Priority action plan:
Fit for the future

Basingstoke and Deane

Introduction

This priority action plan sets out the actions that Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will take to deliver on the Council Plan priority:

"Fit for the future"

This plan also includes the measures and targets that will be used to monitor the delivery of this priority over the financial year 2021 to 2022.

Sub-priorities

Fit for the future

Sub-priorities

- Being a modern and financially sustainable council

- Delivering excellence in governance, democratic and electoral services

- Customer centric provision of services, including keeping them well-informed about decisions and initiatives

- Supporting a high performing, motivated, resilient and well-informed workforce

- Informing and supporting policy change and implementation

- Implementing programmes to support improvements in efficiency and effectiveness in provision of services

Executive commitments

There are no specified executive commitments that sit under the 'Fit for the future' priority however, this priority is fully endorsed by the Cabinet with continued support for the council's transformation activity and actions to drive the digital agenda and channel shift and to provide excellence in customer services.

COVID-19 adjustments to this priority

COVID-19 has meant that many more of the council's activities have had to become digital in nature in order to carry on functioning. This includes:

- Communications methods that respond to changing technology and customer demand
- Reception services
- Meetings and events
- Employee lifecycle processes
- Democratic services.

These changes do not change the priority but benefit the introduction of our digital programme and we will aim to expand and learn from them over the coming months. This includes introducing more online customer services and communications and moving away from contact at reception. It is proposed that the customer digital platform project is prioritised over the ERP project, in order to meet these new expectations.

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the council's finances, with the largest impact forecast to be in 2020/21 and an ongoing impact in later years, with the severity of this in terms of reduced income and increased costs depending on the depth and length of the recession that follows from the initial pandemic, lockdown and resulting actions.

The pandemic led to a recruitment freeze and the expectation of reduced staff turnover and therefore more stability in the workforce. As more staff work from home, the cultural change approach for the Smarter Ways of Working (SWOW)

project has changed and a greater emphasis has been placed on the safety of employees in the work environment.

There has been an increased volume of policy and legislative changes as a result of COVID-19 and the recovery is likely to see this continue and affect/ drive key government policies through the council plan period e.g. fiscal policy.

COVID-19 is likely to also affect timings/ approaches to government national agenda items such as devolution and the end of the transition period of exiting the EU.

Partnership activities

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council cannot become fit for the future on its own and local and national partners will be key to our success. The council will work with partners from many organisations, including the following, in order to achieve this priority:

- Hampshire Constabulary
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Electoral Commission
- Hart District Council
- Winchester City Council.

Being a modern and financially sustainable council

Continued and strengthened financial viability by transforming the council's operating model, focussing on customers, service delivery, digital technology, accommodation, workforce skills and income generation.

Key points

- The use of realistic and prudent assumptions and continuous review of financial planning
- Prioritisation of activity within council resources
- Maintaining adequate specific and general risk reserves
- The approach to reshaping the structure in line with the Fit for the future priority
- The continuation of the digital strategy
- Commercialisation Strategy development and implementation
- The implementation of the Treasury Management Strategy
- Ensuring the implementation of a robust Property Asset Management Strategy along with clear asset management plans
- Implementation of the Property Investment Strategy
- A robust in-year budget monitoring process and
- Appropriate systems and processes.

Key system updates

- ERP Project (a key project within the Digital Transformation Programme)
  - Implementation of integrated Finance, HR, Payroll, and optional modules such as Performance Management and Asset Management
  - Will provide efficient, integrated business processes and data across the organisation.

Actions

Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Development of an in-house service for the collection of debts	✓	✓		
Fit for purpose Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and Treasury Management Strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓
Annual review of financial regulations and financial procedure rules	✓	✓	✓	✓
Work with Jones Lang LaSalle to conduct a strategic review of the council's property portfolio	✓			
Adoption of a new property strategy		✓		
Develop individual asset management plans	✓	✓		
Develop a property performance dashboard	✓	✓		
Adequate and sustainable risk reserves	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial management – training, support and monitoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review of Procurement and Contracts service with an update of contract standing orders and implementation of Basingstoke Procurement Strategy	✓	✓		
Commercialisation Strategy and academy to identify opportunities for commercial activity	✓	✓		
Update of Digital and IT Strategy		✓		

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
Forecast revenue expenditure within 1% of budget	-0.73% (2019/20)	+/- 1%
Forecast revenue income within 1% of budget	-0.69% (2019/20)	+/- 1%
Forecast capital expenditure within 15% of budget	-4.68% (2019/20)	+/- 15%
Treasury Management portfolio return (Average, %)	1.76% (2019/20)	1.98%
Treasury management portfolio return (Actual, £m)	£2.8M (2019/20)	£2.56M
Debt collection rates (%) by end of next quarter- sundry	98.39% (2019/20)	90.00%
Debt collection rates (%) by end of next quarter - property	97.91% (2019/20)	95.00%
Collection rates (% of annual amount due) - council Tax	98.35% (2019/20)	98.60%
Collection rates (% of annual amount due) - Business tax (NDR)	**98.39% (2019/20)**	**99.20%**

Delivering excellence in governance, democratic and electoral services

As a public authority the council has a responsibility to ensure that the powers placed upon us are discharged effectively, efficiently and transparently thus allowing those who have entrusted us with that responsibility of public service to hold us to account and be satisfied that we have discharged that duty with proper care and attention.

The aims of the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) Project:

- **Strategic alignment:** Programmes and projects with organisational direction and growth.

- **Governance:** Provide quality assurance through regular reviews and transparency.

- **Organisational readiness:** Reshape culture and drive change.

- **Programme and project management:** Build a clear and consistent approach to leading to mature environment.

- **Learning and improvement:** Provide resource, capability and resilience through Centre of Excellence.

- **Value and impact:** Demonstrate added value through key performance measures.

The CPMO was established in 2020 to meet the aims outlined above, as a result the CPMO Service Charter and Programme and Project Framework were developed.

The service and documentation were delivered by the CPMO creation project, where extensive internal consultation with stakeholders within each directorate took place in a series of workshops.

Actions

Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Administer borough elections	✓	✓	✓	✓
Administer county council elections	✓	✓		
Administer Police and Crime Commissioner elections	✓	✓		
Maintain an accurate and complete electoral register	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engagement with under represented groups in the electoral process	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provision of a shared legal service (with Hart District Council) and information governance service	✓	✓	✓	✓
Implementation of Mod.Gov report management system	✓	✓		
Undertake and Implement a review of the Constitution		✓		
Deliver a Member councillor development programme		✓		
Completion of the internal audit plan by 31 March each year	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of a variety of media including social media to promote elections, committees, council and decisions taken	✓	✓	✓	✓
Expand the use of technology to enhance fraud prevention and detection	✓	✓		
Completion of the fraud and corruption plan	✓	✓	✓	✓

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
Achievement of a clean annual audit opinion	Unqualified opinion	Unqualified opinion
Percentage of FOI requests dealt with in time	90%	90%
Percentage of subject access requests dealt with in time	100%	100%
Chief Internal Auditor's annual opinion on the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes	Substantial Assurance (2019/20)	Minimum level of a 'Substantial' assurance
Protect the public purse to ensure that resources are used for their intended purpose by the identification of fraud and error	£200,000 (2019/20)	£250,000
Completion of fraud e-learning module	N/A	100%
Daily social media posts		

Customer centric provision of services, including keeping them well-informed about decisions and initiatives

We will continue to:

- Focus on the customer experience and ease of access to services, so that the customer doesn't have to see or experience how we are organised when dealing with us.

- Develop the council's use of digital and social media communications in response to changing technology and customer demand and habits, supporting smarter ways of working and driving channel shift.

- Through effective communications, drive efficient use of council services and user satisfaction and understanding of decisions made, increasing trust in the council and perception of its value in a difficult financial climate.

- Use targeted behaviour change campaigns to drive positive action in the borough, especially around climate change, recycling and healthy lifestyles.

- Further integrate the principles of clear and customer-focused communications into the council's functions and services, encouraging increasing forward planning and message development.

Actions

Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Provision of a new customer platform to replace the customer relationship management (CRM) – single view of customer	✓	✓		
Provision of a new web content management system (WCMS)		✓		
Provision of a new self-service portal (replacing and enhancing My Basingstoke)		✓		
Review services to be included in self-service portal		✓		
Process mapping of all external customer contact across the council to understand volume and nature of requests	✓	✓		
Transfer of appropriate activity into the contact centre and develop capability to deliver service online		✓		
Development of Customer Strategy, Framework and Charter	✓	✓		
Supporting of channel shift	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review of customer payment mechanisms	✓			
Training and support to embed customer centric approach across organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delivery of council-wide communications plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delivery of communications and marketing strategies for key council priorities and activities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop agreed social media approach across the council to maximise engagement		✓		
Refresh council's extensive communications handbook (2021 to 2023)		✓	✓	

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
Customer satisfaction with council website online experience	N/A	
Take up of the new self-service account	N/A	Annual increase
Completion of web forms	N/A	Annual increase
% customer complaints responded to within 10 working days	96.04% (2019/20)	100%
"Well informed" rating in residents' survey maintained/exceeded	73%	N/A (residents survey every 2 years)
Engagement with council's social media platforms	N/A	Annual increase

Supporting a high performing, motivated, resilient and well-informed workforce

In the period of this council plan there are a number of large authority-wide programmes / projects as part of the overall Fit For the Future transformation programme, which will be essential in driving fundamental changes in how our staff work, are rewarded and utilise technology which will support the delivery of the overall council plan through a skilled, customer focused and flexible workforce. These programmes / projects include smarter ways of working, pay and benefits review and culture change programme.

In addition to these significant change programmes there will remain an important focus on staff health and wellbeing in recognition of the importance of this in maintaining resilience within the workforce.

Focusing on the future workforce of the organisation, in addition to our current staff, will remain a high priority through the increased use of apprenticeships, engagement with local schools, colleges and universities in addition to expanding our use of social media in our recruitment campaigns.

Whilst our change programmes will facilitate a customer focused workforce, having a workforce which also represents our customers remains a key priority. Through targeted activities we will promote and seek to expand our position as a diverse employer in the local community where staff of all backgrounds are supported to succeed. There will be an additional focus for those groups under-represented within our workforce when compared with the local population.

Actions

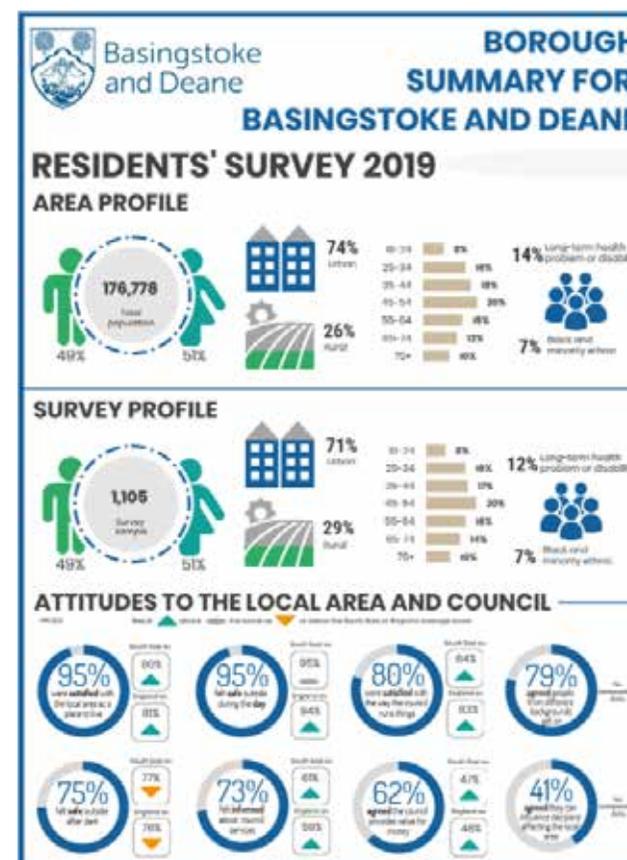| Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Cultural Change programme (including review of all stages of employee lifecycle - recruitment, onboarding, appraisal, staff development)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pay and Benefits review: Introduction of new job evaluation system Introduction of new pay grading system Review of current benefits and additional payments Review of spans of control	✓	✓		
Review and update of People Strategy		✓		
SWOW activities: Review of key policies Training and development programme Staff engagement Employee relations	✓	✓		
Workforce, equality, diversity and inclusivity - further embedding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) approaches across the employee lifecycle e.g. **signing up to Race at Work Charter**	✓			
Annual staff survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
Introduction of new ERP system - supporting managers with ongoing access to real-time staff information	✓	✓		

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
% Total staff turnover (all reasons)	12.63%	13.8%
% Staff turnover due to voluntary resignation	7.76%	9.2%
Total work time (%) lost due to sickness absence (current Qtr = YTD)	3.1%	2.5%
Total average workdays lost due to sickness absence	8.5	6.5
End of year appraisal completion	75%	100%
% of council workforce starting apprenticeships in past 12 months	1.5%	2.3%
Staff engagement score		Annual increase

Informing and supporting policy change and implementation

Providing a comprehensive evidence base from which the council and its officers and members are able to operate will become even more important in the coming years and as such our focus will be on:

- Keeping abreast of the changing national and local landscape in terms of policy, guidance and legislation and sharing this with key stakeholders in a timely manner.
- Providing timely and effective policy advice and support, and the provision and interpretation of data and metrics, to inform both horizon scanning and the day to day provision of services. This facilitates both robust decision making and a responsive approach within the council.
- Key support and input into significant national government agenda items such as Exiting the EU, devolution and the response to and recovery from, COVID-19 both economically and societally.
- Proactively continue to embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into all council services and activities.

Actions

Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Work with the Office for National Statistics to support delivery of a successful Census 2021	✓	✓		
Equality, diversity and inclusion - undertaking wide-ranging action plan and regularly reviewing it in the light of the changing context	✓	✓	✓	✓
Horizon 2050 and Council Plan integrated as part of service activity	✓	✓		
Update council's evidence base to incorporate new ward boundaries		✓		
Update council's evidence base to include Census 2021 data		✓	✓	
Undertake preparatory work and respond to the anticipated White Paper on Devolution and local government reorganisation	✓			
Policy / data input into key council activity workstreams e.g: **Economic recovery** **Climate change** **Place shaping**	✓	✓	✓	
Co-ordinate council's response to and planning for UK exit of the EU	✓			
Provision and interpretation of statistical information to support key services e.g. housing and planning	✓	✓	✓	✓

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
Briefing relevant members / officers of policy updates via Policy Log	Achieved	Achieved
Re-publish borough key facts document annually to include most recent and relevant data	Achieved	Achieved
Re-publish ward profiles annually to include most recent and relevant data	Achieved	Achieved
Annual publication of borough and workforce equality profiles	Achieved	Achieved
Annual agreed EDI action plan	Achieved	Achieved

Implementing programmes to support improvements in efficiency and effectiveness in provision of services

The purpose of the Digital Programme is to provide internal and external customers with joined up digital services that are efficient and deliver better outcomes.
Successful delivery of four projects: Customer Digital Platform, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Data and Document Management, and IT Enablers.

These projects will:

- Contribute to MTFS efficiencies
- Ensure digital channels are customer-centric
- Streamline business processes
- Provide staff with digital tools
- Embed performance management
- Provide a "tell us once" approach
- Flexible and open solutions
- Use Government Digital Service (GDS) framework.

Recognising that our people are our greatest asset, the Smarter Ways of Working (SWOW) programme will transform the way we work. The purpose of this transformative programme is to:

- Enable the organisation to provide the standards of services that our customers expect and demand both now and in the future.
- Realise the potential of our staff by empowering them with the right training and technology.
- Provide a modern working environment that reduces silo working and is conducive to wellbeing, flexibility, productivity, and that attracts and retains talented staff.
- Modernise technology that no longer meets the needs of a modern organisation.
- Introduce new approaches to developing high-performing teams.
- Introduce more efficient, productive and flexible working practices.
- Support the climate change agenda.
- Enabling virtual operation for all aspects of the organisation.
- Enabling virtual Democratic Services with public engagement.
- Supporting the COVID-19 recovery programme.

CPMO

The purpose of the Corporate Project Management Office (CPMO) is to support strategic and service level programmes and projects, promoting consistent project management principles and services.

The CPMO will:

- Align programmes and projects with strategic direction.

- Create best practice for consistent programme and project management.

- Effectively prioritise and manage programmes and projects to a successful completion.

- Collaborative provision of resource, capability and resilience through centralisation.

- Enhance reporting capability through modernisation of processes.

Actions

Actions to achieve the sub-priority	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Implementation of new ERP platform	✓	✓	✓	
Implementation of new Customer Digital Platform (CRM, CMS, website redesign, AI, customer insight, social media, customer communications)	✓	✓		
Implementation of new Contact Centre telephony system	✓	✓		
Implementation of Business Intelligence and GIS	✓	✓		
Redevelop staff intranet and staff self-service business processes	✓	✓		
Implementation of new payment platform	✓	✓		
Implementation of document and data management	✓	✓		
Modernise the desktop architecture (MS Teams, document collaboration, soft phones, room booking system)	✓	✓		
IT service improvement (Cyber security review, ITIL standards and practice, applications roadmap)	✓	✓		
Refurbish the Deanes building and retire the Parklands building	✓	✓		
End-user device replacement	✓			

Measures and targets

Measure	Baseline	2021 to 2022 Target
Channel shift from telephony to digital	N/A	50%
Channel shift from face to face to telephony	N/A	90%
Channel shift from face to face to digital	N/A	75%
Average handle time of contact centre calls	N/A	Annual increase
Reduction of cash and cheque payments	N/A	100%
% of residents that would like to contact the council via the website (Residents' Survey)	13%	25%
Reduction in running costs per person and per square metre		
Reduction in cost of business travel		
Reduction in cost of commute travel		
Additional income derived by accommodating further public sector partners		
% staff voting Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council a great working environment (Staff Survey)	66%	70%
% staff agree that technology empowers them to do their jobs effectively regardless of location	71%	80%
% staff that agree that they can meet and collaborate effectively as remote teams		
Ratio of successfully completed strategic projects to all projects in the portfolio (per period)	67% (cross industry baseline)	50%
Ratio of estimated strategic project duration to actual duration	46% (cross industry baseline)	40%
Ratio of estimated project costs to actual costs	53% (cross industry baseline)	45%

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