

# **The Barking & Dagenham** **Corporate Plan**

*2020 to 2022*

Revised as of November 2020

## Foreword

Never in this borough's history has the landscape in which we live and work changed so quickly, or so drastically, as it has in the months since March 2020.

At the time of writing, 177 of our fellow residents have lost their lives to the Coronavirus<sup>1</sup>. Up to half of working residents were either furloughed or in receipt of self-employment support. The number of residents in receipt of Universal Credit has more than doubled, with over one in ten residents now receiving welfare support.

Meanwhile, the normal lives of each and every one of us was turned upside down. We physically distanced ourselves – to protect those we love – at the very time we most needed social connection. We learned the true value of 'key work' and came together to recognise those who risked their own health to support the health of the community. We came together to help those who found themselves vulnerable, stepping up to organise the support that was needed.

As a Council, we have worked tirelessly on the frontline of this pandemic: ensuring that vital frontline services remained open; working with colleagues in the care sector to support the stability of care services facing crises on several fronts; securing and distributing PPE for key workers; helping schools to navigate unprecedented requirements; working in partnership with civil society and volunteers to get social support, food and medicine to residents who needed it; constantly talking to the community about the requirements for lockdown and social distancing; and much more.

One of the many impacts of the pandemic is that the Council is now caught in a financial pincer movement, stuck between the additional costs of responding to Covid-19 and a loss of income as a consequence of lockdown. The Government has made additional funding available which has eased the in year situation with funding of £24m having been made available to meet known and certain in year costs of £25m. However as we move into winter there are still further substantial risks with a pessimistic forecast of up to an additional £10m of costs and income losses in year. In addition, there has been an impact on our local taxbase with net collection fund losses of £8.5m projected. And this could only be the start. Any new lockdown arrangements in Barking and Dagenham would have a further, substantial impact on the Council's finances. Government have made funding available for this financial year but have not yet committed to any funding for 2021/22. In addition, funding reforms have been deferred again until at least 2022/23 resulting in substantial uncertainty moving forward.

In truth, the financial impact of the pandemic, and the subsequent impact on our ability to deliver the Performance Framework set out in this Corporate Plan, can only be managed through constant monitoring and regular communication over the coming weeks, months and years.

In short, this has been and remains the greatest challenge most of us have ever faced. It has been and remains an extraordinary time.

Recognising the scale of this challenge, in May 2020 – just a few weeks into the crisis – the Council Assembly agreed an extraordinary version of this Corporate Plan and a new Single Performance Framework. This set out the Council's approach, as well as a benchmark for what we intended to achieve over the next two years in the form of its Performance Framework. We knew this benchmark would change due to Covid-19. Therefore, it was agreed then that we would review the Corporate Plan and Single Performance Framework as the long-term implications of the pandemic began to emerge, both on the Council's priorities and on the work we plan to undertake. It is important that we

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<sup>1</sup> ONS, deaths registered up to 24 October 2020.

explain how the Council has adapted and is adapting to the changing landscape. We knew that we would have to shift our focus, to work in ways we had not foreseen. This Corporate Plan has been reviewed to take account for the impact of Covid-19, to the best of our understanding as of November 2020.

At the same time, we were confident that while we needed to adapt our work to our new reality, the strategic approach we developed before the pandemic was the right one. The priorities set out in our Performance Framework are – in fact – more important than ever. The inequalities we were grappling with before the pandemic have been heightened, rather than fundamentally altered, over the last few months. As such – with a few modifications to reflect new realities – the Corporate Plan and the Single Performance Framework describe the ways in which we are going to support our community to recover from Covid-19, as well as the ways in which we are pursuing our long-term vision.

This Corporate Plan is both a plan for recovery and a plan in pursuit of the Borough Manifesto. Despite the uncertainty, we believe it is up to the scale of the task.

CLlr Darren Rodwell and Claire Symonds

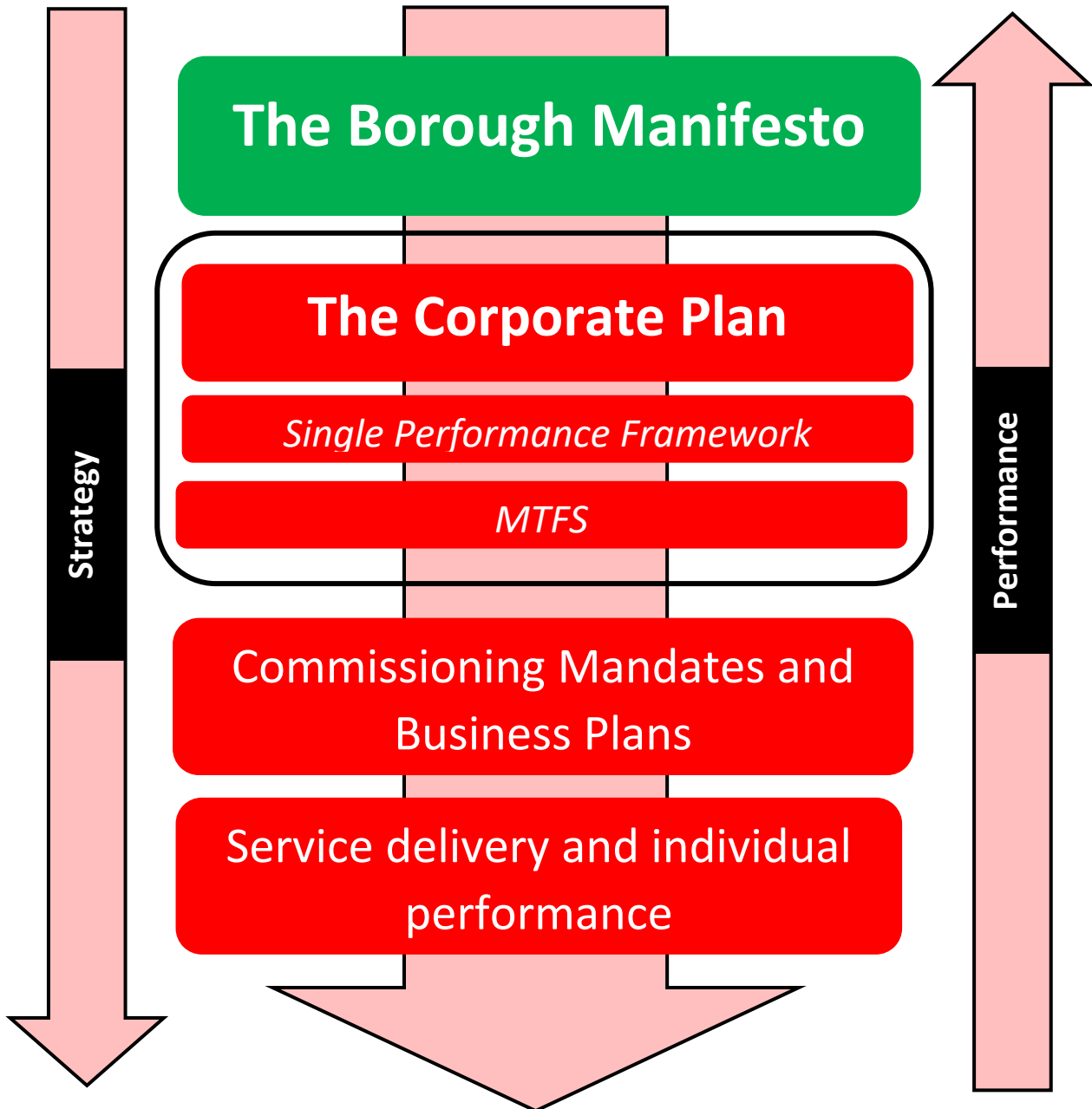


# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Strategic Framework</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Borough Manifesto</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>This Corporate Plan</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Our strategic priorities</i>	<b>17</b>
<i>Participation and Engagement</i>	<b>18</b>
<i>Prevention, Independence and Resilience</i>	<b>20</b>
<i>Inclusive Growth</i>	<b>24</b>
<i>Well Run Organisation</i>	<b>29</b>
<b>Cabinet Portfolios</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Delivering this plan</b>	<b>37</b>

# The Strategic Framework

The Council's Strategic Framework helps us to make decisions, set strategy and manage performance. It includes the 'golden thread' of documents that describe our long, medium and short-term priorities, and which are managed through our commissioning and performance processes. It provides a clear line of sight between the ultimate vision of the Borough Manifesto, day-to-day service delivery and individual performance.



The top-line of the 'golden thread' is the **Borough Manifesto**, providing a co-produced, long-term vision for Barking and Dagenham.

The Council's approach to realising this long-term vision is translated into medium-term priorities and programmes of activity in the **Corporate Plan**.

The Corporate Plan both informs and is informed by the **Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**, which sets out a framework to be used to guide resource allocation in the pursuit of our aims set out in the wider Strategic Framework.

The Corporate Plan is translated into tangible activity in the **Single Performance Framework**, which sets out, in detail, the work we intend to undertake and the impact we hope and expect that work to have by May 2022. The Performance Framework is organised around four key strategic priorities:

- 1. Inclusive Growth**
- 2. Participation and Engagement**
- 3. Prevention, Independence and Resilience**
- 4. Well Run Organisation**

The layers of the Strategic Framework described above in turn inform the commissioning mandates, business plans and other documents through which we plan the activity of each service and delivery block across the Council's system. These drive frontline service delivery and individual performance management.

In what follows we explain the Council's strategic priorities, our overall approach to addressing them, and how we organise our approach into each part of the 'golden thread'.

# The Borough Manifesto

The Borough Manifesto lists a set of 11 aspirations, co-produced with over 3,000 residents in 2016-17, which collectively form our long-term vision for the Borough:

A place where every resident has access to lifelong learning, employment and opportunity.	A place with high-quality education and sustained attainment for all residents.	A place which supports residents to achieve independent, healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.
A place with sufficient, accessible and varied housing.	<b>A place people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay.</b>	A place where businesses and communities grow and thrive.
A friendly and welcoming Borough with strong community spirit.		A place with great arts and culture for everyone, leading change in the Borough.
A place where everyone feels safe and is safe.	A place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed.	A clean, green and sustainable Borough.

This vision is underpinned by the belief that our Borough, and our residents, can and should aspire to more. Everyone wants something different out of life, but no one should have to accept high levels of unemployment and low pay, low levels of educational attainment and lower life expectancy than almost anywhere else. Our mission, to realise this vision, is to raise aspiration.

# This Corporate Plan and our overall approach

Since 2015 the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham has been on a long journey of transformation. This journey began with the Ambition 2020 transformation programme, which sought to redesign, from first principles, how the Council worked in order to harness ‘the borough’s potential for the benefit of all, where no one is left behind’<sup>2</sup>. The transformation sought to: ‘reach a new agreement with the local community’; to ‘increase the opportunities for [residents] to have their say’; to do more ‘work in partnership with the community’ and civil society; and to build an approach to Inclusive Growth which captured our potential as London’s growth opportunity, while ensuring nobody was left behind.

It was also spurred by the recognition that austerity meant we were unable to continue working like we had been, and only reinvention would make financial sustainability possible. Through the insight of the Growth Commission and the vision of the Borough Manifesto, co-produced with residents in 2016-17, we honed our approach to change and identified the Council we wanted to become.

In the proceeding years we have built a new kind of Council and a new way of working together and with residents. We have restructured our services, building a commissioning model which places outcomes for residents at the centre of our decision-making. We have integrated previously siloed services to create new ones, including our universal front-door Community Solutions. We have safeguarded jobs while harnessing untapped potential through Council-owned companies such as our regeneration and development vehicle, Be First, which have in turn accelerated our regeneration and development in such a way that benefits our whole community, and leaves no one behind. And we have found ever more ways to collaborate with and empower the community, increasingly casting aside the paternalistic ways we used to work.

We have learned a lot in the past few years. Not least that the journey to transform the way we work is never over. There will always be challenges with which to grapple and ways in which we need to improve. However, in 2020 we now understand what it will take for our New Kind of Council to realise the ambition set out in the Borough Manifesto. We must focus on **unleashing the potential of our place and its people, whilst addressing the underlying poverty, deprivation and health inequalities that hold so many of our residents back**. This will demand practical action across our four strategic priorities: Participation and Engagement; Inclusive Growth; Prevention, Independence and Resilience; and Well-Run Organisation (set out in the Single Performance Framework). But it will also demand a shared, Council-wide approach to managing and facilitating change, including:

1. A shared approach to dispersed working and community hubs
2. A shared approach to service design and delivery
3. A shared approach to cross-cutting issues and outcomes

We have also learned that we are only one key partner in a complex network of those who want to and are in a position to make change in this borough. Together, we must develop the borough’s social infrastructure and public services so that they are designed to enable residents to meet their potential and prevent the inequalities which get in the way.

We must apply this approach in addressing the four key strategic priorities we hold as a council:

1. Prevention, Independence and Resilience
2. Participation and Engagement

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<sup>2</sup> LBBDD. *We all have a part to play*. 2015.



3. Inclusive Growth
4. Well Run Organisation

### **A shared approach to dispersed working and community hubs**

One of the most influential learnings we have taken from our transformation is the vital importance of place to the way we work. Simply put, our services and the way we work should be built around the needs of residents, rather than the convenience of the Council. We must ensure that the right support is available, in the right place, at the right time, if we stand any chance of working well with residents to prevent poor outcomes. This belief must inform how we deliver our services, how we use our buildings, how we roll out new technologies, what we do with the data we collect and the insight we generate, and how we encourage different teams to work together.

Our commitment to this style of working has become even more important in the context of lockdown, social distancing and our response to Covid-19. Necessity is the mother of invention, and in March 2020 we instituted a dispersed, remote working model in which the majority of the workforce have continued to operate at full capacity – either at home or in the community – but without access to a central office. This approach has proved successful, thanks to our use of remote working technologies, with minimal disruption to service delivery.

Our experience over the past six months has informed our thinking about the role of localities, and means we are currently building on the work we had done before the pandemic to embed a digitally-enabled, truly dispersed model, which is less reliant on central offices and allows more of our staff to spend more of their time in the community, closer to residents. This model will be built around the reconfiguration of our buildings, so that they can act as more resident-centred, integrated **community hubs**. These hubs will be open, friendly and easy to access. They will act as flexible bases for a range of Council and partner services, including but not limited to money and debt, housing advice, health and wellbeing, learning, employment and skills, care and support, and social sector and other partners. They will combine a standard universal offer and targeted support aimed at meeting specific local needs. They will be digitally enabled and capable of adapting to changing needs across the borough. Most importantly, they will be inclusive and welcoming to residents.

We are not starting from a blank sheet of paper. We have already made significant progress in embedding this locality approach, thanks to our transformation and the work of the past few years. From Marks Gate and William Bellamy Children’s Centres, to the Barking Learning Centre and our ongoing work with BD\_Collective and the wider social sector, we are building from a strong foundation to make this approach a reality.

This approach is also firmly rooted in our Single Performance Framework. A range of deliverables from across the Performance Framework will contribute to the development of our locality model, such as:

- Our community assets review and new community assets policy
- Community Solutions’ development of our community hubs
- The implementation of the new Adults and Children’s Target Operating Models
- Our partnership and ongoing work with the BD\_Collective and wider social sector.

However, it is important to note that over the coming months, as further specific activities to develop a Community Hubs model are clarified and agreed, the Performance Framework will be adapted to include the relevant deliverables, ensuring that our shared approach to community hubs is embedded in the Council’s Performance Framework.

Embedding this model is central to the Council's approach and will inform work across the organisation over the coming two years.

### **A shared approach to service design and delivery**

Our transformation since 2015 has also led the Council to a set of principles which guide the way in which we design and implement public services in all contexts. These principles have been learned slowly, and we keep these at the front of our thinking every day as we seek to manage and facilitate change. They are tools for Members, commissioners, service managers and all those involved in the design and delivery of services. These principles therefore support, but are separate to, the Council's core DRIVE values (deliver, respond, inspire, value, engage), which we expect everyone who works for and with the council to embody. Our principles for service design are set out below, along with examples of how we have already put them into practice:

#### ***Prioritise prevention***

We will use the best of our data, our technology, our relationships and our insight to identify the people who most need support, doing everything in our power to ensure they get the right support, at the right time, before problems turn into crises.

For example, at the start of the Covid-19 lockdown in March this year, the Insight Hub investigated a range of datasets to identify 11,000 residents who were potentially vulnerable as a result of lockdown, shielding and the wider implications of the pandemic. Using our insight in this way allowed the Council to reach out to these residents, identify those who needed support – whether with their shopping, picking up medicines or social contact – and get that support to them before their circumstances deteriorated.

#### ***Understand, don't just assess***

We will always connect with people first and foremost, based on empathy and shared understanding, looking beyond the presenting issue and seeking to understand the full richness of a person's life and circumstances. We will nurture real relationships without letting bureaucratic processes get in the way.

For example, the 'Stories Project' in Barking and Dagenham's Adult Social Care involved radically freeing up the way in which social workers relate to the residents they work with, replacing an extensive and ineffective assessment form with the opportunity for the social worker to write a story about and with the resident in question, allowing them to get to know the resident better as a fellow person, understand their life circumstances in a wider and more empathetic context, and as a result better identify the support that can make the difference the resident needs.

#### ***Get the basics right***

We will strive to design and operate beautifully simple services that are intuitive and reliable for the resident, and supported by clear, consistent and to-the-point communications. We will always do what we say we are going to do.

For example, in March 2020, responding to lockdown, more than three-quarters of the Council's workforce moved rapidly to wholly remote working, while ensuring that vital frontline services remained open and accessible. This was a huge and unprecedented challenge, and it was only possible because of the substantial progress made through the Council's New Ways of Working Programme.

Over the past few years, the Council's use of technology to supporting working arrangements, whether through the implementation of Microsoft Teams or laptops that support fluid flexible working, has made adaption to different working arrangements possible and effective. This Process was supported by frequent, clear and coherent internal and external communications, to ensure that everyone was on the same page about the changes that were happening and what was expected of Council officers. It was a prime example of our focusing on getting the basics right, even in extreme circumstances.

### ***Focus on people's strengths***

We will start by exploring how all residents, no matter their circumstances, can use the strengths they already have, as well as the resources available in their wider networks, to grow their independence, whilst making the most of their full potential.

For example, the Pause Programme – used in Barking and Dagenham as well as other local authorities around the country – works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. Its aim is to give women the opportunity to pause and take control of their lives, breaking a destructive cycle that causes both them and their children deep trauma, whilst at the same time making the most of their skills and resources in order to build a new and more fulfilling life.

### ***Empower through participation***

We will empower people by giving them the opportunity to participate equally in the design and delivery of public services as well as in their neighbourhood and the wider community. We will increase the choice and control residents have over services and decisions that affect and matter to them.

For example, in 2019 the Council Cabinet agreed the proposal to use Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy funds to establish a Neighbourhood Fund, to be deliberated over by a panel of local residents identified by sortition. Local community groups can bid for up to £10,000 each to spend on local initiatives that will benefit the community, and awards will be made by a panel of residents who have chosen to participate in the scheme. This both enables effective decision making about how to allocate community funding, as well as a great opportunity for residents to participate in their community, building their confidence and social networks

### ***Safety is everyone's business***

We will create a borough where everyone feels safe and is safe. We will lead by example, thinking contextually about safety when commissioning and delivering services, and when planning public and living spaces; anticipating risk and acting on signs of resident vulnerability, whatever their age.

For example, since adopting a whole-system approach to domestic abuse in 2019 and undertaking significant work in relation to addressing domestic abuse in the workplace – including, among other work, introducing special paid leave for survivors to access services and those using abusive behaviours who are committed to change – the Council was recognised for its best practice through accreditation to Everyone's Business in January 2020. The Council has also won the Best Organisational Development Award in the PPMA Excellence in People Management Awards 2020, and have been shortlisted in the Family Law Awards 2020 for the ground-breaking partnership work between its legal teams, Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham and local family law firms.

### ***Learn, and act based on insight***

We will make decisions and work according to all the insight at our disposal. And we will make this insight available to every member of staff in our day-to-day work. We will never stand still but will constantly learn from what works and what doesn't, being brave and taking risks where they are understood.

For example, in conjunction with the Social Progress Imperative, the Council have developed the first [social progress index](#) at ward level, allowing us to understand the social wellbeing of residents across the borough. This pioneering use of data helps the Council and partners to understand how individuals are living and progressing within the borough, and who is being left behind, and is therefore a key tool in helping us make decisions about service design and implementation.

### ***Work in partnership***

We will work in partnership across organisational and sectoral boundaries, working in the way that makes most sense rather than remaining in our existing siloes. We will support every partner to play their part in achieving for our place and its people. We will work effectively in localities, building partnerships in places to ensure the right services and assets are available to residents in the places that make most sense.

For example, as lockdown approached in March 2020, the Council got together with BD\_Collective and a range of partners from across the faith and civil society sectors. Together, we knew that we had to act fast to put in place a support system that could help those residents who found themselves vulnerable under lockdown conditions. Through rapid and robust partnership working, BD CAN was established; a cross-borough community support system through which the Council, civil society partners and volunteers could ensure that vulnerable residents received the food, medicine and social support they required during the crisis. The relationships of trust between each partner was a critical factor in making this working possible.

### **A shared approach to cross-cutting issues and outcomes**

As well as understanding *how* we should work to make the most lasting positive change, in the form of the service design principles described above, our transformation has significantly improved our capacity to understand the challenges with which we and the community grapple. Our insight capacity, both through data science and through empathetic engagement with residents with lived experience, has increased substantially in recent years. This means that we have a far greater understanding of *what* we should be working on and *who* we should be working with, in order to address the poverty, deprivation and health inequality that hold so many of our residents back.

In 1942 William Beveridge wrote the report which would shape much of the welfare state that developed over the second half of the twentieth century, which helped us achieve significant social progress and which still guides many of our public services today. In that report, Beveridge identified the 'five giants on the road to post-war reconstruction': want (of an adequate income for all); disease (and the need for health care); ignorance (and the need for education); squalor (and the need for housing); and idleness (and the need for employment)<sup>3</sup>. The five giants represented key areas of need for all of us, areas where we should pool resources and ensure collective focus. They formed the cornerstone of the Attlee Government's programme of social reform, and underpinned the creation

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<sup>3</sup> **Beveridge, William.** *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, 1942

of the NHS, the development of welfare support and access to education, and the building of social housing.

Today, in 2020, we are still informed by the work of William Beveridge and his five giants. However, it is a different time and we must adapt if we are to build on the progress made by the generations who came before. The challenges we face, and the approach we must adopt to address them, are different now than they were in post-war Britain. If the principles described above can act as Barking and Dagenham's new approach to service design, then what are the 5 giants on the road to social progress for Barking and Dagenham now? What must we rally around if we really are going to bring about lasting change?

The cross-cutting issues and outcomes set out below represent **Barking & Dagenham's version of the five giants**. The pandemic and lockdown have only served to heighten and reinforce the severity of these challenges and the urgency with which we must address them

1. Domestic Abuse
2. Social Isolation
3. Unemployment
4. Debt
5. Neighbourhood Crime

Our challenge is to find new ways to focus our collective energy on addressing these issues or outcomes, through building multi-disciplinary teams of experts from across the Council and the wider partnership that are able to spot new opportunities for innovation and improvement. The projects and programmes that flow from this work must adopt a 'systems focus', drawing together, building upon and supplementing existing activity - from across our Performance Framework – whilst recognising the need for innovation and improvement the responds to the entrenched nature of the issues themselves.

Below, we set out why these issues represent Barking & Dagenham's five giants for the 2020's, and what we are currently doing to address them.

### ***Domestic abuse***

Barking and Dagenham has had the highest police-reported rates of domestic abuse in London for the last 10 years. Importantly, a huge amount of domestic abuse goes unreported. In both 2017 and 2019, a survey by the School Health Education Unit asked secondary school students a range of questions, including a question about the acceptance of abusive behaviours. The school survey surveyed over 2,500 secondary school students and found that 26% of young people thought it was sometimes acceptable to hit your partner. These attitudes are likely to be the product of home and wider environments, and importantly we do not have the comparison data for our adult population.

The Barking and Dagenham Domestic Abuse Commission brings together the thinking of 12 national experts to explore the attitudes around domestic abuse in the borough, and make a series of recommendations which can help to make a long-term change to attitudes. Chaired by Polly Neate CBE, CEO of Shelter, the Commission has run a year-long programme of engagement and research, and will publish its report with a series of recommendations in January 2021. Relatedly, a programme team has grown around the development of a 'Whole System Approach to Domestic Abuse' (and specifically the development of the perpetrator housing innovation programme).

### ***Social isolation***

Social isolation and loneliness are among the greatest health risks we face as a society, comparable with or worse than, for instance, smoking or obesity in the health risks associated <sup>4</sup>. For example, people who are isolated or lonely are more likely to suffer from dementia, heart disease and depression than those who are not. A study by the Co-op and British Red Cross has shown that over 9 million people in the UK – of all ages – are always or often lonely. Locally in Barking and Dagenham, more than one-fifth of social care service users, and over half of carers, say that they have limited social contact <sup>5</sup>. Social isolation has only been heightened by lockdown, as residents' isolation was cemented by social distancing requirements while others who previously enjoyed ample social contact found themselves isolated for the first time.

Across the Council and community various projects are taking aim at the challenge of social isolation. Since 2018 adult social care users have been supported through a pilot of *Breezie*, which seeks to enable greater connection through digital tech. We have and found that 72% of users received as much social contact as they'd like after using the tech, compared to 22% before. The ongoing learning from this work is informing the Council's approach to care tech more broadly, and has become even more important since the introduction of social distancing.

More recently, in January 2020, Reconnections launched in Barking and Dagenham and Havering. Reconnections by Independent Age is a volunteer-led service that supports over-65s in rediscovering their love of life in the communities where they live. They introduce volunteers to residents and connect them to local activities, gatherings and events that provide vital social connections and help break the cycle of isolation and loneliness. And, as part of the Council's and community's response to lockdown, BD CAN not only ensured that vulnerable residents received food and medicines, but also that they have social contact even when physically isolated from the community. The challenge for the coming years will be to join up the great efforts happening across the borough and develop a robust, cross-borough approach to social isolation.

### ***Unemployment***

Unemployment and insecure employment were already severe problems for Barking and Dagenham before the economic impact of Covid-19 began to emerge, with 6.9% of the population experiencing unemployment as of April 2020 <sup>6</sup>. The onset of lockdown and social distancing requirements has had and will continue to have a significant impact on our local economy. For example, by June 2020 more than 28,000 residents were claiming Universal Credit, an increase from approximately 13,000 residents in January. 49% of working residents were either furloughed or in receipt of self-employment support during lockdown, and with roughly 25% of jobs in Barking and Dagenham being in hospitality and retail, our long-term employment prospects are at-risk.

While the economic forecasts are deeply concerning and the Council must collaborate with partners to seek new solutions, we also head into this crisis with a strong support offer in-place. More than 1,300 residents have been supported into jobs through the Employment and Skills service, and wider support is available via the Homes and Money Hub, community food clubs, the Adult College, social prescribing, the hardship fund and much more. For businesses, a new business support scheme has been launched by the BEC, the Business Forum meets quarterly along with a webinar programme, and over £26m has been paid out in grants to local businesses during the crisis. Our approach to employment also relies upon strong partnership working with the borough's schools, in their efforts to raise aspiration. This approach is underpinned by the borough's wider economic development and

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<sup>4</sup> *The facts on loneliness. The Campaign to End Loneliness.*

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Social Care Service User Survey, 2017. LBBD.*

<sup>6</sup> *London Poverty Profile, Trust for London. 2020.*

regeneration projects, which will create thousands of new jobs for local residents, such as through the new Film Studios.

However, we know that to meet the unemployment challenge we are facing we must do more, go further. As well as continuing our core offer, we will: launch a high-profile local jobs campaign to galvanise action and offer inspiration and hope; take advantage of external funding to enhance our offer through schemes such as Kickstarter, the Flexible Support Fund and more; scope out a local Green Youth Jobs Programme; build a local jobs coalition with key partners; and undertake a design and innovation project to tackle long-term unemployment.

### ***Debt***

We know that debt is a serious problem for many in Barking and Dagenham. Triggered by any number of events or factors, debt can quickly and easily spiral into an entrenched crisis and cause or make worse further problems, from eviction to addition to mental ill health. As of May 2019, our data showed that there were over 10,000 households in Barking and Dagenham – with 30,000 people – who owe debt to the Council, either through Council tax arrears or rent arrears. 85% live in social housing or private rented accommodation. The average person in Council tax arrears owes £1,700, while the average person in rent arrears owes £583. We do not have local data on private sector debt, but through our experience we know that residents who are in debt to the Council are also likely to be in other debt, such as from credit cards, high-interest loans, or high-interest consumer products.

To address the challenge of debt and associated money issues we are continuing to build a joined-up, ethical and data-driven approach to the collection, management and prevention of debt. This means building on the success of the Homes and Money hub by developing its preventative offer, making better use of data and insight to support proactive outreach, and working more closely in partnership with civil society. It means continuing to provide residents with a range of affordable alternatives to the high street, including four additional community food clubs (delivered in partnership with Fair Share) which provide access to affordable, healthy food, alongside personalised debt and money management support. Finally, it means using the opportunity created by the return of the revenues and benefits service into Community Solutions to reform how we manage and collect our debts, improving rent collection whilst also maximising the potential for upstream prevention.

### ***Neighbourhood crime***

We know from engagement with the community that crime and safety are consistently among the top three concerns of residents in this borough. In 2019 we had a crime rate of 90.1 per 1,000 residents, and serious youth violence remains a severe problem for this part of London<sup>7</sup>. At the same time, more than fifty per cent of residents do not feel safe in their local neighbourhood after dark<sup>8</sup>. This is unacceptable, and we know that feeling unsafe in your community acts as a barrier to wider engagement with the community.

The Borough Manifesto sets the ambition for Barking and Dagenham being ‘a place where everyone feels safe and is safe’. The Council and its partners, including those on the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), know that to achieve this vision we must address the issue of crime, as well as perceptions of crime and safety across the borough. The Community Safety Plan joins up efforts to address this challenge by setting out a set of priorities in order to create a safer borough, including: keeping children and young people safe; tackling crimes that affect people the most; reducing

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<sup>7</sup> Met Crime Dashboard, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> 2019 Residents Survey, **LBBB**.

offending; standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism; and tackling violence against women and girls. Over the next two years, the council and partnership’s approach to neighbourhood crime will continue to be developed. These efforts will draw upon and build on impactful programmes such as our ‘Step Up Stay Safe’ campaign. However, it is important to note that important work has also been done to address this challenge during the pandemic-response, such as through: issuing Community Protection Notices and Warnings; issuing closure orders, using dispersal zones to tackle crime and ASB and supporting a new Community Safety Security Team.

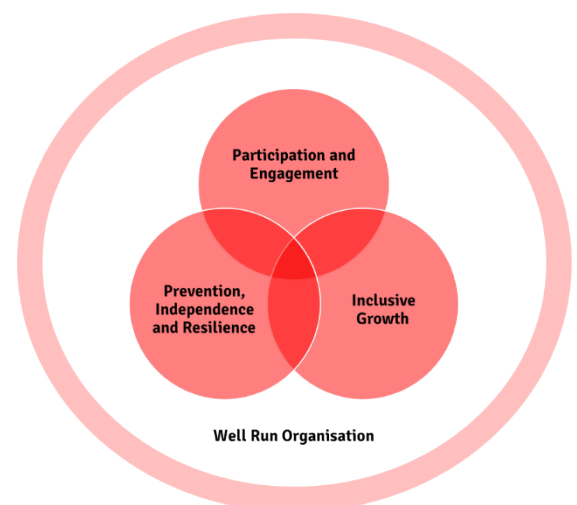
As well as these five giants, we must also adopt the same approach to supporting the five substantial **improvement programmes** that are being implemented across the Council: My Place, Adults, Children’s, Disability, Core Transformation. We must also enact this approach, critically, in our work to develop community hubs and enhance our locality working. These are vital programmes of work that are shaping our ability to address the challenges we face. Each of these cross-Council programmes are unique, responding to a particular set of challenges, to different timelines and with different resource. However, each is in its own way embodying the approach of the Council, they are connected to one another, and each is vital to putting our approach into practice, as is clear from the progress that has already been made.

So, in the five years since 2015 we have come a long way. We still have a long way to go, and our work will never be finished, but our progress in transforming the role and function of the Council has led us to what we believe is an effective approach to our work. It has led us to an approach to locality working, a set of principles that guides the way we design and implement services, and to a set of five giants, challenges that we must rally around if we are going to support the community to meet their potential in the years to come.

### **Our four strategic priorities**

The delivery of this approach demands action across four key areas. The Council’s plans for the next two years are organised around these four strategic priorities, which mirror the pillars of *New East New Thinking*:

1. **Participation and Engagement** - Empowering residents by enabling greater participation in the community and in public services.
2. **Prevention, Independence and Resilience** - Children, families and adults in Barking & Dagenham live safe, happy, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Inclusive Growth** - Harness the growth opportunity that arises from our people, our land and our location in ways that protect the environment and enhance prosperity, wellbeing and participation for all Barking & Dagenham residents.
4. **Well Run Organisation** – Focusing on the efficient and effective operation of the Council itself.





The work we are doing and planning across these priorities is described in detail in the **Single Performance Framework**, alongside the targets and deadlines we are setting for ourselves.

In what follows, we summarise our plans for the next two years in relation to each strategic priority.

## ***Participation and Engagement***

By participation and engagement, we mean:

***Empowering residents by enabling greater participation in the community and in public services.***

The challenge this priority seeks to address is the need for the Council to move its activity in the community from paternalism to participation and, ultimately, to embrace a new relationship with its residents. To empower residents across all our communities, including our children and young people. The Council is doing this firstly because an empowered community is a positive outcome in and of itself. And secondly because greater individual agency and stronger social networks, built through participation, are key to strengthening independence and preventing poor outcomes. Now, as we continue to respond to and recover from Covid-19, participation has never been so important. Not only have more people found themselves isolated, in need of strong social networks and opportunities to participate in their community, but we have also seen first-hand the power of the community; what can be achieved when people band together to create the change they want to see, and are helped to do so by public services and the social infrastructure of their community.

The Council's work on participation and engagement is structured around four key priorities:

- 1. Building capacity in and with the social sector to improve cross-sector collaboration.**
- 2. Developing opportunities to meaningfully participate to improve individual agency and social networks.**
- 3. Facilitating democratic participation to create a more engaged, trusted and responsive democracy.**
- 4. Becoming a more relational council to improve the way we work with residents.**

Set out below is a brief summary of the work ongoing and planned for each of these four priorities. For further detail, please see the Participation and Engagement section of the Single Performance Framework.

### ***Priority 1: Building capacity in and with the social sector to improve cross-sector collaboration.***

The Council's relationship with the social sector; which we define as all individuals, groups and organisations that act in pursuit of social change, with voluntary and community, social enterprises, charities and faith groups at its core, as well as individuals and funders; is critical to our collective ability to enable participation.

The Council will build on the progress made in recent years by, firstly, enhancing its collaboration and commissioning with the BD\_Collective; a new collaborative platform for local social sector organisations created in 2019 to stimulate new opportunities in the Borough, intentionally growing cross-sector partnerships and connecting people, places and projects across Barking & Dagenham. Through this partnership with the social sector we will develop a local giving model to make it easier for people and organisations to give to causes that matter. We will create a coherent and integrated volunteering platform. And we will create a consistent approach to community assets that enables social value. We will also continue to strengthen our partnership with the faith sector.

## **Priority 2: Developing opportunities to meaningfully participate to improve individual agency and social networks.**

For a Borough with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation, and therefore limited mobility, it is vital that there are opportunities to participate in the community and in the culture and heritage of the Borough at a local level. This has become even more important as we have responded to Covid-19.

This refers firstly to the Council's partnership with Participatory City Foundation in support of the participation platform Every One Every Day. We will continue to act as an enabler of the platform and will work in partnership with Participatory City over the next two years to develop and implement a long-term sustainability plan to ensure the participation platform remains in the Borough on a permanent basis.

Secondly, Barking & Dagenham has a rich culture and heritage to celebrate and draw upon. The Council will develop its already strong cultural programming. It will engage the community further with the Borough's heritage assets, parks and open spaces. And it will bring the potential of culture and heritage much closer to the way the rest of the Council's services are run.

## **Priority 3: Facilitating democratic participation to create a more engaged, trusted and responsive democracy.**

Opportunities for residents to engage with and shape the running of our local democracy represent a vital form of participation. Our representative democracy can be strengthened by bringing residents closer to how we work and enabling them to deliberate over its outcomes. We will build on what we learnt in creating and operating BDCAN during lockdown, to develop the Citizens' Alliance Network (CAN). CAN will become a network that makes it easier for residents to bring about they want to see in the community; a network for democratic participation and community organising, run by the community and supported by the Council.

To support the work of CAN, the Council will continue to find ways to bring residents closer to the way we work and make decisions. We will run deliberative processes on key topics, and develop the way we commission and design services to become more participatory and open.

## **Priority 4: Becoming a more relational council to improve the way we work with residents.**

To enhance our ability to prevent poor outcomes, we will continue to change the way Council services operate to become more relational and participatory. This means refocusing how we work away from delivering services *for* or *to* the public, and more about working *with* people to solve shared problems.

We will achieve this firstly by continuing to hone the way in which the Council communicates with the community, so that we are able to maintain meaningful, insightful and two-way conversations with residents. We will empower the Council's workforce to embody this participatory way of working with each other and with residents. And we will ensure that the way we deliver the other three strategic priorities – inclusive growth; prevention, independence and resilience; and well run organisation – is with participation and engagement at the heart of our approach.

## ***Prevention, Independence and Resilience***

By prevention, independence and resilience we mean:

***Children, families and adults in Barking & Dagenham living safe, happy, healthy and independent lives.***

We must ensure that our services foster resilience and the capacity of our residents to confront and cope with life's challenges and to maintain their wellbeing in the face of adversity. Evidence shows that resilience could contribute to healthy behaviours, higher qualifications and skills, better employment, better mental wellbeing, and a quicker or more successful recovery from illness. Resilience is not an innate feature of some people's personalities. Like adversity, it is distributed unequally across the population, and is related to broader socio-economic inequalities which have common causes: the inequities in power, money and resources that shape the conditions in which people live and their opportunities, experiences and - crucially - their relationships.

Despite Barking & Dagenham becoming a younger, better-connected and more diverse Borough over the last 10 years, it still has too many residents experiencing a poor quality of life, too many children and young people achieving low educational performance, too much crime and anti-social behaviour, unacceptable levels of health inequality, and too many families struggling to make ends meet. This strategic priority seeks to address these issues directly.

Most of the time, people living in our Borough engage with Council services because they need to do so for specific, time-limited reasons, which might change as they go through life. They rightly expect our services to provide the help they need when they need it, and to do so safely and effectively. Many people are independent and resilient for most if not all their lives, drawing strength from family, friends, neighbourhoods and communities, and wish only for light-touch assistance from public bodies. Others need more support.

We will have the greatest success in empowering individuals and families where we can intervene earlier, preventing a problem from escalating into crisis. As well as providing the right services that help to build resilience, local communities must have the capacity and infrastructure to support people to access them. We need to fundamentally change the way we interact with residents, prioritising choice, recognising that everyone's needs are different, and putting the responsibility for positive change in the hands of residents wherever possible.

Over the next two years this approach to service delivery is being delivered through action across fifteen priority areas:

***Working together with partners to deliver improved outcomes for children, families and adults.*** We cannot realise the ambitions that we have for our residents alone. We must maximise the assets of our local public sector economy given the challenging financial landscape, and do this within the context of significant changes either in motion, or on the horizon, that will reshape how we work with some of our key partners and, in some cases, how they themselves operate. It is vital, therefore, that the Council continues to take forward its role as a system leader and orchestrator across prevention and statutory services, exemplifying excellent partnership work to ensure the best services possible for our residents.

***Providing safe, innovative, strength-based and sustainable practice in all preventative and statutory services.*** If we are to reduce dependency on statutory services, we must adopt a holistic, individual and family-centred approach that helps us to take better-informed, targeted action, that can make the most difference to residents' lives. Our approach must be capable of making the most of assets

and services that already exist in the community and further build on our successes so far in integrating health and social care across the Borough. The way we work with people must raise aspirations among residents, breaking intergenerational cycles and show that everyone can expect more from themselves and their community.

**Every child gets the best start in life and all children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality early years settings and local schools.** Ensuring that every child has the best start in life and that our young people are ready for a happy, successful adulthood is perhaps our biggest single priority. This means ensuring mothers enjoy healthy pregnancies and support for children under five and wider families is strong. To do this we want to create a child-friendly Borough where every child is valued, supported and challenged so that they go on to develop the ambition, skills and resilience to succeed. Children in Barking & Dagenham should live safe and healthy lives and know that they live in a welcoming and nurturing community.

It is also true that everyone deserves to reach their full potential, and this means continuing to drive educational standards and attainment and education standards at all levels, including for our most vulnerable pupils. The Borough has seen strong and steady improvements in education standards over several years, and schools are one of our greatest assets. At August 2019, 92% of Barking & Dagenham schools were rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, above the national average (86%) and almost at London average (93%), based on provisional Ofsted data. Headteachers and staff in schools work in challenging circumstances. They have seen the most rapid growth in the country in school places and some of the highest growth in children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and the complexity of needs that they present. Despite this challenging context, it is to their credit that the Borough's schools exemplify some of best inclusive practices for children with SEND in the country.

**More young people are supported to achieve success in adulthood through higher, further education and access to employment.** Successive government reviews and wider evidence suggest improving pathways and employment outcomes for learners requires vocational training with a clear line of sight to work. An ability to shape the curriculum to meet employers' broad skills needs as well as those of learners is important, as is the availability of structured and relevant work placements. This means engaging employers early so that we can build cohort sizes that make apprenticeship training viable for the College as well as working in collaboration with key education partners to improve opportunities for all young people.

**More children and young people in care find permanent, safe and stable homes.** Over the last two years our looked after children's service has placed greater emphasis on early permanency for children in our care, and consequently the number of children coming into care under Section 20 has significantly reduced. To ensure children can remain at home with their families where suitable we have invested in good 'cusp-of-care' services. We have also established an Access to Resources Team, Crisis Intervention Service and consistent use of Family Group Conferencing. This is supplemented by our Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) programmes. Our Caring Dads programme supports fathers who are a source of safeguarding concerns to focus more on the needs of their children.

**All care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing and employment needs.** As Corporate Parents, we are committed to ensuring that our care leavers live in homes that are suitable for their needs and that an increased proportion enter education, training or employment. Our enhanced local offer for all care leavers up to the age of 25 is now available via an app and continues to be developed and improved with their input. Further work is

being done to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and capitalises on the benefits of the Council's inclusive growth agenda.

**Young people and adults at risk are safeguarded in the context of their families, peers, schools and communities and safeguarded from exploitation.** A priority will always be ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults in most need are safe and experience a reduced risk of harm, violence and exploitation. We need a true multi-agency response to those most at risk of exploitation, reducing the risk of children going missing and the numbers of children accommodated over age 16 as a result of vulnerability to exploitation. Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults from violent extremism is also a priority, be it in the form of Far-Right aggression or so called 'Islamist' extremism in the Borough. We also believe that it is every person's right to feel safe and to be safe in their community. Being safe is a basic requirement for creating civic pride and community cohesion. Too many of our residents have told us they often do not feel safe in their neighbourhoods. We are working together to challenge and intervene in unacceptable behaviour such as environmental crime, anti-social behaviour, discrimination of any form, exploitation and knife crime.

**Zero tolerance to domestic abuse drives local action that tackles underlying causes, challenges perpetrators and empowers survivors.** Responding to the entrenched challenge of domestic abuse in the Borough remains both a considerable challenge and an absolute priority. Domestic abuse reduction is already a key priority in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and last year we published our new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which sets out the Council's vision for tackling this most resistant of challenges in our community. We also have a full programme of work over the next two years to address domestic abuse head on, centred around the role and contribution of the Domestic Abuse Commission, which will seek to understand more about the issue and what can be done to address it.

**All residents with a disability can access from birth, transition to, and in adulthood that is seamless, personalised and enables them to thrive and contribute to their communities.** We are working to ensure that disabled people living, working and studying in Barking & Dagenham are supported, empowered and enabled to live their lives to the full. We want disabled people to be independent and equal in society and have choice and control over their own lives, with services actively removing barriers, changing attitudes and building community capacity and access in a disability friendly Borough.

**Children, young people and adults can better access social, emotional and mental wellbeing support - including loneliness reduction - in their communities.** We continue to work proactively with partners to provide preventative and high-quality specialist social, emotional and mental health support that promotes good mental wellbeing. Good mental health is more than absence of mental illness. Mental wellbeing is integral to maintaining good health, recovering from physical illness and living with a physical health condition. Furthermore, poor mental health is linked to poor physical health.

**All vulnerable adults and older people are supported to access safe, timely, good quality, sustainable care that enables independence, choice and control integrated and accessed in their communities, and keeps them in their own homes or close to home for longer.** We want our residents to age well with services promoting independence, wellbeing and connectedness. We have a clear ambition to increase digital enablement and to mainstream our care technology provision so that it forms an integral part of the support offer in Adult Social Care. A transformed Care Technology offer can support the Council and its partners to realise the aspiration for a health and care system

that enables people to make healthier choices, to be more resilient, to deal more effectively with illness and disability when it arises, and to have happier, longer lives in old age.

We are also caring for vulnerable older residents in the community with integrated multiagency support which ensures their safety and independence continues to be a priority for the Council and our partners, including health, the Police Service and the Fire Brigade. To this end we are currently working together to develop a new Adult Social Care delivery model to further improve the experiences and outcomes of older people receiving our care. We always reliably meet our statutory obligations and we understand the importance of developing and maintaining positive professional relationships with the residents we support. This also includes good relationships with relatives and informal carers. Our new delivery model emphasises the importance of focussing on people's strengths rather than disproportionately looking at their disabilities. This includes looking at all available resources and assets, including available support from Community Groups and family networks.

**Tackling inequality in all aspects of our service delivery and within our communities jointly with partners and Public Health.** The Barking & Dagenham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out a renewed vision for improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities at every stage of residents' lives by 2023. We will continue to deliver and track progress on these outcomes through our HWBB.

Further detail can be found in the Prevention, Independence and Resilience section of the Single Performance Framework, which sets out a series of actions, deliverables, outcome measures and indicators that cut across each of these priority areas.

## ***Inclusive Growth***

By Inclusive Growth we mean:

***Harnessing the growth opportunity that arises from our people, our land and our location in ways that protect the environment and enhance prosperity, wellbeing and participation for all Barking & Dagenham residents.***

Covid-19 is a public health and an economic crisis rolled into one and the context for the Council's approach to Inclusive Growth is very different from just six months ago. Unemployment is rising fast and is likely to get much higher as government protection recedes. Many more local households are dependent on universal credit than a few months ago and local businesses face a highly uncertain future. Since March, the Council has done everything it can to support residents and the wider economy, with hardship funds, deferred tax bills and grant programmes – as well as responding to Covid-19 itself. We know people have suffered and many are wondering what the future will hold.

In looking to what comes next, we think that the pandemic and its impacts make our mission to pursue Inclusive Growth in Barking & Dagenham more urgent and important than it was before. Our Borough has an amazing history, but even before Covid-19 we were grappling with a legacy of deindustrialisation, under investment and market forces which cause unnecessary suffering and make life harder than it should be for too many people. However, despite the turmoil, huge economic opportunities remain on the horizon for Barking & Dagenham and doing everything we can to grasp them is our duty. Put simply, we need both more (sustainable) growth, to increase prosperity and protect the planet, and more (social and economic) inclusion, so that everyone benefits, and no-one is left behind.

In order to achieve this vision we have adopted an approach to local economic development that gives us the best possible chance of addressing poverty, disadvantage and structural inequality in all its forms, while offering hope, opportunity and aspiration for the community as a whole. This approach is underpinned by four key principles:

- **Lead and attract investment.** Leveraging the Council's balance sheet to directly drive and shape growth, by investing in homes, in land, in developing new industries, in developing low carbon sources of energy etc, while capturing long-term value and returns; attracting private investment from those who share our vision and values; and making the case for greater public investment in Barking & Dagenham.
- **Build institutions and alliances.** Working with a family of Council-owned companies (for regeneration, housing and energy; Be First, Reside and B&D Energy), welcoming new anchor institutions to put down roots in the Borough (like CU London, B&D College and the Barking Enterprise Centre), and mobilising partnerships with organisations and individuals committed to the pursuit of Inclusive Growth.
- **Actively intervene in markets.** Using the full range of powers and levers at our disposal to shape how residents are treated by markets and the outcomes they generate, through enforcement and planning, but also by being an active player locally in markets for land, development, housing, labour, energy and more – not just accepting the market outcome.



- **Empower through participation.** By ensuring that local people have meaningful opportunities to participate in shaping the nature of growth in Barking & Dagenham over the years ahead; both in relation to decisions by the Council and others, but also in playing an active role themselves in bringing about positive change in the local community (while expecting everyone to take responsibility for themselves and those around them).

Over the next two years, this approach is being delivered through action across four priority areas:

1. Homes: For local people and other working Londoners;
2. Jobs: A thriving and inclusive local economy;
3. Places: Aspirational and resilient places; and
4. Environment: Becoming the green capital of the capital.

**Homes: For local people and other working Londoners.** Building on the Borough Manifesto, our goal in relation to HOMES is:

*50,000 new homes built in the Borough over the next two decades to meet housing need and provide for our growing population; with Barking and Dagenham remaining a place where working Londoners can afford to put down roots, raise their family and grow old in dignity; and where people live in decent, secure conditions, homelessness is prevented wherever possible, and suitable accommodation is available for vulnerable groups of residents to enable as many of possible to live well independently.*

The first homes that were built on the Becontree Estate will soon be celebrating their centenary. Enabled by reforms such as the Addison Act, the building of the Becontree provided high quality affordable homes for working Londoners and drastically improved the living conditions of 120,000 people. These were homes fit for heroes and public house building on a scale we haven't seen since. The Becontree was only possible because the state played a direct role as provider of new homes. Today we are returning to that approach; directly funding and building the homes we need. And, at the same time, working with third party developers and investors that share our values. Our ambition for housing in Barking & Dagenham today is to capture the spirit that delivered the Becontree to deliver new homes for today's working Londoners. Clearly the housing needs of today's Londoners have changed, as has the way we do house building. But the Becontree still symbolises what can be achieved with vision, ambition, and the right tools to deliver.

The Single Performance Framework appended to this Corporate Plan contains actions, deliverables and outcome measures and indicators that cut across four priority sub-themes:

- Building new homes
- Improving the quality and management of homes
- Tackling homelessness
- Providing homes for vulnerable residents

**Jobs: A thriving and inclusive local economy.** Building on the Borough Manifesto, our goal in relation to JOBS is:

*At least 20,000 new jobs in the Borough over the next two decades, as part of shaping a thriving post-industrial local economy based around facilitating new strengths in key growth sectors (such as data, science, and the creative industries) as well as intervening to improve the quality of work in the everyday economy (like construction, care, logistics, food etc). Crucially, our focus is on doing everything we can to ensure that local business benefits from this economic development and that local residents benefit from the new job opportunities in the Borough and the surrounding area this will create; particularly those facing labour market disadvantages and needing extra help.*

Like in the rest of the country, the economic impact of Covid-19 has been dramatic in our Borough. From March through to June, claims for Universal Credit doubled, and whilst this figure has stabilised since, it remains at least twice its pre-lockdown peak. During the same period, 40 per cent of the local workforce were furloughed or placed on the self-employment support scheme. Our immediate response to the economic crisis brought about by Covid-19 was to provide emergency financial support to households and businesses, though help with Council tax and business rate bills, plus a new local hardship fund and getting over £25m of government grants paid out to support local firms.

Now, our task is to prepare for the wave of job losses likely to follow the end of the furlough scheme, as well as the potential impact of a wider recession.

We must also remember that Barking & Dagenham faced significant enterprise and employment related challenges long before Covid-19. For many years, our economy has had too many low wage jobs, and higher levels of long-term unemployment and inactivity than most other London Boroughs. Traditionally, local and national government have sought to address these challenges by investing in the skills of individuals, to enable them to compete and progress in the UK's flexible labour market. Our approach – both in responding to Covid-19 and to addressing these longer-term trends – recognises the limitations of this model, especially in the absence of action to improve the quantity and quality of the jobs available.

In contrast, we are dedicated to expanding the availability of good quality, well-paid employment, in growing 21st century industries, while also intervening to improve pay, job quality and performance in the 'everyday' economy where most people work - recognising that the make-up of these 'everyday' jobs will necessarily shift in the aftermath of Covid-19. We are committed to using our planning, procurement and convening powers to create more clear pathways into good jobs for residents, and as well as new opportunities for existing businesses to grow and improve (as well as for new ones to start and succeed). And finally, we are committed to targeting our employment support to those who need it most, linked directly to the new opportunities that are being created.

We believe that the fundamentals of this approach – aimed at creating a thriving and inclusive local economy - will not change as a consequence of Covid-19, even if there are a set of specific measures that we need to take now in order to mitigate its impacts.

The Single Performance Framework appended to this Corporate Plan contains actions, deliverables and outcome measures and indicators that cut across two priority sub-themes:

- Improving the quantity and quality of jobs in Barking & Dagenham.
- Supporting residents to access new employment opportunities in the Borough and the wider London economy.

**Places: Aspirational and resilient places.** Building on the Borough Manifesto, our goal in relation to PLACES is:

*To lead large-scale, transformative regeneration across the Borough over the next two decades – in Barking Town Centre and the large but poorly used industrial areas to the south, east and north of the Borough; with the aim of shaping fantastic new places with homes, jobs, infrastructure and community spirit that each become distinctive destinations. In the short-term, as these plans emerge, our top priority remains the condition of local neighbourhoods and the experience of living there, in particular things like the cleanliness of the streets and perceptions of safety that can undermine trust and cohesion. In addition, we are focused on ensuring we secure the social and physical infrastructure – from transport to schools and green spaces – which the local community needs now and into the future.*

Barking & Dagenham is made up of approximately 40 neighbourhoods and counting. These neighbourhoods are well known and well loved. Each has its own story and identity, often made up of memories that stretch back generations. Many residents love their neighbourhoods, but they are also aware of their issues, from a legacy of under-investment in key physical and social infrastructure (like public transport and community spaces) to the cleanliness of the streets and perceptions of crime.

We have a long-term vision for every neighbourhood in the Borough and will use every lever at our disposal in order to pursue this vision. In practice, this includes buying land of strategic significance, undertaking direct development ourselves, and making full use of our planning powers – alongside working with other landowners, developers, investors and the local community to bring about change. At the same time, we are equally committed to addressing the street level issues that our residents care about most. Using all our statutory powers to the maximum, we can confront those who don't respect other residents or take care of the local area, tackling scourges like fly tipping, grime crime and private landlords who don't look after their properties. But it also means a relentless focus on getting those core basic services which touch everyone's life right, like emptying the bins, keeping the streets clean and improving the public realm.

The Single Performance Framework appended to this Corporate Plan contains actions, deliverables and outcome measures and indicators that cut across three priority sub-themes:

- Safe and liveable neighbourhoods
- Delivering new or improved physical and social infrastructure
- Shaping aspirational places

**Environment: Becoming the green capital of the capital.** Building on the Borough Manifesto, our goal in relation to the ENVIRONMENT is:

*To play our part in addressing the climate crisis by transitioning to net zero carbon, in relation to the Council itself and the Borough as a whole. This means leading and facilitating major changes in energy, waste and the wider local environment; affecting our homes, our work and how we get around. Our aim to generate far more low or zero carbon energy locally; dramatically reduce energy usage (especially in our housing stock and transport system); progressively decrease the production of waste and increase the level of reuse and recycling; and enhance the quality and sustainability of*

*the natural environment in a Borough blighted by a history of heavy industry and dirty vehicles. This transition will take time and will not be painless, but we see huge opportunities to generate new sources of jobs and prosperity, alongside improvements in the quality of life.*

Achieving these goals means delivering game changing innovations in energy production, distribution and efficiency. These innovations will lay the foundation for the wider roll out of green infrastructure in future, demonstrating what is possible and making the case to government and third-party investors. It means creating new institutions that are focused on helping the Borough transition to clean and green energy systems. It means making strategic use of our Borough's industrial land to promote sustainable industries. And it means using our planning and our enforcement powers to ensure the highest possible green standards on all new development.

The Single Performance Framework appended to this Corporate Plan contains actions, deliverables and outcome measures and indicators that cut across three priority sub-themes:

- A decarbonised local energy system
- Energy efficient homes and buildings
- A green local environment

In addition – and cutting across these four core themes – is a theme related to **Money & Debt** where our goal is to reduce levels of debt and associated money issues in our community through the adoption of an ethical and data driven approach to the collection, management and prevention of debt. This means building on the success of the Homes and Money hub by developing its preventative offer, making better use of data and insight to support proactive outreach, and working more closely in partnership with civil society. It means continuing to provide residents with a range of affordable alternatives to the high street, including four additional community food clubs (delivered in partnership with Fair Share) which provide access to affordable, healthy food, alongside personalised debt and money management support. Finally, it means using the opportunity created by the return of the revenues and benefits service into Community Solutions to reform how we manage and collect our debts, improving rent collection whilst also maximising the potential for upstream prevention.

## Well Run Organisation

The success of all activity associated with the three priorities above is dependent upon the capacity and capability of the Council's core and support functions to enable and collaborate with each service delivery block across the Council's system. Excellence in what we do must be enabled by the core of the Council. It is for that reason that there is a fourth, cross-cutting strategic priority, concerned with the operation of the Council's support functions and the way in which our business is operated. We call this the 'Well Run Organisation'.

In July 2016 Members gave the green light for plans to redesign the structure of the Council from first principles, to build a 'new kind of Council' capable of constructing the preventative system we aim for and, ultimately, realising the vision of the Borough Manifesto. In the years that have passed, this structural transformation has been implemented through our Ambition 2020 programme. We now have the structural framework needed to undertake our approach and are in a new phase of transformation with a focus on how we work and who we work with.



Key to the next two years is ensuring there are 'best in class' support functions which enable service delivery blocks to play their part as specified through the commissioning system. This means getting the basics right in terms of governance, HR, finance, procurement, and customer service. But it also means a step change in our approach to commissioning, policy, insight, technology, and how we facilitate participation from residents in Council business. And we must do this while adapting to a rapidly changing situation as the Coronavirus pandemic and its fall-out continues to unfold.

Over the next two years, the **Core Transformation Programme** will 'root and branch' re-design the Core functions around the principles of the Council's approach to public service; a new culture and ethos. This final piece of the puzzle of the Council's structural transformation will develop its support functions to be relentlessly reliable, lean and efficient, modern and agile.

In time, as the Core Transformation is implemented, the 'blueprints' for each function of the Core will be developed to include comprehensive performance frameworks that evidence the standards of excellence to be achieved by our functions in supporting the wider approach of the Council. This development will require the iteration of this section of the Single Performance Framework. Until then, this section of the Framework serves as an interim way of analysing and shaping the improvement activity that is in-train or on the visible horizon.

This section of the Framework is divided into five themes which capture what it means to be a Well Run Organisation. It sets out our expectation and ambition for people management, financial management, customer experience and the disciplines which support good strategic planning and operational service delivery. Below is a summary of these five themes, and what it would look like if we were operating at our best in relation to each:

**Delivers value for money for the taxpayer.** We are financially solvent with a secure and sustainable future. Good financial controls and processes are in place to protect the public purse. When we use

our significant spending power, we ensure maximum value for money and social value and we use our commercial acumen to improve the financial health of the Council against a challenging budget context. We ensure that we continue to deliver value for money even as the challenges we face change rapidly before us.

**Employs capable and values-driven staff, demonstrating excellent people management.** Our employees are inspiring public servants committed to the DRIVE values of our organisation. They are engaged, empowered and supported to deliver their best for residents.

**Enables democratic participation, works relationally and is transparent.** We are an open and transparent organisation which invites and encourages the community to influence what we do and to hold us to account. We use our communications to hold a dialogue with residents so we can listen and respond to what is important to them. We co-design and co-produce with residents so their views and experiences run through our policymaking and service design.

**Puts the customer at the heart of what it does.** Every transaction and interaction with our residents is important to us. As such, we do everything we can to ensure that the customer experience is easy and ends with a positive outcome. Where we fall short of this, we have in place mechanisms to gain feedback and use this as inspiration for improvement.

**Is equipped and has the capability to deliver its vision.** We are deeply data-driven and insight-based. This approach puts prevention at the heart of our mission and informs all aspects of delivery from strategic planning through to frontline operational decision-making. We harness technology to be productive and efficient. Our staff have the tools to do their jobs well and residents have digital platforms to interact with our services and to work with us.

## Cabinet Portfolios

Our Cabinet takes collective responsibility for the delivery of the actions, deliverables, outcome measures and indicators that sit under each of our strategic priorities. The Single Performance Framework will allow Cabinet to monitor the progress the Council, and the Borough more broadly, is making towards the long-term vision set out in the Borough Manifesto, and within the context of our ongoing response to the Coronavirus. In order to discharge these responsibilities, Cabinet delegates actions, deliverables, outcome measures and indicators to individual Cabinet Members who work with officers to ensure that these are being delivered effectively. Each Cabinet Member has a range of delegated responsibilities, many of which cut across our three overarching strategic priorities. In the Single Performance Framework, we highlight which Cabinet Members take lead responsibility for each action, and for progress in relation to which outcome measures and indicators.

Importantly, Cabinet also take collective responsibility for leading the Council's response to and recovery from Covid-19. As the risks we face continue to evolve, Cabinet is working together and with our workforce to make sure that the Council is doing everything in its power to support the safety and wellbeing of the community as we grapple with the pandemic.

In what follows, we introduce our Cabinet and their overarching responsibilities. For further detail about our priorities and plans for 2020-22, please see the Single Performance Framework.

### Councillor Darren Rodwell

*Leader of the Council*

Cllr Rodwell is Leader of the Council and manager of Cabinet. He is responsible for ensuring Cabinet is collaborating as an effective and efficient team to deliver the entirety of this Corporate Plan. Cllr Rodwell is also the representative and champion of the Council in a range of regional and national contexts.



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### Councillor Saima Ashraf

*Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Leadership & Engagement*

Councillor Ashraf is Deputy Leader of the Council and is responsible for delivery of all actions and deliverables related to the **participation and engagement** priority. This includes the Council's work with the social sector; our efforts to create and facilitate opportunities to meaningfully participate in the community; the ways in which we are facilitating democratic participation; and the ongoing process of becoming a more relational council. Over the next two years, Cllr Ashraf's top priorities include:



- Supporting the BD\_Collective to grow and develop as a connector of the social sector, including developing a coherent and integrated volunteering offer across sectors and organisations;
- Co-producing with the community the Citizens Alliance Network to act as a platform for democratic participation and community organising; and

- Working in partnership with Participatory City Foundation to develop a long-term sustainability plan for Every One Every Day’s participation platform in Barking & Dagenham.

Councillor Ashraf has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of her individual priorities can be found in the ‘Participation and Engagement’ section of the Single Performance Framework.

### Councillor Dominic Twomey

*Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Core Services*



Councillor Twomey is Deputy Leader of the Council and is responsible for delivery of the actions and deliverables related to the creation of a ‘**Well Run Organisation**’. This includes ensuring the Council delivers **value for money** for the taxpayer, employs **capable and values-driven staff**, enables **democratic participation**, puts the **customer at the heart** of what it does, and is equipped with the **capability to deliver its vision**. Over the next two years, his top priorities include:

- Delivering a balanced budget and MTFs, approved by Assembly;
- Achieving ‘Investors In People’ gold standard accreditation; and
- Approving an ambitious new Social Value policy for the Council which ensures we are securing wider community benefits from those winning contracts from the Council and its wholly owned companies, combined with practical support for commissioners and potential contractors, and the development of robust monitoring and enforcement arrangements (joint priority with Councillor Bright).

Councillor Twomey has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of his individual priorities can be found in the ‘Well Run Organisation’ section of the Single Performance Framework.

### Councillor Sade Bright

*Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Aspiration*



Councillor Bright is responsible for the delivery of our plans related to the creation of a **thriving and inclusive local economy**. Specifically, this includes activity focused on **improving the quantity and quality of jobs** in Barking & Dagenham, as well as the provision of **support to residents to access new opportunities**. Over the next two years, her top priorities include:

- Implementing our ambitious new Social Value policy for the Council which ensures we are securing wider community benefits from those winning contracts from the Council and its wholly owned companies (combined with practical support for commissioners and potential contractors, and the development of robust monitoring and enforcement arrangements)(*joint priority with Councillor Twomey*);
- Further developing the Barking & Dagenham Business Forum, with regular communications, events and engagement with the local business community, including work with partners



(such as the Barking Enterprise Centre, Barking and Dagenham Chamber of Commerce, Barking and Dagenham College, CU London and others) to improve access to space, finance, new markets and support for businesses in the Borough; and Striving to support as many local residents into work as possible (targeting 1,000 people each year) while also designing enhanced support for those heavily reliant on the Council to enter and sustain employment. This will include striking the right balance between the roles of Community Solutions, Care & Support services and specialist providers – based on a mix of Council funding and external grants.

Councillor Bright has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of her individual priorities can be found within the Inclusive Growth section of the Single Performance Framework.

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### Councillor Cameron Geddes

*Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing*

Councillor Geddes is responsible for the delivery of all plans related to the **construction of new homes** in the Borough, as well as the **management of existing homes and estates**. He is also responsible for many of our plans related to our wider commitment to shaping **aspirational and resilient places**. Over the next two years, his top priorities include:



- Starting the construction of around 3,000 new homes directly delivered by Be First of which 75% will be affordable, whilst ensuring that the Council delivers on the manifesto commitment of at least 2,000 new affordable homes completed by 2023;
- Improving landlord and estate services whilst developing a long-term investment plan for HRA properties; and
- Developing and starting to deliver strategies for the future of the major regeneration areas of the Borough, based on a distinctive vision and practical plans for each, including Barking Town Centre, Dagenham East, Chadwell Heath and the area south of the A13.

Councillor Geddes has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of his individual priorities can be found within the Inclusive Growth section of the Single Performance Framework.

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### Councillor Evelyn Carpenter

*Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement*

Councillor Carpenter is responsible for the delivery of our plans related to ensuring all children can attend and achieve in **inclusive, good quality local schools**, as well as several of our plans related to ensuring that every child gets the **best start in life**. Over the next two years, her top priorities include:



- Publishing an Annual School Place Sufficiency Plan to ensure there are enough childcare, nursery and school places in the Borough to meet the needs of our population;

- Delivering our plans alongside Barking & Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP) to ensure that quality of education and pupil’s attainment continues to improve; and
- Developing the new Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Strategy.

Councillor Carpenter has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of her individual priorities can be found within both the Prevention, Independence and Resilience section of the Single Performance Framework.

### Councillor Syed Ghani

*Cabinet Member for Public Realm*

Councillor Ghani is responsible for the delivery of many of our plans related to the **maintenance of clean, green environments** and **producing less and doing more** with the Borough’s **waste**. This includes ensuring that the Borough’s core refuse services are relentlessly reliable, with a focus on street cleansing and fly tipping. Over the next two years, his top priorities include:



- Developing an annual plan identifying the hotspots for “grime crime” and other environmental issues (waste, planning enforcement, eyesore gardens, parking, landlord licensing, fly tipping etc) that will be tackled by the joint public realm and enforcement taskforce; using data and intelligence to assess each location for the appropriate robust action (joint priority with Councillor Mullane);
- Developing and adopting a new East London Joint Waste & Resources Strategy forecasting and modelling the waste arising for the next 25 years, with options for waste minimisation, reuse, recycling, reformed collection services and treatments for residual waste; and
- Banning single use plastics and drawing up an action plan to phase out the material among its commissioned services, contractors, suppliers and Local Authority-run schools.

Councillor Ghani has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of his individual priorities can be found within the Inclusive Growth section of the Single Performance Framework.

### Councillor Margaret Mullane

*Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety*

Councillor Mullane is responsible for the delivery of our plans related to the **enforcement of the highest standards of public safety** in relation to issues such as food standards, licensing and trading standards. She is responsible for our plans to address a range of **community safety issues** including violent crime, hate crime and anti-social behaviour. Finally, she is responsible for emergency planning and business continuity. Over the next two years, her top priorities include:



- Developing an annual plan identifying the hotspots for “grime crime” and other environmental issues (waste, planning enforcement, eyesore gardens, parking, landlord licensing, fly tipping etc) that will be tackled by the joint public realm and enforcement taskforce; using data and intelligence to assess each location for the appropriate robust action (joint priority with Councillor Ghani);

- Maintaining focus on violent crime through delivery of the Serious Violence and Knife Crime Action Plan; and
- Delivering the Parking Action Plan which aims to improve safety, congestion and air quality across the Borough, as well as providing a safer, fairer, consistent and a more transparent parking service.

Councillor Mullane’s responsibilities cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, with an even split of individual priorities across both the Inclusive Growth and the Prevention, Independence and Resilience sections of the Single Performance Framework.

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### Councillor Maureen Worby

*Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration*

Councillor Worby is responsible for the delivery of our plans related to: Giving our young people the **best start in life**, and preparing them to be adults; making sure all our residents, and particularly our most vulnerable, are **kept safe**; ensuring all residents have the opportunity to live **long and healthy lives**; and ensuring our residents are supported to **age well**, in their own homes. Over the next two years, her top priorities include:



- Developing a new Target Operating Model for Targeted Early Help and designing the new Early Help and Prevention offer with Community Solutions and the new Safeguarding Partnership;
- Working with our new strategic partner on Domestic Abuse – Refuge - to implement new offer for families where DA is a factor and implementing the recommendations made by the Domestic Abuse Commission; and
- Improving the housing offer and pathways for key groups of vulnerable residents, including via the development of a specialist housing new build programme, reviewing existing sheltered and adapted stock, implementing the new allocations policy, developing an annual lettings plan and embedding new accommodation panels and move-on arrangements.

Councillor Worby has responsibilities that cut across the Council’s strategic priorities, but most of her individual priorities can be found within the Prevention, Independence and Resilience sections of the Single Performance Framework.

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*Cabinet Member for Equalities and Diversity – at the time of writing Cabinet responsibility is being shared between Cllr Saima Ashraf and Cllr Sade Bright.*

This Cabinet portfolio is responsible for working with portfolio holders across Cabinet, and with officers, to ensure that all the Council’s activity responds to the ways in which personal and identity-based characteristics intersect with root causes to produce structural inequalities for particular groups in our community. The brief of **‘Equalities and Diversity’** stretches across all three strategic priorities and is a central component of our long-term approach to public service. Over the next two years, the top priorities include:

- Organising and supporting a calendar of community events that celebrate the Borough’s rich and diverse culture;

- Developing the purpose and process for deploying Equality Impact Assessments within the policy-making process; and
- Developing a policy position to explain how the Council’s Strategic Framework embeds equality, diversity and human-centered design into the Council’s approach, including its commissioning and performance processes. This policy will set out how the Equalities and Diversity agenda will influence the activity of the Council’s other portfolios and priorities, including key areas in Inclusive Growth such as housing and jobs; in Participation and Engagement such as the ability to participate in cultural activities and community cohesion; and in Prevention, Independence and Resilience such as domestic abuse, disabilities and serious youth violence.

These responsibilities cut across the Council’s strategic priorities with an even split across all three sections of the Single Performance Framework.

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# Delivering this Plan

The Corporate Plan and Single Performance Framework act as the medium-term articulation of the Council’s approach, priorities and objectives. It is therefore vital that they shape and drive the two systems through which accountabilities are discharged and managed within the organisation: commissioning and performance.

## Commissioning

‘Commissioning’ is the mechanism through which we discharge responsibility for the delivery of the priorities and objectives in the Single Performance Framework from the Council’s core (made up of Strategic Directors and commissioning teams) to one of a series of service delivery blocks (including in house-services and wholly owned companies, as well as trusted public sector, civil society and private sector partners).



The relationship between the core and service delivery blocks is managed through the production of commissioning mandates that translate the medium term-objectives set out in Single Performance Framework into specific plans for each block, aligned with a clear delivery budget set out in the Council’s MTFs. Mandates are collaboratively developed and agreed between commissioners and operational leads, providing a framework through which performance can be monitored and managed on an ongoing basis.

## Performance

Commissioning mandates sit within a wider performance system that is structured around each of the strategic priorities set out in this Corporate Plan and the Single Performance Framework, allowing Strategic Directors, commissioning teams, operational leads and Members to monitor performance across systems rather than in individual service delivery silos.

Together, commissioners and operational leads provide regular updates on progress against the actions, deliverables, outcome measures and indicators in the Single Performance Framework to one of four dedicated working groups for each strategic priority. A monthly cut of the Council’s performance across these four systems is then presented to the senior leadership team (Corporate Performance Group), before discussion at individual Member Portfolio Meetings and a dedicated meeting of relevant Cabinet Members, again structured around systems rather than individual services. The Council’s performance is also then discussed formally and publicly at Cabinet.

Our commissioning and performance systems rely upon a distributed model of leadership that encourages strategic directors and operational leads to take collective responsibility for the delivery of our medium-term goals and objectives, alongside our partners. The key to this model is the strength of the relationships that we maintain with each other. No-one service or organisation can do this alone. We all have a part to play.