

## **Council Plan: Proposed actions**

### **Objective One - Be a more welcoming and inclusive council:**

- Ensure that individuals and community groups presenting petitions, grant applications, opinions or objections to Committees, Cabinet and Council are treated as welcome guests at all times and that Chairs are encouraged to take a flexible and enabling approach to their participation.
- Creating a programme of regular engagement and survey activities which will enable us to measure progress in how the Council's work with residents and community groups is perceived, and how it encourages new ideas for improvement.
- Keep the Council's Complaints Policy under review to ensure its fitness for purpose as a useable and accessible tool, including its website version and the publishing of results and statistics.
- The expansion of use and promotion of Town Talks and Councillors' Surgeries with particular focus on developing links with groups that have not traditionally engaged with these activities.
- Implement a "customer account" for customers to access specific information relating to them and to enable them to transact with the Council from a single log-on. To speed up processes for customers with the use of Artificial Intelligence.
- Ensure that the Council's website encourages public use and engagement, particularly in relation to the planning portal and other areas.

### **Objective Two - Building thriving and resilient communities**

- Create a programme of regular engagement and survey activities which will enable us to measure progress in how the Council's work with residents and community groups is perceived, and how it encourages new ideas for improvement.
- To re-establish a programme of work with schools and local youth groups – especially for Local Democracy Week - to establish productive and active engagement with young people across the District.
- To work with the Licensing team, the Police and the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) to explore and resolve some of the issues of extreme caution relating to Community events.
- The Community Safety team to assist Councillors in re-establishing regular communications with police and other community safety partners.

### **Objective Three - Responding to challenges to the environment**

- Exploring a range of ways in which local communities, including streets and neighbourhoods, can be encouraged to take some responsibility in supporting, improving and maintaining their local environment.
- Return to a 'business as usual' waste collection regime
- Increase recycling tonnages – target 60% for 2019/2020.
- Carry out waste composition analysis to understand waste streams better and enable a realistic food waste collection target for 2020/2021.
- Work with Urbaser to deliver service improvements to residents.
- Be a listening and engaging Waste and Recycling service.
- Identify the council's current carbon foot print.
- Consult with the public and with interest groups of strategies for achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- Identify the district carbon foot print and in consultation with the public identify means by which the council can assist the residents and businesses on North Herts achieve the target of net zero emissions across the district by 2030.

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- Work with cycling groups to produce a cycling plan to promote cycling, including the use of electric bicycles, as a means of transport and identify simple to remove barriers.
- Purchase of energy from renewable sources.
- It will consider all future operational vehicles leased or purchased by the council are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and encourage contractors to adopt similar measures.
- Explore the mechanism for tree planting on the Council's land and to encourage private landowners to do so.
- Installing additional electric vehicle charging points in council car parks to ensure that every car park has charging points in at least 5% of spaces, with a minimum of two spaces per car park.
- Installation of on street electric vehicle charging points in on street parking bays in town centres (in agreement with the County Council).
- Install PV panels on council buildings where this is practical and economically viable.
- Maintain the provision of indoor leisure facilities as both a community service and a source of income to the council at present or better levels.
- End the program of removal of equipment from play areas with the exception of any locations where there is local support for removal.
- Investigate the potential for installing informal play items (beams, logs, etc.) in larger play areas where equipment has already been removed.
- Ensure that the local plan or supplementary planning guidance leads to the provision of sustainable and suitable play provision as part of all larger housing developments in the district.
- Explore opportunities to enhance the community use of the Fearnhill Sports Centre.
- Produce a plan identifying the specific indoor and outdoor leisure facility needs resulting from the projected developments in the local plan, including preparing proposals to a point where they can be used to secure appropriate developer funding when planning applications are submitted.
- Identify solutions to existing issues of capacity at Royston Leisure Centre and parking/access at Hitchin Swimming Centre.
- Agree a plan with Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) to eliminate single use plastics from Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools.
- Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Events 2-3 events per year.
- Discounts on garden waste charge for vulnerable residents.
- Greater utilisation of Herts Waste Partnership (HWP).
- Air Pollution: Review what we currently do and how we might be able to take steps to improve air quality, and take action to stop car/bus/taxi idling (particularly at schools)
- Council led environmental health action days (surrounding dog fouling, fly tipping, dumping of waste).

## **Objective Four - Enabling an enterprising and co-operative economy**

- Ensure that the Council's income generating activities should never look to disadvantage non-profit or charitable community groups out of principle.
- We will encourage the development of co-operative businesses and enterprises within the District by providing or signposting advice services.
- Community Interest Companies (CIC), Social Enterprise and Cooperative opportunities should also be considered alongside the conventional Ltd. Company structure.
- Support development of CIC, Social Enterprise and Cooperative opportunities in the community.

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- Value should be attached to the benefits to the local community when establishing a commercial interest.

### **Objective Five - Supporting the delivery of good quality and affordable housing.**

- Identify opportunities for requiring better than building regulation thermal performance from new building in the district, including the potential for zero carbon houses.
- Support in every way possible the achievement of the climate change and particularly carbon reduction targets. This means above all designing new developments to discourage car use and to encourage alternatives such as walking, cycling and using public transport.
- It also means looking at existing infrastructure to make it more ecologically friendly.
- Ensure that the local plan or supplementary planning guidance leads to the provision of sustainable and suitable play provision as part of all larger housing developments in the district.
- Seek local partnership with all Registered Social Landlords (RSL) to build more social homes.
- Support delivery of homeless accommodation scheme in Letchworth.
- Prevention of homelessness through early intervention/role with local RSL's
- Support development John Barker Place.
- Ensure new developments be designed to integrate them into existing communities, and must ensure that their infrastructure is appropriate.
- Developments must provide a full range of housing, private, self-build, and social rented, for families and single people, for young and old.
- Review of the Planning Code of Good Conduct.