

Resources Directorate

The borough of opportunity

2023 Service Plan (1 April to 30 September)

Executive Director: Resources

Stuart McKellar

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Our Directorate

What we do

Develop and deliver clear financial and people strategies and facilitate delivery of the Council Plan objectives, and enabling other service areas to deliver their priorities effectively and efficiently.

We will do this by:

Providing a wide range of services, shaped by the needs of our internal and external customers. We will ensure that the council's finances are effectively managed, providing timely, constructive financial and commercial advice, monitoring and strategies. We will help create a sustainable, high performing workforce, supported by excellent managers and leaders.

There are a number of detailed plans that support the operational and strategic direction of the directorate. These key plans and strategies include:

- Workforce and OD Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Joint Venture Business Plan

Who we are



Our Services Resources

HR and OD

- HR and Contracted Services
- Talent Services (Organisational Development, Learning and Recruitment)
- Workforce Data Services

Revenue Services

- Council Tax
- Business Rates
- Cashiers
- Grant Payments

Audit and Risk Management

- Internal Audit
- Insurance
- Risk Management

Procurement

- Procurement Advice and Support
- Contract Register
- Strategic Procurement Group
- Contract Advice

Finance and Business Services

- Exchequer Services (Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable)
- Payroll
- Systems Support
- Capital and Treasury
- Banking

Accounting

- Strategic Accountancy
- Finance Business Partners
- Accountancy Support Hub
- Schools Funding
- Financial cycle (Revenue and Final Accounts)

Joint Venture

- Delivery of agreed development sites
- Future redevelopment opportunities

Our Service Plan

Context

This service plan describes how our team is working towards the delivery of the [Council Plan](#) objectives. It presents the final year of strategic activity, out of the four year Council Plan strategy. Our strategic actions focus on achieving the objectives within the six themes of the Council Plan. Some actions also link to delivering our Equality Scheme, these are marked within the document with an (E) and the equality objective number.

Progress

Detailed progress on achieving the priorities and indicators is reported in the Quarterly Service Reports and the Council Plan Overview Report. Of the priorities reported in last years' service plan, three strategic action has been completed and removed. Three additional priorities have been set for the upcoming year. Many actions have also entered into a new phase of work.

In
2022/23

3

Completed strategic priorities

3

New strategic actions set



Budget Position

Revenue Budget

For the Resources directorate, the gross expenditure cash budget is £7.904m with £-1.388m of income, making a planned net spend of £6.516m. The gross budget includes £5.025m for staffing.

Savings

The 2023-24 budgets include savings of £0.080m.

The key themes adopted in making the savings were:

- Reduction in various supplies and services budgets £0.005m
- Reduction in overall training budget through a review of essential and mandatory training offered £0.025m
- Reduction in budgeted resources for cyber security costs following the receipt of Government funding and a re-assessment of how the identified support will be procured £0.050m.

Capital Budget

The 2023/24 capital programme does not include any schemes for the Resources Directorate.

Pressures

The budget includes pressures of £0.514m. These pressures can be analysed into the following broad categories

- Increased ICT hosting/licensing/software maintenance costs of £0.094m;
- Increase in costs of internal audit days from external provider £0.021m.
- Payments to households in receipt of Council Tax support £0.399m

Financial Risks

The Resources directorate have identified no budgets that can pose a risk to the council's overall financial position, principally because they are not vulnerable to significant changes in demand for the service.

Workforce Position

Staffing position (as at 31/12/22)

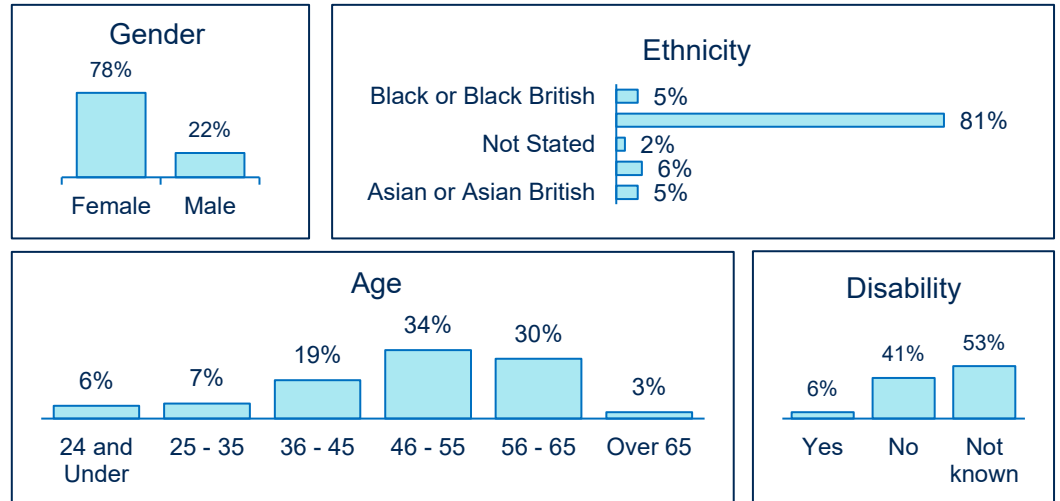
For the department, there is an overall headcount of 98 staff in post made up from 93 employees, 2 casuals and 3 temporary agency staff.

Pressures

The staff turnover is currently 13.9%.

The sickness rate for Q3 22-23 was 2.27 average days per employee (21-22 Q3 was 1.99 days).

Workforce demographics (as at 31/12/22)



[Further workforce equalities information is available online](#)

Workforce Risks

The department has identified several aspects of workforce management that are at risk of causing staffing pressures for the plan period and could therefore affect the delivery of the actions set out in the service plan.

Risk	Comments
Hard to recruit posts	Finance positions, audit
Specialist staff leaving	Procurement knowledge transfer
Key workforce challenges	Workload and capacity

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money

Economic resilience

Education and skills

Caring for you and your family

Protecting and enhancing the environment

Communities

“We will continue to drive and maintain strong financial management and ensure that what we are spending is targeted on the right things. The way the Council is funded will continue to change, so will the way we deliver the services you value and trust.”

Key Objectives

1. Ensure our Council Tax is in the lowest 10% nationally amongst similar authorities.
2. Invest in digital technology and access points to help people access our services.
3. Generate income to fund local services from a commercial property portfolio.
4. Establish a Joint Venture with a private partner to ensure timely and appropriate development of key Council sites.

Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)		Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to other strategies
1.1 Ensure our Council Tax is in the lowest 10% nationally amongst similar authorities.				
1.1.02	Spending is within the approved budget for this year, monitored through monthly reporting to DMTs and CMT.	Mar 2024	Executive Director: Resources	Medium Term Financial Strategy
1.1.07	Work with senior management and the Business Change team to ensure transformation savings identified by the wider organisation are validated and achieved per time scale.	Sep 2023	Chief Accountant	Medium Term Financial Strategy

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Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)

Due Date

Lead Officer

Link to other strategies

1.2 Invest in digital technology and access points to help people access our services.

1.2.03

Continue to review the Workforce and Organisational Development Strategies to ensure they reflect the different needs arising from remote working, including enhanced digital, communication, and management skills. (E4)

Sep 2023

Assistant Director: HR and OD

Workforce and OD Strategy

1.2.06

Deploy the Recruitment and Retention Strategy to priority service areas experiencing difficulties in attracting and retaining permanent staff, helping reduce the cost and reliance on agency workers. (E4)

Sep 2023

Assistant Director: HR and OD

Cross council strategies

Key Performance Indicators

2019/20 Baseline

Year 1 (20/21) Target

Year 2 (21/22) Target

Year 3/4 (22/23) Target

Link to Council Plan Objectives

L051

Percentage of council tax collected (Quarterly)

97.9%

Q1 – 29.0%
Q2 – 56.5%
Q3 – 84.0%
Q4 – 98.0%

Q1 – 29.0%
Q2 – 56.5%
Q3 – 84.0%
Q4 – 98.0%

Q1 – 29.0%
Q2 – 56.5%
Q3 – 84.0%
Q4 – 98.0%

1.1

Council Plan Priorities

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Key Performance Indicators		2019/20 Baseline	Year 1 (20/21) Target	Year 2 (21/22) Target	Year 3/4 (22/23) Target	Link to Council Plan Objectives
L053	Collection of business rates (Quarterly)	102.1%	Q1 – 35.0% Q2 – 59.5% Q3 – 87.5% Q4 – 98.0%	Q1 – 35.0% Q2 – 59.5% Q3 – 87.5% Q4 – 98.0%	Q1 – 35.0% Q2 – 59.5% Q3 – 87.5% Q4 – 98.0%	1.1
L260	Staff satisfaction - staff are satisfied in their current job (Triennial)	58%	Not required as survey is triennial	60%	60%	1.1
L391	Percentage of agency staff temporarily resourcing vacant posts	42.6%	38%	34%	30%	1.1
L392	Percentage of Agency workers council wide	7.9%	7%	6%	5%	1.1
Contextual Indicators for monitoring						
L261	Level of staff sickness absence <i>Actual average days sickness including long and short term (Quarterly)</i>	Q1 – 1.60 Q2 - 1.27 Q3 - 1.90 Q4 - 2.01	No target	No target	No target	1.1

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money

**Economic
resilience**

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Communities

“We will continue to work hard to make sure that Bracknell Forest continues to thrive even with the challenges ahead for all sectors of the economy. The Council is committed to continue the town centre regeneration and over the next 4 years to deliver the next phases, helping the whole town centre to flourish and grow, providing a rich 18-hour economy. We will also deliver new housing including much needed social housing in future schemes. The world of work is changing, and we will continue to work closely with all our employers as they look to their futures. We are committed to helping new companies, start-ups and entrepreneurs, maintain high rates of local employment and ensure that Bracknell Forest remains a great place to live and work.”

Key Objectives

1. Adopt a new Local Development Plan that enables the development of employment areas along with the right mix and location of houses and infrastructure.
2. Secure delivery of the next phase of Bracknell’s town centre regeneration including The Deck and the refurbishment of Princess Square.
3. Encourage residents to become school governors.
4. Work to retain businesses and help attract new companies to Bracknell Forest.
5. Support the Business Improvement District (BID) area covering the South and Western Employment Areas.
6. Actively engage with employers and support local businesses to drive local growth.
7. Implement strategic improvements to the Highway and Transport network to support economic growth and manage congestion.
8. Seek CIL and Section 106 funding for new infrastructure in the Borough to support growth.

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money	Economic resilience	Education and skills	Caring for you and your family	Protecting and enhancing the environment	Communities
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Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)		Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to other strategies
2.2 Secure delivery of the next phase of Bracknell's town centre regeneration including The Deck and the refurbishment of Princess Square.				
2.2.06	Joint Venture (JV) Business Plan 2020-23 to be reviewed via JV project boards regularly to assess progress against the agreed aims and objectives for the regeneration of key sites in Bracknell Town Centre, reporting progress through the Bracknell Town Centre regeneration Committee.	Sep 2023	Executive Director: Resources	Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032
2.2.07	Ensure necessary approvals are in place to deliver the Coopers Hill and Market Street sites	Jun 2023	Executive Director: Resources	Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032
2.5 Support the Business Improvement District (BID) area covering the South and Western Employment Areas.				
2.5.X	Support the Bracknell Improvement District with robust billing, collection and reporting arrangements.	Apr 2023	Revenue Services Manager	

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money

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Communities

“The Council is responsible for providing school places to meet demand. By ensuring we have enough school places we are supporting parents in their desire to have greater choice. The Council supports schools through its highly rated schools improvement service. Working with teachers and governors the service helps with driving up standards and enhancing the learning environment.”

Key Objectives

1. Ensure we provide enough school places for every child in the Borough.
2. Work with schools to ensure standards are in the top quartile nationally.
3. Encourage local businesses to engage with local schools.
4. Review the future of our youth services and open a new town centre youth hub at Braccan Walk.
5. Increase the number of apprenticeships, work experience placements and other training opportunities both within the Council and in the Borough.
6. Increase the percentage of children (aged 0 - 5) achieving good levels of development in communication and language.
7. Create opportunities for care leavers to develop skills to help them prepare for transition.
8. Improve the protection of vulnerable children including those with Special Educational Needs.

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money	Economic resilience	Education and skills	Caring for you and your family	Protecting and enhancing the environment	Communities
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Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)		Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to other strategies
3.5 Increase the number of apprenticeships, work experience placements and other training opportunities both within the Council and in the Borough.				
3.5.01	Continue to increase the number of apprenticeship roles throughout the council. (E4)	Sep 2023	Assistant Director: HR and OD	Workforce and OD Strategy
3.5.02	Continue to promote and use the Apprenticeship Levy to support staff development. (E4)	Sep 2023	Assistant Director: HR and OD	Workforce and OD Strategy
3.5.X	Support school leaders to recruit and effectively manage their workforce	Sep 2023	Assistant Director: HR and OD	Workforce and OD Strategy

Key Performance Indicators		2019/20 Baseline	Year 1 (20/21) Target	Year 2 (21/22) Target	Year 3/4 (22/23) Target	Link to Council Plan Objectives
L393	Number of entry level apprentices Council Wide	3 (Council 2) (Schools 1)	3-5	3-5	10-15	3.5
L394	Percentage of staff that have undertaken Apprenticeship training	2.05%	2.20%	2.20%	2.80%	3.5

Council Plan Priorities

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“Bracknell Forest is one of the healthiest places to live. We want you to live longer in good health, both physical and mental. We will continue to invest in preventing you and your family from needing health and care services in the first place. We pledge to buy the best possible services that meet the needs of our residents.”

Key Objectives

1. Develop and implement a council-wide programme of measures to help improve the health of our local population.
2. Develop a new early help mental well-being service for children and young people, working with partners including our schools.
3. Align our social care services with Primary Care Networks to allow improved integration of care and health activities.
4. Review our Disabled Facility Grants Adaptations Service to speed up applications to support people to live independently, implementing a new policy.
5. Work with CCG* to develop a joint community and health facility at Blue Mountain.
6. Work with Town and Parish Councils to deliver new community facilities.
7. Transform the way children’s centres work making them into family support hubs.
8. Embed the Family Safeguarding Model of Social Work practice to protect vulnerable children and reduce entrants to the youth offending service.
9. Deliver a new residential facility for elderly people with dementia at Heathlands in Bracknell in partnership with the Health partners.
10. Use social prescribing and support the voluntary sector to help reduce isolation and loneliness.
11. Ensure there are opportunities for everyone to enjoy and participate in sports and leisure activities.
12. Continue to provide easy access to the natural environment.
13. Actively support the armed services located in Bracknell Forest.

*the CCG is now NHS Frimley Integrated Care Board

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money

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Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)

Due Date

Lead Officer

**Link to other
strategies**

4.6 Work with Town and Parish Councils to deliver new community facilities.

4.6.X

Support set up of new facilities and services, in 2023/24 specifically Blue Mountain and Warfield Community Hubs and the Bridgewell facility

Sep 2023

Head Of
Corporate
Procurement

Council Plan Priorities

Value for money

Economic resilience

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Protecting and enhancing the environment

Communities

“We will ensure the sustainable development of Bracknell Forest so that it remains clean and green and will work towards becoming a low carbon environment with high rates of recycling.”

Key Objectives

1. Protect our highly valued green spaces and strategic green gaps.
2. Promote recycling and diverting waste from landfill, including introducing food waste recycling.
3. Improve parking in residential areas.
4. Protect green spaces, the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and maintain strategic gaps between communities.
5. Enhance facilities and customer experience at Horseshoe Lake and maintain other Council open spaces.
6. Address the impact of man-made climate change on our local communities by putting in place actions that work towards meeting the government target of eradication its net contribution to climate change by 2050.
7. Promote greater use of public transport and cycleways.

Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)	Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to other strategies
5.6 Address the impact of man-made climate change on our local communities by putting in place actions that work towards meeting the government target of eradication its net contribution to climate change by 2050.			
5.6.X Review current approaches to climate change, social value and alternative funding routes, e.g. green bonds, social impact bonds etc, and explore potential for holistic policy approach.	Sep 2023	Head Of Corporate Procurement	Climate Change, Social Value
5.7 Promote greater use of public transport and cycleways.			
5.7.06 Identify opportunities to reduce staff car usage and promote green travel initiatives.	Sep 2023	Assistant Director: HR and OD	Climate Change

Council Plan Priorities

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Communities

“Bracknell Forest delivers over 200 different services. To secure strong and safe communities we will continue to:”

Key Objectives

1. Maintain the viability of our community-based shopping and employment areas.
2. Support our network of community centres and libraries.
3. Work with our local police to maintain good public order, reduce anti-social behaviour and combat drug related crime.
4. Support culture and arts facilities such as South Hill Park.
5. Establish a local lottery to help raise additional funds for local voluntary and community groups.
6. Deliver housing services that focus on preventing homelessness.
7. Develop a new Homeless Strategy and implement a local action plan to reduce rough sleeping.
8. Identify the need for and facilitate the provision of affordable homes for rent and shared ownership and rent to meet that need.
9. Review our Housing Allocations Policy to make best use of affordable housing provision to meet local needs.
10. Support the cultural diversity of our communities.

Annual Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)	Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to other strategies
6.7 Develop a new Homeless Strategy and implement a local action plan to reduce rough sleeping.			
6.7.03 Make arrangements to secure the closure of Downshire Homes Ltd and the transfer of properties for homeless households to Bracknell Forest Council.	Sep 2023	Executive Director: Resources	Homelessness Strategy

Operational Priorities

Operational Priorities (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023)		Due Date	Lead Officer	Link to key strategies
Resources				
7.021	Celebrate the diversity of the workforce through staff engagement activities and events. (E4)	Jun 2023	Assistant Director: HR and OD	Equality Scheme
7.026	Publish Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23. To include working papers of a consistently high standard.	May 2023	Chief Accountant	Medium Term Financial Plan
7.3X	Further development of the in-house Internal Audit team and service following the appointment of apprentices to provide an innovative service and enhanced added value to the senior management team.	Jun 2023	Head of Audit and Risk Management	Internal Audit Charter
7.3X	Progress the counter fraud pilot agreed prior to COVID through engagement with high fraud risk areas across the council.	Sep 2023	Head of Audit and Risk Management	Fraud Prevention Policy
7.3X	Develop the use of the Citizen Access portal to roll out more services and reach a greater proportion of residents and businesses	Sep 2023	Revenue Services Manager	Medium Term Financial Plan
7.3X	Support commissioners across the organisation to review current procurement strategies in order to deliver future savings	Sep 2023	Head of Corporate Procurement	

Operational Priorities

Key Performance Indicators		2019/20 Baseline	Year 1 (20/21) Target	Year 2 (21/22) Target	Year 3/4 (22/23) Target
L066	Top five percent earners – women, Council wide (Annual).	49.77%	50%	50%	50%
L067	Top five percent earners - minority ethnic communities, Council wide (Annual).	12.94%	13%	14%	15%
L068	Top five percent earners - with disability, Council wide (Annual).	7.61%	7.7% – 7.9%	7.9% - 8.1%	8.1% - 8.3%
L070	Percentage of employees with a disability, Council wide (Annual).	2.26%	2.3% - 3%	3% - 4%	5% - 6.5%
L071	Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees, Council wide (Annual).	7.48%	9%	10%	11%
L072	Gender pay gap, Council wide (Annual).	18.26%	16% -18%	15% - 17%	13% - 15%
L074	Average amount spent on training per employee, Council wide (Annual).	£299	£300	£300	£315
L262	Voluntary staff turnover (Quarterly)	Q1 – 2.17% Q2 – 6.53% Q3 – 2.47% Q4 – 2.37%	No target	No target	No target
L131	Percentage of staff leaving within one year of starting, Council wide (Annual)	19.88%	17% -19%	16% - 18%	15% -17%
L234	Number of households with an unpaid court order for Council Tax (Quarterly).	Est. 5,250	No target	No Target	No Target
BV8	Ensure performance target for payment of creditors within 30 days is achieved.	94%	95% within 30 days	95% within 30 days	95% within 30 days
L064	Debt outstanding as % of gross debt (Quarterly) .	7%	Lower than 7%	Lower than 7%	7%