

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET – 3 APRIL 2018
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES)

WELWYN HATFIELD BUSINESS PLAN 2018-21

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Cabinet the process for creating the council's new Business Plan for 2018-21.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Cabinet approves the process set out in this report and delegates authority to the Executive Board to agree and publish the new Business Plan over the coming months in consultation with Executive Members and Directors.
- 2.2 Cabinet approves the Plan on a Page to go forward to the next meeting of the full Council, as appended to this report.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 The council's current Business Plan sets out our corporate priorities, objectives, vision and values over a three year period to March 2018. It has been supported by an annually refreshed Action Plan with measurable targets drawn from across all of the council's services.
- 3.2 The new Business Plan, which has undergone consultation and revision over recent months, will cover the next three financial years to March 2021. Workshops and meetings have been held with Executive Directors and Heads of Service to help shape the structure of the new Plan, and to ensure their service activities are reflected in its priorities and objectives.
- 3.3 A survey among members of the council's Borough Panel has also been completed, with 61 households taking the opportunity to complete a short online survey in which we sought their views on our proposed priorities and objectives. An average of 90.3 per cent of all responders either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' with them for the next three years. 27 households have also asked to receive a copy of the Business Plan when it is published.
- 3.4 Based on the completion of this internal and external consultation over recent months, our revised corporate priorities to March 2021 will be:
1. Our Community.
 2. Our Environment.
 3. Our Housing.
 4. Our Economy
 5. Our Council.

- 3.5 These priorities have been shortened from the last iteration of the Business Plan to make them easier to present to our communities and more accessible to a wider audience. They will also support an agreed vision for the council which is *'Working together to keep Welwyn Hatfield a great place to live, work and study with a vibrant and growing economy'*. We will also introduce a new strapline which is *'Working Better, Together'*.
- 3.6 The council's values have also been reviewed so they are better aligned with what we consider to be important when dealing with local residents, businesses and partners. They are:
1. Integrity – we will be honest, clear and consistent in what we do.
 2. Fairness – we will be fair in our policies and in our decision making, and listen to the views and feedback we receive.
 3. Transparent – we will be approachable, accountable and open in the way we communicate and conduct our business.
 4. Respect – we will have respect for our residents, businesses, partners and employees.
 5. Responsive – we will respond to internal and external influences on our services by adapting them to meet changing needs.
 6. Innovative – we will evaluate and implement other means of providing our services when it leads to greater efficiency without compromising on quality.

These are all shown together on the Plan on a Page.

- 3.7 A key organisational change since the Business Plan was last published has been the successful reintegration of our housing service having operated it at arms-length for a number of years. So there will be much more content relating to this in the new Plan. Resources in support of the council's *Economy* priority have also been enhanced in recent years, and there are upcoming changes in some of the council's major contracts covering environment and leisure services.
- 3.8 What is clear is this council, along with other local authorities, is operating in a rapidly changing public sector with new government legislation and regulation being introduced; ongoing pressure on our budgets coupled with increasing service demands from a growing population; and a need to evaluate and implement new ways of maintaining and improving our income while managing our costs as central government support reduces.
- 3.9 For our communities this means preserving the quality of our core services such as household waste and recycling collections; protecting the environment; providing a statutory planning service; enabling the construction of new and affordable homes for local people; and supporting the delivery of sport and leisure services to encourage healthy and active lifestyles. These will all be set out clearly in the new Business Plan.

Implications

4 Legal Implication(s)

4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

5 Financial Implication(s)

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

6 Risk Management Implications

6.1 It is good practice to have a published Business Plan which summarises the council's priorities and objectives. It sets out what we are seeking to achieve in the borough, and assists residents and other stakeholders in holding us to account for our service performance.

6.2 Not having a Business Plan and a supporting Action Plan means we are not able to effectively monitor and manage our service performance against a set of clear priorities and objectives. The Plan is central to the operation of the council's performance management framework, which includes a core suite of key performance indicators and the monitoring of strategic and operational risks across our services.

7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

7.1 There are no direct security and terrorism implications arising from the contents of this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

8.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the contents of this report.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications arising from the contents of this report

10 Link to Corporate Priorities

10.1 This report is linked to all of the council's corporate priorities as the Business Plan sets out the council's priorities, objectives, vision and values over the next three years to March 2021.

11 Equality and Diversity

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as the new Plan revises an existing one and sets out a framework for the delivery of service-related policies at the council.

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March 2018

Background Paper:

Business Plan on a Page (2018-21).