

**Brighton & Hove City Council**  
**Corporate Plan 2011 – 2015**  
**Annual Update 2014-15**



**Brighton & Hove**  
**City Council**



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## Foreword by the leader of the council

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I am pleased to introduce a refreshed and re-focussed version of Brighton & Hove City Council's Corporate Plan. We have made significant progress across all areas in the past year.

This revised plan reflects those successes, which include accreditation as a One Planet City, record GCSE results and securing funds to deliver the i360 to help regenerate our ageing seafront. Despite unprecedented financial challenges, our city remains economically buoyant, thanks to a combination of our work, our location, the activity of local businesses and our support for them.

We retain our four priorities, Tackling inequality, Creating a more sustainable city, Engaging people who live and work in the city and Modernising the council, and we've taken the opportunity to explain their impact since this plan was originally launched in 2011.

As we look ahead we must build on these successes which have kept our city thriving and supported those in greatest need. But with the ongoing challenges of cuts to our government funding and growing demand, business as usual simply isn't an option.

We are all committed to doing the best for our city and its citizens despite diminished resources. We need to continue 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 will need to take our partnership working to whole new levels of integration and trust. Council staff, councillors and partners all need to develop a new culture of collective working as we face these challenges. We must use our regional influence and authority through the City Deal scheme to make better links with our neighbours, with whom we share many residents, businesses and visitors.

Key to our future must be making much greater use of digital technology to work together and deliver services. We need to rethink our services in light of what new technologies and partnerships might offer.

It is imperative that the council continues to develop our open, transparent and accessible work. In that spirit I invite you to work with us, talk to us and let us know your feelings about the work we do on your behalf, because our city is nothing without the input of its residents and visitors.

**Councillor Jason Kitcat**

## Introduction by the chief executive

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I am very pleased to introduce this latest update of our Corporate Plan, 2011-15. While our four priorities will by now be familiar to many I hope that the work we have done to make this version of the plan look and feel different is noticeable. There is more content in the plan but I hope that it will help you to be clearer about what the council is striving to achieve, whether you work for us or are a citizen who relies on us. We will use the plan to communicate with you better, through our website, through media and through our employees.

As we enter the last financial year in the life cycle of this plan it's clear that the challenges ahead are going to be greater than those we have faced over the past four years. I'm keen that our plan reflects the steps we have taken to be absolutely clear, for ourselves and for citizens, about what kind of council we aspire to be and how we expect everyone within the organisation to perform. This understanding is vital if we are going to work together to emerge as a better, higher performing council.

The financial challenges facing all local authorities are unprecedented. The best councils will recognise that difficult decisions need to be made but will remain committed to providing effective leadership in their area. Brighton & Hove City Council, along with [Brighton & Hove Connected](#), is ambitious in its aspiration for a sustainable future for the city and the wider city region. This Corporate Plan sets out how we will rise to that challenge with a commitment to openness and a strong focus on collaboration and partnership working.

We will position Brighton & Hove alongside the [Key Cities](#) as a driver of economic development in the UK. We will continue to lobby for more local freedoms and flexibility, a better funding deal from central government and greater financial devolution. We will be co-investors in the Greater Brighton city region's economic future, focussing on creating jobs and ensuring that our young people are equipped with the right skills to access those employment opportunities.

We recognise what makes Brighton & Hove special; our seafront, the variety of our cultural offering and a relaxed but vibrant lifestyle. As the only democratically elected body in the city, we are in a unique position to provide civic leadership. But we know that we cannot sustain this on our own. The role played by businesses, our two universities, the community and voluntary sector, by neighbourhoods and by individual citizens will be crucial.

As our population grows, young and old, we need to make sure services are designed to deliver the best outcomes for those most in need. Closer integration between health and social care will be essential, focussing on early help and providing multi disciplinary primary care. We know this is easier said than done, but with the right management and leadership and a clear focus on how we can make a difference, we can support the most vulnerable to have greater independence and choice.

These are testing times for all who work for and with the council. In my view modernising what we do and how we do it is the best way to make sure we can meet our purpose and realise our ambition.

**Penny Thompson CBE**

## Section 1: Summary

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### A short overview of the Corporate Plan

Each year Brighton & Hove City Council, overseen by 54 locally elected councillors (each representing one of 21 'wards' or areas in the city) spends a total budget of approximately £778 million. This budget is funded through government grants, council tax, business rates, other fees and charges and rents. In turn it is used to employ 9,400 staff (which includes 4,500 who work in our city schools), providing 800 services to the city's 273,400 residents, 12,650 businesses and 8.5 million annual visitors.

The council works year round to ensure that services are provided routinely and consistently. These should be rated highly by citizens, represent value for money and collectively achieve a common purpose; that of looking after the best interests of the city and of citizens. The council must adapt to meet its biggest challenges; the varied and changing needs of a growing, ageing and diversifying population, as well as the scale of reductions in public spending. The need, therefore, is for the council and the city to become increasingly self-sufficient and sustainable.

The Corporate Plan is our way of setting out the council's purpose, ambition, values and priorities, describing how we will work to meet them. We recognise from public feedback that the reputation of the council to deliver services and spend public money wisely can and should improve. Our rationale is always that there is room, or necessity, for improvement. Though the funding situation is very challenging we will use this as a driver for innovation, becoming clearer about what the council is here to do and being more efficient in getting it done.

### Meeting our challenges as a partner

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Most often we seek to work with others, inside and outside of the organisation, making the best use of wider public, business and community resources and reducing duplication. In other words, sound investment in the city and its people by those agencies who work on its behalf to promote and draw in new investment. The Corporate Plan is therefore not only a plan which governs the organisation but which sets out the council's own contribution to delivering the city's sustainable community strategy, Brighton & Hove – the Connected City.

Given the radical national reforms of local authorities and public services generally, we must strive to create a new model for public services in Brighton & Hove; one which relies on a spirit of connectivity and togetherness. Only by realising that we work better together by breaking down barriers and collaborating between organisations and across sectors, will we deliver Brighton & Hove and also Greater Brighton's unrealised potential.

### Meeting our challenges as an organisation

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The Corporate Plan describes the way in which the council works, and will work increasingly, to meet its challenges and those of the city. For each of our four priorities the plan gives detail of what we want to achieve – our intended outcomes – and the key areas of focus for us to do this, aligned to the budget setting process.

Our priorities are:

- **Tackling inequality** – a fair city that works together with a shared responsibility for everyone’s health and wellbeing and protects its most vulnerable citizens
- **Creating a more sustainable city** – a world class economy and visitor destination that is a [One Planet City](#)
- **Engaging people who live and work in the city** – a shared understanding of what is important to citizens and actively encouraging people to get involved
- **Modernising the council** – a high performing local authority working toward a new model of self-sufficiency for public services in the city

## Meeting our challenges as individuals

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Council employees work across seven departments or ‘directorates’, each led by a director or other senior manager. They are by far the council’s greatest resource, a great many of whom not only work for, but live, in the city and surrounding area. With support from the organisation and from their managers, all council officers are expected to give their personal best for our customers, citizens and for the city. To ensure that everyone is able to understand what this means, our employees created and agreed six organisational values. Our values describe the qualities every officer is expected to demonstrate when carrying out their job.

The budget setting process for this and for previous years has required difficult choices. Tough decisions will follow as we have to increasingly prioritise and question what we are able to keep doing, even as the health of the wider economy gathers pace. We commit to keep working democratically to fulfil our purpose, striving to be a high performing council. It is therefore a necessity and a collective responsibility to decide what council and public services for the city will look like over the coming year and the coming decade. Professionals who deliver public services and citizens working together are vital in shaping our future.

## Section 2: Our Corporate Plan

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### How the plan works

The Corporate Plan brings together important information about the council and the city, for those who work for the organisation and those receiving council services. The plan is refreshed and published online annually following agreement by Full Council.

Councils are, by their very nature, large and complex. The Corporate Plan is our way of making sense of what we are here to do and how we go about doing it. It describes our purpose and ambition as well as how we will work with others to achieve it, forging strong partnerships through [Brighton & Hove Connected](#), the city forum where public, business and community representatives agree shared aims and priorities.

The Corporate Plan describes in detail the council's four priorities. These are our intentions and actions in response to changing demand for services, the need to manage the council's budget even more closely and changes in the way that national legislation and Government expects us to work.

One of our priorities, Modernising the council, is about council services and officers making a personal contribution to work toward common goals, finding increasingly better and more cost effective ways of doing things, while securing high quality and accessible services. This is critical in meeting our other priorities – Tackling inequality, Creating a sustainable city and Engaging people who live and work in the city.

Our service delivery model (overleaf) shows how the council, despite our range of services and duties, has a shared sense of purpose and clear priorities which shape the way that all services are delivered. This is so that we can lead the city effectively and succeed in making a difference for citizens.

The Corporate Plan has been designed primarily to be read on the council's website. This enables the plan to be updated easily without the cost and environmental impact of large print runs. If you need a paper copy of the plan please email [centralpolicy@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:centralpolicy@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 293944.

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



**Figure 1. Brighton & Hove City Council service delivery model**

The Brighton & Hove City Council delivery model is our contribution towards meeting the shared priorities in the city’s sustainable community strategy, Brighton & Hove – The Connected City.



## Section 3: Our achievements

### Examples of how we have met our challenges over the past year

The following list describes examples of significant achievements by the council over the past year. These might be a one off project (sometimes with special funding attached), a service priority or organisational improvement, or a more fundamental change in our responsibilities. The outcome of all of these things should be that we fulfil our purpose and ambition and that the reputation of the council is improved.

- GCSE attainment – further significant improvements in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A\*-C results including English and maths, rising from 56% in 2012 to 62%
- The Level – opening of regenerated city centre open space achieved with a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund
- Living Wage – accreditation for the council as a UK Living Wage Employer and one of the first 100 local employers to sign up to the Brighton & Hove Living Wage campaign
- The Keep – opening by Her Majesty the Queen of a state of the art shared archive facility with East Sussex County Council and the University of Sussex
- City Deal – successful negotiation of an investment agreement with government, including formation of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.
- Key Cities – became part of a group of UK cities who are working to influence government to promote their local economy and local regeneration schemes.
- Lewes Road – £4million investment improving transport infrastructure and cutting congestion
- Sustainability – accreditation as the world's first One Planet City, with a comprehensive action plan for both the council and the city, across ten key principles
- Brighton & Hove – The Connected City – helped to develop the new partnership vision for the city
- Tourist Information – a completely new model of provision across multiple locations in the city
- Pay modernisation – completing a significant review of allowances to address historic inconsistencies across the organisation
- Decent homes – achieved our 100% target to bring all council homes up to national standards of decency, through joint working with our partners Mears and PH Jones
- Extension of free childcare – to 20% of two year olds from September 2014 with over 90% of the target number in place by December 2013
- Withdean sports complex – invested £3 million to improve facilities, including enhanced health and fitness provision, replacement athletics track and new climbing centre
- i360 – funding secured through a loan from the Public Works Loan Board with work to begin in June 2014, the attraction will generate income to invest back into the seafront
- Winter flooding – the joint emergency effort between public services, the community and volunteers in Patcham was an example of collaboration at its best

## Section 4: Our city

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### About the city we are here to serve

The city has a rapidly growing and diversifying population and, within our boundaries, relatively little land to accommodate competing pressure for employment, affordable homes and social needs such as schools. There are significant inequalities in the health and life prospects of our different communities across the city. Compared to our neighbours we are home to a younger population, but we are living longer and are showing more complex health and social care needs across all ages.

We enjoy a rich cultural and architectural heritage, strengthened by visitors from near and far. Major additional investment is needed to protect our assets, particularly the seafront and the Royal Pavilion Estate. The economy has fared well through the recession, but increasing the number of better paid jobs and training opportunities depends in large part on our capacity to sustain and nurture 'higher value' businesses, such as the creative and digital sectors.

Securing investment in our transport system, public space and homes for a growing workforce across the Greater Brighton regional economy is also fundamental to the wellbeing of all our communities. The health and inclusiveness of our local economy has an important bearing on the level of demand for services that the council and other public services are facing.

As a coastal city, extreme weather events and long term climate change have a very important impact on our communities. We have a responsibility to protect our local ecology, recognising the health and leisure opportunities it brings now and for future generations. Protecting and enhancing our natural environment from the South Downs to the sea along with the opportunities of a growing economy is one of our major challenges. If we get it right collectively it will also be the key to the city's future success.

For demographic information about the city please see the Brighton & Hove State of the City [summary report](#).

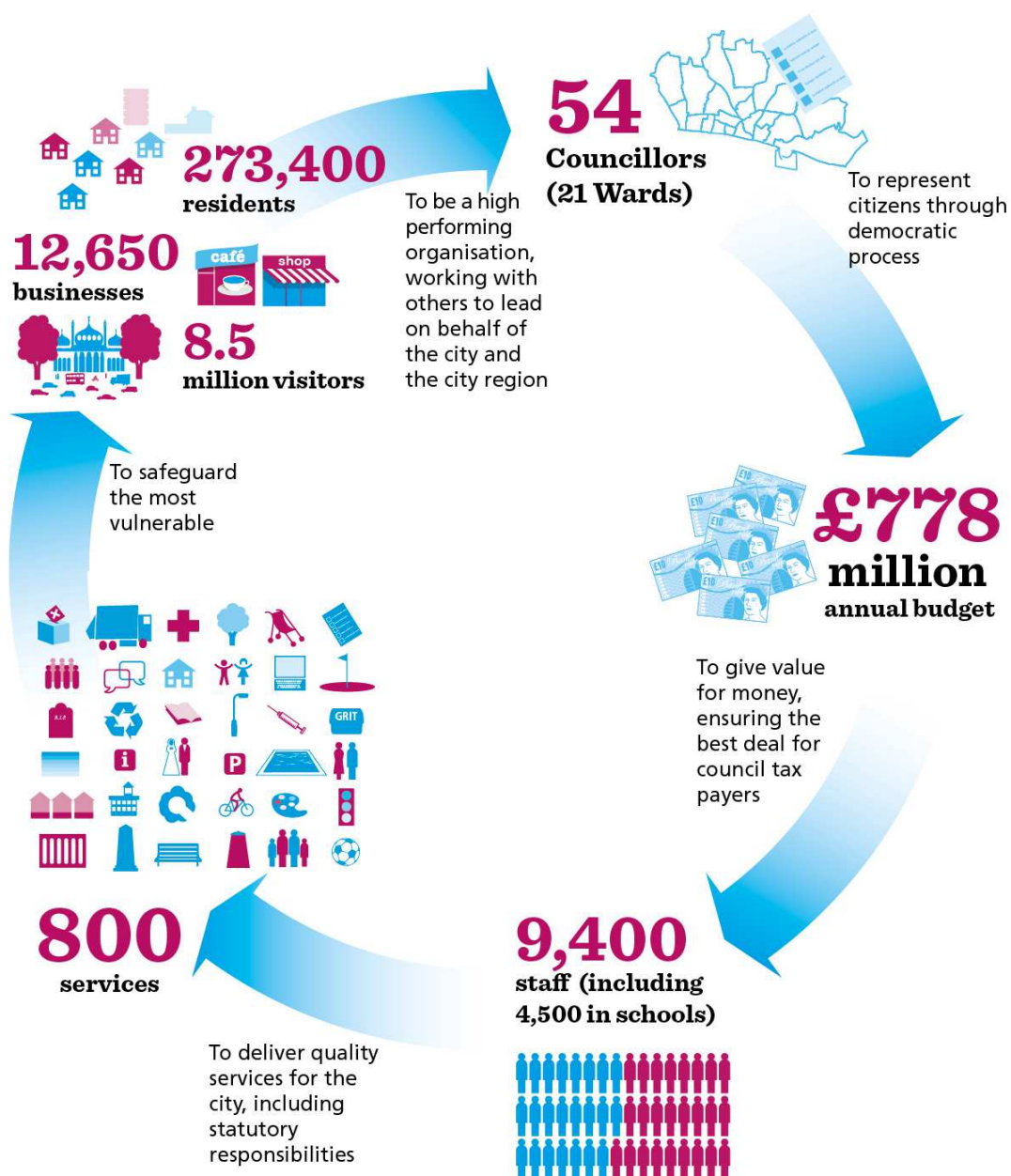
## Section 5: Our purpose & ambition

What we are fundamentally here to do and where we are trying to get to in the longer term

Each year Brighton & Hove City Council, overseen by 54 locally elected councillors (each representing one of 21 'wards' or areas in the city) spends a total budget of approximately £778 million. This budget is made up from government grants, council tax, business rates, other fees and charges and rents. In turn it is used to employ 9,400 staff (which includes 4,500 who work in our city schools), providing 800 services to the city's 273,400 residents, 12,650 businesses and 8.5 million annual visitors.

Our [budget video](#) has more detailed information about council spending and services.

Figure 2. Our purpose & ambition



## **To represent citizens through democratic process**

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In order to properly represent our citizens, our locally elected councillors take account of community views and concerns when making decisions. This is based on personal understanding of the place and its people, as well as objective results of more formal consultations and other means of democratic representation such as petitions.

It is important that councillors are as representative of their communities as possible. We continue to find ways that support all individuals seeking to become councillors, such as an appropriate allowance system and flexible means of working, while also upholding the process of formal committees and meetings that underpin the council's decision making process.

Brighton & Hove City Council is responsible for all local government operations within the city and is known as a 'unitary' authority. Our scale, in terms of the size of the budget, numbers of staff, services and customers, will continue to change over the coming years in a continuing climate of tough decisions on public spending. Our democratic process underpins the debate and forms consensus about how we prioritise resources.

Our website contains more information about [councillors](#) and [council meetings](#).

## **To give value for money, ensuring the best deal for council tax payers**

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The impact of the recession has meant the majority of councils have had to find ways of delivering better for much less. Significant changes have taken place in recent years which have enabled us to reduce costs and to sustain levels and quality of service provision. But further substantial budget reductions are likely and as our overall budget diminishes, we must continue to innovate to increase efficiency but also ask more fundamental questions about the services we provide.

We will continue with our consultative approach to the annual budget and council tax setting process. An open and transparent approach will enable us to demonstrate value for money as we seek to provide high quality services for council tax payers. As traditional government grants reduce we accept the challenge that local areas are best placed to generate their wealth by fostering a strong economy, and so we aim to create an enterprising and productive city with increasingly self-sufficient public services.

## **To deliver quality services for the city, including statutory responsibilities**

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The council has a legal duty to provide some services, and permission from government to provide others. Many of our services are very visible and are used routinely by all, for example refuse and recycling collections, highways maintenance, schools and the upkeep of our many parks. Other services, like children's centres, housing and care for older people, will become necessary for many at some point in their lives. Some services will, relatively, only be used by a few but are among the most important things that we do, such as our role as a Corporate Parent to children in our care.

As the council changes shape we will continue to review the ways in which we deliver services. We have for many years met our obligations by delivering services through a

variety of means. We have directly delivered some services and bought, commissioned or delivered others through partners. We will be exploring new and even more innovative ways of delivering services while ensuring the quality of provision and fulfilling our statutory obligations.

## **To safeguard the most vulnerable**

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‘Safeguarding’ has a very particular definition for councils. It refers to our duty to protect people’s health, wellbeing and human rights. It demands that we enable people to live free from harm, abuse and neglect, and is particularly pertinent for those who work with children and older or vulnerable people.

In the future, with a growing and changing population, it is likely that more people in the city will be considered vulnerable. We will seek, with partners, to make the collective impact of our services greater. However, with increasing demand and reduced spending we must also be clear on how we define and prioritise support and determine who is most vulnerable. We must also ensure that we meet the significant changes in our role and responsibilities which will be brought about by national reforms to adult social care.

## **To be a high performing organisation, working with others to lead the city and city region to a more self-sufficient future**

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We acknowledge that we can only be a high performing organisation with the dedication and professionalism of our employees and partners, and with recognition by citizens that we are succeeding. We are proud of our civic leadership for this creative and tolerant city and commit to securing an even greater future. We seek to build on our social, cultural and economic strengths to create a model of UK society which others follow.

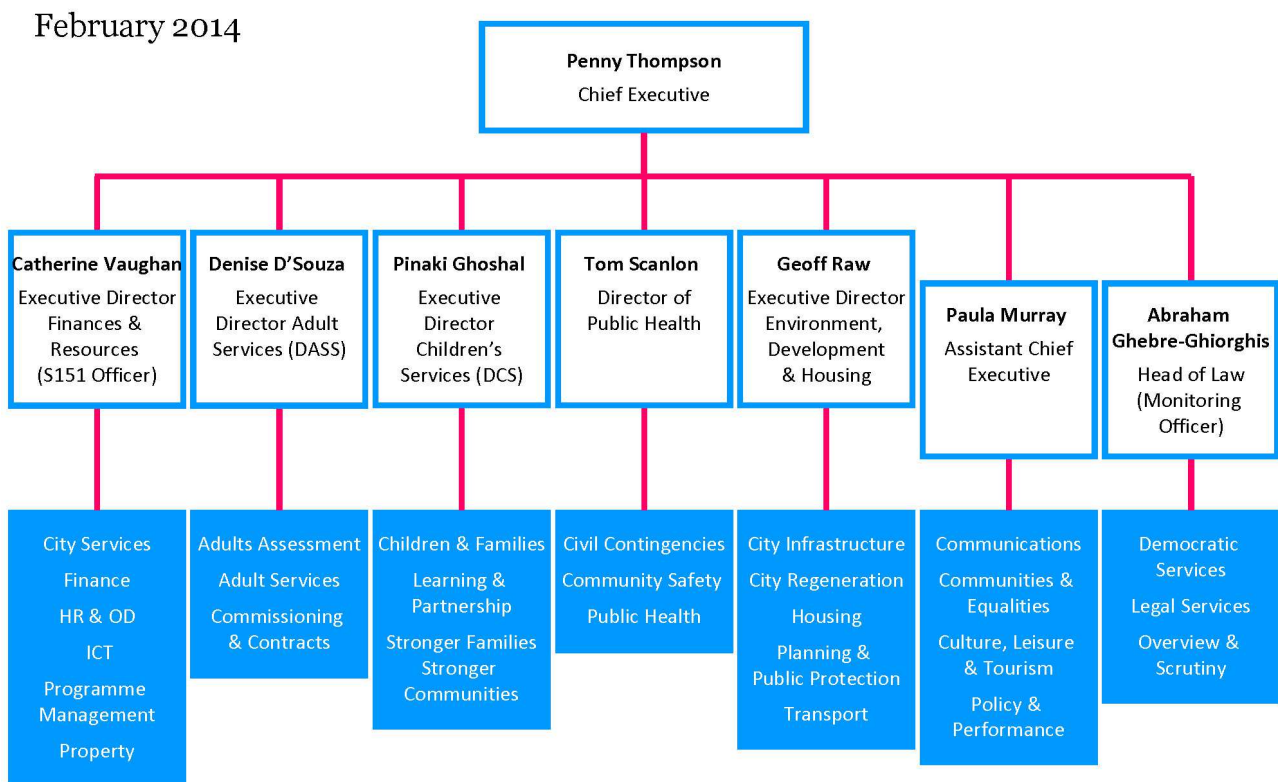
This means we must develop the full potential of the local economy, beyond our city boundaries alone. Our vision of a ‘Greater Brighton’ is to attract public, private and EU investment to create jobs and maximise the business rate base to sustain public services that nurture and protect a skilled population, so that this fantastic and distinctive city competes in the national and global marketplace.

## Section 6: Our workforce & Values

Each making a contribution, providing services that meet the needs of the city and are valued by citizens

Staff within the council work across seven directorates each led by a director or other senior manager. This is a way of grouping services together with a sense of common purpose and customer base, in a way that will make sense to those who use services. A large organisation needs an effective organisational and managerial structure, but it is also our clear expectation that colleagues from across the directorates work collaboratively together with a shared understanding and commitment to our overall purpose and shared priorities.

Figure 3: Brighton & Hove City Council organisational structure



The Chief Executive, along with each of the directors, the Assistant Chief Executive and the Head of Law meet weekly to form the Executive Leadership Team, providing joined up leadership to the council. This team is supported regularly by a collective meeting of the next tier of managers from across the directorates known as the Corporate Management Team. From this level, flows service and team meetings, ensuring that colleagues at every level of the council are coming together to discuss shared opportunities to innovate, collaborate and improve services.

The views and input of our employees are key to providing quality services. We expect managers to engage constructively and frequently with their teams as a whole and with individuals' through one to one supervision and personal development. We conduct a regular survey of all our staff, something we have committed to do annually, so that we keep pace and connection between what is said and what we do as a result.

We invite staff to come together through internal communications and events to make sure we celebrate and share our success, as well as acknowledge challenges, so that we learn and progress. There are constructive informal and formal discussions with the unions who represent their members, as we have seen in the recent negotiations over pay and allowances. We have four staff forums, where individuals come together based on a shared sense of identity, to support each other and to help the organisation to evolve along with the society it serves.

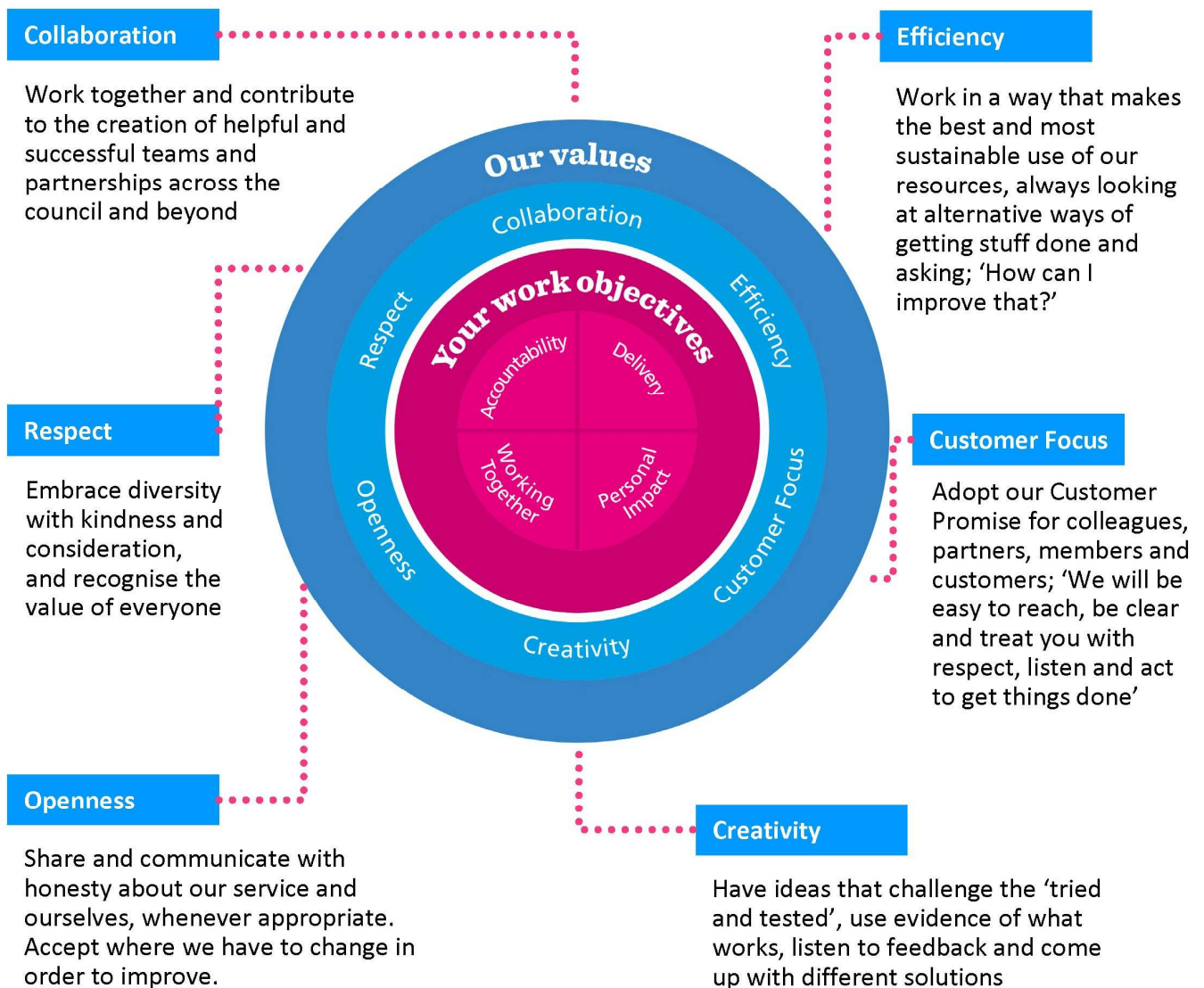
## Our values

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With support from the organisation and from their managers, all council officers are expected to give their personal best for our customers, citizens and for the city. To ensure that everyone is able to understand what this means, our employees created and agreed six organisational values. Our values (overleaf) describe the qualities every officer is expected to demonstrate when carrying out their job.



**Figure 4. Brighton & Hove City Council individual values and responsibilities**



Our values shape the way council officers review their own conduct and the performance of others. Each member of staff has a Performance Development Plan which sets out their current work objectives so that they, their manager and the organisation are clear on what they are being asked to achieve and that they have the relevant training and support not only to do this, but also to develop as people and professionals. We believe strongly in a motivated workforce that feels ownership for their individual roles and wider aims of the organisation.

There are four key areas of responsibility used in individual performance development plans, that work objectives are based on:

### Our key responsibilities

**Accountability:** What you are accountable for and/or who you are answerable to?

**Delivery:** What do you have to do or achieve?

**Personal Impact:** How does your behaviour impact on others?

**Working Together:** Who do you need to work with eg colleagues, customers and external partners?

### Organisational change

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Our values were formally introduced to the organisation in 2013-14 and are now recognised and are being embedded. In order to respond to our increasing financial challenges and ensure we continue to deliver our best for the city and its citizens, the council is embarking on a cultural change and performance improvement programme.

Based on our values, the programme is called Living our values, everyday. This will focus on how the council will achieve its ambition to become a high performing organisation, building on feedback and learning from recent activities such as the People Strategy, Investors in People accreditation and the Staff Survey.

## Section 7: Our relationships with others

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### The importance of city partnerships and a new aspiration for public services

Brighton & Hove benefits from having one of the most established and best managed family of partnerships in the country. The council believes that it is vital to the future of its services, of all public services and the future of the city as a whole that we continue to bolster this reputation.

Brighton & Hove Connected is the name of our local strategic partnership, the main citywide forum, which is made up of representatives of key local partnerships and local bodies. Along with the council it includes the city's two universities, the NHS, Sussex Police, Job Centre Plus, the Environment Agency, the Arts & Creative Industries Commission, the Economic Partnership, Community Works and the Transport Partnership.

### Vision of the Brighton & Hove sustainable community strategy

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*"Brighton & Hove – the Connected City. Creative and dynamic, inclusive and caring. A fantastic place to live, work and visit".*

One thing that connects all these bodies and representatives is their passion for Brighton & Hove and for the people who live, work and visit the city. All members of the family of partnerships are acutely aware of the need to make more of diminishing resources. Working in partnership helps to share experience and resources, enables collaboration and addresses matters of cost, producing outcomes that bodies working alone simply could not achieve.

Our Corporate Plan is our contribution and our commitment to connect with the aims of the partnership and with others – organisations, businesses, communities – to achieve this shared vision. The priorities of our Corporate Plan complement the two overarching principles of the [Brighton & Hove Connected](#) sustainable community strategy, Increasing our Equality and Improving our Engagement, as well as its priorities.

This connection must extend beyond organisations and representatives, to the core of the city's need to become increasingly self-sufficient to secure its future health. It needs well thought through and managed relationship between all of its assets and sectors; business and enterprise, public services and democracy, citizens and their skills, culture and society, homes and the built environment, respecting and promoting natural resources.

## Section 8: Our spending & business plans

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### Planning our budget and business objectives, and how we will measure success

#### Managing our budget

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The council must, by law, approve an annual budget, including levels of council tax, and set the council tax base and council tax reduction scheme. In the current climate of reductions in funding for local authorities our strategy for managing the budget must address necessary priorities and pressures in spending for the year ahead, but we must also look beyond the immediate future if we are to protect and develop appropriate services in a considered way. The council's [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) is produced alongside the budget and the Corporate Plan to ensure that a longer term view is taken that will help to meet our purpose and ambition and address the city's changing needs.

Our [budget video](#) has more detailed information about council spending and services.

#### Business planning & risk management

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All of the council's services and teams are required to produce an annual business plan which demonstrates their contribution toward our purpose and priorities. These plans make appropriate links to the budget, the council's actions in the city's shared Sustainability Action Plan and our equalities work. They also give an appraisal of any risks that may impact on service delivery, for example changes in demand for services or the impacts of adverse weather, and ways to reasonably anticipate and alleviate such threats. The business and risk management plans are used to set individual work objectives through staff performance development plans.

#### Measuring success

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For each of the council's priorities, detailed in the Corporate Plan, we routinely monitor service and organisational performance information so that we know we are meeting our purpose and our priorities. These are contained in and monitored routinely throughout the year in the council's Organisational Health Report.

We will also know if we are making progress through:

- Customer feedback – routine collection, analysis and use of feedback to inform service provision and development
- City Tracker survey – asks residents about their views on the quality of council and other public services in the city
- Our staff survey – annual survey of staff to find out their level of satisfaction with the organisation and ability to do their job

## Section 9: Our priorities

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### Working towards shared outcomes as an organisation, up to 2015

In addition to our long term purpose and ambition, the council has defined four current priorities through the Corporate Plan. These describe our collective aspiration and the difference we want to make and are determined by the need to respond to the most pressing challenges facing the city and the organisation.

Wherever and however people fit into the organisation we want them to feel, and know how, they are contributing to each one of our priorities.

### Brighton & Hove City Council Priorities, 2011-15

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- **Tackling inequality** – a fair city that works together with a shared responsibility for everyone's health and wellbeing and protects its most vulnerable citizens
- **Creating a more sustainable city** – a world class economy and visitor destination that is a [One Planet City](#)
- **Engaging people who live and work in the city** – a shared understanding of what is important to citizens and actively encouraging people to get involved
- **Modernising the council** – a high performing local authority working toward a new model of self-sufficiency for public services in the city

As a large and diverse organisation we need to ensure that we can effectively manage our delivery of the Corporate Plan. Therefore each priority is broken down into a number of different outcomes. These describe how services, or groups of services, aspire and work to improve people's lives, communities and the city as a whole.

Under each outcome is:

- **Our aspiration** – why the outcome is important
- **Our approach** – the way we are working to meet it
- **Our aims** – things we will do over the course of the Corporate Plan
- **Our key areas of focus** – specific actions which relate to current budget and business plans

## Priority one – Tackling inequality

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### Introduction

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The council believes that everyone has a right to a good education, a decent home, good healthcare, a job that pays for a decent standard of living, financial resilience and safety in their community. No one should be disadvantaged simply because of gender, race, sexuality, disability or the neighbourhood or family circumstances they are born into. The council's first priority therefore is to tackle inequality and work for a fairer city.

Tackling inequality has been a national and local government priority for several decades. In Brighton & Hove there have been numerous neighbourhood based initiatives making good progress but some city neighbourhoods remain significantly disadvantaged in terms of life chances with high levels of multiple deprivation.

Things have inevitably been compounded by the current economic climate. A complete overhaul of the welfare system continues to take effect which alters the nature and level of financial assistance for some of our most vulnerable individuals and families.

The services which safeguard the most vulnerable in society, children's and adult social care, also account for the largest proportion of the council's spending. The population in the city is growing and needs are becoming more complex, while public spending nationally is decreasing.

### Our outcomes for Priority one

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- 1.1 [Children and young people have the best start in life](#)
- 1.2 [Vulnerable adults supported to live healthy, independent lives](#)
- 1.3 [Decent, affordable, healthy housing](#)
- 1.4 [Reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues](#)
- 1.5 [Access to quality employment with wages that pay for a decent standard of living](#)
- 1.6 [Culture and leisure opportunities for all](#)
- 1.7 [Cohesive and safe communities](#)

Figure 5. Tackling inequality



## **Outcome 1.1: Children and young people have the best start in life**

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### **Our aspiration**

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We want to ensure that all of our children and young people have the best possible start in life, so that they grow up happy, healthy and safe with the opportunity to fulfil their own potential. This means all children and young people in the city have access to high quality education and the right to a nurturing family, learning and social environment that will provide them with knowledge, experiences and skills to secure employment and be active and responsible citizens.

### **Our approach**

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Universal services such as Early Years provision, support for schools and some youth services, collectively seek to ensure that all children and young people across the city have access to a range of services that help them to grow and mature into active citizens.

Early Help services seek to identify children and families who are struggling and might need support to prevent them requiring complex and costly interventions. They include services such as targeted health visiting support, parenting support programmes, family support and support to reduce the level of school exclusions.

Specialist services provide support and interventions where children have a high level of need. They include services for disabled children and those with Special Educational Needs and statutory social work services that ensure that children are safe.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will focus on raising overall education attainment and narrowing the gap between the lowest and highest performing pupils.
- b) We will support all educational institutions in the city to work more collaboratively to achieve city priorities.
- c) We will continue to support healthy, creative, tolerant and high achieving schools that promote social and environmental responsibility.
- d) We will work with partners, including schools and health services, to meet the needs of children with complex needs and provide an inclusive environment.
- e) We will work with further education providers to ensure a range of choices for young people choosing work-based training and skills development, which help them compete in the local labour market.
- f) We will lead by example by continuing the council's own commitment to apprenticeships.
- g) We will increase our focus on prevention and Early Help and prioritise spending on preventing families from falling into need, helping them to get out and stay out of crisis.
- h) We will work to improve our integrated, multi-agency approach providing holistic, tailored support for families.
- i) We will continue to prioritise the safeguarding of all children and will rigorously monitor and improve safeguarding practice to protect children and young people.



Priority one: Tackling inequality

- j) We will ensure that vulnerable young people have support to make positive life choices especially young people at risk of committing crime and entering the youth justice system.
- k) We will support young offenders into suitable education, training or employment.
- l) We will offer choice in the type of care individuals can choose to receive, offering personalisation to those who want it.
- m) We will offer appropriate support, where desired, to develop and build resilience amongst those who care for children and young people with additional and special needs.
- n) We will work to reduce the number of children requiring high levels of support within the social care system.
- o) We will ensure that those children we have a corporate parenting responsibility for have the highest quality of care and support and the best possible life chances.
- p) 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.
- q) 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, such as our Sound City music hub.
- r) We will ensure that we maximise the use and impact of successful community outreach programmes to engage with some of the most vulnerable young people, such as the Sports Development Team's Street Games programme.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Develop an Early Help hub working effectively with a range of evidenced based interventions such as our Stronger Families Stronger Communities programme.
2. Review our services for disabled children and those with special educational needs.
3. Work with partners to develop a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
4. Extend free childcare to 40% of two year olds including families with low incomes from September 2014.
5. Further develop a positive relationship with schools and ensure stronger educational standards.
6. Ensure the voice of children and young people is central to the development of service provision.

## **Outcome 1.2: Vulnerable adults supported to live healthy, independent lives**

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### **Our aspiration**

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We want people to be able to live as they wish, confident of their independence and dignity. All adults who need support should not only feel their needs are met but that they are able and encouraged to make an active contribution to society. Helping people to maintain independence is not only about the care and support available to individuals but also about the homes they live in and the community support around them. To do this we have adopted the World Health Organisation, Age Friendly City approach to ensure that the city is inclusive, accessible and promotes active ageing.

### **Our approach**

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Adults services offer personalised care and support plans, and support to carers. Demographic changes in the population, an increasing higher older population (those 85 and over) and young adults with complex needs (mental health, substance misuse and homelessness) means that the amount spent on services is increasing while available budgets are decreasing.

Major changes are happening in the world of adult social care. The Care Bill (which will receive Royal Assent in 2014/15) will update the national legal framework which social care services operate within as well as bringing new responsibilities to the council, including charging arrangements for long term care, information and advice provision, services to carers and safeguarding.

The Better Care Fund (announced in summer 2013) is the platform for integrating community services to promote independence, working with all providers of care and support in the city including the private and community and voluntary sector.

We must make sure that the services we provide offer the best value for money, and look at alternative models of delivery to manage costs. We have to be clear who is considered most vulnerable, who is eligible for support and, where people are not, how they can seek support.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will protect services for vulnerable residents who rely on essential care and support from the council, in particular vulnerable adults, ensuring those with assessed eligible needs have them met in a personalised way.
- b) 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.
- c) We will continue to prioritise prevention and a reabling service, and offer choice in the type of care people can choose to receive, ensuring it meets individual needs.

Priority one: Tackling inequality

- d) We will continue to review our care and support services to ensure equal access for all, recognising that our service users often require a range of support.
- e) We will increase our efforts to ensure that vulnerable adults are safe and work with partners to ensure the public are aware of what constitutes abuse.
- f) We will carefully commission and monitor the quality of provision through contract monitoring and wider care governance arrangements, with a range of partners including the Care Quality Commission.
- g) 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 supported housing.
- h) 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.
- i) We will prioritise our work with communities to develop low-level community support and social capital, linking these with existing neighbourhood networks and activities.
- j) We will continue to recognise the vulnerability of and inequality experienced by many individuals who provide care for other family members, especially young carers.
- k) We will continue our support for community and voluntary sector organisations as service providers, and as advocates and voices for our most vulnerable citizens.
- l) We will seek, with our partners, to ensure the environment is safe and secure, not only people's homes but also the streets, roads, parks and open spaces around them.
- m) 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.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Continue to use our effective reablement and promotion of telecare services to support people to live at home, optimising their capacity to live independently and look at how best to provide community equipment services jointly with the NHS.
2. Develop and begin implementation of a major change programme in relation to the Care Bill 2014. This will ensure the council meets its statutory duties for adult social care and that opportunities are taken through implementation to deliver services that are modern and personalised in their delivery.
3. Work with partners to deliver integrated services that can deliver improved outcomes for local people and more efficient working across the health and care system through the Better Care programme.
4. Develop innovative procurement methods, such as the Commissioning Prospectus approach, to deliver more efficient, quality assured services that support people in their communities.
5. Promote good quality service provision, monitor service quality and take effective action where services are not achieving acceptable standards.
6. Safeguard vulnerable adults from harm, minimising risk to people and the city, through undertaking adult social care statutory functions.

## Outcome 1.3: Decent, affordable, healthy housing

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### Our aspiration

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We want people to be able to live in the city but it is becoming increasingly difficult for many individuals and families to do so because of availability and affordability. We will enable more homes to be sustained, renewed and built, that better address the changing nature of households. We will seek to improve housing quality and neighbourhood amenities, ensuring new homes are as affordable as possible within the constraints of public funding and the pressures of market conditions.

### Our approach

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The council has embarked on a 'New Homes for Neighbourhoods' programme drawing on our own sites and premises. This has identified redevelopment opportunities small and large which, in consultation with local residents, we are delivering using high quality architects and trusted developers. We are in the fortunate financial position and experienced in being able to draw on a variety of capital investment sources to implement viable schemes.

During 2013/14 the council achieved 100% Decent Homes across our stock. We will continue to invest in the effective management and maintenance of the homes we manage. As well as the physical aspects of our homes, we also provide supporting services to ensure that our tenants and leaseholders are able to sustain their rental arrangements and enjoy good neighbourliness.

Our new City Plan, to be formally adopted later this year, provides a robust planning policy framework for residential conversion, renewal and new builds across all tenures. It follows an exhaustive exercise to identify housing development site opportunities. Some of these sites form part of mixed use regeneration initiatives for which we are promoting development, bringing necessary partners and communities together and where possible injecting public investment to unlock schemes. Our planning approach also aims to ensure a balanced supply of accommodation for those with long term residential needs as well as the shorter term requirements of visiting language and local university students.

We continue to work with private landlords and owners to bring empty properties back into residential use. We also aim to use public funding initiatives such as Green Deal to incentivise homeowners and landlords to improve the thermal efficiency of their properties.

Finally, we are developing a more integrated approach to how housing, social care, health and police resources are better used to target more effective service provision and reduce public sector cost pressures over the long term. This includes the provision of extra care housing for elderly households; reviewing our sheltered housing accommodation service; and tackling the accommodation needs of complex vulnerable adults.

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will continue our commitment to improve the quality of existing council homes, including the quality of our repair and maintenance service.
- c) We will work with private landlords and the universities to improve standards of properties and establish an ethical lettings agency.
- d) We will help individuals to access affordable finance to install energy efficiency measures, especially people on low incomes.
- e) We will continue to work with partners to help those who find themselves at risk of homelessness.
- f) We will minimise the disruption of homelessness, especially for families and young people, helping them into secure, affordable decent housing as swiftly as possible.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Commence building for our first wave of the New Homes for Neighbourhoods scheme.
2. Deliver the final transfer of improved homes to Brighton & Hove Seaside & Community Homes.
3. Work collaboratively with adult social care, children's services and health teams to reduce long term social care cost pressures, such as securing the Brookmead Extra Care scheme, reviewing the design of our sheltered housing service and recommissioning Supporting People services.
4. Support the implementation of the Sussex Energy Savers Partnership programme to install energy efficiency measures and support vulnerable residents with heating and insulation installations.

## **Outcome 1.4: Reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues**

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### **Our aspiration**

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Life expectancy should not be determined by wealth or by postcode, yet in some parts of the city life expectancy can be up to ten years less than in others. Poverty, poor housing, poor diet, air pollution and unemployment are among the causes of health inequality. The major contributors to ill health and premature death (alcohol and drug abuse, smoking and obesity) compound health inequality, particularly in our more deprived areas. We want to reduce the gap, helping people across the city to live healthier lives and to address the rising numbers of young people with complex needs.

### **Our approach**

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With the return of Public Health responsibilities to the council there is even more reason for all council services to aspire to contribute to a healthier city and a reduction in inequalities. This will include initiatives on housing, employment, education, culture and leisure, as well as promoting a healthier lifestyle in a range of settings, including the establishment of a Public Health Schools Programme.

We have established an inclusive Health and Wellbeing Board providing strategic leadership for the city and political accountability. We are working closely with NHS colleagues in the emerging Clinical Commissioning Group to tackle these problems together.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will work with partners to 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 Public Health Schools Programme 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 enforcing firm but fair enforcement of environmental health and licensing standards.
- b) We will increase the impact of 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.
- c) We will undertake a licensing review and maximise any new powers gained through the Localism Bill to manage the availability of alcohol.
- d) We will continue our focus on tackling alcohol-related crime and disorder, and with the NHS, on providing high quality and accessible treatment services.
- e) 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.
- f) We will continue with high profile enforcement of food and health and safety rules, maintaining our excellent record of environmental health improvements.

## Key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. We will further develop the Health and Wellbeing Board, integrating it with the work of the NHS with the aim of providing greater strategic direction to health and wellbeing in Brighton & Hove.
2. We will maximise the public health benefits that result from the integration of community safety, civil contingencies and now environmental health and regulatory services within public health by bringing a population perspective to this work.
3. We will redesign the major public health commissioned programmes; alcohol and substance misuse and sexual health services with the aim of having new contracts in place in 2015.
4. We will launch the new Public Health School Programme which will ensure a comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing within schools with initiatives for pupils, staff and parents. This work will be implemented in tandem with the Early Help Strategy and the development plan for School Nurse Services.
5. We will redesign the local NHS Health checks service with a view to providing a targeted service that more effectively tackles health inequalities.

## **Outcome 1.5: Access to quality employment with wages that pay for a decent standard of living and enable financial resilience**

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### **Our aspiration**

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We want everyone in the city to have the best opportunity to find and sustain work and to aspire to a rewarding career. Working with neighbouring local authorities, local businesses and government agencies, we have developed a bold strategy to position the city for sustainable growth. This capitalises on our relative strengths as a good place to do business and addresses our weakness of low productivity. Supporting local companies to grow and encouraging new businesses to locate here is key to providing better paid jobs.

We aim to tackle financial exclusion and recognise that this can be experienced by everyone at different times in their life. We want everyone to have the opportunity to access services, skills and knowledge that enables them to maintain and improve their financial wellbeing and resilience.

### **Our approach**

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Working with our city region partners we have refreshed our Economic Strategy and we are delivering a five year action plan from 2013-18 to generate new better paid jobs by supporting business growth and encouraging inward investment.

The council is relatively 'asset rich' although not all of the land, sites and structures are in good repair or capable alone of generating greater economic growth and well-being. Using borrowing and fund raising powers and the creative use of assets, opportunities will be explored to unlock opportunities and accelerate growth.

To engage with government, we have established the Greater Brighton Economic Board and successfully submitted a City Deal investment bid. This sets out ambitious plans for new business innovation space, collaboration between business and university research and joint investment for the benefit of the city region. The public funding and private sector leverage attached to our City Deal proposals make our ambitious plans deliverable.

We have worked with the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership to shape their Strategic Economic Plan, EU Structural & Investment Fund Strategy and bid to government for a Growth Deal. Future government spending allocations for economic development, transport and housing will be strongly influenced by these plans and the robustness of our specific projects and proposals.

We cannot deliver economic success on our own and so we continue to strengthen our collaboration with core business sectors including retail, hospitality, tourism, computer digital & IT (CDIT), environmental industries and health sciences. We are committed partners to the City Employment & Skills Group and continue to support apprenticeships and investment in training and employment opportunities for young people.

We will focus on financial resilience through a new Community Banking Partnership and seek to remove barriers to work such as availability of flexible and affordable childcare. We continue to support the Brighton & Hove Living Wage campaign and encourage more



public, private and voluntary sector employers to join in order to reduce inequality of wealth in the city.

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will continue to play our role with city partners to sustain and create jobs.
- c) 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.
- d) We will work with schools, colleges and businesses to ensure that all school leavers are equipped to enter training, employment or to continue their education at a higher level.
- e) 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.
- f) We will work with our partners to support individuals into employment who have difficulty getting work, due to poor mental health or lack of skills.
- g) We will increase access to learning for adults as part of our community learning programme.
- h) We will ensure that support for childcare is targeted to the most disadvantaged children.
- i) We will work as a member of the Advice Partnership to take action to promote financial inclusion.
- j) 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.
- k) We will support the community and voluntary sector by using and promoting their services, recognising their economic and social value to the city.
- l) We will ensure that vulnerable groups of young people including those who are in care and who are disabled receive the additional support they need to access employment.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Deliver the £1.79 million Brighton City Region business support programme which includes grants to businesses that offer quality job opportunities.
2. Work with the Greater Brighton Economic Board to help unlock funding and development sites leading to new employment space and new jobs, and work with developers and sub-contractors via the Brighton & Hove Local Employment Scheme (BHLES) to ensure that apprenticeships, skills training and jobs are linked to key development sites and contracts.
3. Introduce a family support model for those most affected by the benefit cap.
4. Deliver the new Community Banking Partnership through the community and voluntary sector.

## Outcome 1.6: Culture and leisure opportunities for all

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### Our aspiration

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The city already has a national and international reputation as a cultural leader. Our arts, culture and heritage offer, along with a growing reputation for sporting events, is central to the city's economic health. Our intention is to take this to a new level, exporting the city's reputation as a place to visit, live and work to a global market. For residents of all ages access to arts, cultural, sport and leisure activities can change lives, improving skills for employment and life chances, broadening horizons and promoting understanding of ourselves and others. Working in partnership with the community and voluntary sector we will encourage everyone to take part in the cultural and active life of the city.

### Our approach

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We must work creatively and with urgency to protect our seafront infrastructure and heritage which has been and remains key to the city's success and economy. Similarly we are developing a masterplan to protect and promote the entire Royal Pavilion Estate as a single, world-renowned visitor destination.

A new model of tourist information delivery is making the service an active and integrated part of the experience of the city through advice in multiple locations and volunteering, recapturing our heritage of the 'Promettes'. Our extensive programme of city events and festivals will continue to define and promote the spirit of the city for residents and visitors alike. We work to make these events more sustainable, reducing their environmental impact and increasing their local economic benefit, using ISO 2012 1 as a recognised standard.

We are developing new, state of the art sporting and leisure facilities for residents through our leisure partnerships, such as at Withdean Sports Complex. We will pursue plans to regenerate key sites along the seafront, including Saltdean Lido, King Alfred Leisure Centre and Black Rock, as well as seeking much needed investment in ageing seafront infrastructure and public highways.

Libraries will act as community resources promoting the cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities of the city to residents to improve health and wellbeing. Communities are encouraged to promote and come together to share cultural activities through our diverse and eclectic range of events and festivals.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will use significant regional, national and international events, such as the Rugby World Cup, UEFA Women's International World Cup Qualifier and the Tour of Britain cycle race, to build and promote inspiring programmes of activity that encourage more residents to get involved in culture and sport.
- b) We will continue to support cultural and sporting events and organisations that seek to engage all sections of our community and promote more sustainable, accessible,

Priority one: Tackling inequality

affordable or free activities, such as the huge range of festivals happening across our neighbourhoods.

- c) We will work with providers, transport colleagues, the police and other safety services to ensure events in the city are safe and successful.
- d) We will preserve, promote and seek to enhance 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.

## **Our key areas of focus for 2014-15**

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Secure conference business for the Brighton Centre, with work continuing on the longer term future of a conference centre and large scale entertainment venue for the city.
2. Begin the next phase of joint work between the Brighton Dome and Festival and Royal Pavilion, Arts and Museums to advance the Royal Pavilion Estate Masterplan.
3. Develop potential long term solutions to ageing seafront infrastructure following a scrutiny panel on the issue.
4. Increase participation in sports through improvements to the city's sports facilities, building on the concessionary leisure card scheme and collaborating with Public Health on joint schemes such as the Active for Life outreach programme, Takepart festival of sport and physical activity, Healthwalks and free swimming.
5. Deliver a programme of events over four years to commemorate the centenary of World War I.

## **Outcome 1.7: Cohesive and safe communities**

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### **Our aspiration**

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Our city has an international reputation as an open, fair and cohesive place and is increasingly safe from crime and disorder. 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, anti-social behaviour, domestic and sexual violence and to protect and improve support for those who are subjected to it as well as change the behaviour of perpetrators.

### **Our approach**

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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 city has established and effective partnerships for delivering community safety. Through our constant drive to deliver a more effective and integrated system we are bringing down crime rates, tackling anti-social behaviour and making the city feel safer. There is always more that can and should be done, including closer collaborative working between criminal justice agencies and service providers, communities and residents.

Our own equalities work as a council sets high standards for the organisation, which have been recognised as excellent through peer local authority review, but also for the city as a whole through our partnerships. We continue to challenge our own practice and will meet even higher standards in future.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will continue to prioritise work that helps us to understand the city's communities, and support organisations and communities to appreciate and value the diversity of people's backgrounds.
- c) We will support and promote stronger, more positive relationships between and within different communities using our community buildings, such as our libraries.
- d) We will continue to play a strong active role in the city's Community Safety Partnership, supporting the delivery of the Safe in the City Strategy.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Agree crime reduction and safety priorities with the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) which will secure PCC investment in those interventions which are of the highest priority for Brighton & Hove.
2. Identify early opportunities for joint commissioning with East and West Sussex including new commissioning arrangements for Victim and Witness and Restorative Justice services, which will lead to reduced costs and efficiency savings.
3. Continue to build the resilience of communities and families to crime and disorder while working with the Communities & Equalities team to eliminate duplication, reducing costs of commissioned neighbourhood services.
4. Facilitate the creation of new partnership arrangements with new probation services providers to ensure that re-offending rates continue to reduce, including by those most prolific and at risk.

## Priority two – Creating a more sustainable city

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### Introduction

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The council has a critical role in modernising and maintaining the environmental infrastructure of the city. Alongside energy, water, sewerage, telecommunication and broadband providers, the council provides a host of vital infrastructure services. These include roads, footways, bridges, retaining walls, seafront structures, street lighting, surface water drainage, refuse and recycling collection and disposal. When the resilience of the city's infrastructure fails, not only does the council risk incurring financial liability, but many aspects of the city's economic and social life are no longer sustainable and quickly grind to a halt.

Nestled between the South Downs and the sea and the development constraints of historic buildings and neighbourhoods, redevelopment opportunities are few. Optimising the efficiency of the city's infrastructure and its use of land is key to economic success and environmental sustainability. For some time the council has been working successfully with partners to improve sustainable transport. The city has also attracted significant (if incomplete) investment from broadband infrastructure companies and this has helped to boost its digital economy reputation.

A more efficient city infrastructure can also feed through to a less expensive city to live and work in. Energy efficiency measures in homes, for example, reduces fuel bills and, where practical, travel by train, bus, cycle and foot is cheaper than by car. Measures to reduce non-renewable energy and pollution can also have an important impact on quality of life and contribute to reducing carbon and other emissions affecting climate change.

The city, more than many, enjoys a strong relationship with its immediate natural environment of the South Downs and the sea. In addition to the city's Downland Estate, this has become particularly significant with the formation of the South Downs National Park and the opportunities this presents to residents and visitors as well as our plans for UNESCO [Biosphere Reserve](#) status. The frequency of extreme weather events – surface water flooding, drought, storms, tidal surges, cold snaps – and their impact demonstrate the urgency to protect and enhance both our natural and urban environment.

To help pull together the work of council teams, other public agencies and partners in creating a more sustainable city, the council has achieved independent accreditation for Brighton & Hove as the world's first [One Planet City](#) with a comprehensive action plan for both the council and the city, across ten key principles.

### Our outcomes for Priority two

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- 2.1 [A strong and low carbon economy](#)
- 2.2 [A fair balance between the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, public transport users and motorists](#)
- 2.3 [A low waste city](#)
- 2.4 [A healthier and higher quality built environment](#)
- 2.5 [Protection and enhancement of the city's natural environment](#)

**Figure 6. Creating a more sustainable city**

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## Outcome 2.1: A strong and low carbon economy

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### Our aspiration

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The city has fared relatively well during the recession and is now enjoying strong private business growth. Tourism, visitor retailing and conferencing have been important sectors in sustaining the local economy. Whilst they will continue to be strengths, they are relatively 'lower value' sectors in terms of productivity and wages. Reflecting the research expertise of our universities and the attractiveness of the city to graduates, strong growth is emerging in low carbon Creative Digital and Information Technology, and Environmental Business sectors. City Deal and the regional working facilitated by the Greater Brighton Economic Board brings a new opportunity to foster employment growth for those born here as well as those drawn by its employment opportunities.

### Our approach

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We have completed a refresh of the council's Economic Strategy 2013-18 and a five year action plan towards a low carbon economy – a future where all people in the city can lead fulfilling and healthy lives, working towards using a fair share of the earth's resources. Brighton & Hove is the world's first local authority to sign up to becoming a 'One Planet City' and adopt a sustainability action plan that aims to realise economic success within a commitment to reduce the city's environmental impact.

The formation of the Greater Brighton Economic Board provides a new and stronger platform for working with government departments and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership. With our partners and in accordance with the five strategic objectives of the Economic Strategy Action we aim to:

- Enhance Brighton & Hove's distinctive destination and lifestyle offer
- Grow quality jobs and business opportunities in higher value and low carbon sectors
- Better align jobs skills to projected needs and in support of higher value sectors
- Tackle barriers to employment and create employment opportunities for all
- Establish a strong and influential Greater Brighton City Region

Public and private investment brought about through City Deal will provide the momentum for development of new low carbon growth hubs and more, better paid jobs.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will provide public leadership to promote collaboration between key business sectors to generate growth and create new jobs.
- b) We will 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.
- c) We will work to become one of the UK's leading destinations for eco-tourism and sustainable events, reflecting the growing maturity of the city as a tourist destination, ensuring that transport links and options around the city contribute to this status.



Priority two: Creating a more sustainable city

- d) 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 National Park, working to grow and diversify the rural economy.
- e) We will work closely with the business community to focus on developing a low carbon economy, improving the city's environmental performance, reputation and inward investment offer, taking advantage of opportunities for real change such as the proposed Rampion offshore wind farm.
- f) 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.
- g) We will focus on working more closely with the food industry, including its supply chain, to improve sustainability standards whilst promoting growth.
- h) We will forge stronger links between the council, the two universities, the teaching hospital, and the business sector.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Deliver the Superconnected Cities (ultrafast broadband) project, including the Connection Voucher Scheme and bring forward options for further wireless provision in the city.
2. Deliver the renovation and extension of New England House, enabling it to become a hub for the creative digital sector.
3. Launch the procurement process for a development partner to replace the outdated King Alfred Leisure Centre and redevelop the current King Alfred site, a scheme that will include a significant number of new homes.
4. Work in partnership with the University of Brighton and the Cathedral Group to bring forward exciting new proposals for the redevelopment of the Preston Barracks site and adjacent university land.
5. Subject to a successful bid to UNESCO, develop an economic programme for the Biosphere reserve area.

## **Outcome 2.2: A fair balance between the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, public transport users and motorists**

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### **Our aspiration**

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We want to ensure that, working with residents, businesses and partners, we minimise the total amount of waste produced, and maximise reuse, recycling and energy recovery of remaining waste. While, education remains important to encourage more people to reduce, reuse or recycle waste we also need to relook at the services we provide to make a significant difference. Domestic waste is only a part of the overall picture and we want to work with the construction industry and businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

### **Our approach**

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Through our sustainable transport plans we encourage active travel including walking and cycling as well as public transport to reduce congestion, carbon and improve air quality. We continue to run road safety and training programmes working with neighbouring local authorities, as well as providing improvements to footways, crossings, the public realm and cycling infrastructure.

We prioritise management and maintenance of roughly £1.4 billion of transport assets contained within our public highways, street lighting, traffic signals, structures, coastline, sea defences and seafront structures. Management of traffic through control centre technology, Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and civil parking enforcement further reduces congestion to support the movement and commercial activity of residents, businesses and visitors to the city.

We have successfully reduced car and van ownership and journeys to work. We have also achieved significant increases in walking, cycling and public transport journeys through Local Transport Plan schemes and significant additional grants and bids, such as:

- Lewes Road bus & cycle corridor providing sustainable transport access from the city through the academic corridor and providing access to the South Downs National Park
- Seven Dials roundabout safety and public realm improvements to reduce casualties and enhance facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers as well as motorists
- Supported bus contracts providing access to public transport for communities and individuals where services wouldn't otherwise be provided
- Better Bus Area grant funding to deliver additional public transport services and infrastructure to improve journey reliability and links to the east of the City
- Old Shoreham Road cycle lane to support increase cycling rates and provide safer access to local schools
- City centre car park refurbishments, including Regency Square, improving the visitor experience and customer safety
- First phase of city wide 20 mph speed limits to reduce the number and severity of collisions and casualties whilst improving the street environment for all users
- Controlled parking schemes and improvements to customer access through rollout of Pay by Phone parking

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will undertake a review of parking schemes in the city to ensure a fair balance between the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. We will deliver the council's next Local Transport Plan setting out the long term vision and strategy to provide an accessible and resilient transport system.
2. Continue the development and activity through the Local Transport Body to secure further significant major scheme funding via the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and Regional Growth Fund for Brighton & Hove including the £8million secured for Valley Gardens proposals.
3. Deliver improvements in walking and cycling facilities through the LTP and schemes including Dyke Road Improvements, The Old Town Improvements, Phase 2 and subsequent 20mph speed limits, cycle parking and cycle training for young people to increase cycling infrastructure and the proportion of people walking and cycling.
4. Develop a new approach to the management of verge and pavement parking.

## Outcome 2.3: A low waste city

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### Our aspiration

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We want to ensure that, working with residents, businesses and partners, we minimise the total amount of waste produced, and maximise reuse, recycling and energy recovery of remaining waste. While, education remains important in order to encourage more people to reduce, reuse or recycle waste we also need to relook at the services we provide to make a significant difference. Domestic waste is only a part of the overall picture and we want to work with the construction industry and businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

### Our approach

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Last year we made major and complex service changes to the collection of domestic waste and recycling. We did this to:

- improve the efficiency of the service and release funds for much needed investment in our vehicle fleet
- minimise financial detriment to our employees from necessary changes to our system of pay and allowances
- improve the service offer to our customers particularly over bank holidays

Looking forward, we face important challenges but also great opportunities. We will continue to focus on the efficiency and reliability of the service. Completing the procurement of new vehicles over the coming year is critical with much of our current fleet coming to the end of its life. We also are employing new equipment to support the productivity of our street cleaning team. As areas of the city change and are redeveloped, we will continue to review our service performance and bring about further change where necessary.

We continue to invest in training our managers and staff, not just in what we do but also in how we work as an integrated team to deliver a quality service to our customers. Nurturing a positive and trusted relationship with our customers is critical, as a poor waste and recycling collection service can be one of the biggest frustrations citizens have with the council. We are planning to engage residents in customer panels, regular neighbourhood feedback and want to inspire our leading staff to be customer care champions.

Improving recycling remains a key focus. Unlike some other cities, we don't collect garden waste and thus our collected recycling tonnages are comparably lower. Aware that the market for recycled materials can be volatile, we are also keen to manage our waste stream responsibly and effectively. Working with private and community and voluntary sector partners, we will continue to improve understanding within our communities of how the city as a whole can reduce domestic waste, its adverse impact on the environment and explore practical and innovative ways of doing so.

Once we have stabilised our domestic waste and recycling collection and disposal service we will continue to develop our business offer. We aim to make it attractive to our neighbours and also to the business sector for whom we would like to offer a commercial waste collection and disposal service where it makes sensible use of our capacity.

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will investigate the feasibility of providing a commercial collection.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Improve customer satisfaction and engagement with our street cleaning, waste and recycling collection services.
2. Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the service changes we introduced in 2013/14.
3. Review our recycling collection and disposal waste stream strategy.
4. Engage with local communities to develop better ways of helping them to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover value from our domestic waste.
5. Complete key stages of fleet procurement.
6. Complete the business case for providing a commercial waste collection service.

## Outcome 2.4: A healthier and higher quality built environment

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### Our aspiration

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The quality of the city's built environment is crucial to the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and the city's economy. We have iconic architecture, a national park bordering the city to the north and the sea to the south. For our economic vision to succeed we must take pride in the city's appearance. We want to preserve and promote our heritage, promote high quality new development and improve our streets and open spaces. In a crowded city our parks and allotments provide a garden for those who are without their own; a place for leisure, to socialise and to cultivate food.

### Our approach

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Following extensive consultation we are working with the government planning inspector to finalise our City Plan, the planning blueprint for the city, to create a resilient and sustainable city over the next 20 years, seeking to protect employment space and green space while prioritising areas for new housing to meet our shortage. We developed the New Homes for Neighbourhoods estate regeneration programme to deliver high quality, sustainable new homes on land owned by the council

As the economy recovers we will bring forward the regeneration of key sites, especially those that are owned or have been released by the council specifically for development opportunities (eg Preston Barracks, Circus Street Market, i360, King Alfred, Black Rock, Falmer Released Land) delivering high quality public realm and new facilities for the city.

We maintain and work to enhance the city's public spaces, ensuring they are safe, clean and accessible for all users. This includes many of the city's roads, public spaces and parks and council housing land. We work collaboratively with partners to regenerate important space in the city, for example the widely celebrated restoration of The Level, a vital open space for communities in our city centre.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) 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.
- b) We will encourage regeneration and new investment in the city through the development of an investment prospectus and creating a City Plan with sustainability at its centre.
- c) 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.
- d) We will push for high quality, sustainable new buildings and new housing within the city by producing our own guidance on minimum design standards.
- e) 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.

#### Priority two: Creating a more sustainable city

- f) We will work with housing cooperatives and social landlords within the city to find sites for 1000 new homes (by 2015).
- g) 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.
- h) We will make it easy for businesses and communities alike to see what buildings and land we own and where.
- i) We will explore with businesses and residents how to improve the quality and cleanliness of the public realm, the environmental impact of these services, while reducing costs.
- j) We will continue to improve and enhance the public realm, seeking to balance the needs of different users, and work with community groups across the city to preserve our architectural heritage.
- k) 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.
- l) 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 different needs.
- m) We will encourage use of allotments through development of our new Allotment Strategy and seek to increase their availability as well as explore new community growing spaces.

### Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Redesign the planning service to increase efficiency and improve customer service, to ensure that as the economy recovers we aid and encourage appropriate, high quality development.
2. Progress new plans to redevelop the Preston Barracks site and adjacent University of Brighton land for a major mixed-use development incorporating high quality public realm, integration with surrounding communities, and improved permeability and links to Moulsecoomb station.
3. Work with our development partners on the Circus Street site to ensure it delivers high quality public realm and accessible public buildings that benefit the whole community.
4. Achieve greater efficiency in the maintenance and upkeep of Parks by reviewing maintenance regimes and working patterns, and strengthening the involvement of volunteers, which will also help to minimise any impact on the existing Green Flag status of some parks.
5. Work with partners Marks Barfield Architects towards achieving a start on site for the Brighton i360 to ensure regeneration of the western seafront can progress as planned.

## Outcome 2.5: Protection and enhancement of the city's natural environment

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### Our aspiration

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Brighton & Hove's extraordinarily tight mix of natural and built environments is unique in many ways and must be celebrated. The city owes its foundation and its historic success to the surrounding environment and we must protect and promote it as part of our vision for the future. We want everyone to enjoy and appreciate the British landscape at its best, whether that is visitors who are drawn by the energy of the city or children and young people who are born and grow up in the city but rarely experience the benefits of nature.

### Our approach

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We will foster a mutual relationship between the urban environment and nature, encouraging people to interact with and conserve natural habitats and wildlife. Our plans for designation as a UNESCO [Biosphere Reserve](#) and our work with schools will help us to instil a culture where children, young people and adults from all neighbourhoods within the city learn about and enjoy the opportunities and the health benefits that our open spaces offer.

The council is a significant owner of open land surrounding the city. We will use our assets, like Stanmer Park, to connect the city with the downs as well as to deliver the Biosphere Reserve. Much of our land is leased and used for farming. We commit to help improve biodiversity on all of the land that we own, tenanted or not, and to manage the impact of human activity on our groundwater resource and on natural habitats and prevent persecution of animals in the wild.

The city's Climate Change Strategy will provide the strategic framework to promote significant reduction in carbon emissions and help us to prepare for the effects of climate change. These have been seen most starkly in recent years with summer droughts contrasted by severe winters, with freezing weather making certain areas of the city impassable and, more recently, localised flooding in communities such as Patcham.

Our position on the coast and the potential for flooding and coastal erosion means that homes, buildings, and infrastructure require protection. Our 12 kilometres of coastline not only make the city an attractive visitor destination but the shingle and extensive system of groynes and sea walls protect our beaches and form an important part of our sea defences. As well as infrastructure we will also work to support further improvement to coastal and marine habitats.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will bid for recognition as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- b) We will preserve and increase biodiversity using our own assets and land, through our City Downland Estate policy.



#### Priority two: Creating a more sustainable city

- c) 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.
- d) 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 for our beaches.
- e) We will take action with partners to protect the city's water supply, our focus being on preventing pollutants in the groundwater, minimising the loss of clean water at source and reducing water demand.
- f) We will take advantage of the pilot study under way in the catchment area of the Adur and Ouse rivers.
- g) 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.
- h) We will seek to protect the welfare and quality of life of domesticated animals.
- i) We will seek to ensure the most rigorous health and safety standards for livestock and that humane practice is applied.
- j) We will continue to provide advice and support to residents and businesses to prevent circumstances where animals pose a risk to public health.
- k) We will ensure that where we do intervene we do so humanely, with minimum distress caused to animals.

### Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Prepare an updated Open Spaces Strategy to deliver the Biosphere principles in the city and inform the future management of our parks and open spaces.
2. Work in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority to achieve refurbishment and re-use of the Home Farm complex within the framework of the Stanmer Park masterplan to promote and encourage greater use of the park and provide an enhanced gateway to the National Park.
3. Develop a strong partnership Biosphere Reserve programme and broader governance arrangements, including the One Planet approach to sustainability in the city.
4. Work to further improve education and engagement of residents with their local environment through the Ranger Service, the schools education programme, the Sussex Festival of Nature, the Biosphere Partnership and partnership working with the South Downs National Park Authority.
5. Improve biodiversity in the city through wildflower planting and the creation of Bee Banks as part of the Nature Improvement Area project and delivery of improvements identified in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

## Priority three – Engaging people who live and work in the city

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### Introduction

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The council aspires to create a city that everyone feels pride in and responsibility for. The council's third priority is to improve engagement with people in the city to ensure council decision making is robust and takes account of local need. We want to encourage more participation in democracy, in community life, in the way we decide the future of our city and how we deliver services. In return we will deliver high quality services, be transparent, report back, make it more straightforward to get involved and modernise what local democracy looks and feels like to the city.

The council recognises that local people have skills, knowledge, views and ideas that help us to achieve our purpose and ambition. Furthermore, it recognises the huge amount of work done by volunteers in the city and aims to support this wherever possible. The city's community, voluntary and faith sector is diverse and vibrant and is uniquely placed to help us engage people, particularly those who are vulnerable and face additional barriers to work with us.

The council is responding to the opportunities presented by the localism agenda set by central government. While the climate to do this is challenging we are responding creatively and with careful consideration of risk. We recognise the positive opportunities and potential this creates to help us ensure that we make good decisions for the city.

The city is also fortunate to have a thriving business sector which has fared well during the recession. We have a significant number of small businesses and creative industries and our culture and arts programmes support much of the tourism industry. Engaging businesses is an important focus for this priority and will help us in our aim to become increasingly self-sufficient as a city.

### Our outcomes for Priority three

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- 3.1 [A council that is easy to contact and demonstrates that it listens to residents](#)
- 3.2 [Resilient and vibrant community and voluntary sector](#)
- 3.3 [Improved collaboration between the council and communities](#)
- 3.4 [Improved council engagement with businesses](#)
- 3.5 [A more open and transparent council](#)

**Figure 7. Engaging people who live and work in the city**



## **Outcome 3.1: A council that is easy to contact and demonstrates that it listens to residents**

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### **Our aspiration**

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To consistently meet and exceed the aspiration described in our [Customer Promise](#):

- We will be easy to reach
- We will be clear and treat you with respect
- We will listen and get things done

People tell us they want services that are built around them and their needs and that improve the city and their quality of life. This means more than just good customer service; we want people to have the opportunity to be a part of our everyday business to ensure we use our resources well and that they are able to influence for positive change in the city.

### **Our approach**

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The key to improving council engagement activity is to work to reduce the amount of duplicated consultations we ask our residents to take part in. We know that wherever possible, residents want to have one conversation with all of the city's public sector services. We are working towards a new strategic partnership bringing together representatives from the community and voluntary sector, police, NHS, universities and others to collaborate and improve engagement and equality across the city.

Our services are delivered best when our customers and users tell us what works. We are therefore committed to enabling all of our service users to have their say about their dealings with us. As a local authority with 11,800 council housing tenancies, we are committed to ensuring that we listen to all of our tenants and act on their concerns. Other examples include hearing the voice of children in care through our youth participation team and working with adults with learning difficulties through the Learning Disability Partnership.

We are also working hard to find new ways to talk with people as well as making existing methods easier to use for example by bringing approaches together in our new Customer Service Centres at Hove Town Hall and Bartholomew House. Social media is now commonplace. It is an easy and immediate way to listen to, ask, involve, share and also to campaign. We have responded accordingly, improving how the council can be lobbied through online petitions and introducing Twitter enquiries. We will keep pace and innovate, and in doing so draw on the creative expertise in the city to do this.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will continue to embed our Customer Promise across all parts of the council.
- b) We will continue to use a variety of ways to listen and respond and use mechanisms that customers tell us are easy and accessible, including improving our website and using social media to maximum effect.

Priority three: Engaging people who live and work in the city

- c) We will build on our budget consultation process every year.
- d) We will offer a wider choice in how service users and council tenants communicate with us, going further than the traditional approaches such as meetings.
- e) We will strengthen the role of our libraries as community hubs, as a result of consultation with over 2,300 users, with new IT facilities, toys for children, refreshments and study space.
- f) We will work with our partners to reduce the amount of duplicated consultations that we ask people to respond to.
- g) We will find better ways to report back on how we have responded to our customers so that it is clear how what is said relates to what happens.
- h) We will use our complaints process to ensure we learn from mistakes and make improvements.
- i) We will build on and support the development of Healthwatch Brighton & Hove to give patients a voice in health and adult social care services.
- j) We will use the learning from our neighbourhood governance pilots to continue using social media, pop up events and online forums as a way of talking to more people at times and in places that suit them.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Work with customers to co-produce improvements to our website as part of a continuous cycle to test and respond to feedback when we create new digital online and mobile services.
2. Use customer insight to improve experience across all services, by creating a better quality way to share customer stories, complaints and feedback.
3. Improve our monitoring of how easy it is to access our services so we can understand and respond.
4. Respond to issues raised in the Adult Social Care City Summit by involving citizens and interested parties in an interactive and varied discussion around six key topics.

## **Outcome 3.2: Resilient and vibrant community and voluntary sector**

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### **Our aspiration**

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Our aspiration is to continue to have a vibrant community and voluntary sector, which is resilient to funding challenges, working with us for the benefit of the city and providing grass roots services. The city is fortunate to have around 1,700 active community and voluntary organisations plus a network of active faith organisations that provide key services, advocate on behalf of service users and promote volunteering in the city. They are sometimes better placed or more trusted than public agencies to provide help, particularly to some of the most vulnerable residents. We want to work even more closely with the Community and voluntary sector through a mutually beneficial partnership arrangement to make sure that the services we support and commission through the sector are efficient, effective and delivered to meet the needs of citizens.

### **Our approach**

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The council has a strong relationship with the city's community and voluntary sector and is proud of its long standing investment in its services. In a climate of reducing funds, the council recognises that the sector is also facing unprecedented challenges and together we need to make some difficult decisions about how we respond. Our starting point is a new Third Sector Commissioning Prospectus which sets out our strategic vision for infrastructure, community development and engagement. This is enabling a new three year funding relationship which builds on the good practice to date and nurtures a mature business approach. We will also commit to working with the sector to consider the findings of the latest Taking Account audit of community and voluntary sector organisations in the city.

We will work alongside the newly formed Community Works as the key community and voluntary sector infrastructure organisation in the city and continue to involve the sector in helping to make important decisions such as those concerned with our budget setting. We will support the sector and cultivate opportunities for collaboration across the community and voluntary sector and the council to ensure effective services are delivered to citizens. We will also work with the city's diverse faith sector, recognising its unique role in providing free support, often to those unable to engage and find help elsewhere.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will work in partnership with the community and voluntary sector including community, voluntary and faith sector staff, volunteers and trustees, to ensure resilience and effectiveness through these financially challenging times.
- b) We will continue to support the community and voluntary sector's role in decision making and the review, design and delivery of council and city services through our new strategic funding arrangement.
- c) We will continue to work in partnership with the community and voluntary sector to attract external and charitable investment.

Priority three: Engaging people who live and work in the city

- d) We will use the latest findings of the Taking Account audit of the community and voluntary sector to inform our partnership and funding approaches.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Commission corporate investment in community development, community Engagement and community and voluntary sector infrastructure pooling both the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and council resources.
2. Work collaboratively across council directorates with the commissioners' network and procurement team to develop a coordinated approach to commissioning the community and voluntary sector, which will include all relevant opportunities.
3. Establish a new working relationship with Community Works as the new infrastructure body for the community and voluntary sector in the city.

## **Outcome 3.3: Improved collaboration between the council and communities**

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### **Our aspiration**

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We want to release the social networks and activism that will make public services more successful and sustainable by working collaboratively with our diverse communities and neighbourhoods. We recognise that individuals and communities have skills, knowledge and resources and we will be better at working with them to maximise our impact. We recognise that people can be part of several different communities at the same time – for example where they live, how they identify or through a shared interest – and we are sensitive to this when carrying out any type of engagement activity. Not only do we want people to feel they can talk to the council and be heard; we want them to be actively involved. We want to build stronger, healthier, more active and productive relationships between the council and the people who live and work in the city.

### **Our approach**

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Our Communities and Third Sector Policy, and Community Development Strategy sets out our vision for collaboration. We will foster the ability of people and communities to help themselves and others through our planned commissioning of community development and infrastructure support. In exceptional situations too we will apply the same principles of collaboration, as demonstrated during recent severe winters. The collective response most recently to flooding in Patcham has shown how council services work in the community with citizens to make sure everyone is informed and those most in need receive vital help.

Our Neighbourhood Governance pilots identified a tremendous willingness in communities to work in collaboration with the council, to look at reducing resources and work with public service providers to create new innovative solutions to local needs. The pilots enabled residents, officers, councillors and businesses to work together and look at how to manage the balance between need and available resource in a creative manner. Residents have been able to add to reducing resources by giving their time, skills and innovation and by raising additional funds.

We acknowledge that we struggle to truly reach and engage all sections of the community. Some of our structures and processes are overly complex or formal, public but poorly attended, without the flexibility and responsiveness to allow a conversation with communities on their own terms and we will continue to innovate to change this. Key to more successful collaboration with communities is a more co-ordinated and joined up approach by public bodies collectively through our new partnership approach.

### **Our aims for 2011-15**

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will continue to strengthen our joint work with communities and Sussex Police on neighbourhood policing, environmental improvements and the work of the Local Action Teams.



Priority three: Engaging people who live and work in the city

- b) We will continue to use the opportunities of the localism agenda through neighbourhood planning, asset transfer and community led services.
- c) We will implement the actions in our Communities and Third Sector Policy, and support high quality collaboration between communities, the Community and voluntary sector and the council to improve the design and delivery of public services, maximising the impact of public investment
- d) 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.
- e) We will collaborate with individuals and communities, including the business community, to work with them to 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.
- f) We will provide more opportunities for co-production and invest in building social value and promoting volunteering.

## **Our key areas of focus for 2014-15**

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Develop a programme of activities which transform organisational culture, behaviour, systems and processes around collaboration with communities.
2. Map cost and review existing direct community engagement and participation spending across the council to ensure opportunities for collaboration are maximised.
3. Support the development and implementation of the communities and community and voluntary sector commissioning framework.

## Outcome 3.4: Improved council engagement with businesses

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### Our aspiration

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We want to create a better understanding of the dependencies between the public and private sectors to create a more self sufficient and sustainable local economy. Our Greater Brighton City Deal proposals are creating a long term vision for economic growth which will increase business rates to invest in public services that promote skills and productivity. We want to engage businesses effectively, whether addressing our future economic plans or issues that affect local and particularly smaller businesses.

### Our approach

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We continue to engage with the Economic Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and business forums. Working with neighbouring authorities and with the private sector we are pursuing opportunities for co-investment through mechanisms such as the Greater Brighton Economic Board, the LEP Strategic Economic Plan and EU programmes.

We continue to collaborate with businesses to deliver on key strategies such as the City Employment & Skills Plan, the Economic Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy. We will work with the community and voluntary sector and businesses in developing opportunities for social enterprise that enables innovation and social value return for citizens.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will increase our focus and quality of engagement with businesses in the current financial climate.

### Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Deliver the Regional Growth Fund Greater Brighton City Region business support programme.
2. Secure EU structural and investment funds in support of business and job growth.
3. Undertake a survey of Greater Brighton businesses and disseminate the findings to inform service priorities and policy interventions.
4. Continue to work with business partners to design and deliver on key strategies such as the City Employment & Skills Plan, the Economic Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy.
5. Create a more strategic dialogue between public and private sectors for future city investment through the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

## Outcome 3.5: A more open and transparent council

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### Our aspiration

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We want to be a council that is connected to its communities and is open, transparent and influenced by local residents. We will strengthen and bring together both the role of political debate and decision taking with civic discussion and accountability, providing support and building the capacity of citizens and communities to participate.

### Our approach

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We have reviewed our decision-making structures reinstating the committee system and are implementing new ways of working brought about by the localism agenda including neighbourhood planning and neighbourhood councils.

We will publish reliable, understandable and useful data about council services and about the city. We will listen to residents about the information that they would like to have and prioritise this. We will listen and welcome challenge to our transparency. We will endeavour to make the data as accessible as possible within technical and legal constraints. Recognising there can be a difference between data that people with technical skills (developers) can use and that residents often want, we will ensure that data is signposted on our website. People will then be able to access this through a library if they need support.

We have produced the second State of the City report which provides an easy to digest statistical view of the city, backed by raw data available to the public. We will undertake a short programme of Needs Assessments that engage and work with those communities in the city facing hidden inequality. This work will help us to analyse and target support where it is most needed. Our work with the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and transgender community is underway and we are planning to start a similar process with disabled people in 2014.

We are publishing all Freedom of Information Requests and their responses online. We will work to identify patterns of repeat requests that could show a desire for information to be published regularly without needing to be requested. We will continue to grow the amount of open data we publish as well as complying with the new code of practice on data transparency.

Following a review of our information systems we will launch a new Brighton & Hove Local Information Service. This will make it far easier to access information, whether it is used by individuals or organisations, enabling easier understanding and interpretation of local needs and more informed bidding for council grants and services.

National government has reduced some of the performance assessment responsibilities 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.

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will make it easier to be involved with the decision-making processes of the council.
- b) We will promote the role of scrutiny and encourage people to participate in scrutiny reviews.
- c) We will use open data formats and licensing for the publication of council information, reports, data and media.
- d) We will ensure that we meet the duties of the Equality Act (2010) and that consideration of the needs of groups protected in law and others are considered throughout all of our work.
- e) We will actively work to strengthen local democracy and improve the quality of democratic conversation in the city.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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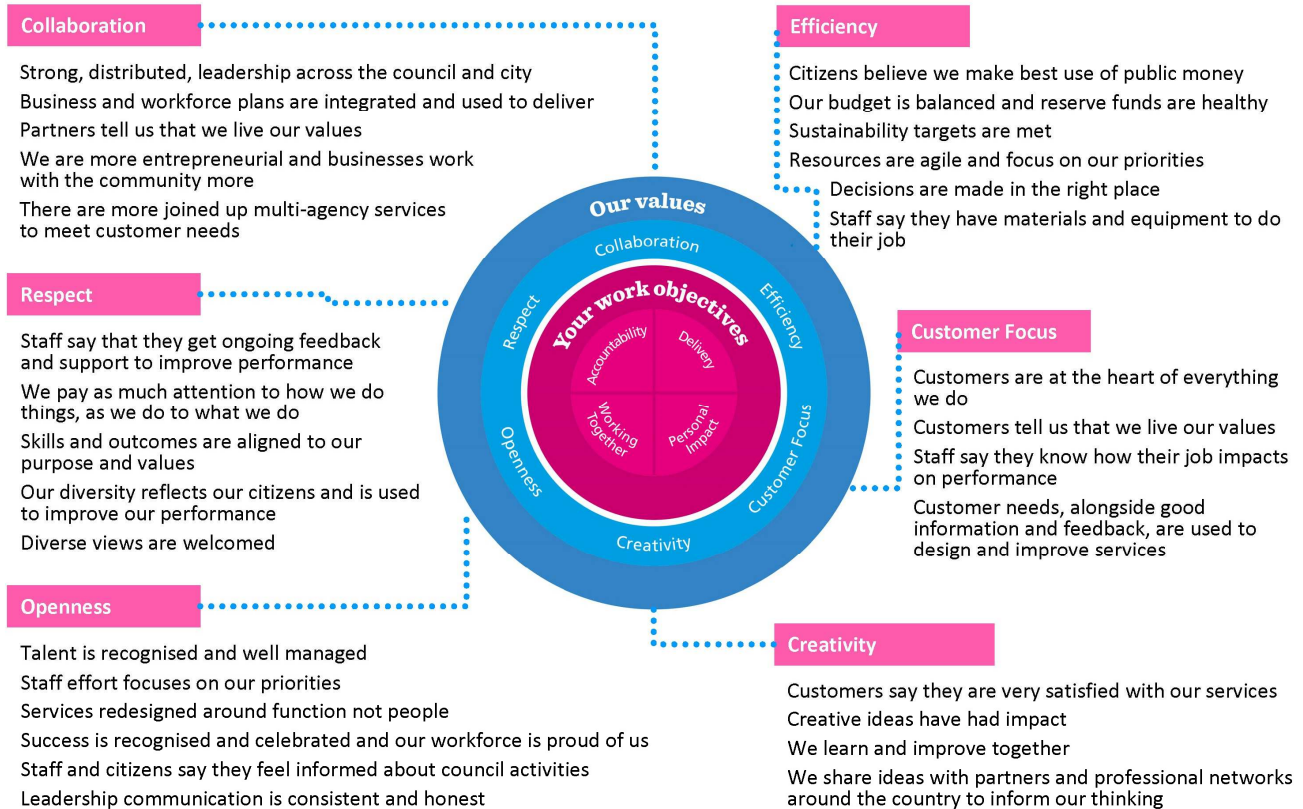
The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Progress the BME and Transgender Needs Assessment in partnership with local communities and the wider public sector.
2. Begin a Disabled People's Needs Assessment in partnership with local communities and the wider public sector.
3. Grow the amount of open data we publish through our open Freedom of Information site as well as complying with the new code of practice on data transparency.

## Priority four – Modernising the council

### Introduction

Modernising the council is more than a series of programmes, it is an approach. We have described what difference we think modernising the council will make using our values to frame the impact.



### Our outcomes for Priority four

- 4.1 [Good governance and leadership](#)
- 4.2 [A high performing workforce](#)
- 4.3 [Excellent customer service](#)
- 4.4 [Value for money](#)

Figure 8. Modernising the council



## Outcome 4.1: Good governance and leadership

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### Our aspiration

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Our role is one of leadership and responsibility for the city and for citizens. So that we can offer credible leadership we must be an organisation that is well led, with a culture driven by shared values and where performance of self, others and services is managed. We uphold our democratic principles through our constitution to ensure that we work to represent the best interests of our communities, who elect councillors and pay for quality services. We know that we cannot achieve our purpose and ambition in isolation and without learning from our own experience and from others. Our partnership arrangements across the city with other public agencies, the community and voluntary sector are strong and we need to sustain them and work increasingly as a city region to raise our profile as a key city in the UK.

### Our approach

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The Corporate Plan sets out the council's purpose, ambition and values and priorities which need to be shared and understood. Councillors and council officers need to have well defined roles and functions and to be developed to fulfil them effectively.

The council works to take properly informed decisions, which are subject to appropriate scrutiny or challenge and effectively manage risks and opportunities. We work according to the principles set out in the corporate plan to engage with people who live and work in the city to ensure robust accountability.

We are part of [Brighton & Hove Connected](#), the city forum where public, business and community representatives agree shared aims and priorities and our Chief Executive chairs the public services City Management Board. We are open to learn from best practice wherever it lies and recognise that peer challenge and support is a vital part of improving local government nationally.

We are strengthening our relationships with the business community, particularly through our Greater Brighton City Deal with government. We also look outside our geographical boundaries to work with neighbouring local authorities, for example through the South East Seven partnership and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership in particular.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will use the CIPFA / SOLACE framework on Good Governance in Local Government to assess how we are doing. This framework has six core principles:
  - focussing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and implementing a vision for the local area
  - members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
  - promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance

Priority four: Modernising the council

- taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
  - developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective
  - engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability
- b) We will report annually to the Audit and Standards Committee on our compliance with these standards.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. We will commission a Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review process.
2. Enhancing the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board to provide systems leadership across the city's health and social care system.
3. Establishing the Greater Brighton Economic Board work programme.
4. Improve council employees' understanding of the importance of good governance through provision of effective induction, training, development and performance management.
5. Implementation of Individual Electoral Registration.



## Outcome 4.2: A high performing workforce

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### Our aspiration

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The council needs to organise itself to make sure that the three city priorities set out in this Corporate Plan can be delivered as effectively as possible given the challenges and the opportunities that we are facing. While internal structures are important to the extent that they ensure clear roles and responsibilities and accountabilities, the culture of the organisation and the way that we work will be more critical to our success. We recognise that there is a need for continuous improvement and a requirement for the programmes of work that support the outcomes to be properly coordinated to add maximum value.

### Our approach

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We recognise that it is important for our workforce to be able to adapt and respond effectively to the changing national and local government context. As an employer of around 9,500 staff (including schools) our success as an organisation depends on the quality and impact of our individual and collective contributions. We value the feedback that we receive through our staff survey and are committed to taking action to respond to the issues raised.

We conduct a regular staff survey which invites views from everyone in the organisation on all aspects of working for the council, and we have now committed to do this annually. We also engaged widely across the organisation in 2011 to develop our People Strategy. That work gave the council important feedback from staff and identified actions across five headings:

- Culture and Communication
- Leadership and Management
- Resourcing
- Learning and Development
- Quality of our Working Lives

The financial pressures facing the public sector and local government mean that we need to be able to respond to changing demands. We need to have good workforce planning, a modern pay system and flexibility in our approach to job roles and career development. 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.

We have signed up to the Brighton & Hove Living Wage campaign and have been an accredited UK Living Wage employer since April 2013, committed to paying all workers a wage that affords them a decent standard of living.

We need a workforce that is representative of and is able to represent the citizens we serve. We have an excellent rating in the Equality Standard for Local Government which we value, but we are not complacent and need to live up to the high standards our staff and citizens expect of us an employer.

## Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- We will encourage and support our staff to meet the high expectations for services that they provide.
- We will commit to renewing Investors in People accreditation as a hallmark of a high performing organisation.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Deliver our new culture change programme, Living our values, everyday, designed to improve performance management across the organisation.
2. Improve staff satisfaction levels by implementing improvements based around the key messages from the staff survey, specifically improving our internal communication, improving our management capability and building personal resilience.
3. Implement the Workforce Equalities Action Plan year 2 commitments and take action to promote positive trends and address areas requiring improvement, meeting our duties under the Equalities Act 2010.
4. Invest in core ICT services to improve staff's day to day user experience, through replacing end of life network, data centre, servers, storage and computers.
5. Ensure the HR infrastructure provides the tools to support modernisation including job families, workforce planning and high quality management information.

## Outcome 4.3: Excellent customer service

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### Our aspiration

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The council is a large organisation providing a wide variety of services. Our [Customer Promise](#) says that:

- We will be easy to reach
- We will be clear and treat you with respect
- We will listen and get things done

We want this to be the case across the whole organisation and we have included customer focus as one of our values. Some services, particularly front line services, are experiencing greater demand than ever. Despite the pressure this places on services the promise is more, not less, important. We will communicate in more flexible ways to make sure that demand in itself is not a barrier to necessary information.

### Our approach

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Public expectations are rising fast. Citizens are used to having choice in their everyday life about what they do, when and how. They are becoming less tolerant of any organisation that they perceive to be bureaucratic and unresponsive to their needs. Increasingly they want to contact us in different ways and at different times and expect quick responses.

It can be hard for us to keep up, particularly with the changing technology that people are using day to day. But we also need to realise that for some, the increasing use of digital communication and interaction is a real barrier to accessing services and engaging with the council.

Our population profile is also changing. The 2011 census reveals quite substantial changes in the proportion of people from different minority groups. We need to ensure that our services are able to respond to those changes and we also need to ensure that as far as possible our workforce is properly representative of the city's demographics.

A key aspect to providing excellent customer service is ensuring that we design services with residents, businesses and visitors. This will make sure that services are driven by the needs and demands of service users and not by the assumptions of service providers.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will continue to instil this promise across all parts of the council through our Improving the Customer Experience (ICE) programme.
- b) We will aim to simplify the experience of contacting different parts of the organisation so that people get the information and help they need first time.
- c) We will continue to redevelop the council website to be more accessible and enable customers to make more transactions online through our Digital Customer Experiences (DiCE) investment programme.

- d) We will make behind the scenes changes to improve how we manage information.
- e) We will continue to provide and improve the different ways people can access council services (recognising that not everyone can or chooses to use the website), making sure people can do business with us swiftly and hassle-free regardless of their need.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Continue to improve our website working towards rolling out a 'My Account' for citizens and customers.
2. Complete implementation of changes to our refuse and recycling services and commit to improving satisfaction levels.
3. Consolidate further services into library or other buildings to provide more joined up services to citizens and customers.
4. Services work together to make access easier, such as exploring single assessment processes, incorporating housing needs and medical assessments, and bringing the Homemove and Housing Options phone lines together.

## Outcome 4.4: Value for money

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### Our aspiration

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The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out a very challenging context for the organisation with reduced central government grants, a new funding model for local government and increasing demand for services. The council needs to be creative in its response to this, ensuring that it can sustain vital public services in a cost effective way. For many of our council taxpayers, household finances are under huge pressure. It is essential that we recognise our fiduciary responsibility to them and ensure that they get value for money from the services they pay for. We need them to have confidence that we can be trusted to spend money wisely.

### Our approach

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The council has a duty to secure 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' in the use of its resources (the three Es) and we deliver this through our far-reaching value for money programme. We know that we are facing serious financial challenges and so we need to spend our money wisely. Some parts of our value for money approach are embedded in individual services and the children's social care and adult social care programmes are crucial examples of this.

We also have cross cutting initiatives which are led corporately but will in time touch every aspect of how we do business. Our Workstyles programme is designed to make better use of our space, reducing the numbers of buildings and our carbon footprint and providing better technology to support a flexible and mobile workforce.

Our aspirations to become a One Planet Living council are driven by our understanding of the fragility of resources and the need to work within environmental limits rather than exceed them.

### Our aims for 2011-15

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The following are our aims over the course of the Corporate Plan:

- a) We will review the very basics of how services operate to improve efficiency and organise ourselves around our customer's needs using a Business Process Improvement (BPI) approach.
- b) We will also increase our investment in ICT to help free up staff time and to enable us to respond to changing customer expectations.
- c) We will continue to build on our commissioning expertise, using expert partners and providers to deliver services where appropriate and pursue a mixed economy of service delivery including use of shared services and new models such as local authority trading companies.
- d) We will comply with our Sustainable Procurement Policy and meet our obligations to assess 'social value' where appropriate so that we take sound decisions for the long term, not simply immediate financial gain.

## Our key areas of focus for 2014-15

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The following are our key areas of focus over the short to medium term:

1. Update our Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan to ensure we effectively prioritise and generate new resources to support our Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. Deliver Phase 4 of the Value for Money programme, including an enhanced focus on procurement, client transport, income management and benefits tracking from substantial ICT investment.
3. Commence Phase 3 of the Workstyles programme involving the disposal of a number of buildings including King's House.
4. Deliver the council's One Planet Living commitments and meet targets including reduced carbon emissions, water use and waste from council services.
5. Move to a more mixed economy of ICT provision including with neighbouring councils and private sector suppliers.