable networking opportunities, business mentoring and shared learning of best practice
- Watford Market revamped and rebranded creating 'anchor' retailers, refurbished units, improved signage and providing opportunities for local businesses and diversity of offering to the public, including a unit to promote local artists
- Successful programme of Market 'Lates' events continued to assist in the revamping of the Market, broaden its appeal and showcase the improvements made – concept proved and a programme of seasonal events is now taking place
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system continues to be rolled out being used to better manage the Council's ongoing relationships and support for businesses

*\* as at 15 December 2021*

- Second successful ‘Generation Watford’ careers fair held 9 November 2021 to continue the 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
- The Council has employed a number of KickStart ‘apprentices’ to help young people at risk of long term unemployment get into the job market by providing government funded six-month job placements
- The Town Centre Operations Group has successfully changed focus to community and operational management of the Town Centre – safer/cleaner/greener streets, monitoring footfall, events, charity donation points, night-time economy, monitoring of void units. A project working group was introduced and is addressing issues around St Mary’s churchyard, with a plan for to improve the area in both the short and long term in line with public realm works in 2022
- Town Centre Framework development process launched to engage residents, businesses, stakeholders on the future of town to design a town centre that works for everyone. Economic and urban design analysis commenced to develop the design code and supplementary planning documents for the town centre, building on policies in the new Local Plan and incorporating key elements such as the transport, public realm, green/blue infrastructure, neighbourhood character, culture and heritage
- Footfall continued to be encouraging with many people using the open space around the town to meet – night-time economy attracting visitors to Watford
- Return of multiple public events including fireworks, Remembrance and Christmas lights switch-on events
- Vacant unit trend stable in the town and a number of new outlets continue to open

## 2.2 Work Stream BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in work stream
	Completed/Initial activity outlined complete	1
	On track/revisit at end of each lockdown	47
	Planning underway	1
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>49</b>

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>				
Develop a Thriving and Productive Economy				
<b>Objective</b>				
Maximise the benefits of working across Hertfordshire to help shape our economic future and respond to current challenges				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will drive the economic recovery of Watford</li> <li>We will implement our Economic Growth Strategy plan</li> <li>We will support businesses to survive, restart and recover</li> <li>We will deliver commercial space</li> <li>We will create opportunities for businesses</li> <li>We will attract investment to Watford</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's work spaces</li> </ul>	<p>Maximise the benefits of working with Hertfordshire wide organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Young Entrepreneurs (YE) programme launched with University of Herts</li> <li>✓ November 21 – BID Grant match funding approved</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Approve wider BID improvement project</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Initial 'bootcamp'</li> <li>• January 22 – Panel to review YE applications and award 20 grants</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Young Entrepreneurs programme launched 17 November 2021 to 59 young people (58% of whom identified as female), providing support to help local young entrepreneurs progress business opportunities. Online 'bootcamp' provided to all attendees, with view to awarding 20 grants to Watford's YEs, with ongoing networking support to develop their business</p>
	<p>Maximise the benefits from Watford's position at the heart of Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) in South West Hertfordshire by aligning planning and other policies. This will ensure Watford benefits from and supports growth in other economic areas</p>	<p>Council continues to leverage its position to maximise the benefits to Watford from ongoing work on the:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopt new Local Plan</li> <li>• town centre strategy and planning framework</li> <li>• development of the Town Hall Quarter</li> <li>• development of Watford Business Park</li> <li>• regeneration of Watford Junction</li> <li>• <a href="#">Herts Essex Rapid Transport (HERT)</a> project consultation</li> <li>• extension of the Watford Hospital redevelopment</li> <li>• Community Renewal fund discussions with Stevenage</li> <li>• Skills and Employment plan</li> <li>• Sustainable Transport strategy</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Watford's Local plan is aligned to other Herts authorities in the FEMA to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- underpin planning policies that make the best use of land we have, deliver the homes we need, and reflect the character of Watford</li> <li>- promote public transport, walking and cycling, car clubs</li> <li>- protect strategic transport routes</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector Action Plan</li> <li>• Digital Infrastructure of the town.</li> </ul>		
	Maximise the benefits from the work of the Herts Growth Board	Continuing to develop business case for potential intervention to redevelop WJ and its environment.	On track	Continuing to develop business case for potential intervention to redevelop WJ and its environment.
	Respond to challenges to the economy and community presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership as part of a cross Hertfordshire response and taking advantage of any funding opportunities, building upon the recent application for Levelling Up funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 31 August 21 – Watford Charity Support Grants awarded to local registered charities and Community Interest Companies</li> <li>✓ 22 September 21 – Watford Business Growth Grant launched to support local businesses of between 5 and 20 employees</li> <li>✓ 30 September 21 – Cultural Business Support and Development Grant launched to businesses, collective groups and individuals in the cultural and creative sectors</li> <li>✓ December 21 - Cultural Business Support and Development Grant closed</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Engage Local Authority neighbours on proposed ‘Fit to Bid’ supply chain grant</li> <li>• December 21 – Launch Sustainable Business Programme (Low Carbon) support grants</li> <li>• January 22– Launch Light Touch Support Programme</li> <li>• January 22 – Explore Legal impacts of working with partner LAs on ‘Fit to Bid’</li> <li>• February 22 – Explore new opportunities for surplus funding, or</li> </ul>	On track	<p>A large range of businesses impacted by the pandemic continue to be supported. 16 charities have shared a total of £61,508 from the Watford Charity Support Grant to date.</p> <p>18 businesses have been awarded a total of £103,000 from the Watford Business Growth Grant to date and criteria has recently been expanded – a further 5 are being reviewed for approval.</p> <p>5 businesses have been awarded a total of £9,405 from the Cultural Business Support and Development Grant to date with a further 25 being reviewed for approval.</p> <p>Anticipating that 75-100 businesses will take part in the light touch support programme.</p> <p>New ARG (Pot 3) grants created to support those local businesses impacted directly by Omicron variant e.g. hospitality, leisure, retail, arts, accommodation sectors.</p>



		<p>revert to scale-up existing schemes – RCB report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 22 – Complete spending of ARG ‘top-up’ funding</li> </ul>		
	Respond to opportunities and challenges presented by Brexit and the new regulatory framework working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 22 – Post-Brexit import changes to impact businesses in Watford</li> <li>July 22 – Post-Brexit import checks commence</li> </ul>	On track	Public Health continue to support local businesses re import/export. Jan 2022 Brexit changes not impacted on Watford businesses too much - many were ahead of game, but monitoring. Focus will now be on July 2022 changes.
	Respond to the Climate Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Deadline for expressions of interest for Low Carbon Business Grant</li> <li>✓ October 21 – Evaluate proposals and appoint a specialist</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Agree terms and sign contract</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Add Watford Sustainable Business Programme to website</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Transfer funding to contractor</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Launch Low Carbon Business Grants</li> </ul>	On track	Local company Sustainable X appointed as contractor to develop, plan and introduce a programme to support local businesses make their businesses more sustainable and support the council’s climate emergency work. Further milestones have been captured as part of the council’s Sustainability Strategy and are reported within Appendix A

<b>Objective</b>				
Supporting Businesses To Thrive				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘BRAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Continue to develop effective engagement channels with businesses, so that we as a Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Complete review of business engagement</li> </ul>	On track	CRM system continues to be rolled out and is part of BAU activity allowing the council to engage

	can champion their interests in Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, support networking and channel funding and signpost support to businesses where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Re-establish links with key accounts and meetings taking place</li> <li>• December 21 – One Watford for Business forum</li> </ul>		more widely with businesses across the town. Additional experienced resource from Jan '22 to support further engagement.
	Continue to support businesses throughout the duration of the remainder of the pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ July 21 – Allocate initial Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)</li> <li>✓ September 21 – Unlock additional ARG funding</li> <li>✓ October 21 – Close Taxi grant scheme</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Launch BID Business Improvement Grants</li> <li>• December 21 – Close Travel with Confidence scheme</li> <li>• January 22 – Launch 'wider Watford' Business Improvement Grants to enable those outside of the BID to benefit from funding</li> <li>• January 22 – Review additional requests due to variant of concern and assess ARG surplus funds</li> </ul>	On track	The initial Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) allocated to Watford of £2.8m has been successfully allocated to a wide-ranging business support programme – this enabled additional funding of £0.98m to be 'unlocked' and allocated.  Council match-funded BID-led Business Improvement Grants which will provide improvements to local high streets and neighbourhood centres.
	Extend business engagement to encourage firms to make use of innovation funds and business support offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October '21 – Commence telemarketing to boost reach and take-up of grants</li> <li>✓ November '21 – Programme of business engagement events to promote the ARG programmes, wider business support offers, valuable networking opportunities, business mentoring and shared learning of best practice</li> </ul>	On track	Telemarketing has significantly boosted expressions of interest in innovation funds and business support offers. An enhanced internal Economic Development team has ensured that there is greater awareness within our business community. Additional experienced resource from Jan '22 to support further engagement.
	Use our account management system to help us understand the issues facing our largest employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Fully implement Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system e.g. Business Rate data</li> </ul>	Complete	CRM system now available and part of BAU activity. This provides a greater understanding of the

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Re-establish links with key accounts and meetings taking place</li> </ul>		<p>challenges our businesses face, so that we can support them to remain in the borough contributing to the local economy and employing local people.</p> <p>Key Account meetings have been taking place and they are now a core Economic Development BAU activity.</p>
	Provide the conditions and assets, such as workspace, to encourage innovative companies to base and development themselves in Watford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Watford Business Park re-tender</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Approve contractor for Watford Business Park at Cabinet</li> <li>• January 22 – Commence site meetings with contractor</li> <li>• January 22 – Liaise with Environment Agency re water treatment strategy</li> <li>• February 22 – Commence Watford Business Park works</li> </ul>	On track	Watford Business Park works now underway . Main contract re-tendering has resulted in the appointment of a principal contractor for a fixed sum in accordance with the appraisal budget.
	Support start-ups and scale-ups, including through the development of an Innovation and Incubation Hub as part of the Town Hall Quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Prove demand for Hub</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Cabinet review of overall Town Hall Quarter Business Case</li> <li>• January 22 – Sign off Project Initiation Document for phase 2</li> <li>• April 22 – Submit final LEP bid</li> </ul>	On track	Overall Town Hall and Colosseum Business Case signed off at Cabinet, opening them up for further community use, including an Innovation and Incubation Hub to support start-up businesses, as part our ambitious Town Hall Quarter programme and will see the future of both buildings secured and brought up to modern standards, whilst enhancing their sustainability and respecting their heritage. Outline LEP Bid submitted.

	Review and relaunch Watford's Inward Investment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Present 'Future of Visit Watford' findings Leadership Board</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence research of Business</li> <li>• January 22 - Review feedback on existing Inward Investment plan and feed in to new strategy</li> </ul>	On track	This will be linked to the town's place brand and narrative, which will launch in 2022. Key strand will be shaping the town's inward investment offer to business.
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<b>Objective</b>				
Ensure Employment space and Investment opportunities are available				
What we want to achieve	How we will do it	Key Milestones	'BRAG' Rating	Update
<i>Cont.</i>	Protect existing employment space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 - Clarendon Road - initial mapping of properties and occupiers</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Complete Watford Business Park re-tender</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Watford Business Park re-tender</li> <li>✓ December 21 – approve contractor for Watford Business Park at Cabinet</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Implement property database module of CRM system and public property search interface on a WBC website</li> <li>• January 22 – Supplement Clarendon Road mapping with planning consents, pre-applications and lease breaks</li> <li>• January 22 – Implement property module of CRM system and public property search interface on a WBC website</li> <li>• February 22 – Follow up on near-term lease breaks to ascertain future plans</li> <li>• February 22 – Commence Watford Business Park works</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Officer discussions ongoing re empty properties/pre-applications on Clarendon Road.</p> <p>Demolition works at Watford Business Park completed. Main contract re-tendering has resulted in the appointment of a principal contractor for a fixed sum in accordance with the appraisal budget.</p>

	Work with developers to establish demand for high quality office space	<p>Clarendon Road Investment and Delivery Plan:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q1 2022 - define and progress actions needed to establish the plan</li> <li>• Q2 2022 - draft plan</li> <li>• Q3 2022/Q4 2023 – finalise plan</li> </ul> <p>Inward Investment Plan:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q1 2022 - define and progress actions needed to establish the plan</li> <li>• Q2 2022 - draft plan</li> <li>• Q3 2022/Q4 2023 – finalise plan</li> </ul>	On track	Both due to commence early 2022
	Deliver new employment space in the district, including a new Innovation and Incubation Hub as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 21 – Prove demand for Hub</li> <li>• November 21 – Strategic Outline Case Funding application drafted</li> <li>• November 21 – Informal review and feedback from LEP</li> <li>• December 21 – Cabinet approval of overall Town Hall Quarter Business Case</li> <li>• December 21 – LEP funding application, Strategic Outline Case revisions and final draft submission</li> <li>• January 22 – Sign off phase 2 Project Initiation Document for Innovation and Incubation Hub</li> <li>• April 22 – Submit final LEP bid</li> </ul>	On track	Part of overall the Town Hall Quarter programme, with a strong focus on enterprise and new business, recognising that Watford is a great location for entrepreneurs and growing businesses and seeking to provide a new hub for start-ups and new enterprises. Work is now underway to develop the Innovation and Incubation hub to support start-up businesses across the borough.
	Work with the NHS to understand the timescale and support the extension of the Watford Hospital redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August 21 – Agree Outline planning</li> <li>✓ August 21 – Agree S106 Heads of Terms</li> <li>• January 22 – HCC to sign S106</li> <li>• March 22 – Practical completion of multi-storey car park</li> </ul>	On track	West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust has published their proposals for Watford Hospital. Our masterplan takes the Watford Hospital into account and will continue to support and facilitate progress. The long-term Watford Riverwell regeneration project supports the Hospital

				redevelopment in this part of the town.
	Recognise the importance of the Watford Junction area and move forward with plans to create a new multi-purpose Watford neighbourhoods in this well connected area	<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 to commence</li> <li>• Q1 2022 – Review of bus station and car parking scenarios complete</li> <li>• Q2 2022 – Review of St Albans access road and National Rail proposals for station enhancements complete</li> </ul>	On track	Project continues to work towards securing comprehensive and coherent regeneration of Watford Junction rail lands, improvements to Watford Junction Station, ensuring that redevelopment of the area does not overload Watford's road network, championing creation of a high quality place at Watford Junction, securing appropriate planning, maintaining relationships with key stakeholders and landowners and promoting redevelopment of the rail lands.

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>				
Support our key sectors				
<b>Objective</b>				
Support our key sectors				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will leverage our sectors</li> <li>• We will attract investment to Watford</li> <li>• We will drive the economic recovery of Watford</li> </ul>	<b>Cross sector initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing – work with Herts Local Enterprise Partnership to develop and deliver sector action plans which support our key sectors and businesses</li> </ul>	On track	Scoped work package for interim resource to research and develop the Watford Sector Action Plan, covering healthcare, and digital-tech as cross-cutting sector, with Creative sector to follow when LEP

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will implement our Economic Growth Strategy plan</li> </ul>				reports are ready. Awaiting decision on LEP funding bid for Creative & Screen sector
	<b>Key sector identification - Professional Services, Creative, Cultural Digital and film, Healthcare (medical services, medical equipment and pharma), Retail, Leisure and Hospitality)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 22 - Watford Sector Action Plan - scope work package for interim resource to research and develop the Watford SAP, covering healthcare, PBS and digital-tech as cross-cutting sector, with Creative to follow when LEP reports are ready</li> </ul>	On track	Awaiting decision on LEP funding bid for Creative & Screen sector.
	Work with all sectors to understand their plans and priorities, accommodation and skills needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 22 – Creative and Screen Sector Action Plan – commence Business engagement work</li> <li>February 22 – Explore alignment of Cultural Strategy and Town Hall Quarter cultural potential with the Creative and Screen Sector Action</li> </ul>	On track	Scoped work package for interim resource to research and develop the Watford Sector Action Plan, covering healthcare, PBS and digital-tech as cross-cutting sector, with Creative sector to follow when LEP reports are ready. Awaiting decision on LEP funding bid for Creative & Screen sector. Have appointed external company to develop more statistics on sectors.
	Seek to retain existing businesses and work with them to attract similar businesses to co-locate here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q1 2022 - draft Sector Action Plan</li> <li>Q2 2022 – finalise Sector Action Plan</li> <li>Q4 2022/23 – establish and launch an active ambassador network</li> </ul>	On track	Actions to establish this are now live. This is linked to Key Account engagement, business networks, inward investment plan and supporting sectors (action plan).
	Prioritise key sectors in the Inward Investment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 22 – Review sector-specific feedback on existing Inward Investment plan and feed in to new strategy</li> </ul>	On track	This will be linked to the town’s place brand and narrative, which will launch in 2022. Key strand will be shaping the town’s inward investment offer to business.

	Work with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, neighbouring districts and Herts Growth Board on a Creative and Screen Industries Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Regular participation in Herts Growth Board Creative and Screen Industries working group</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Herts Growth Board sub-group met to commence scope Herts Film Office</li> </ul>	On track	Council Events Manager in attendance to ensure that South West Herts leverages its geographical location at the centre of UK screen industries, in line with our Economic Growth Strategy.
	Work with cultural entrepreneurs to establish the demand for space for cultural enterprises and identify opportunities to provide it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing monitoring of vacant units in Town Centre</i></li> <li>✓ October 21 – engage Watford Palace Theatre re Cultural Grants</li> <li>• January 22 – Panel review of applications and award grants</li> </ul>	On track	Vacant units tracked as part of Mayor's Town Centre Operations Group. Voids remain low compared to peer locations. 39 Cultural Grant applications received and panel reviewing.
	Work with film studios, town centre strategic partners, Watford BID and high street occupiers to establish the potential to adapt the town centre so it can be used more regularly for filming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 22 – Creative and Screen Sector Action Plan – commence Business engagement work</li> </ul>	On track	Scoped work package for interim resource to research and develop the Watford Sector Action Plan, covering healthcare, and digital-tech as cross-cutting sector, with Creative sector to follow when LEP reports are ready. Awaiting decision on LEP funding bid for Creative & Screen sector

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>				
Create a new economic future for the Town Centre				
<b>Objective</b>				
Create Watford's place based brand narrative and marketing approach				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will reimagine the High Street, public realm and outside space</li> <li>• We will champion and promote Watford effectively</li> </ul>	Develop a shared vision, strategy and town centre partnership management approach for Watford town centre which aligns with our wider place brand narrative across the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing Town Centre Ops Group with partners, chaired by the Elected Mayor</i></li> <li>✓ October 21 – Combine partner events into a single Watford calendar</li> </ul>	On track	Town Centre metrics created and being reviewed regularly. Key partners (BID, Police, Atria, Officers) attend to ensure the town centre continues to attract people back post-lockdowns.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will attract investment to Watford</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's Town Centre</li> </ul>				Continuing to develop shared vision and strategy. Single events calendar being developed for 2022.
	Ensure that Watford town centre promotes a diverse experience and is a welcoming place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Inaugural Market 'Lates' event to promote revamped Watford Market and its offering</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Wayfinding/Heritage Trail Expressions of Interest</li> <li>• January 22 – explore speciality markets</li> <li>• January 22 – Market unit available for creator/ maker artisans to display and sell craft products</li> <li>• January 22 – publish Wayfinding/Heritage Trail tender</li> </ul>	On track	Market Lates concept proved and additional successful events held.  Wayfinding and Heritage Trail works are now underway and will support an under-represented sector in Watford and one severely impacted by COVID.

Objective				
Supporting Town Centre businesses				
What we want to achieve	How we will do it	Key Milestones	'BRAG' Rating	Update
Cont.	Build on the close relationships we have developed with retail hospitality and cultural sector businesses to trade safely and adapt to the new environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing support of local businesses by Public Health team</i></li> <li>✓ December 21 – Review latest Gov't regulations introduced in view of variant of concern and work with local businesses to adhere/implement</li> <li>✓ January 22 – Create new ARG Pot 3 grant schemes</li> <li>• January 22 – Review additional ARG requests for support due to variant of concern</li> </ul>	On track	Ongoing monitoring of variant of concern. Worked with night-time economy businesses and Watford FC to adhere to latest COVID status certification requirements, so they could continue to operate from mid-Dec. New ARG (Pot 3) grants created to support those local businesses impacted directly by Omicron variant e.g. hospitality, leisure, retail, arts, accommodation sectors.

	<p>Make the case for our Innovation and Incubation Hub, utilising any successful Levelling Up Fund bid from our recent application, to support local businesses and start-ups across the town</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Prove demand for Hub</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Cabinet approval of overall Town Hall Quarter Business Case</li> <li>• December 21 – LEP funding application, Strategic Outline Case revisions and final draft submission</li> <li>• January 22 – Sign off phase 2 Project Initiation Document</li> <li>• April 22 – Submit final LEP bid</li> </ul>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>Part of overall the Town Hall Quarter programme, with a strong focus on enterprise and new business, recognising that Watford is a great location for entrepreneurs and growing businesses and seeking to provide a new hub for start-ups and new enterprises. Business case has been approved by Cabinet and work is now underway to develop the Innovation and Incubation hub to support start-up businesses across the borough.</p>
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<b>Objective</b>				
Master-planning, Investment and Accessibility				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<p><i>Cont.</i></p>	<p>Develop a planning framework for Watford town centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 – Appoint Town Centre Framework tenderer</li> <li>✓ October 21 – Review Town Centre strategy at cross-party Strategy forum</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Launch Town Centre framework</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence engagement with stakeholders, businesses and community on town centre issues and priorities</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Publish Heritage Trail and Public Art Expression of Interest</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Finalise Wayfinding brief for Expressions of Interest</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Review Town Centre Strategy at Leadership Board</li> </ul>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>Town Centre framework - vacant shop in Atria secured for 'urban' room to demonstrate to public and 'Commonplace' website launched for public engagement. Analysis on development potential and transport commenced. Youth engagement programme further developed, with interest from a range of schools and youth organisations. 16 Expressions of Interest received for a provider/consultant to lead the Wayfinding and Heritage trail work looking at feasibility, recommendations, how to deliver</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 21 – Commission Town Centre provider</li> <li>January 22 – Complete community engagement on town centre issues and priorities</li> </ul>		and cost involved. Heritage trail pilot due before end March.
	Improve the public realm and utilisation of recreational space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Commence Market Street South works</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Re-open Clarendon Road carriageway traffic both ways</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Former magistrate’s courts reinstated</li> <li>✓ January 22 – Complete phase 1 of Market Street (South) works</li> <li>• January 22 – Planning and design for Market Street North</li> </ul>	On track	Market Street is to benefit from a range of streetscape improvements to improve the look and feel of the area, create an attractive, safe space at the heart of the town centre and provide a better experience as a place to meet, relax and enjoy. Works include the introduction of better cycle parking facilities, safer cycling routes and new modern street furniture, as well as pedestrian friendly measures such as renewed footway paving, improved drainage and strategically placing bollards to prevent illegal parking. WBC are also into a 2 year streetscape maintenance agreement with HCC for the St Albans Road Streetscape project improvements already delivered.
	Transform the heart of Watford by delivering major improvements such as Town Hall Quarter (following the recent bid for Levelling Up funding) and other keys sites and facilitating the development of Watford Junction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ December 21 – Approve Town Hall Quarter business case and implementation plan at Cabinet</li> <li>• January - Full Council to consider the budget for the Town Hall Quarter programme moving forward</li> <li>• February – Issue Architectural and M&amp;E designs for Town Hall tender</li> </ul>	On track	Town Hall Quarter Business case has been approved by Cabinet. including recommendations for the Town Hall and Colosseum Refurbishment. Architectural designs for the Town Hall reviewed by internal sponsors and feedback given to the design team to be incorporated into the

				<p>final RIBA stage 2 report due in February 2022.</p> <p>Watford Junction project continues to work towards securing comprehensive and coherent regeneration of Watford Junction rail lands, improvements to Watford Junction Station, ensuring that redevelopment of the area does not overload Watford's road network, championing creation of a high quality place at Watford Junction, securing appropriate planning, maintaining relationships with key stakeholders and landowners and promoting redevelopment of the rail lands.</p>
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<b>Objective</b>				
Develop marketing and promotion of Watford town centre				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Develop the place based narrative strategy for the town centre, which aligns to the wider brand narrative for the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Identify brand narrative</li> <li>✓ October 21 – Review brand strategy with key stakeholders</li> <li>• January / February 22 – Launch of brand narrative</li> </ul>	On track	Our place brand narrative is an important foundation in promoting the diverse retail, leisure and dining offer in our High Street. This has been developed with stakeholders and will be launched in early 2022.
	Review the delivery mechanisms for marketing and promoting Watford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January / February 22 – Fill Marketing Manager role</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones will be established once the Marketing Manager is in post.</p>	Planning underway	Delay in recruiting a suitable candidate to fulfil the role that will promote the town, leverage the new brand narrative, and bring the public to live, work and play in a

				vibrant town with a diverse offering.
	Ensure that the local economy works as a component of the wider local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing Town Centre Ops Group with partners chaired by the Elected Mayor</i></li> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence engagement with stakeholders, businesses and community on town centre issues and priorities</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence <a href="#">Herts Essex Rapid Transport (HERT)</a> project consultation</li> <li>• January 22 – Review additional ARG requests for support due to variant of concern</li> <li>• January 22 – Complete community engagement on town centre issues and priorities</li> <li>• January / February 22 – Local Plan ‘Examination in Public’</li> <li>• January 22 – Close HERT public consultation</li> <li>• February 22 – Use Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy as a base to develop Watford specific action plan/ interventions</li> </ul>	On track	Multiple public engagement interactions across the renewal objectives to ensure our strategies reflect the wider Watford community.

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>				
Support our communities to access opportunities				
<b>Objective</b>				
Consider how inclusive our economic decisions are				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘BRAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will support people into employment, education and training</li> </ul>	Use our economic spending power to create opportunities locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Support KickStart campaign for 16-24 year olds</li> </ul>	On track	A number of KickStarters employed by the Council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will create community wealth</li> <li>• We will champion inclusivity</li> <li>• We will leverage the council's scale and expertise</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – launch Young Entrepreneurs' programme</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Community Renewal fund discussions held with Stevenage (leading HCC-wide approach)</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Community Renewal fund discussions held with Stevenage (leading HCC-wide approach)</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Submit growth bid for resource to assist this delivery</li> <li>• December 21 – Community Renewal fund on agenda for One Watford for Business</li> <li>• January 21 – continue developer discussions re 'meet the buyer' event to involve businesses in their supply chain</li> <li>• January 22 – Explore potential Skills Academy with a developer and West Herts College</li> <li>• January 22 – Launch Young Entrepreneurs' 'Hard to Reach' Programme</li> <li>• January / February 22 – explore Bidding for Business concept</li> <li>• January 22 – Identify 5 Watford organisations for Community Renewal Fund grant funding</li> </ul>		<p>Young Entrepreneurs programme launched 17 Nov to 59 young people (58% of whom identified as female), providing support to help local YEs progress business opportunities. Online 'bootcamp' provided to all attendees, with view to awarding 20 grants to Watford's YEs, with ongoing networking support to develop their business.</p> <p>Watford are working with other local authorities on the Herts-wide Community Renewal Fund application. The fund will focus on 4 key themes of investment in skills, local business, communities and supporting people into employment.</p> <p>Rebel Business School now appointed to take forward the 'Hard to Reach' programme (experience of running programmes to hard to reach young people). Intention is to deliver a project which helps develop local supply chains in Watford, and enable businesses to grow, through winning more contracts.</p> <p>Watford is part of the Herts-wide Community Renewal Fund application, ensuring that Watford is at the forefront of the Herts process. The fund will focus on 4 key themes of investment in skills, local business, communities and supporting people into employment.</p>
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	<p>Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments the council is responsible for, to create new well-designed communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ July 21 – Agree draft Local Plan</li> <li>✓ August 21 – Submit draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State</li> <li>✓ September 21 – Appoint Planning Inspector</li> <li>• January / February 22 – Local Plan ‘Examination in Public’</li> <li>• February 22 – Adopt Local Plan</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Draft Local Plan agreed by Council on Jul 19 2021 and submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public on 6 August. Planning Inspector Will Fieldhouse appointed. ‘Examination in Public’ dates set for mid-Jan to mid-Feb. Hearing statements completed December and Hearing sessions will be virtual. Heritage Impact Assessment completed and agreed with Historic England in December.</p>
	<p>Work with those residents in sectors most impacted by the pandemic, such as retail and hospitality</p>	<p><u>Skills and Employment Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 22 – Define linkage with sector action plans and agree work to stem from this</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>First draft of skills evidence base now received, which is the starting point to develop a Watford Skills and Employment Plan so that we can support individuals and businesses find the right employment/ employee.</p>
	<p>Support our current and future workforce to be resilient following the pandemic, ensuring residents can access support for improving or developing new skills and increasing their employability, and for maintaining/improving their mental health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Launch Young Entrepreneurs’ programme</li> <li>• January 22 – 20 Young Entrepreneurs to progress from ‘boot camp’ to intensive tailored programme</li> <li>• January 22 – Explore potential Skills Academy with a developer and West Herts College</li> <li>• January 22 – Launch Young Entrepreneurs’ ‘Hard to Reach’ Programme</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Young Entrepreneurs programme launched 17 Nov to 59 young people (58% of whom identified as female), providing support to help local YEs progress business opportunities. Online ‘bootcamp’ provided to all attendees, with view to awarding 20 grants to Watford’s YEs, with ongoing networking support to develop their business. Aimed at those specifically affected by the impact of COVID. Aimed at creative and green sectors.</p>

	<p>Work with the Herts Skills and Employment Board, University of Hertfordshire, West Herts College, other providers and Local Businesses in our key sectors to develop and deliver a Watford skills and employment strategy</p>	<p><u>Skills and Employment Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – First draft of skills evidence base</li> <li>• January 22 – Review skills evidence base with West Herts College</li> <li>• February 22 – Use Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy as a base to develop Watford specific action plan/ interventions</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>First draft of skills evidence base now received, which is the starting point to develop a Watford Skills and Employment Plan so that we can support individuals and businesses find the right employment/ employee.</p>
	<p>Support the delivery of apprenticeships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Council involved in KickStart programme</li> <li>• March 22 – initial KickStart placements end at Council</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>A number of KickStart apprentices employed by council for 6 months. Businesses have until 17 Dec to register with KickStart.</p>
	<p>Attract new highly skilled workers and retain talented people in the Borough</p>	<p><u>Skills and Employment Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – First draft of skills evidence base</li> <li>• January 22 – Review skills evidence base with West Herts College</li> <li>• February 22 – Use Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy as a base to develop Watford specific action plan/ interventions</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>First draft of skills evidence base now received, which is the starting point to develop a Watford Skills and Employment Plan so that we can support individuals and businesses find the right employment/ employee..</p>



<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>				
Create the right environment for sustainable growth				
<b>Objective</b>				
Deliver an effective and efficient infrastructure				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will ensure the town's infrastructure supports and attracts local business and the wider economy</li> <li>We will develop better places to live, work and relax</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's work spaces</li> <li>We will support a green recovery</li> <li>We will stimulate green economic growth</li> <li>We will launch a green skills academy</li> <li>We will embrace 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sustainable Mobility</li> </ul>	Seek to maximise the growth benefits from planned infrastructure improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence <a href="#">Herts Essex Rapid Transport (HERT)</a> project consultation</li> <li>• January 22 – Finalise Sustainable Transport strategy document</li> <li>• January 22 – Present Digital Infrastructure report to Portfolio Holders</li> <li>• January 22 – Close HERT public consultation</li> </ul>	On track	Full Sustainable Transport Strategy document and executive summary updated and under review within project team. Briefing provided to MSG, Leadership Board and paper prepared for Portfolio Holders and All Members. Cabinet report drafted and appendices drafted.
	Deliver high quality housing with a particular focus on increasing housing options to attract and retain residents/ employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ July 21 – Agree draft Local Plan</li> <li>✓ July 21 – Developer to start Family Housing at Riverwell</li> <li>✓ August 21 – Submit draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State</li> <li>✓ September 21– Appoint Local Plan Planning Inspector</li> <li>• January / February 22 - Local Plan 'Examination in Public'</li> <li>• February 22 – Adopt Local Plan</li> <li>• February 22 – Launch sales campaign for Riverwell Family Housing</li> </ul>	On track	The council's joint venture Riverwell development is providing hundreds of high quality homes for local residents. Jarvis is developing the Family Housing at Riverwell which will be launched in the early part of this year.
	Encourage the delivery of high-speed broadband to attract new investment/ support the growth of businesses and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Present Digital Infrastructure report to Managing Director's Strategic Group</li> <li>• January 22 – Present Digital Infrastructure report to Portfolio Holders</li> </ul>	On track	The delivery of high speed broadband is recognised in our Economic Growth Strategy as a key way of boosting investment and growth across the town.

	<p>Create a sustainable transport strategy for the town</p>	<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> <li>✓ May '21 - draft strategy presented to Portfolio Holders</li> <li>✓ Aug '21 – Strategy consultation underway</li> <li>✓ October '21 – Strategy consultation closed and views of residents, businesses and stakeholders incorporated into updated draft</li> <li>• February '22 – Cabinet review of final Sustainable Transport Strategy</li> <li>• March '22 – Final Strategy published</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Consultation of the draft of the Sustainable Transport Strategy was launched in August 2021 and closed in October 2021. Significant levels of positive engagement were seen and have been incorporated into a further draft of the Strategy which will be reviewed by Cabinet in February 2022 with the intention of publishing the final Sustainable Transport Strategy by March 2022.</p>
	<p>Ensure that the town's infrastructure attracts local business and supports the wider economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence <a href="#">Herts Essex Rapid Transport (HERT)</a> project consultation</li> <li>• January 22 – Close HERT public consultation</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>A new, sustainable passenger transport network that will carry more people than a car, but be more convenient and reliable than a traditional bus. The proposed HERT will run from Hemel Hempstead and West Watford, with opportunities to link in with the MLX replacement. The project is in its early stages but consultation is open at the current time and due to close this month.</p>

<b>Objective</b>				
Managing environmental impact across the Borough				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Encourage low carbon businesses to invest and grow in the borough	✓ December 21 – launch Sustainable Business Programme (Low Carbon) support grants	On track	Local company Sustainable X appointed as contractor to develop, plan and introduce a programme to support local businesses make their businesses more sustainable and support the council's climate emergency work.

## Work Stream 3: Organisational Renewal

### 3.1 Key achievements over this period

- Ongoing use of Amenities area as a vaccination centre to improve the provision of COVID vaccine to the people of Watford
- Digitisation of Waste and Recycling processes now live
- Agreed introduction of hybrid technology for Committee meetings in the Council Chamber, to ensure our decision making is as transparent and accessible as possible and allows our residents to actively engage in local democracy
- Draft 2022/23 growth bids submitted and reviewed by leaders and portfolio holders
- Payments received from Atria for 'pay-over' (£129k), final balance of John Lewis site (£20k) and unforecasted additional £98k
- Arrangements in place for the completion of Gade House disposal
- Council investment strategy reviewed and management contract renewed with current provider
- Lease variation agreed with Citiparks to enable repayment of £774k rent arrears
- Lease re-gear agreed with Eskmuir to realise £795k premium by end calendar year
- Terms agreed with RIAS to re-gear lease and enable £240k premium in due course
- Successful trial and installation of internal hybrid meeting technology (8\*8 type) in meeting rooms at Town Hall and alternative agile workspace locations
- Town Hall decarbonisation works commenced and alternative staff office working plan successfully implemented
- Third round of 'staff-to-staff' Time to Talk sessions held to improve staff wellbeing and develop additional Officer relationships
- Agile and Managing by Outputs training for senior staff completed, to enable the development of Agile Charters to determine the way in which staff can best serve our customers in the future
- Menu of options introduced to support teams' ways of working and the health and wellbeing of staff
- Staff COVID guidance reviewed and updated in light of new variant of concern – individual COVID risk assessments confirmed
- Quarterly Watford Health & You newsletter published with focus on 'making it safer for women and girls'
- Business continuity plans updated in line with supply chain pressures.

### 3.2 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	19
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influence, or reported elsewhere on update	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>26</b>

DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE				
Deliver high quality sustainable services				
Commitment				
Manage our organisational renewal post Covid-19				
What we want to achieve	How we will do it	Key Milestones	'BRAG' Rating	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing delivery of our Council Plan and business as usual services</li> <li>Delivery of excellent services for our customers in a Covid-safe way</li> <li>Services that remain accessible to all, including via digital channels where possible</li> <li>Ongoing interest and engagement in local democracy</li> </ul>	<p>We will continue to report regularly to Cabinet on progress against our Council Plan and highlight where our plans have been disrupted by the uncertain Covid-19 situation. We will also let our residents and businesses know how we have delivered against our Council Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 – Cabinet approval for refreshed R2R plan</li> <li>✓ January 22– Quarterly R2R plan update</li> <li>• 07 February 22 – Review by Cabinet</li> <li>• 24 February 22 – Review by Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</li> </ul>	On track	Revised reporting approach to Renewal with focus on Business & Economy, Community and Organisational Renewal ensuring that transparency is provided in relation to renewal activity across the town.
	<p>We will continue to review our risk assessments on a regular basis to protect our customers and staff,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing review of Council risk assessments</i></li> </ul>	On track	Council risk assessments up to date and regularly reviewed to ensure that we can continue to keep customers, staff and members safe.

	and will respond accordingly when the risk of Covid-19 changes			Staff COVID guidance reviewed and updated in light of any change in government guidance or emergence of new variant of concern – individual COVID risk assessments confirmed
	We will continue to support our community and our health and care services by providing the Town Hall as our local vaccination centre, adapting our customer service centre so that we can continue to provide an excellent service to both our residents seeking council services and those wanting a vaccination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing use of Amenities area as a vaccination centre</i></li> <li>✓ November 21 – Lease extension request received</li> <li>• January 22 – Lease renewal arrangements</li> </ul>	On track	<p>The Town Hall has continued to be used as a vaccination centre to support the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine, which includes the recent booster programme.</p> <p>Lease extension requested to continue using Amenities area as a vaccination centre until June 2022</p>
	We will continue to make sites available across Watford to support Covid-19 testing and other similar activity to support the response to the pandemic and protect our health and care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ongoing use of testing site and other site discussions underway, if needed</i></li> </ul>	On track	Testing site remain available across the town with the council continuing to work closely with the NHS to support the testing regime, in line with government guidance
	We will ensure that all council processes utilise existing council technology so that customers, whether residents or businesses, can transact with the council at a time that suits them, not just during the council's traditional opening hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September 21 – Digitise waste and recycling processes</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Re-plan digitisation work milestone dates for Revenues and Benefits forms</li> <li>• January to March 22 – Develop new suite of licensing forms following decision of Gov.UK to withdraw the existing standard suite of forms</li> <li>• April 22 – New licensing forms available</li> </ul>	Delivery Reprofiled	Following 18 months of Covid-19 grants work, the Revenues and Benefits team are currently focussing on re-establishing their business as usual processes which will allow a further review of digitisation opportunities. Gov.UK withdrawing their existing suite of licensing forms and so in-house work underway to deliver a

				new set of forms so that a digital service can be maintained
	We will retain the broadcasting of key council meetings online, building on the foundations established during Covid and introducing hybrid meeting solutions, to ensure our decision making is as transparent and accessible as possible and allows our residents to actively engage in local democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Agree implementation of hybrid technology for Committee meetings</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Install internal hybrid 8*8 meeting technology</li> <li>• January 22 – Monitor internal hybrid 8*8 tech live system</li> <li>• February 22 – Implementation of hybrid technology in Council Chamber for Committee meetings</li> </ul>	On track	Internal hybrid 8*8 technology installed in 2 Town Hall meeting rooms and at Watford Community Housing in order to support hybrid meetings, embed agile ways of working and allow people to continue serving our residents even when self-isolating. All member meetings continue to be broadcast online allowing for greater transparency and resident accessibility.

**DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE**

Welcome innovation, technology and new ways of working to continuously improve

**Commitment**

Ensure that the council's future office accommodation is fit for purpose

What we want to achieve	How we will do it	Key Milestones	'BRAG' Rating	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An agile workforce that can provide an excellent service to customers no matter from where they are working</li> <li>• Shared spaces which will foster joint working and collaboration</li> <li>• A corporate culture which values outcomes and benefits, rather than inputs and presenteeism</li> </ul>	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 regular staff surveys to inform our Reimagining Watford project as part of the Town Hall Quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ June '21 – Undertake staff ways of working survey</li> <li>✓ June '21 – Engage Staff Ambassadors</li> <li>✓ October '21 – Council agile principles approved</li> <li>✓ December '21 – Following feedback from staff, development of Agile Charters for all services setting out how services will work in an agile way in the future</li> </ul>	On track	Our Reimagining Watford project continues to progress with Agile Charters drafted by all services to determine the best way of working in a balanced and collaborative way when staff return to the office. Engagement with staff and, in particular, our Staff Ambassadors Group, is continuing with further staff surveys scheduled for the new year.
	Through our Reimagining Watford project, we will continue to engage	✓ September 21 – Pathfinders appointed	On track	The development of the culture, behaviours and skills required to

	<p>regularly with the Staff Ambassador Group and our Management Group so that our values and behaviours are co-designed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 – Pathfinders’ training</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Scope values and behaviours</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Publish staff working comms and update Reimagining Watford Intranet pages</li> <li>✓ November 21 – support staff during the move to new Agile working spaces</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Agile and Managing by Outputs training for managers</li> <li>• December / January 21 – Deliver mop-up Agile training for managers</li> </ul>		<p>work in agile ways has been realigned to the HR function to be delivered as part of the Council’s OD plan. An Executive Group Head Assistant has now been assigned to this work which will commence in Q4 of 2021/22 and be reported via the Organisational Development Strategy progress update, shown at Appendix B.</p> <p>The support required for employees to return to working in a redesigned Town Hall space has been brought into the scope of the Reimagining Watford project.</p>
	<p>We will bring our teams back together with our Reimagining Watford project, allowing them to develop Agile Charters which will determine the way in which they can best serve our customers in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21– Change to office working venues</li> <li>✓ November 21 – Commence Agile charters via Agile reconnection ‘bubbles’</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Complete development of Agile Charters</li> <li>• January 22 – Review Team Charters and interdependencies across the service areas</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Whilst staff continue to work at home as a result of the change to government guidance, additional desk and meeting space at alternative sites were introduced in November 2021 providing additional collaborative space to support our agile ways of working. All teams have now drafted Agile Charters which will set out how they can best serve the residents of the town in an agile way in the future.</p>
	<p>Learning the lessons from Covid-19 and based on our new ways of working, we will, as part of our ambitious Town Hall Quarter programme, develop modern, fit for purpose, sustainable and value for money offices for our staff to collaborate in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ December 21 – Town Hall Refurbishment business case approved at Cabinet</li> <li>✓ January 22 – Initial mood boards shared with Staff Ambassadors Group</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>In order to continue providing the best service for our residents and businesses in modern, fit-for-purpose and value-for-money office space on a significantly reduced footprint, the Outline Business Case recommending the refurbishment of the Town Hall and the opening up of</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February 22 – Work underway to new working space in the Annexe building of the Town Hall</li> <li>June 22 – Refurbishment of new working space complete and available for collaborative staff use</li> </ul>		the building to the community in the space left by council space, was approved by Cabinet in December. Over the coming months, the designs will be confirmed and refurbishment works in the Annexe commenced.
	We will provide our staff with the tools and technology they need to provide the best experience to customers, no matter where they are working from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing use of 8*8 technology</li> <li>✓ Dec – install internal hybrid 8*8 meeting technology</li> </ul>	On track	Internal hybrid 8*8 technology installed in 2 Town Hall meeting rooms and at Watford Community Housing in order to support hybrid meetings, embed agile ways of working and allow people to continue serving our residents even when self-isolating. All member meetings continue to be broadcast online allowing for greater transparency and resident accessibility.

<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>				
Welcome innovation, technology and new ways of working to continuously improve				
<b>Commitment</b>				
Embed resilience across the organisation				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the impact of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of staff</li> <li>Excellent services that can continue to operate as we learn to live with Covid</li> </ul>	We will continue to ensure that our staff are supported to work safely in the community by undertaking regular risk assessments (including specific risk assessments which recognise the increased risk of the virus for our ethnic minority colleagues) and putting in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ongoing review of Council risk assessments</i></li> </ul>	On track	COVID guidance docs remain on intranet and reviewed regularly in line with Government guidance. Council risk assessments up to date and regularly reviewed to ensure that we can continue to keep customers, staff and members safe. Staff COVID guidance reviewed and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A healthy, safe and educated workforce</li> </ul>	measures to mitigate the impact of Covid-19			updated in light of any change in government guidance or emergence of new variant of concern – individual COVID risk assessments confirmed.
	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ongoing Health &amp; Wellbeing Champions meetings</i></li> <li>✓ November 21 – Publish quarterly Watford Health and You newsletter</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Mental Health First Aider refresher training</li> </ul>	On track	Line Managers continue to check in regularly with staff, particularly given the reintroduction of working from home guidance. Our Mental Health First Aiders have been recredited and Watford Health and You information, accessible for all staff, remains updated.
	We will continue our Time to Talk initiative, providing space for staff to reconnect and support their and colleagues’ mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September / October ‘21 – Third round of ‘staff-to-staff’ Time to Talk sessions</li> </ul>	On track	Three ‘Time to Talk’ sessions have now been held across the council, reconnecting staff from across the organisation and providing them with space to talk.
	We will regularly update our business continuity plans to recognise the need to live with Covid so that we can continue to deliver excellent services to our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ongoing review and update of business continuity plans</i></li> </ul>	Complete and ongoing	All service business continuity plans have been updated throughout the pandemic, allowing us to maintain services as new waves emerge.
	As we move out of the pandemic our commitment to developing our people outlined in our Organisational Development Strategy will grow so that they fulfil their potential and their aspirations. All our staff will participate in a meaningful appraisal, where performance,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 22 – Next PDR cycle opens</li> <li>June 22 – PDR cycle closes and all information collated to ensure that we can continue to support staff with professional and personal development</li> </ul>	On track	The next annual appraisal cycle is due to open in April 2022, providing staff with an opportunity, on top of their regular 1:1s, to set and review objectives, feeding into corporate priorities and discuss opportunity for training and development.

	<p>aspirations and potential are equally important, and we will actively seek development opportunities for our staff, retaining and growing our key talent to ensure that we can retain our talented teams</p>			
	<p>We will continue to promote the benefits of Covid vaccinations to our staff to encourage take up and ensure that the organisation is less vulnerable to local outbreaks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regular communications to staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Ongoing use of Amenities area as a vaccination centre</i></li> </ul>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>	<p>The Town Hall continues to be used as a vaccination centre, including for the recent booster programme. Regular staff communications, including directly from the Manager Director, have encouraged staff to take up the offer of a Covid-19 jab and booster. Whilst there have been incidences of staff catching Covid, incidences of absence as a result have been relatively low.</p>
	<p>We will offer all our staff a flu jab to mitigate any impact of winter variations in the number of Covid cases and the expectation of a bad flu season, supporting our health and care services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October 21 – Publish staff communications offering flu jab to all staff</li> <li>✓ December 21 – All staff reminder mail</li> </ul>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>All staff across the council have been offered a flu jab, with many employees also able to access the jab via an extended NHS offer for 2021/22. Incidences of flu have been extremely low.</p>
	<p>We will provide our managers with a menu of options that can be used to support staff and their health and wellbeing, including time away from video calls and sufficient breaks between meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November 21 – Publish and use in Agile reconnection bubbles to develop Agile charters</li> <li>✓ January 22 – Complete development of Agile Charters</li> </ul>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Menu of Options now part of Agile Charters and being discussed in Agile bubbles. This provides staff across the council with alternative plans for collaborative work to be undertaken, making best use of assets owned by the council</p>

<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>				
Focus our budget so we can deliver on our commitments and secure investment to work for Watford				
<b>Commitment</b>				
Deliver the council's financial recovery				
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'BRAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sustainable and balanced budget which continues to support delivery of our services as well as our ambitious Council Plan</li> <li>• Sufficient financial support to help the town, our residents, businesses and community recover and renew from Covid-19</li> <li>• A robust local supply chain able to support our services and portfolio of projects</li> </ul>	<p>We will proactively manage our Renewal budget, ensuring that we are able to support our communities and businesses as they recover from Covid-19 and are able to thrive within our town</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ July 20 – Renewal budget approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• <i>Ongoing – RCB approval (&lt;£5k requests)</i></li> <li>• <i>Ongoing – Tactical Portfolio Holders approval (&gt;£5k requests)</i></li> <li>• <i>Ongoing monitoring by Head of EPMO</i></li> </ul>	On track	<p>£550,000 remains in the Renewal budget which has already supported High Street marshals, the Council's popular 'Lates' night markets, Christmas lights in the Town Centre, the development of our voluntary sector strategy and Watford Outdoor Theatre. Further requests for funding to support the council's Civic Centenary celebration are awaiting approval.</p>
	<p>We will set a 2022/23 budget which allows us to deliver our Council Plan whilst supporting business as usual services for our residents, businesses and community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October / November 21 – Service financial planning underway</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Draft budget developed and reviewed</li> <li>• January 22 – Budget council</li> <li>• April 22 – New financial year</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Budget council is scheduled for 24 January. Approval of the budget will allow for the council to continue focusing on priorities and delivering high quality services for the residents and businesses of Watford.</p>
	<p>We will continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on our budgets and if necessary will reset our finances in the light of the pressures created by Covid-19 and based on insight about possible future pressures which will allow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October / November 21 – Service financial planning underway</li> <li>✓ December 21 – Draft budget developed and reviewed</li> <li>• January 22 – Budget council</li> <li>• April 22 – New financial year</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Budget council is scheduled for 24 January. Approval of the budget will allow for the council to continue focusing on priorities and delivering high quality services for the residents and businesses of Watford.</p>

	us to fund priorities to help Watford recover			
	We will close our grants processes by the financial year end but retain plans to scale this back up if required in the future so that our community and businesses continue to get the support they need	<i>Reported under Business &amp; Economy work stream</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>Reported under Business &amp; Economy work stream</i>
	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ongoing - work with other LAs and DLUHC (Dept of Levelling Up, Housing &amp; Communities) on highlighting cost of leisure provision during COVID</i></li> </ul>	On track	Working with HCC and LA colleagues to ensure the all COVID funding spent by end of financial year
	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	✓ November 21 – All projects reviewed	Complete	Projects reviewed. Minor impact from COVID-19 itself but knock-on effect as a result of global constriction material increases and labour shortages. Delivery of all projects continue to be monitored by the council's Enterprise Programme Management Office and regularly reported to Leadership Board.
	We will continue to carefully manage our property investment portfolio, ensuring that it continues to provide invaluable financial stability so we can continue to deliver our high quality services and ambitious programme of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 July '20 - Compare latest quarter rent/investment collections with pre-Covid quarters</li> <li>✓ 10 August '20 – outstanding market rent letters sent</li> <li>✓ 15 August '20 - Intu rent receipt not received</li> </ul>	On track	Further refurbishments have completed at Croxley Business Park and monitoring of quarterly rent receipts and comparison with previous quarters remains ongoing. Atria seeing encouraging volumes from leisure and event businesses

	<p>improvements for our local residents and businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 September '20 – Regus rent extension agreed at PIB</li> <li>✓ 20 October '20 - LSH quarterly update report to Commercial Income and Investment Board</li> <li>✓ 1 November '20 – Additional occupation of CBP premises</li> <li>✓ 30 November '20 – Ongoing monitoring of intu rent income</li> <li>✓ 02 December '20 - Cabinet approval for the refurbishment of the Croxley Business park units</li> <li>✓ 16 December '20 – CIIB approved Croxley Business park refurb</li> <li>✓ 8 February '21– Cabinet approval for the letting of Building 1 at Croxley Business Park</li> <li>✓ 1 March '21 – Cabinet approval to the Croxley BP Business Plan for 2021/22</li> <li>✓ March '21 Completion of procurement for external legal support at Croxley Business Park</li> <li>✓ June '21 – Review of Croxley Business Park income model</li> <li>✓ July '21 – Premium from John Lewis site received</li> <li>✓ August '21 – Refurbishments of buildings 4 &amp; 6 completed</li> <li>✓ September '21 – Receipt of balance of John Lewis premium</li> <li>✓ October '21 – Decision expected from interested party on 935 High St proposal</li> <li>✓ November '21 – Atria pay-over due</li> </ul>		<p>since lockdown ended on 19 July, in line with expected change in consumer behaviours post-COVID.</p>
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