

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

**CORPORATE PLAN  
2011-2015**

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## About This Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out Brighton & Hove City Council's strategic direction and priorities for the next four years. It describes how the council will help to deliver the vision of the city's Sustainable Community Strategy, by improving council services and through closer working with partners and residents.

This plan is in two parts:

**Part One:** identifies the council's corporate priorities and strategic outcomes for the next four years. It explains how these priorities have been identified and how progress will be measured.

**Part Two:** sets out the council's priorities for how the council itself is organised and resourced to deliver. This includes how it will manage its resources to deliver the priorities and contribute to achieving the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

More detail about the activity of individual services and how they contribute to achieving the priorities of the Corporate Plan and the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy is contained within the council's business plans.

The Council's Performance and Risk Management Framework is an important piece of the improvement jigsaw, ensuring that every member of staff has clear objectives that connect their contribution to the council's priorities. The business planning process links employee development with day-to-day tasks and service outcomes, right through to the Sustainable Community Strategy aims. This provides a 'golden thread' of work by individuals to the long-term vision for the city. Identifying opportunities and mitigating against risk is an integral element of each services business plan.

Annual progress against the plan will be reported to the council's Governance Committee.

If you would like more detailed information about council services and local democracy visit:

Web: [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BrightonandHoveCityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/BrightonandHoveCityCouncil)

Twitter: @BrightonHoveCC

## **FOREWORD BY COUNCILLOR BILL RANDALL LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

I am pleased to introduce Brighton & Hove City Council's Corporate Plan for 2011/15.

Over the next few years the council faces a significant reduction in funding from central government. At the same time the city is experiencing considerable social, economic and environmental challenges, many of which are illustrated in the State of the City report.

To help protect front line services which support the city's most vulnerable people, we intend to raise council tax by 3.5 per cent for 2012/13. Financial pressures are affecting not just the council, but all of our partners, whether in the Public, Private or Community & Voluntary Sector. Therefore, along with our partners, local businesses, trade unions and residents, we are working to ensure public money provides value for money.

Over the next four years we will focus on **tackling inequality and working to create a fairer city**. Much has been achieved in ensuring equality of opportunity in Brighton & Hove. However, much more remains to be done. Key areas include creating jobs, improving housing standards and availability, ensuring children have the best possible start in life, improving public and social health care provision, boosting public protection, and reducing financial exclusion.

We also want to **create a more sustainable city**. Using 'One Planet Living' principles, we plan to set an example in the city by making our own operations more sustainable. Working with our partners we will take action to reduce carbon emissions, promote sustainable economic growth, improve the sustainability of our transport options, reduce the city's waste, and improve and protect the built and natural environment.

We will **engage more individuals and groups across the city** - whether they are service users, residents, members of community or voluntary groups, employees or employers, including our own staff, or trade union representatives. We want to encourage better participation in democracy, in community life, in the way we decide the future of our city. Everyone should feel pride in and responsibility for the place in which they live or work. This means ensuring genuine collaboration between the council and citizens, going much further than traditional formal meetings and procedures.

The priorities contained within this Corporate Plan are our contribution towards helping to achieve the vision for the city set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy

These are challenging times, but I believe that this should not limit our aspirations. We need to make the most of the city's resources by working better together and more creatively.

Whether you are a resident, a community member, a business owner, a trade union member, an employee of an organisation, or a visitor to Brighton & Hove, I want to hear your ideas about delivering our plan.

**INTRODUCTION BY JOHN BARRADELL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

We have an ambition to become a 'Council the City Deserves' bringing the council closer to residents, businesses and visitors to achieve a stronger, healthier, thriving City. We aim to meet need, to innovate and improve the services we offer and to provide value for money in everything we do.

Improving services during a time of reducing resources and increasing demand is challenging. We have started the change to the way we work, creating an organisation providing services based on a robust understanding of our City, its people and businesses, their needs and aspirations. We have a better understanding of what works and what doesn't, and doing so within the means that we have.

It is not just about how we are organised. We need to properly recognise value and encourage the people working for the council, supporting innovation and improvement. We will do this working closely alongside our partners in the public, voluntary and community, and private sectors.

If we are to truly thrive and emerge from the current economic climate as a robust, forward-thinking and sustainable local authority we have to harness the ambition, energy and drive that powers our city.

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# PART ONE

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# **PRIORITY ONE: TACKLING INEQUALITY**

## **Introduction**

We believe that everyone has a right to a decent home, a good education, a job that pays for a decent standard of living, good healthcare and to feel safe in their community. We also strongly believe that no one should be disadvantaged from birth due to the neighbourhood or family circumstances they are born into.

Although tackling inequality in all these areas has been a focus of national government and local councils for many years, some of our own neighbourhoods still suffer some of the highest levels of multiple deprivation in England. We recognise the negative effect that this has on people's life chances. We will take a more holistic approach to tackling these complex issues. Only by joining up a wider range of services and activities across the public, third and private sectors, and by prioritising resources for the most vulnerable people and communities can we tackle inequality.

We will work in a more joined up and creative way, so that our resources have the greatest impact possible and give the best value for money. We are keen to explore different ways to tackle these issues, which could be through co-operatives, mutuals or social enterprises. We want to continue to strengthen our involvement and work with partnerships across the city (from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to the City Inclusion Partnership, to the Transport Partnership, to the Arts Commission) for the specialist expertise and innovation they offer, to help tackle issues of inequality.

We also know that to make our limited resources have the biggest impact it is important to ensure that this work is not short-term, and that we help to build resilience in our communities and help people feel less dependent on the state, whilst providing a safety net for the most vulnerable.

Our work to tackle inequality contributes to achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities for:

- Promoting enterprise and learning
- Reducing crime and improving safety
- Improving health and well-being
- Improving housing and affordability
- Providing quality advice and information services

## 2011/12 Commitments

- Ensure that our children centres and nurseries are supported to provide the best start in life, having a focus on our most vulnerable families.
- Create a culture of collaboration between schools in order to raise standards, particularly in secondary schools.
- Redesign the way in which youth services are delivered to ensure young people have the opportunity to be active citizens through participating in community activities.
- Co-produce with partners a city Child Poverty Strategy to ensure a co-ordinated approach across public, private and Community & Voluntary Sectors to reducing family poverty.
- Work with the advice sector to reconfigure services to tackle financial exclusion for families and adults on low incomes, especially those subject to multiple disadvantage.
- Pay council employees a minimum living wage of £7.19 per hour and convene a commission on a living wage for the city.
- Actively support the development of community networks, shared values and co-operation within communities to support vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that major planning applications and key council decisions do not have a negative impact on the health of citizens.
- Create an inclusive Health & Wellbeing Board providing strategic leadership for the city and political accountability.
- Reduce unauthorised encampments on sensitive sites by locating a new, permanent site for Gypsy and Roma Travellers.
- Start a programme to fit solar photovoltaic panels on around 1,600 council homes to help cut Carbon Dioxide emissions and reduce residents' fuel bills.
- Work with our council housing tenants, housing associations and co-operatives starting our four year '1000 homes programme', to help address the city's affordable housing shortage.
- Create a new Equalities and Inclusion Policy and Action for council to include wider social and economic inclusion.

## 2011 – 2015 Outcomes

### **Children and young people have the best start in life**

We want to ensure that all of our children and young people have the best possible start in life, so that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, whatever that might be, and to be happy, healthy and safe.

This means ensuring that all children and young people in the city have access to high quality education that will provide them with the knowledge and skills to secure employment and be active and responsible citizens. We will focus on raising overall attainment and narrowing the gap between the lowest and highest performing pupils. We will support all educational institutions (nurseries and children's centres as appropriate, schools, colleges and other educational institutions) in the city to work more collaboratively to achieve city priorities. We will continue to support healthy, creative, tolerant and high achieving schools that promote social responsibility. We will work with schools to meet the needs of children with complex needs and provide an inclusive environment.

The delivery of our schools capital programme through the council's strategic construction partnership is essential to achieve this. All our schools should provide safe, healthy environment for learning and development.

Continuing our close work with City College and other institutions, we will ensure, that for young people, choosing work-based training and skills development, the city offers a range of choices which help them compete in the local labour market. The council will lead by example through continuing its commitment to apprenticeships.

We recognise that life chances for some of our children and young people are uncertain. Growing up in poverty, often with complex home lives means some children need more help and support to recognise value and fulfil their own potential. We will continue to focus on prevention and early intervention and prioritise spend on preventing families falling into need, and helping them to get out and stay out of crisis. We will work to improve our integrated, multi-agency approach, providing holistic, tailored support especially for families where the quality of parenting is affected by adult substance or alcohol misuse, domestic violence or mental health or learning disability issues. We will continue to prioritise the safeguarding of all children and will rigorously monitor and improve safeguarding practice to protect children and young people. For vulnerable young people we will ensure they have support to make positive life choices especially young people at risk of committing crime and entering the youth justice system. Young offenders will be supported into suitable education, training or employment.

We want children and their families to be able to live as they wish; confident that services are high quality, safe and meeting children, young people's and parent carers' aspirations, and that life can be lived with independence, well-being, dignity and a sense of fun. To ensure this we will continue to prioritise prevention and early intervention. We will offer choice in the type of care individuals can chose to receive, offering personalisation to those that want it and appropriate support where desired to develop and build resilience amongst those who care for children and young people with additional and special needs.

We will work to reduce the number of children entering the social care system. For those who we have a corporate parenting responsibility for, we will ensure they have the highest quality of care and support and the best possible life chances. We will work towards being able to place as many children under the age of ten years old as possible with in-house foster carers. We will work closely with providers of adult care to improve our transitional support to young people,



ensuring no-one falls through the gap and with housing colleagues to support care leavers to live independently.

It is important that young people have the opportunity to take part in open, informal creative activity, designed and delivered wherever possible by themselves. Therefore we will work with our youth, sport and cultural services and partners across the city to ensure all young people are able to enjoy their leisure time using it constructively and creatively. We want them to be inspired and challenged to develop a positive attitude to their education, skills and learning and their ambitions for adult life.

We will ensure that we maximise the use and impact of the Community Stadium and Brighton & Hove Albion's successful community outreach programme to engage with some of the most vulnerable young people.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Narrowing of educational attainment gap whilst improving overall attainment levels
- All our schools are judged good or outstanding by OFSTED
- Increase in the number of young people in out of school activities
- Reduction in the number of young people aged 16 – 18 who are Not in Employment Education or Training
- Reduction in the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system
- Reduction in rate of youth reoffending
- Increase in the number of young offenders in suitable education, training or employment
- Increase in take up of Disability Living Allowance and Severe Disability Allowance by working age clients with children
- Increase in stability of placements of Looked After Children
- Reduction in the rate of children who were the subject of a child protection plan per 10,000 children
- Reduction in the rate of children looked after per 10,000 children
- Reduction in the rate of children in need per 10,000
- Increase in evidence based family intervention work to better support children at risk
- Increase in the number of care leavers in education, employment or training
- Reduction in percentage of children under 16 living in households in receipt of out of work benefits
- Reduction in percentage of young people reporting frequent misuse of drugs/volatile substances, alcohol or both
- Reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies

### **Vulnerable adults supported to live healthy, independent lives**

At a time of decreasing resources we will protect services for our vulnerable residents who rely on essential care and support from the council in particular vulnerable adults, families and those on low incomes. We will retain the balance between fulfilling our statutory duties and working proactively with partners, communities and individuals to provide personalised packages of care and support that help people maintain healthy independent lives.

We want people to be able to live as they wish, confident that services are high quality, safe and serving their need for independence, well-being and dignity. To ensure this we will continue to prioritise prevention and early intervention, and offer choice in the type of care people can choose to receive, offering personalisation to those who want it and appropriate day care where desired.

We will continue to check and review our care and support services to ensure equal access for all, recognising that our service users often require a range of support. We will increase our efforts to ensure that vulnerable adults are safe in all locations, whether in their own homes or in other settings. We will carefully vet and monitor all providers.

Helping people to maintain independence is not only about the care and support available to individuals but also about the homes people live in and the community support around them. We will make best use of council housing to help meet the needs of different service users, particularly where an individual or household needs a range of services. This includes making best use of our housing to help support the most vulnerable through schemes such as Extra Care Housing. We will continue to provide practical support to enable individuals to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. This includes ensuring that new homes meet lifetime standards.

We will prioritise our work with communities to develop low-level community support and social capital linking in with existing neighbourhood networks and activities.

We will continue to recognise the vulnerability of and inequality experienced by many individuals who provide care for other family members, especially young carers. They make an invaluable contribution to society and we recognise their support need.

We will continue our support for Community & Voluntary Sector organisations as service providers, and as advocates and voices for our most vulnerable citizens.

Also, working with our partners we will seek to ensure the environment is safe and secure. This means not only people's homes but also the streets, roads, parks and open spaces around them. We will work with partners to ensure the city has accessible, reliable and affordable transport, that people have access to local services and high quality amenities and that the public realm is inclusive, clean, safe, and clutter-free.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the proportion of people taking up self-direct support
- Increase in the percentage of people supported to live independently through social services
- Increase in the percentage of people receiving Supporting People services who have established or are maintaining independent living
- Increase in the number of carers receiving needs assessment or review and specific carers service or advice and information

**Decent, affordable, healthy housing**

We will work more creatively with a wider range of partners (Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes, housing cooperatives, housing associations and private sector landlords) to help residents find secure, affordable, high quality housing and prevent homelessness. We will continue the council's commitment to improve the quality of existing council homes, including the quality of our repair and maintenance service.

Like many cities, thousands of people are unable to access the housing they need, either to rent or buy. Demand for council and housing association homes far outweighs supply, as does the availability of appropriate and good quality private sector housing.

Tackling this demands multiple actions including identifying opportunities to build homes on council land and bringing empty properties in the private sector back into use quickly and efficiently. We will also work with private landlords and the universities to improve standards of properties and establish an ethical lettings agency.

We are committed to improving the energy efficiency of the city's housing stock across all tenures, reducing the cost of living at a time when energy prices continue to rise. We will help individuals to access affordable finance to install energy efficiency measures, especially people on low incomes. This will help tackle fuel poverty and contribute to reducing the city's Carbon Dioxide emissions.

Of great importance is vigilance to the risk of homelessness that many of our residents face in these financially challenging times. We will continue to work with partners to help those who find themselves at risk of homelessness. For those who do, we will minimise the disruption, especially for families and young people, helping them into secure, affordable decent housing as swiftly as possible.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the number of council homes meeting Decent Homes Standard
- Increase in the supply of ready to develop housing sites
- 10% of all new affordable housing meet wheelchair standard
- 155 empty homes brought back into use per year
- Reduction in the number of people living in fuel poverty<sup>1</sup>
- Increase in the energy efficiency of local authority owned homes
- Increase in the number of households where homelessness was prevented due to casework by the council'

**Reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues**

Life expectancy should not be determined by wealth or postcode. Poor housing, poverty, poor diet, air pollution and unemployment are but some of the pillars of health inequality. The major contributors to ill health and premature death (among them alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, obesity) buttress this health inequality, particularly in the more deprived areas of the city. All council services should then be contributing to a healthier city and a reduction in inequalities through initiatives on housing, employment and education as well as promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Working with partners, we will focus on supporting people's health and wellbeing – both physical and mental health - as well as creating a healthier environment. This will include promoting the healthy schools initiative and reducing bullying; improving thermal quality of new and existing homes; establishing a core network of safe cycle routes in the city; improving public spaces and firm but fair enforcement of environmental health and licensing standards.

We will increase the impact of our partnership working to tackle the causes and symptoms of alcohol abuse, and seek to strike the right balance between recognising the economic value of our night-time economy with the need to protect the health and safety of visitors and residents. We will undertake a licensing review and maximise any new powers gained through the Localism Bill to manage the availability of alcohol. We will continue our focus on tackling alcohol-related

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<sup>1</sup> Indicator currently under review by National Government

crime and disorder, and with the NHS, on providing high quality and accessible treatment services.

We will deliver the Health Protection Action Plan to reduce the misuse of substances, and of related crimes and anti-social behaviour, and help individuals access and complete treatment programmes.

We will continue with high profile enforcement of food and health and safety rules, maintaining our excellent record of environmental health improvements.

Planned reforms to the NHS will see the return of public health responsibilities to the council. We will establish an inclusive Health and Wellbeing Board providing strategic leadership for the city and political accountability. We will work closely with NHS colleagues in the emerging Clinical Commissioning Group to tackle these problems together.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Reduction in differences of life expectancy between communities. This is to be measured by a slope index of inequality in life expectancy, separately for men and women (Healthy Life Expectancy);
- Reduction in the number of alcohol-related hospital admissions and alcohol-related deaths;
- Reduction in the rate of drug-related deaths;
- Increase in the number of drug users who complete 'effective treatment' and become drug free

**Access to quality employment with wages that pay for a decent standard of living**

Being without work is one of the greatest inequalities, and supporting local companies and small businesses is a key priority. We have had a strong economy buoyed by a healthy entrepreneurial spirit and a high number of businesses per person in the city. We will continue to enable business support activity and improve the use of council assets, empty shops and offices, bringing them into use as workspace for small and medium sized businesses.

We will continue to play our role with city partners to sustain and create jobs. We will focus on existing economic strengths (tourism, retail, culture, digital, media and creative industries) whilst encouraging diversification, for example into the growing environmental products and services sector. We will develop an 'investment prospectus' for the city and a new sustainable economic strategy, as well as ensuring that all school leavers are equipped to enter training, employment or to continue their education at a higher level. We will continue to work with employers to develop and widen local training and development programmes, ensuring the skills of our workforce match those which are needed for the economy.

Some people in the city have difficulty getting work, due to poor mental health or lack of skills. Working with our partners we will support these individuals into employment. As part of our community learning programme we will increase access to learning for adults. For others, access to work or training is blocked by the lack of flexible and affordable childcare. We will ensure that support for childcare is targeted on the most disadvantaged children.

Working as a member of the Advice Partnership we will take action to promote financial inclusion. This means we will help to ensure that households have enough resources to meet basic need adequately and to be able to make choices over a prolonged period to maintain physical and mental wellbeing and participate in community life.

We will support the Community & Voluntary Sector by using and promoting their services, recognising its economic and social value to the city.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the percentage of adults with learning disabilities known to the council in paid employment
- Increase in the percentage of adults receiving secondary mental health services who are in paid employment, self-employment or supported employment
- Increase in the percentage of the population qualified to at least Level 2,3 and 4
- Increase in the take-up of formal childcare by low income working families

**Culture and leisure opportunities for all**

The city has a reputation as a cultural leader. Our arts, culture and heritage offer is central to the city's economic health. For residents of all ages, access to arts and cultural activities can change lives, improving individuals' skills for employment and life chances, broadening horizons and promoting understanding of ourselves and others. Although a relatively high percentage of the population take advantage of the city's arts, cultural and heritage opportunities, more can and will be done to encourage those who don't. We will use significant national and regional events, such as the 2012 Olympic and Para-Olympic Games, to build and promote inspiring programmes of activity that encourage more residents to get involved in art, culture and sport.

We will continue to support cultural events and organisations that seek to engage all sections of our community and promote more sustainable, accessible, affordable or free activities, such as the huge range of festivals happening across our neighbourhoods. Partnership working with the Community & Voluntary Sector is critical to our cultural success. We will promote and preserve our unique heritage sites and buildings, ensuring patronage and appreciation by residents and visitors alike. We want all residents to share in the life of the city.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the percentage of the adult population that has engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months
- Increase in adult participation in sport and active recreation
- Increase in the percentage of the adult population who have attended a museum at least once in the last 12 months

**Cohesive and safe communities**

Our city has an international reputation as an open, fair and cohesive place. This has not come about by chance, but has been developed through partnership working between the public, private, and community and voluntary sectors. Together we aspire to stamp out discrimination, hate crime and domestic and sexual violence and improve support for those who have been subjected to it.

Law and enforcement have an important part to play in pursuing this goal, but equally we must capitalise on the creative and cultural expertise in the city using new ways of raising awareness, eradicating fear of reporting and tackling prejudice and intolerable behaviour.

The council will lead by example. We will strengthen our already strong equality commitments and ensure full compliance with our Equality Impact Assessment policy. This means our services are provided in an accessible and responsive way to our diverse communities and that all decision making fully considers the potential impact on all equality groups.

We continue to prioritise work that helps us to understand the city's communities, and supports organisations and communities to appreciate and value the diversity of people's backgrounds. We will support and promote stronger, more positive relationships between and within different communities using our community buildings, such as our libraries.

The city has effective partnership working in community safety and through our constant drive to deliver a more effective and integrated system, bringing down crime rates, tackling anti-social behaviour and making the city feel safer. However, there is always more that could and should be done, including ever closer working between organisations, communities and residents. We will continue to play a strong active role in the city's Community Safety Partnership, supporting the delivery of the new Safe in the City Strategy 2011-2014.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the percentage of people who believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- Increase in the percentage of people who think that not treating one another with respect and consideration is a problem in their area
- Increase in the percentage of people feeling safe in the daytime and after dark in their local area
- Reduction in levels of domestic violence<sup>2</sup>
- Reduction in racist and religiously motivated hate incidents and crimes<sup>3</sup>
- Reduction in disability motivated hate incidents and crimes<sup>4</sup>
- Reduction in LGBT motivated hate incidents and crimes<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Indicator often increases as a result in efforts to increase reporting of these crime

<sup>3</sup> Indicator often increases as a result in efforts to increase reporting of these crime

<sup>4</sup> Indicator often increases as a result in efforts to increase reporting of these crime

<sup>5</sup> Indicator often increases as a result in efforts to increase reporting of these crime

## PRIORITY TWO: CREATING A MORE SUSTAINABLE CITY

### Introduction

Creating a more sustainable city means protecting and enhancing the environment, meeting social needs and promoting economic success.

We will be using the One Planet Living<sup>6</sup> Framework to guide our actions toward a more sustainable city. The One Planet Living approach to sustainability was developed by Bioregional and WWF to help people and organisations live and work within a fair share of our planet's resources.

Research shows that in order to achieve this we need to work on reducing our ecological footprint, with particular focus on carbon emissions, transport, food, waste and the materials we use. So, for example, we need to rethink how we create and use energy, how we move our goods and ourselves around the city, and how waste and materials are produced, used and disposed of. We are also committed to continuing our work to promote a Fair-trade city.

Creating a more sustainable city is not just about protecting the environment but supporting new industries within a resilient economy. Brighton & Hove is a city with a reputation for innovation and, with businesses; we would like to create a low carbon city, taking advantage of opportunities for real change such as the proposed 'Rampion' offshore wind farm. With partners we will produce a new Economic Strategy for sustainable growth.

We want to develop the next phase of our economy, becoming a UK leader in eco-tourism. The tourism sector provides 17,000 jobs in the city with an economic value of £700 million. We will provide public leadership to promote collaboration between key business sectors to generate growth and create new jobs. Many businesses that locate here are attracted not only by the economic opportunities, but also by the quality of the local workforce and the quality of life.

We will encourage regeneration and new investment in the city through the development of an investment prospectus and by redrafting the Core Strategy to create a 'City Plan' with sustainability at its centre. We will also set new standards to ensure development is more sustainable. For example, we will be the first council in England to adopt a Planning Advisory Note providing guidance on food growing in new developments.

Achieving UN Biosphere Reserve<sup>7</sup> status will be a major focus. This means working towards making Brighton & Hove a high quality natural environment where a balanced relationship exists between people and nature. We will continue to work to create a better urban environment, fostering pride in the communities in which we live, and to protect and make the most of all open space in the city, creating a stronger link between the sea and the South Downs.

As well as preparing economically for the future, the city must also adapt to the impacts of climate change. For example, the severe winters that we have experienced in recent years affect critical services, such as delivering food, medicine and personal care to the most vulnerable people. The city's Climate Change Strategy<sup>8</sup> will provide the strategic framework to promote significant reduction in carbon emissions and help us to prepare for the effects of

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<sup>6</sup> One Planet Living is a jointly owned trademark of BioRegional Development Group and WWF International, [www.oneplanetliving.org](http://www.oneplanetliving.org)

<sup>7</sup> Official recognition by UNESCO of an area that promotes sustainable development based on local community efforts and sound science.

<sup>8</sup> To be published in December 2011

climate change. Our position on the coast and the potential for flooding and coastal erosion means that homes, buildings, and infrastructure require protection.

We will capitalise on significant national and regional events, such as the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, to promote the city as a place to visit. We will also use the enthusiasm that surrounds such events to encourage residents to get involved in the cultural and leisure opportunities of the city

Key to creating a sustainable city is the strength and commitment of our city partnerships. The City Sustainability Partnership is critical to spearheading the new changes as well as other partnerships, such as the Housing, Transport, Economic and Food Partnerships, which are fundamental to delivery.

Our work to build a more sustainable city contributes to achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities for:

- Promoting enterprise and learning
- Living within environmental limits and enhancing the environment
- Providing sustainable transport

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## 2011/12 Commitments

- Redraft the Core Strategy to support the new corporate priorities and outcomes, in particular sustainable transport and housing delivery
- With the business community create a new Economic Strategy, a blueprint for sustainable economic growth, and publish an investment prospectus
- Launch the city's first eco-tourism strategy
- Produce the city's Climate Change Strategy for developing a low carbon city that is adapting well to climate change
- Offer greater choice in how people move about the city, prioritising action in the new Local Transport Plan to support a fairer balance between all road users.
- Begin establishing a coordinated programme of 20 mile per hour speed limits in consultation with residents
- Review the effectiveness and impact of current parking schemes on the city, for residents, businesses and visitors
- Increase and make safer cycling routes in the city such as Old Shoreham Road and The Drive/Grand Avenue
- Review the Municipal Waste Strategy and develop plans for a food waste collection and communal recycling trials, and implement a community composting scheme
- Reduce the council's ecological footprint by installing solar photovoltaic panels on schools and council buildings, setting tough targets and working towards One Planet Living endorsement
- Develop a 'carbon budget' for the council to be reported alongside the financial budget, providing accountability in our carbon emissions from 2012/13

## 2011-2015 Outcomes

### A strong and low carbon economy

Thanks, in large part, to Brighton & Hove's reputation, growth and innovation the city has not been as hard hit as some areas of the UK by the recession. But the economy is still fragile and we must not be complacent. We want to help forge economic recovery by working with businesses, both major established employers and new start up companies, to help weather the downturn and take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. Together we will develop a new Economic Strategy for the city that will deliver sustainable growth and job creation.

The city's economy benefits greatly from tourism (particularly UK visitors but increasingly from Europe) attracted by the wonderful historic architecture, the unique shopping experience, the city's inclusivity and its cultural and entertainment offer. While this is important to the future of the city, we have arguably not promoted one of our best assets, the South Downs. We will work to become one of the UK's leading destinations for eco-tourism, reflecting the growing maturity of the city as a tourist destination. We will continue to capitalise and support the uniqueness of our seafront whilst creating a stronger visitor experience between the city and the South Downs.

Working closely with the business community we will focus on developing a low carbon economy, improving the city's environmental performance, reputation and inward investment offer. We will seek to capitalise on the growing environmental industries and services sector and focus on supporting and growing the city sectors and clusters that support the UK transition to a low carbon future, including our creative, digital and technological businesses.

The creative industries are not the largest sector of our economy but they are the fastest growing and we can learn from their success, particularly how they communicate effectively with each other through networks such as 'Wired Sussex'. Small businesses (those of fewer than 10 people) account for the majority of employers in the city. Small and start up companies need suitable and affordable workspace if they are to establish, thrive and importantly to remain here.

The source of our food and disposal of food waste is an issue for both residents and visitors alike. The food industry plays an important role within our tourism economy and we will focus on working closer with the industry, including its supply chain, to improve sustainability standards whilst promoting growth.

Forging ever stronger links between the council, the two Universities, the Teaching Hospital and the business sector is paramount. Many of the departments are leaders in their field and we will enable greater interaction between business and academia.

The city remains one of the UK's leading conference destinations. The council has long been a host and beneficiary through the Brighton Centre. Unfortunately, our plan to rebuild the Brighton Centre, to provide state of the art facilities and maintain the viability of the city as a conference destination, has been stalled by the recession. We will invest in the current building to reduce its carbon footprint, through improved environmental management and through plans we draw up for its future.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Reduction in the percentage of the working age population claiming out of work benefits
- Increase in the percentage of small businesses showing a year on year increase in number of employees

- Increase in the number of new business registration for VAT and PAYE per 10,000 resident population aged 16 years old and over
- Growth in number of digital media businesses
- Growth of the environmental industries sector<sup>9</sup>
- Increase the number of businesses relocating to the city
- Increase the number of tourism businesses that have green accreditation
- Increase conference income
- Reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions per capita (domestic, industrial, commercial and road transport)

### **A fair balance between the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, public transport users and motorists**

The council has achieved recognition as ‘Transport Authority of the Year’ for demonstrating excellence, innovation and progress. We want to do more and become an exemplar in transport policy and practice.

Road vehicles are the greatest contributing factor to poor air quality in Brighton & Hove. Traffic congestion has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of residents and people’s perception of the city as an accessible, safe and enjoyable place. Working with transport providers we intend to improve choice, making cycling and walking a safer and more pleasant experience and public transport an increasingly convenient and effective alternative to personal car use.

The number of residents who cycle to work in the city is in line with the national average. Whilst good, as an official Cycling Demonstration Town and more recently a ‘Cycling Town City’ we should be doing better. We will use good practice, nationally and internationally, to encourage more people to be confident and safe when moving about the city, offering sufficient and secure cycle parking.

We will undertake a review of parking schemes in the city to ensure a fair balance between the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. We will also work to improve the visitor experience of getting in and around the city, including as part of our eco-tourism strategy getting to and from the South Downs.

We want our children to be safe on the roads and have a viable alternative to being driven to school in a car. We will work with governing bodies to revise travel plans for all our schools to ensure they focus on improving the health of our children, through increased walking and improved air quality. This will also serve to reduce the number of car journeys, reducing congestion in neighbourhoods and the risk of road traffic accidents.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the number and proportion of cycle trips
- Increase in cycle parking across the city
- Increase in bus patronage originating in the local authority area
- A higher proportion of access to employment by public transport
- Increase in the percentage of bus services running on time
- Reduction in airborne particulates and nitrous oxide in local authority area
- Reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions per capita (transport only)

<sup>9</sup> Indicator under development by BHCC Economic Development & Enterprise

- Reduction in the number of adults and children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

### **A low waste city**

We want to ensure that, working with residents, businesses and partners, we minimise the total amount of waste produced, and maximise reuse and recycling of the remaining waste.

Over the last few years, whilst domestic waste levels have been declining, recycling levels in the city have been static. Whilst, education remains important in order to encourage more people to reduce, reuse or recycle waste to increase recycling we need to relook at the services we provide. We will be planning food waste collection and communal recycling trials and community composting schemes. Residents will be involved in designing these schemes to see what works best, is affordable and can be rolled out across the city.

Domestic waste is only a part of the overall picture. Construction and commercial waste makes up a significant amount of the waste produced in the city. We already work with the business community to encourage recycling and we will investigate the feasibility of providing a commercial collection.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Decrease in overall levels of domestic waste produced in the city
- Increase in the percentage of domestic waste recycled and composted
- Decrease in the percentage of domestic waste sent to land fill

### **A healthier and higher quality built environment**

Despite the recession, the city is growing. In 2010/11 the planning application rate in the city was at the highest level for the last five years. Some major developments have been delayed but, at the same time, a community stadium had been built and re-development of the Open Market is underway.

The council is responsible for ensuring that all planning applications within the city comply with planning policies laid out in the Core Strategy and national planning guidance. We will push for high quality, sustainable new buildings and new housing within the city by producing our own guidance on minimum design standards. The success of One Brighton<sup>10</sup> demonstrates that sensitive and sustainable regeneration of sites can be achieved and is economically viable.

We are revising the Core Strategy to plan for a resilient and sustainable city over the next 20 years, as well as to protect employment and green space, and push for new housing. We are working with housing cooperatives and social landlords within the city to find sites for 1000 new homes over the next four years. We will continue to identify space for new housing on all council owned housing estates within the city. We must plan and use the limited space that we have for effective, efficient and sustainable growth.

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<sup>10</sup> One Brighton is one of the country's first environmentally and socially sustainable 'One Plant Living' communities.

We will look at how we use and manage our assets, at underused or empty council owned buildings and land, to create new and affordable workspace. We will make it easy for businesses and communities alike to see what and where we own buildings and land.

We are responsible for maintaining and developing the 'public realm' ensuring it is safe, clean and accessible for all users. This includes many of the city's roads, public spaces and council housing land. The council provides essential services such as street lighting and signage, and other facilities like benches and public toilets as well as street trees. Working with businesses and residents we will explore how to improve the quality and cleanliness of the public realm, the environmental impact of these services, while reducing costs.

The built environment affects the perception of the city as a safe and welcoming place – both for those who live and work here, and for those who visit. New Road is a model of good practice, balancing the needs of different road users and becoming a community space, and we will seek to make this happen in other parts of the city. We will continue to improve and enhance the public realm and work with community groups, across the city, to preserve our architectural heritage.

As the density of the city increases, demand and use of parks and open spaces escalates. The city is very fortunate to have an extensive estate of urban gardens, parks and squares and we will continue work to ensure they are attractive, inclusive, safe, clean and support wildlife. For example the council has submitted a £2 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for The Level. Many of our parks and spaces benefit from the support of local communities and all play a key part in supporting the health and well being of our residents. The majority of our open spaces have a long heritage and when we seek to improve or adapt them we will always consult with the widest range of users possible to ensure those plans fit need.

Demand for allotments is high and increasing. The benefits of 'growing your own', working on the land and enjoying the exercise is increasingly popular. We have a range of sites across the city, the majority of which are over-subscribed and well managed. We will encourage their use and seek to increase their availability as well as explore new community growing spaces.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Consistent high level of user satisfaction of council parks
- Increase in the proportion of approved planning applications for new build (residential) development committing to high standards of environmental design
- Reduction in the number of conservation areas at risk
- Reduction in the number of listed buildings at risk
- Reduction in complaints regarding appearance of sites/buildings
- Increase in the number of allotment plots available and reduction in the number of residents awaiting a plot

### **Protection and enhancement of the city's natural environment**

Brighton & Hove's close mix of natural and built environments is unique in many ways, and we want to ensure that the city is and remains a rewarding place for residents, businesses and visitors alike. We will foster a mutual relationship between the urban environment and nature, encouraging people to interact with and conserve natural habitats and wildlife wherever they are. Using our own assets we will preserve and increase biodiversity, including reinvigorating the Downland Initiative.

We will work to achieve UN Biosphere Reserve status. Designation as a Reserve would attract resources to find new ways of addressing the economic and environmental issues facing the city. Research shows that this status attracts economic investment.

Part of the work on Biosphere Status includes ensuring access and raising awareness of the great range of environments on our doorstep to enjoy. We want to instil a culture where children and young people from all neighbourhoods within the city enjoy the opportunities and the health benefits that open space affords. Education about our environment, for children and adults alike, is crucial and our schools have an important role to play.

We will maximise the opportunities our city location provides. With only three miles between the sea and the South Downs at the widest point we want to become renowned as an eco-tourism destination, surpassing our traditional reputation as a 'London-by-the-sea'. We will take full advantage of having a new National Park on our doorstep, and work with partners to reclaim the city's two blue flag awards.

With partners, we will take action to protect the city's water supply with our focus being on preventing pollutants in the groundwater, minimising the loss of clean water at source and reducing water demand. We will take advantage of the pilot study under way in the catchment area of the Adur and Ouse rivers.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Maintain the condition of city's two Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Improvement in groundwater status

**Dignified and decent treatment of animals**

The council is a significant owner of open land surrounding the city, much of which is leased and used for farming. We commit to help protect wildlife on all of the land that we own, tenanted or not, and to manage the impact of human activity on natural habitats and prevent persecution of animals in the wild.

We will continue to use our influence in relation to circus animals and those in captivity, seeking to promote and improve the rights of all creatures. This includes the rights of domesticated animals, whose welfare and quality of life we will seek to protect. In respect of livestock we seek to ensure the most rigorous health and safety standards and that humane practice is applied.

We will continue to provide advice and support to residents and businesses to prevent circumstances where animals pose a risk to public health. Where we do intervene we will ensure that we do so humanely, with minimum distress caused to animals.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Continue to meet the standards for the control system for animal health

## **PRIORITY THREE: ENGAGING PEOPLE WHO LIVE & WORK IN THE CITY**

### **Introduction**

The council does not and should not work in isolation. We value engagement and are committed to continuous improvement. From how we provide information about the council – how it is run, the services we provide – to opportunities for residents, community and voluntary groups and businesses to influence and take decisions.

Not only do we want people to feel they can talk to the council and be heard, but we want them to be actively involved. We will collaborate with individuals and communities – including the business community – to find out how we best meet their needs, tackle issues and create a city that we are all equally responsible for and proud to live, work and socialise in.

We want to build stronger, healthier, more active and productive relationships between the council and people who live and work in the city. We will provide more opportunities for co-production and invest in building social capital and promoting volunteering. Involving and working as equal partners with citizens and communities is how we do business. It will be key to the success of the UN Biosphere Reserve, the city parking review, and tackling health inequalities.

Right now, the reality is that, like many other authorities, we struggle to truly reach and engage all sections of the community. Some of our structures and processes are overly staid and formal, public but poorly attended, without the flexibility and responsiveness to allow a conversation with communities on their own terms. Some, though, work well and we must make this the rule and not the exception.

We recognise the recent phenomenon of social media as an easy and immediate way to talk, share and also to campaign. We have responded – improving how the council can be lobbied through online petitions and now residents can make an enquiry through Twitter. But we must keep pace and innovate, drawing on the expertise that exists here in the city – creative people and creative organisations – to help us find new ways to engage.

We will actively work to strengthen local democracy and improve the quality of democratic conversation in the city. In the current climate of decreasing resources and the need to prioritise spending, improved engagement is not only an ideal, but a necessity. We must ensure that spending is directed to the right place at the right time for the right purpose. Therefore we must strengthen and bring together both the role of political debate and decision taking with civic discussion and accountability; providing support and building capacity of citizens and communities to participate.

Key to improving council engagement activity is our involvement in the Stronger Communities Partnership. Working as a collective of partners from the community and voluntary sector and public organisations, the Partnership is responsible for driving up the quality of community engagement in the city. In particular, it is focused on ensuring statutory and community and voluntary organisations meet the standards for engagement as set out in the city's Community Engagement Framework. The Partnership is also taking forward actions to develop the capacity for organisations and communities to carry out high quality engagement. The Framework was approved by the Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership in 2009 and the Stronger Communities Partnership is currently updating the Framework actions, with the council's full support.

Our actions to improve the involvement of all individuals and communities support the Sustainable Community Strategy priority of 'strengthening communities and involving people'.

## 2011/12 Commitments

- Improve the council's online offer to residents by expanding the range of fully web-enabled transactions and make progress towards a website that can be personalised by the customer
- Support residents to self-serve and access services more locally by widening the Council Connect services to more locations and venues across the city
- Work with communities to provide them with the power to directly influence services in their neighbourhood by piloting new approaches for neighbourhood governance
- Work with private sector and community and voluntary sector partners, and members of the community to trial new ways of bringing community forums and online forums together
- Explore how, through Scrutiny, we can improve the council's engagement with council housing tenants
- Remove restrictive terms and conditions from the council's online planning and licensing application registers and meeting webcast system.
- Ensure school governing bodies are supported to engage with the council's priorities
- Have an open budget book
- Most inclusive budget setting process to date for 2012/13 budget

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## 2011 – 2015 Outcomes

### **A council that is easy to contact and demonstrates that it listens to residents**

The council's 'Customer Promise' says that the council will be easier to reach, clear and respectful, and listen and act. We will continue to embed this promise across all parts of the council.

We have signed up to an open data approach, but recognise that not everyone can access or wants this. We will provide information in the most appropriate format with the option of full data sets where available. We will continue to respond to where the majority of citizens go to for information and to communicate; we will review and improve our communications focusing on improving our website and using social media to its maximum effect.

We are committed to ensuring that people have the opportunity to be part of and influence service reviews and redesign. This includes providing them with support and building their capacity to participate. Individuals and communities know what works and what doesn't and can help us ensure public funding makes maximum impact. 2011 will see the most in-depth budget consultation the council has undertaken, and which we will build on every year.

Following a consultation by our libraries staff with over 2,300 customers, feedback has been taken directly on board and resulted in changes that will be rolled out across all libraries. This will improve the effectiveness of libraries in their traditional function as a provider of books but also strengthen their role as community hubs, with new IT facilities, toys for children, refreshments and study space.

As a local authority with over 12,000 council housing tenancies, we are committed to ensuring that all tenants' voices are heard. We will offer a wider choice in how they communicate with us, going further than formal structures.

Our commitment to enabling young people to have an active role in the services that affect their lives, their communities and the city they live in is unwavering.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in customer satisfaction levels

### **Resilient and Vibrant Community & Voluntary Sector**

We recognise the significant value and benefit that the Community & Voluntary Sector provides to our city. We are fortunate to have a thriving Community & Voluntary Sector, with over 1,600 active organisations, from small community-based grass roots organisations to branches of large national charities, to locally grown social enterprises. As well as being key service providers and service users' advocates, the Sector plays a significant role in facilitating and increasing volunteering in the city. There are 19,200 volunteer positions in Brighton & Hove, giving 57,600 hours per week. If volunteers were paid the same rate as workers in the Community & Voluntary Sector their annual salary bill would be worth £24 million - a huge donation of time and effort.

We will work in partnership with community and voluntary sector staff, volunteers and Trustees, to ensure the Sector's resilience and effectiveness through these financially challenging times. The Sector plays a key role as advocate and conduit for some of our most vulnerable citizens

and communities. Its participation in the city's decision making structures including the council's is a key strength of the city engagement picture. We will continue to support its role in decision making and the review, design and delivery of council and city services.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in percentage of Community & Voluntary Sector organisations that feel positive or very positive about how local statutory bodies influence their organisation.
- Increase in percentage of people who take part in formal volunteering

**Improved collaboration between the council and communities**

We are committed to the principles of community development and actively building the capacity of communities to find solutions for themselves, which may or may not involve public bodies. We want to turn public services inside out and rediscover the human resources within our communities and harness their social networks and activism that will make public service activity more successful and sustainable. We recognise that 'community' is a highly mobile term and that individuals can relate to several different communities at the same time – geography, interest, identity and we should be sensitive to this when carrying out any type of engagement activity.

Key to more successful collaboration with communities is a more co-ordinated and joined up approach by public bodies and our ability to use and build on engagement routes and activity that already exists. We will continue to strengthen our joint work with communities and Sussex Police on neighbourhood policing and environmental improvements.

We will start with exploring the risks and opportunities that neighbourhood plans, as proposed in the Localism Bill, might have for neighbourhoods.

We will reinvigorate our policy on community asset transfer to ensure we are using council assets to support and encourage community activism, working in partnership with communities to reduce risk and ensure sustainable benefit.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in percentage of people who feel that they belong to their local neighbourhood
- Increase in percentage of people participating in decision making groups that affect their area

**Improved council engagement with businesses**

Much of our focus, quite rightly, is on engaging and working with individuals as residents and service users, and with communities. In the current financial climate we will increase our focus and quality of engagement with businesses. Through continual improvement in our understanding of and collaboration with the business community we can ensure we have a robust strategy for sustainable economic growth.

**We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in number of businesses represented and involved in council and city planning and decision making

## **A more open and transparent council**

The council is a politically and democratically led organisation and elected members represent citizens of the city. We will take action to make it easier to be involved with the decision-making processes of the council. We will promote the role of scrutiny and encourage people to participate in scrutiny reviews. We will review the current decision-making structure and see where improvements can be made, taking advantage of national Government's proposals in the Localism Bill including neighbourhood planning, neighbourhood councils, and the option to reinstate committee style decision making.

We will use open data formats and licensing for the publication of council information, reports, data and media. We are proud of the 2011 State of the City report which, for the first time, provides an easy to digest statistical view of city, backed by raw data available to the public.

Importantly, we will ensure that we meet the duty of the Equality Act (2010) that 'the public and voluntary and community sector organisations have the opportunity to review published council data before public bodies set their equality objectives in April'. We must give people two clear months in which to review the data.

National government has abolished many of the external auditors of the council however we remain committed to being locally accountable and therefore will, annually publish an update on the city performance plan as well the council's organisational health report.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the number of petitions submitted to council
- Increase in webcast views of council and cabinet meetings
- Increase in the number of public questions and letters to Council and Cabinet meetings
- Increase in the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality

# PART TWO

# A RESPONSIBLE AND EMPOWERING EMPLOYER

## Introduction

We value the contribution made by all colleagues within the organisation and our partners across the City who together seek to plan and deliver the best possible services to the residents of Brighton and Hove. When the economy is challenging and resources are stretched we understand the additional burdens that are placed on our colleagues. In these times we rely on them even more to continue to perform consistently well and to give their best.

Some of the values that staff portray and that are important to us as an employer include:

- Fairness and equality
- Respect, openness and trust
- Openness to innovation and change
- Sustainability and continuous improvement

In summer 2011, as part of developing the council's 'People Strategy', we engaged colleagues in a conversation on four themes: our changing environment, our changing culture, the quality of our working lives and organisational effectiveness.

By listening to what people tell us, looking at the facts and figures and considering the transformation with which we are currently engaged, the new strategy will describe the climate and conditions we need for us to continue to thrive as an organisation.

The People Strategy will:

- Support the delivery of this Corporate Plan
- Ensure that our organisation internally reflects our aspirations and ambitions for the city
- Create a new strategic framework for employment, behaviours, performance, management and development

We will be refining our Performance & Risk Management Framework and undertaking an in-depth review of the way we manage learning and development to ensure they support the People Strategy. Both will also be closely linked to make sure that we focus our learning and development resources on the needs of the organisation as a whole.

In April 2011 we introduced a new strategy for improving attendance at work. This strategy places greater emphasis on early intervention and problem solving and is supported by early referrals to occupational health services and regular monitoring for evidence of the negative effects of stress. We plan to assess regularly the impact of the new strategy with a view to improving the level of attendance across the organisation.

Local Government has and will most likely continue to experience constant change; therefore we will strengthen how we manage change and support people. We will develop a new Change Management Strategy that will improve internal communication and ensure the right learning and development opportunities are in place. We also realise the importance of strong Human Resource support for managers and colleagues during change and will be reviewing and ensuring that what we have in place is appropriate.

We will also build flexibility into our approach to job roles and descriptions, providing staff and managers with sufficient clarity to understand, communicate and manage their work whilst giving them and the organisation sufficient flexibility to respond to the constantly changing demands on local authority services. This along with our commitment to limit any new recruitment, offer schemes for voluntary severance where possible and support re-training and redeployment will help us to try and avoid compulsory redundancies and retain the skills, knowledge and capability we require.

## **2011/12 Commitments**

- To listen and reflect the views of colleagues, partners and Trade Unions in the development of the People Strategy
- Collaborate with colleagues in implementing the People Strategy, turning organisational aspirations into action
- Continue to promote equality of opportunity through the refresh of our Equality and Inclusion Policy.
- Introduce a new policy to promote Dignity at Work
- Implement a new policy for the management of attendance
- Provide a minimum Living Wage for employees of the council
- Through careful workforce planning, continue to take action to reduce the need for compulsory redundancies
- Help the organisation maintain its status and recognition as an 'Investor in People'
- Deliver, in partnership, a successful city-wide community engagement learning programme
- Complete the council's bi-annual staff survey
- Refresh our procedure for individual performance management

## **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in overall staff satisfaction
- Decrease in percentage of employees responding that they have experienced discrimination or harassment or bullying in the last 12 months
- Increase in percentage of employees who declare that they have a disability as a percentage of the total workforce (non-schools)
- Increase in percentage of employees who declare that they are from an ethnic minority as a percentage of the total workforce (non-schools)
- Decrease in number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (non-schools)
- Increase in the number of staff receiving individual performance reviews

# A COUNCIL THE CITY DESERVES - OUR TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

## Introduction

The Council has set out a transformation programme to meet the challenges of the next few years and develop a 'Council the City deserves'. This programme continues to form the foundation of the changes we are introducing, and will develop and evolve to help us meet new challenges and take advantage of opportunities as they arise. These include, reducing public sector budgets, increasing demographic pressures and rising customer expectations, all of which means we will need to do a lot more with much less. We need to provide value for money.

We need to develop a better understanding of the needs of the City, give our citizens a real say in what services we provide and be innovative in how we provide those services, using the expertise of our staff to design new ways of working.

If we are to create a more sustainable city then the council needs to lead by example, reducing its environmental impact, through adopting One Planet Living Principles. We will embed these principles throughout the work of the council and, where appropriate, through our procurement practices. Our areas of focus will include:

- Making buildings more energy efficient and using renewable energy solutions where appropriate
- Developing more sustainable transport options for our services and staff
- Reducing the amount of waste we produce, and increasing its reuse and recycling where possible
- Working with suppliers and contractors to reduce the environmental impact of goods and services we purchase
- Using water more efficiently in our buildings
- Protecting biodiversity and creating new spaces for wildlife
- Continuing our support for a Fair Trade City
- Strengthening and extending our environmental management system

Working in partnership with public and community and voluntary sector organisations provides us with the opportunity to maximise all public funding for the benefit of the city. Collectively we need to make better use of our buildings and land, and exploit the opportunities presented by rapid advances in technology.

In his "first 100 days" document the Chief Executive outlined the gap between our residents' perception of the city as a great place to live and their perception of the council. Whilst many individual services are well regarded and respected, the role of the organisation as a whole to help shape the life of the city is not so well acknowledged. The transformation programme is vital to improving not only what we do and how we do it, but also the reputation of the council and of public services in general.

## 2011/12 Commitments

- Improve the council's online offer to residents by expanding the range of fully web-enabled transactions and make progress towards a website that can be personalised by the customer
- Increase the integration of the council website with back office systems to manage customer information more efficiently
- First in depth consultative approach to setting council's budget for 2012/13
- First open book approach to council budgeting
- Adopt open government license and make more council data available.
- Develop an asset map of all council owned land and buildings including all major public partners
- Bring all property management functions across the council together to ensure we are making the best use of all our land and buildings
- Introduce a Memorandum of Understanding to share support services across public organisations in the city
- Share accommodation with two new partners
- Reduce the council's electricity consumption and costs through improved energy management and by fitting photovoltaic panels on certain council buildings
- Develop further the council's ISO 14001 environmental management system to reduce costs and improve resource efficiency
- Develop more robust sustainability indicators to more accurately monitor the council's performance
- Adopt new sustainable and ethical procurement standards
- Improve the council's internal Environment Champions network and staff engagement in sustainability



## 2011 – 2015 Outcomes

### **Excellent customer service**

The council's 'Customer Promise' says that the council will be easier to reach, clear and respectful and to listen and act. We will continue to embed this promise across all parts of council.

The council is a very large organisation providing a wide variety of services. We aim to simplify the experience of contacting different parts of the organisation; so that people get the information and help they need first time. Key to this is the roll out of a system called 'Council Connect' and the establishment of customer access hubs.

We have developed the council website to be more accessible and enable customers to make more transactions online. We will continue to increase the range of council services people can access through our website and the range of transactions they can make, since this is now widely expected by the public, often more convenient than the telephone or face-to-face and costs less for us to provide. We will make behind the scenes changes to improve how we manage information, for example capturing once and re-using many times.

We realise not everyone can, or chooses, to use the website; that it does not suit all our residents. We will continue to provide and improve the different ways people can access council services, ensuring people can do business with us swiftly and hassle-free depending on their need.

A key aspect of how we provide excellent customer service will be to ensure that we design what we do and how we do it with residents and visitors' needs always in mind. This will be embedded in all that we do to make the Council more efficient and effective.

### **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the levels of customer satisfaction
- Reduction in customer repeat contact as they need only tell us once
- A consistent customer experience for common transactions
- Quicker turnaround time of customer transactions

### **An efficient and effective council**

The National Government's comprehensive spending review is driving significant change across all public sector organisations and like many other local councils we are exploring new ways of working to maintain excellent services within decreasing budgets.

A goal of our transformation programme is to achieve stronger outcomes for citizens. By this we mean ensuring council services have the maximum positive impact possible on both individuals and the city. This is through 'Intelligent Commissioning' which means working in partnership and using strong evidence to understand what needs to be done, and to be innovative in the way it is achieved.

We continue to support this approach and will roll this out across the Council, underpinned by the following principles:

- Using comprehensive evidence to understand the needs of our residents, including an assessment of the impact and cost of current services, best practice from within the city, nationally and internationally
- Designing future shape of services with residents; ensuring services focus on what matters most to residents and harnessing their knowledge and experience
- Enabling all staff to help review and design services; valuing and capitalising on their knowledge and experience and avoiding wasted effort
- Joining up delivery across the council and our partners; maximising all resources available
- Using best practice and innovation to add value and keep within budget
- Reviewing the impact of services on residents, businesses and visitors, regularly, and responding as necessary
- Working to achieve One Planet Living principles

These principles are not new, but we need to raise standards and increase consistency across the council. The principles provide staff, at all levels, with a framework within which to work; one defined by 'Systems Thinking' and that is focused on the outcomes for individuals.

We are introducing a new organisational structure to support these principles based around differentiating between strategy/policy development and delivery rather than working in more traditional Directorates. With the development of a new Strategic Leadership Board and Council Management Team, most of this structure is in place. We will now complete the structure and, most importantly, embed the principles into it.

Alongside this new framework for the council we will take practical steps to increase our efficiency. We will look to share assets and resources with other local government service providers where it will add value. The City Property Group, comprising of Property Managers from many different providers, has led the way in sharing accommodation and co-locating services wherever it benefits residents and reduces costs.

We will also ensure staff are able to be more flexible in where they work, reducing travelling time, increasing their productive time especially contact time with residents and reducing our carbon footprint. Phase 1 of our 'Workstyles' programme started us on this journey allowing about 500 of our staff to work more flexibly. We will continue to roll-out this programme learning from phase 1 and engaging with staff.

Technology is pivotal to our flexibility and we will take every opportunity to get best value from the rapid advances in this area. We will ensure we can more easily share data across the Council and with partners where needed, consolidating the 300 separate software products we currently use, most of which work in isolation. We will produce a new Information, Communication and Technology Strategy that will outline how we intend to achieve these changes based on the following principles:

- Capture data once and re-use often, holding only what is essential
- Open up our information to public use as much as possible
- Design our systems so that information can easily flow across the council
- Standardise and share applications across the council avoiding bespoke systems.
- Make systems mobile so that data can be captured at source and information is available wherever it is best used.
- Make systems simple to use and empowering.
- Through these principles and by how we provide IT and communication systems, reduce our carbon footprint.

## **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Increase in the proportion of staff working under new workstyle arrangements
- Achieve a 'desk to people' ratio of 7:10 (full time employees)
- Reduction in office accommodation by 30%
- Reduction in the council's Carbon Dioxide emissions (from its operations)
- Reduction in waste produced from council operations
- Decrease in the number of separate software applications
- Reduction in the annual cost of council business travel

## **Value for Money**

The council spends over £700 million of public money each year and it is our responsibility to provide value for money. We will continue to systematically review all our services, identifying areas where we can reduce costs while improving or maintaining high quality services. We will work with other partners to share costs, promote innovation and reduce duplication.

We will seek to make efficient use of our buildings in terms of space and energy. We will roll out our new carbon reduction programme and improve our monitoring of energy and water usage and our waste produced, looking for ways to reduce associated costs. We will reinvest income from our renewable generated energy back into meeting council priorities.

Many of the ways in which the council works need to be unique to individual services to ensure professional expertise is developed and service delivery is focused on residents. However, some activities, currently undertaken by many teams across the council, will be co-ordinated by single teams. This will enable us to develop economies of scale, make best use of limited resources or skills, be more joined up and ensure the flow of information. The activities included are Asset Management, Communications, Information, Communication and Technology and Learning & Development.

We are aware of the risk of increasing bureaucracy by standardising and centralising these functions. Our overriding principle will be to ensure that decisions are made at the appropriate part and level of the organisation. We will also continue to review our management structures and our administrative support to ensure they are value for money and are enabling effective and efficient service delivery.

Our transformation programme will change the organisation. Best practice shows that good project and programme management is needed for change to be successful in any large organisation. We will be strengthening the Council's change management method and have set up a Programme Management Office, to ensure any significant changes within the organisation are well planned and managed.

## **We will know we are making a difference if, by 2015 there is:**

- Achievement of our value for money saving targets

## **FINANCIAL PLANNING**

### **Summary of the Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the resource projections for the forthcoming three years, the financial challenges and opportunities that the council faces and the approach planned to meet the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

The MTFS explores in more detail the opportunities and risks presented by some major proposed changes to the local government finance system from 2013/14 and provides further analysis of the potential consequences of reforms to the benefits system. It will be regularly updated to reflect the latest information available.

The MTFS includes some changes to our financial planning principles:

- An intention to raise council tax by 3.5% in order to protect as far as possible services for the most vulnerable.
- Regard for the new Government incentive from April 2013 to grow the local economy and keep part of any growth in local business rates which could be maximised by the council's own direct capital investment, its enabling development and its relevant overarching strategies.
- Will seek to protect as far as possible capital grant funding for transport and the public realm investment.
- All services will review their assets to determine any that are surplus to requirements which can be disposed of in order to meet the council's other corporate capital investment priorities and reduce its carbon footprint.
- Council carbon budgets will be developed to be reported alongside the financial budget of the council.
- A sharing of the use of any future new homes bonus income, to further protect those services and to reinvest in enabling new housing development.

The council will integrate its service and financial planning on the basis of need, ensuring cost effective outcomes and will continue working with partners to ensure the provision of joined up services and share costs wherever possible. Where appropriate Equality Impact Assessments will be developed for all proposals to change services and implement savings. Analysis will also be undertaken to assess the cumulative impact of different proposals particularly on the most vulnerable and deprived sections of our community. A more extensive and inclusive programme of consultation on the budget will take place as part of the annual budget process.

Many of the commitments for 2011/12 will be funded through a change in priority or focus for the use of existing resources, including staff time and capital programmes such as the Local Transport Plan.

Some commitments have additional costs which have been factored into existing budget plans, for example:

- Funding to facilitate the redesign of youth services;
- Support to the advice sector's work on financial inclusion;
- Commitment to a £7.19 Living Wage for Council staff;
- Fitting solar photo-voltaic panels on council homes and corporate buildings (self-financing);
- Bidding for UN Biosphere Reserve status.

There are some proposals that are likely to require additional revenue investment but which cannot be fully costed at this early stage. This is because there are a range of options about how they could be implemented and further consideration and consultation will be required before reaching a view about the best way forward. The two most significant ones in revenue terms are probably:

- Reducing domestic waste and increase recycling including the launch of a food waste pilot; and
- New approaches to neighbourhood governance.

The council will explore all options for external funding and innovative cost effective solutions to help support the delivery of these proposals.

The council will continue to use a range of tools to lever investment into the city to deliver priorities in relation to affordable housing, redevelopment of major sites and the public realm including the seafront. These include:

- Planning policies and securing enabling development;
- Use of existing council land and buildings for example in relation to the housing local delivery vehicle;
- Facilitating private sector investment into the city;
- Accessing grant funding, for example to support plans for The Level;
- Using prudential borrowing where there is a robust and affordable business case.

The following table shows a summary of the budget projections for the General Fund over the next 3 years.

Table: Summary of General Fund budget projections			
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Budget requirement brought forward	232,221	225,377	227,093
Function & Funding changes	-519	-	-
Revised Budget requirement brought forward	231,702	225,377	227,093
Inflation	2,988	4,933	4,920
General Risk Provision	500	500	500
Commitments - impact of previous decisions	-1,925	-832	-111
Service pressures – General	7,500	7,500	7,500
Service pressures – Specific Grants	249	3,051	451
Service Pressures – Function & funding changes	519	-	-
Service pressures – Carbon Reduction Commitment	160	100	100
Full year effect of 2011/12 savings	-3,931	-	-
Savings	-16,386	-14,598	-18,502
Sub-Total	221,376	226,031	221,951
Change in contribution to / from reserves *	4,001	1,062	-
Budget Requirement	225,377	227,093	221,951
Funding			
Formula Grant	101,377	96,308	86,677
Council Tax	124,000	130,785	135,274
Total	225,377	227,093	221,951

\*Reserves have been used to support the 2011/12 budget to cover only one-off expenditure items and agreed savings that will be implemented during the year. The removal of this one-off funding is completely offset in future years by the full year effect of savings and the removal of one-off expenditure items shown under commitments. By 2014/15 the budget forecast does not rely on the use of any reserves.

The main source of Government funding for General Fund services comes from Formula Grant. The following chart forecasts how this funding may reduce for the council over the 4 year period compared with the national funding reductions as set out in the Government's Spending Review 2010. Over the Spending Review period Formula Grant for Brighton & Hove is forecast to fall in cash terms by approximately one third or £43million.



