

Cabinet – 4 February 2015

Emerging Corporate Plan 2015 -19 - “Shaping a Fairer Future”

Portfolio: Councillor S Coughlan, Leader of the Council

Related portfolios: All

Service: All

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary

A new Corporate Plan for 2015-19 enables the Council to clearly articulate its priorities and vision - setting the context for the extensive public service delivery that will continue as well as the difficult decisions that will be necessary given the unprecedented reductions in government funding. A set of emerging priorities were approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 29 October 2014, alongside the draft budget, and the purpose, vision and values agreed on 17 December, along with the title of ‘Shaping a Fairer Future’ which aims to capture the overall spirit of the plan in an accessible and memorable phrase.

The latest draft is attached for approval incorporating the section on the change needed. This a high level summary of the corporate change programme which will help to deliver the priorities expressed in the plan alongside the level of savings needed.

The plan is being presented alongside a draft financial plan for the same four year period. This more medium term perspective is considered crucial to meeting the challenges of coming years in an effective and responsible manner. Once the financial plan has been approved a the resource section within the Corporate Plan will be updated to include a high level summary of the budget.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends Council to adopt the Corporate Plan 2015-2019, ‘Shaping a Fairer Future’ as the context for a four year financial plan.

3. Report detail

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan provides a clear focus to plan activities and target improvements, ensuring we get the best out of diminished resources.
- 3.2 It is an articulation of the aspirations of the Council, expressed as a strategic plan that can be delivered over a four year horizon, aligned to the budget.
- 3.3. As well as high level priorities, the plan also makes a number of firm commitments for which Members and Officers can be held to account. Regular reporting on delivery of these commitments, along with the difference they are making will help promote transparency.
- 3.4 The plan has been informed by intelligence from the 2011 Census, Index of Deprivation 2010 and the three key thematic needs assessments: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA); Economic Needs Assessment; and Safer Walsall Community Safety Assessment.

4. Council priorities

The Corporate Plan establishes the following priorities for the Council-

With fewer resources available we will concentrate on protecting the most vulnerable and reducing inequalities through:

- Support with Cost of Living
- Creating Jobs and helping people get new skills
- Improving Educational Attainment
- Helping local high streets and communities
- Promoting health and well-being
- Helping create more affordable housing

5. Risk management

There are no significant risks associated with publishing the Corporate Plan, other than the risk to the Council's reputation if it fails to deliver. Effective risk management practice is incorporated into the planning of projects and initiatives that will support the delivery of the plan and this helps mitigate any risk of failing to deliver.

6. Financial implications

The development of the priorities has run alongside the budget setting process and as such activities needed in year to deliver it are all accounted for within the proposed budget.

7. Legal implications

There is no legal requirement to publish a Corporate Plan though its adoption and implementation, and in particular the values it expresses will help deliver a more robust governance framework

8. Property implications

There are no direct property implications associated with the approval of this plan; however the priorities expressed in the plan will inform decisions on how to get the best use out of the Council's existing property portfolio, along with wider community and partner assets.

9. Health and wellbeing implications

Health and well-being is a clearly expressed priority within the plan. Delivery of the plan will help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for all Walsall people.

10. Staffing implications

The Corporate Plan provides staff with a clear vision and purpose for what the Council is trying to be achieved as well as a set of values that underline how we approach our work. This clarity is important for both governance and morale, providing a positive focus with clear expectations.

11. Equality implications

The Corporate Plan fully recognises the diverse needs within the borough and acknowledges the different approaches needed to meet these needs. Its central premise is reducing inequalities through focussing on those most in need.

12. Consultation

The plan has been informed by intelligence gathered from numerous consultation processes including budget setting. In drafting the plan colleagues from across services have been engaged.

Background papers

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Corporate Plan 2015-2019

“Shaping a Fairer Future”

Foreword

This plan sets out the vision of Cabinet and the Council to shape a fairer future for all the residents and communities of Walsall. A fairer future is one in which we protect the most vulnerable and help raise the quality of life and aspirations for the most deprived, addressing the inequality gaps that exist in health, attainment and prosperity.

With deep cuts to local authority budgets from central government over the last four years, councils have faced an enormous challenge to balance their books and still deliver vital services. This situation will not improve over the next four years but, rather it will get increasingly difficult to continue to find savings each year that do not impact on front line services.

The council operates within the context of the wider local government and public sector pressures and changes as well as the policy framework set by central government. For example there are major pressures within the NHS system requiring new ways of working for our local partners. The reform of the welfare system is having an increasing impact on our most vulnerable families, reducing household income, taking money out of the local economy and increasing demand for public services, especially crisis support. There are changes in the police service and the probation service. There is uncertainty over the long term role of local authorities in relation to schools with government encouraging more schools to move out of the local authority sector. There are new and emerging legislative pressures as well. The Children and Families Act and the Care Act both have a fundamental impact on how we will be able to deliver social care functions, adoption, and Special Education Needs Disabilities (SEND) provision in the future.

All of this suggests a picture of considerable complexity and change. We will need to work closely with our public sector partners to ensure that the changes we are each making are co-ordinated to avoid fragmentation and damage to public services and to minimise any negative impact on the most vulnerable.

My Cabinet colleagues and I are determined to find new and better ways of doing things to ensure we get the very best out of the resources we do have and to ensure they are targeted in the right way. The starting point for that is a clear, *long term* strategic plan because the scale of the savings that need to be found will not be achieved in a way that is fair and maintains the viability of services by only planning year on year. The difficult and painful cuts that we need to make must be supported by longer term ambitious plans that meet our longer term vision and priorities. This document sets out that strategic plan for all to see and work towards.

With these challenges comes opportunity. The Council is in a unique position to understand what the borough needs and to provide leadership and support to communities and other organisations across the public, private and voluntary sector to shape the future we want and need. We know that as a Council we will be doing less, with fewer staff, but as a borough there are new and innovative ways of working together that we can and must find, with locally designed solutions that are shaped around and meet the needs of our diverse

local communities. To this end, this plan is supported by a change programme that will help deliver the structural and cultural changes that are needed.

There are also great opportunities for closer collaboration at a regional level and, as we move toward a Combined Authority model for the West Midlands, my Cabinet colleagues and I will be working hard to make sure that Walsall's communities see the benefit of more devolved power and resources for the region.

We are committed to openness and transparency and have made several commitments in this plan that we will deliver over the next four years. We will report regularly on the achievement of those commitments, along with the difference our actions are making so that we may be held to account for our decisions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Cabinet colleagues, non-executive councillors, staff and partners who will help make this plan a reality. I would also like to thank the communities of Walsall and its districts, who we are here to serve and whose strength and character makes me believe that together we are able to shape a fairer future.

Councillor Sean Coughlan

Leader of the Council

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Our Purpose

Walsall Council exists to serve the people and communities of Walsall, by representing and working with them to protect and improve the quality of life for all, particularly the most vulnerable.

Walsall Council will provide strong, fair, open and honest leadership for the borough and its people and work with any organisation willing to work in the best interests of Walsall.

We do this with limited resources and so must always work to ensure that public money is targeted to where it is most needed and used in the most efficient way possible.

We are led by the communities we serve who help shape the services we provide and we help those communities to make a positive difference to their own lives through active civic engagement and cooperation.

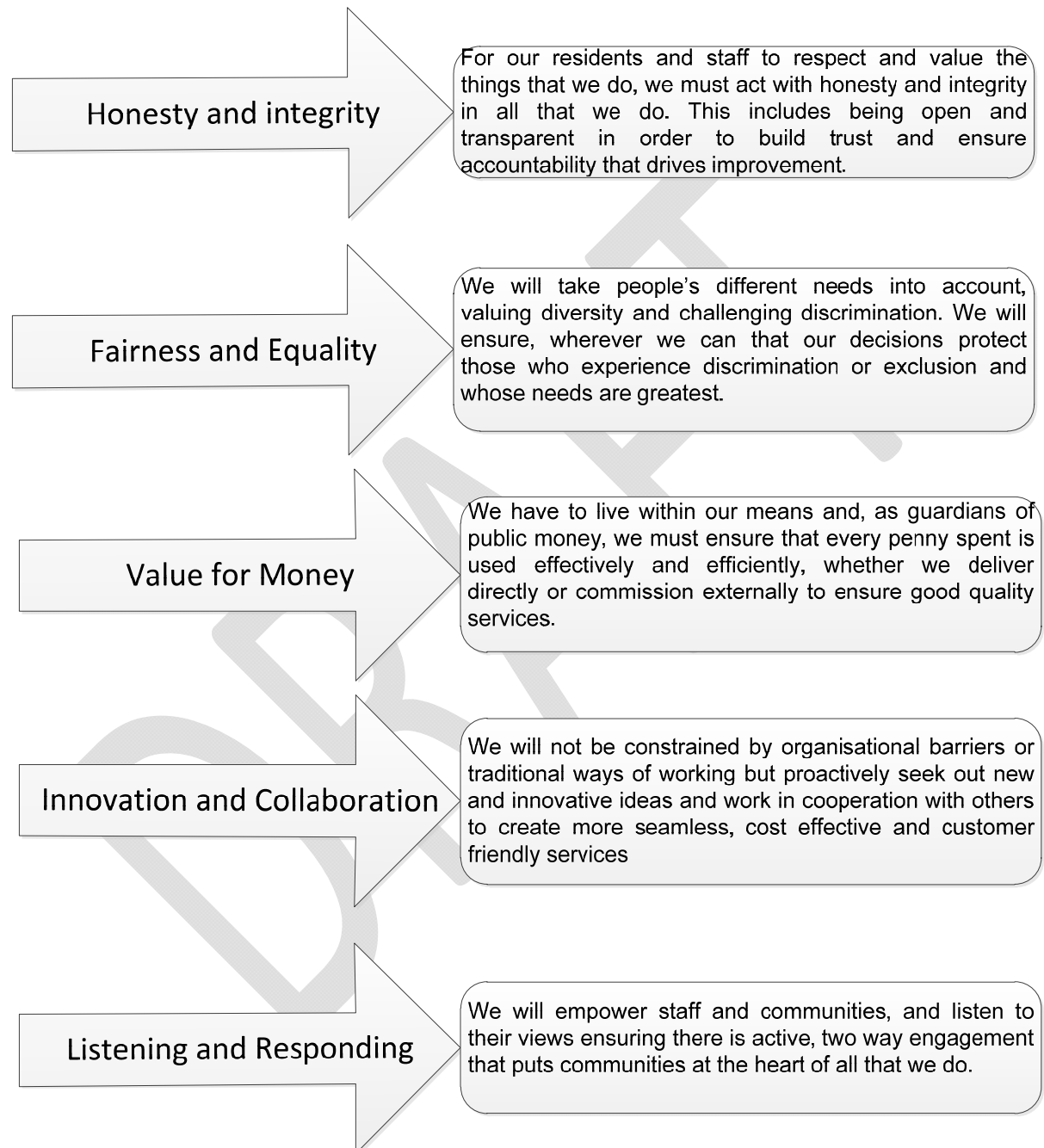
Walsall in 2019

In 2019 the Council will be a key enabler of improvements to Walsall and its' Districts as a place to live, learn and work; working innovatively and collaboratively with strong and resilient communities, public sector partners, schools and businesses to shape services that deliver real and sustainable improvements to people's lives.

The Council will by necessity be smaller, doing fewer things, and those services that we continue to provide will be delivered in a very different way to how they are now. Our efforts will be focussed on protecting the most vulnerable: ensuring people are safe, and narrowing the gap in life chances by helping them to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, increasing aspirations and remaining independent for as long as possible. In doing this we will help to shape a fairer Walsall.

Our Values

Our values will help us to achieve the Council's purpose and objectives. They will help to shape a fairer future for Walsall. Our values underpin the way we operate as an organisation. They influence our choices and our behaviours - they are the thread running through everything we do.

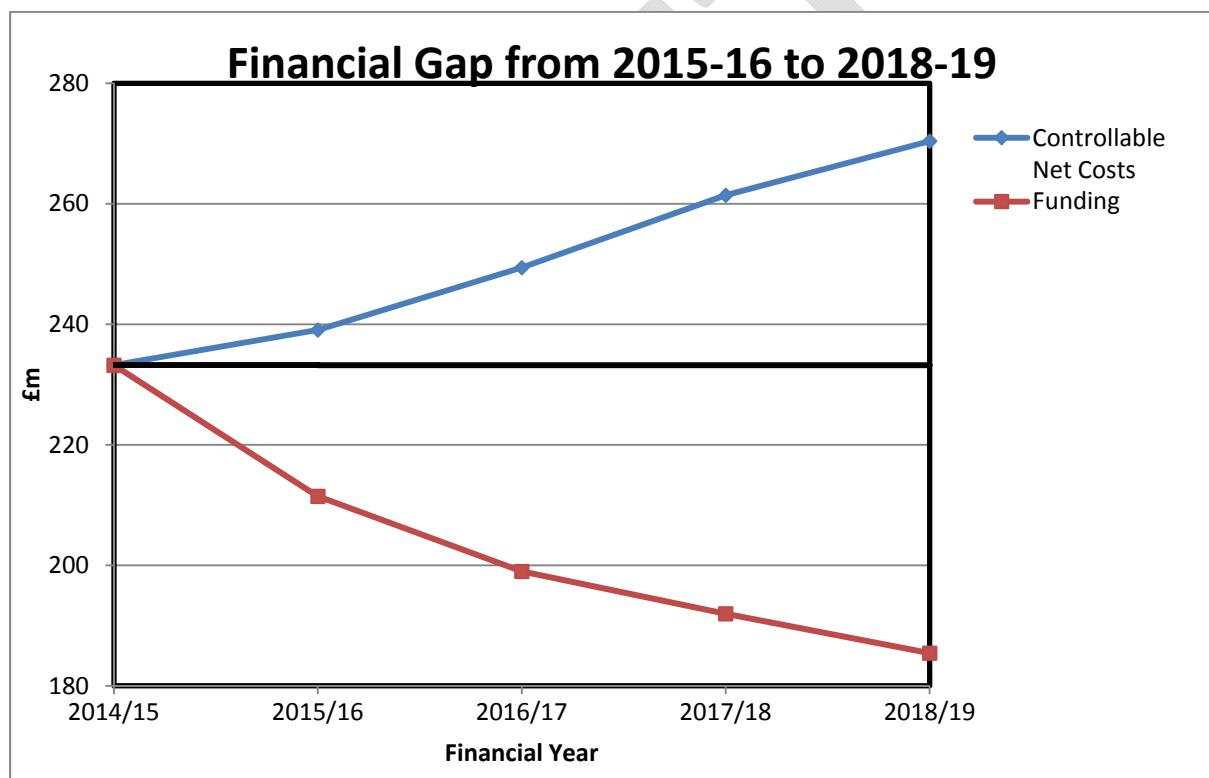


Our Challenges

Finances

Over the last four years (2010/11 – 2014/15) the council has reduced its spending by £79.67m but will need to save a further £86m over the next four years to be able to balance the budget in 2018/19.

The graph below illustrates the projected widening gap in finances, as a combination of reducing funding and increasing costs. It is clear that funding for key priorities will be significantly diminished and the council will not be able to sustain services at the current level.



We, like all other public sector bodies, have seen government grant funding reduce since the Emergency Budget of 2010 when the Government set out its initial plans to reduce the overall Government deficit, quoting a 28% reduction in funding to local authorities. This has continued following government spending reviews in 2010 and 2013, with a one year spending round in June 2013 setting out spending plans for 2015/16.

The Borough of Walsall

The profile of Walsall shows a borough with particular challenges and pressures which in many cases are increasing:

- Walsall has an increasingly dependent population; overall Walsall's population is ageing and this will impact on demand for local public services, with the need to plan for a growing number of older people being a key priority for all partners.
- 'Healthy Life Expectancy' (the proportion of life lived in a healthy state) in Walsall is about 60.3 years, this is 2.3 years lower than the West Midlands and 3.4 years lower than England averages. This is a significant demographic pressure on health and social care services in the borough.
- Walsall's population is becoming more ethnically diverse and by 2011, 23.1% of Walsall residents come from a minority ethnic background; a significant increase from 14.8% in 2001.
- Deprivation is deeply entrenched in Walsall and has worsened with the recession. There are extremes of deprivation, with central and western areas typically much more deprived than eastern areas, though pockets of deprivation exist even in the more affluent parts of the borough.
- Large numbers of Walsall children (16,100 under 16's) are living in families that are experiencing poverty (29.2%, compared with 20.6% nationally). Growing up in poverty, or with no adults in their household in work, has an impact on young people's aspirations and future life chances, particularly their educational attainment and health.
- Walsall fares particularly badly in terms of education, income and employment and many of the issues that challenge the borough mirror the picture of deprivation nationally.
- Walsall experiences slower than national population growth though this is in line with regional trends.
- The private sector in Walsall has suffered from long term decline, and despite recent improvements in productivity, the growth in local economic output has failed to match the improvements seen nationally – this has resulted in an increasingly widening gap between Walsall and the UK.

Our Partners

The Council is just one of the organisations in the borough that has a role in meeting the needs of local people. We work collaboratively on a day to day basis with our partners to provide vital services to residents.

Whenever it makes sense, we will always look to work in partnership. True partnership is not activity for its own sake, it is a collective commitment to improve Walsall, grounded in the realisation that we can achieve more together than we can alone.

Agencies in the Borough have developed a partnership infrastructure which enables each representative body to bring their resources together with others on the things that matter the most, with a shared vision to make Walsall **a great place to live, work and invest.**

Our relationship with the voluntary and community sector is particularly important and will become increasingly so as we strive to design services around local need. Walsall Local Compact is an agreement between Walsall Council, the local NHS, Walsall Partnership and the Voluntary and Community Sector. It is a framework that will help improve effective joint working and the way we work together towards common goals and visions.

Regionally, we already have excellent working arrangements with our local authority neighbours, including through the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership. This will be strengthened by moves towards a West Midlands Combined Authority.

Our Priorities

In order to meet our purpose and vision, the Council will be focussing its energy over the next four years on the following key priorities, recognising that we must do so with decreased and decreasing resources and concentrating our efforts on those most in need:



The financial constraints we must operate within mean that, in the short term difficult decisions have to be made, with cuts to some services that we would otherwise wish to protect. However the commitments we are making in this plan are achievable over four years.

Cost of Living

Low wage growth, cuts to welfare and spiralling costs of essentials such as gas and electricity have severely impacted on the living standards of many of our residents. Doing what we can to ensure that people have enough money to live on will help ensure a fairer society, improve the life chances of children and young people and boost the local economy.

Key Facts:

- The average weekly full-time earnings of Walsall residents is £42 less than the national average
- 29.2% of under 16s are living in families who experience poverty (compared to 20.6% nationally)
- Over 1 in 7 Walsall adults are out of work and dependent on key benefits (compared to 1 in 10 nationally)
- 17% of those who receive housing benefit in Walsall are in work



We
will

Introduce a Welfare Reform Forum with partners to seek ways to minimise the impact of changes to welfare on local people.

Review support and advice for residents suffering with problem debt to reprioritise and better coordinate across the range of advice services, including improved collaboration with the voluntary sector

Help residents address problem debt by promoting the use of credit agencies and alternative forms of responsible lending, whilst taking action against payday loan companies by restricting their access to advertising on billboards and bus stops.

Introduce the Living Wage for Council employees and work toward and encourage the Council's sub-contractors and partners to do likewise.

Do what we can, within financial constraints, to help those most in need through a subsidy to council tax of up to 75%.

Creating Jobs and helping people get new skills

Economic prosperity has a fundamental impact on a number of aspects of people's lives, including health, community safety and the life chances of our young people. We know that the economic divide between the east and west of the borough corresponds with poorer health, lower educational attainment and higher crime rates. Creating jobs, and ensuring that local people have the rights skills to fill those jobs is essential to improving outcomes for our residents.

Key Facts:

- There are just 0.59 jobs per working age adult in the borough
- 1 in 2 Walsall adults have a literacy standard below level 2 (equivalent to Grade C at GCSE), with 4 in 5 having numeracy standards below this level.
- The number of active business enterprises in Walsall is 4% lower than the national average for an area of this size
- Only 3 in 10 Walsall companies have their main supply chain in the Black Country meaning a considerable amount of potential spending is lost to the local economy

We
will

Spend more of our money with local firms, boosting the local economy and helping local businesses.

Review Council contracts and procurement practices to ensure that contracting decisions have a positive impact on local jobs and skills, with rules favouring organisations with a smaller gap between the highest and lowest paid staff, social enterprises that put profits back into creating more jobs, and firms that demonstrate clear local added value benefits.

Require that companies who want Council contracts do not participate in the illegal practice of "blacklisting", and will give opportunities, apprenticeships and training to local people.

Work with local businesses and colleges to create more opportunities for our young people

Offer a guaranteed interview for all available jobs in the council to former armed service personnel

Improving Educational Achievement

Raising educational attainment across the borough is vital to the future success and wellbeing of our young people as well as to our economy. We are determined to provide all our children with an education that allows them to get the best possible start in life as well as helping Adult learners to improve their own prospects.

Key Facts:

- Walsall has fewer adults with qualifications than nationally: 17% of residents have no formal qualifications
- In Walsall, only 68% of Primary pupils and 57% of Secondary pupils attend a school judged as good or better by Ofsted; less than the national averages of 79% and 73%.
- Children from poorer families are 30% less likely to achieve 5 GCSEs including English and maths at grade A*-C

We
will

Use an independent Performance Board to oversee, monitor and robustly challenge educational attainment across the Borough, paying particular attention to schools and academies whose key stage results fall below an acceptable level.

Undertake a comprehensive review of school support and school to school support arrangements to produce a more challenging and school focused improvement service, to work with all schools and particularly those facing challenges.

Review and improve universal and preventative early years services across the Borough, ensuring that those families and children most in need of help receive targeted support, including much closer joint working with NHS colleagues.

Adopt a whole family approach to education and learning, including supporting parents back into work via programmes of education and training.

Helping Local High Streets and Communities

We recognise that strong and resilient communities have a vital role to play in shaping services to their own needs and supporting the most vulnerable. A cooperative approach that is integrated and tailored to local need and demand can help us to deliver more with less by getting the best out of the assets and potential that already exist in the community to improve the social and economic prosperity of local areas, address equality gaps and help fight crime and antisocial behaviour. We recognise that local high streets and district centres provide an important focal point for communities, act as a boost to the local economy, and help generate pride and a sense of belonging.

Key Facts:

- More than a quarter of shops in Walsall town centre are empty, the 3rd highest rate in the country
- Incidences of police reported Anti-social behaviour have increased by 30% compared to the same period last year

We
will

Listen to the voice of the community, putting Walsall residents and businesses at the heart of decision making

Work with the third sector on a Trust-based approach to ensure our parks, green spaces and leisure facilities have a bright future

Address anti-social behaviour through more integrated work with partners including the police, trade associations and the third sector

Continue to seek out new sources of income to support regeneration of district centres

Review existing council, partner and community assets to find options for greater integration and improved access to services.

Improving Health and Wellbeing

There are stark health inequalities within Walsall and we know there is a strong association between poorer health and the social and economic conditions that differ across the borough. As well as being determined by social inequalities, poor health also perpetuates these by being a barrier to work (including for those acting as carers.) As well as steps to tackle wider social inequalities that may help improve health and wellbeing, the Council must also ensure effective preventative health and social care services are targeted at those most in need, recognising the detrimental impact on the quality of residents' lives caused by issues of mobility, social isolation and children being at risk of harm or sexual exploitation.

Key Facts:

- Men living in the most deprived wards in the borough die on average 10.8 years younger than those in affluent areas.
- There is a high prevalence of a range of preventable conditions such as diabetes for which Walsall has the 7th highest rate in the country
- Less than half (44%) of adult social care service users said that they have as much social contact as they would like
- Walsall has a higher rate of children with a child protection plan and more Looked After Children than expected for the level of poverty
- Walsall has the 7th highest teenage pregnancy rate in the country
- 23% of Year 6 Children are considered obese, compared to 19% nationally

We
will

Maintain a clear and committed approach to safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children, with a particular focus on tackling the underlying causes of Child Sexual Exploitation

Develop a genuine integrated approach to the delivery of services alongside our partners, including the NHS

Ensure a focus on the most vulnerable, recognising the major detrimental impact of mobility problems and social isolation

Use Council powers to hold local care providers to account for their performance

Pilot a free school meals service for 8-11 year old in areas where deprivation is highest

Affordable Housing

There is a pressing need for an adequate supply of good quality and affordable housing to meet both the current and future needs of Walsall's population. A lack of quality housing supply has a real and substantial effect on the quality of life for residents, as well as their future aspirations, with areas of poor housing experiencing higher crime, poorer health and lower educational achievements. There is also a strong economic argument for house building with the ability to boost spending, attract and retain workers and enable residents to be more productive and to participate in society.

Key Facts:

- 12% more Statutory Homelessness Acceptances per 1000 Households in Walsall compared with nationally
- An estimated 1500 new properties are expected to be built over the next three years, but the 2010 Housing Needs Survey highlighted a need for over 1000 affordable properties per annum

We
will

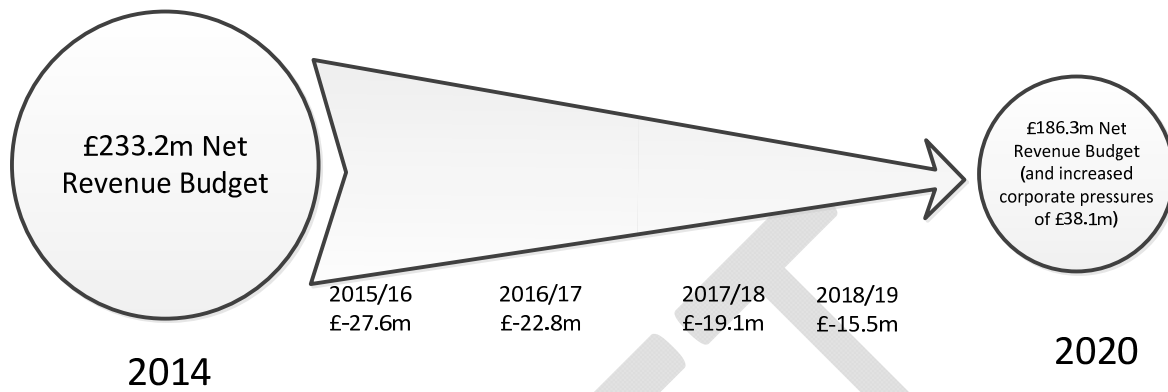
Use Council powers to force owners of long term vacant properties to sell up to create new homes for people in housing need

Introduce a borough wide licensing scheme for private landlords to give tenants assurances that their landlord is reputable and able to carry out their duties

Work with social landlords and private developers to create a housing market which provides good quality affordable homes

Delivering our priorities

Resources available



<outline high level budget- this will be inserted once budget is agreed>

Change needed

Delivering the priorities expressed in this plan, within the financial constraints set, will require us taking a radically different look at what we do and how we do it to ensure we get maximum benefit from our spending. A programme of change, focussed on the delivering of this plan within the context of less financial resources and increasing demand, is therefore needed with appropriate governance and resourcing. This 'shaping a fairer future' change programme will have at its heart a move towards community involvement in the design and delivery of our services and the transformation of our organisation to ensure we maximise how much we spend on the most vulnerable. This programme will ensure it delivers in a way which encompasses the values expressed in this plan.

The Change Programme

The Change Programme consists of "front line" projects, two support projects and one cultural project.

The Front Line elements of this plan have a direct relationship with our priorities. The underpinning elements of this plan give us the technological and staffing capability to help deliver our priorities.



Alignment of the Change Programme to the Corporate Priorities

Corporate Priorities	Change Programme workstreams	Infrastructure and Staffing
Support with Cost of Living	Community Led Service Redesign Regeneration of the Borough Adult Social Care Redesign	Empowering Our Staff ICT/Channel Shift Corporate Services Redesign
Creating Jobs and Helping people get new skills	Community Led Service Redesign Regeneration of the Borough Adult Social Care Redesign	
Improving Educational Achievements	Children's Service Redesign	
Helping Local High Streets and Communities	Community Led Service Redesign Regeneration of the Borough	
Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Community Led Service Redesign Children's Services redesign Regeneration of the Borough Adult Social Care Redesign	
Helping Create More Affordable Housing	Community Led Service Redesign Regeneration of the Borough	

Community Led Service Redesign

In order to meet the Administration's ambitions, the Shaping a Fairer Future Change Programme will, at its heart, have an approach to designing locally based solutions that maximises available council, partner and community assets to best meet the needs of that local community in a way that helps close inequality gaps in health, prosperity and aspirations. Assets are meant in the widest sense, not just property but money, people, knowledge, expertise, good will, leadership and includes potential as well as actual assets.

This 'approach to place' will be centred around local area partnerships, with solutions designed around the needs of that area, rather than any one size fits all model, and will be flexible enough to respond to shifting demand. It is important to note that this

does not necessarily signal devolution of services to local areas, and certainly not merely the division and replication of services around district areas. Rather, it is about making services more accessible to local people and better designed around their need and it likely to include a mixture of delivery at a borough, district, neighbourhood, doorstep and virtual level. As services change to a more digital format, supporting residents in accessing these services is going to play a key part in delivering through hubs.

The project will be looking at all areas of service delivery and will be linked to other directorate changes facilitating transition and potential alternative delivery models.

Children's Services Redesign

Following a two year period of intense scrutiny from the Department of Education and OFSTED, through an Improvement Board for Children's Services, the Improvement Notice was lifted from the 23 July 2014 after demonstrating significant improvement. This does not mean that the improvement journey is complete and there is still a major focus on quality of practice and systems.

The Mosaic system, due to be implemented by April 2015 provides a modern information management system designed to meet the needs of Children's and Adult's social services for at least the next five years. Its current alignment to best practice and the supplier's continued determination to keep their system aligned to the latest legislative changes means that the Council will possess a tool which will help it deliver continuous improvement and statutory security. However, systems are only a small part of the improvement journey. A far bigger influence keeping our Children safe is social work practice. This remains a priority for the Council and will require changes to resource to support the continuing improvement journey. This will include the creation of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), a focused team involving partners that will ensure a holistic view of screening and decision making on safeguarding issues. This model is already proving successful in many other Local Authorities, including Sandwell and Coventry. Currently in the scoping and planning phase, the work is being supported with Project Management capacity. Location, technical issues around systems and data sharing are the key infrastructure elements, but the tough work will be in the creation of a new multi-disciplinary team, representing all key partners, and ensuring that the team is focused on need.

In order to reduce the number of Looked After Children, recruit and retain more permanent social workers and enable children and young people to live in placements in Walsall, and not be placed out of Borough, there are a number of workstreams in place. For example a 'challenge to care' team is being implemented to work with families with children on the edge of care, more robust measures are being put in place to reduce the number of teenagers coming into care, internal

placements and making appropriate provision in the Borough is a priority and work is underway to recruit and retain more permanent social workers to reduce reliance on more costly agency staff.

Education

The Local Authority (LA) arrangements for supporting school improvement were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors in June 2014 and judged to be ineffective. The report indicated that procedures and systems in place within the LA were not effective in ensuring that enough pupils attend schools which are good or better.

Improving educational attainment is a clearly expressed priority within the Corporate Plan and a key mechanism through which wider inequalities will be managed and gaps closed. Schools also provide focal points for the community and as such will be key partners in the Council's ambitions to redesign services based around local need. As such the Council's relationship with schools, both LEA controlled and Academies, and the support provided to them will be an important element of the wider change programme. This includes the continuous development of how the Council trades its services with and generates income from schools and Academies.

In the new way of working with schools and academies the local authority will be developing a sector led improvement model with schools providing more support for each other. The LA brokers or commissions work with and between schools in order for them to work together formally to raise standards of education. The LA takes on more of a monitoring and quality assurance role to measure outcomes, impact and improvements in schools. The LA is also working more proactively with clusters of schools to focus on improving standards of literacy, numeracy, maths and boys' writing. This work is initially being led by the LA in partnership with schools. Schools are driving the agenda to address the underperformance of targeted groups of children and young people, especially the vulnerable.

As part of the traded services project we are developing a web based offer which schools, academies and other providers will be able to access and buy from the LA or other commissioned services via the LA. We aim to give value for money with quality assured services provided across the LA. We also aim in the future to sell services outside the Authority with Walsall schools being the first priority. As part of this traded services offer there is a main focus on Governor services and governance in schools. We are also developing a professional development package for schools to access for training staff in schools on all aspects of education. This will range from health and safety, safeguarding, curriculum, Newly Qualified teachers and leadership and management.

Within the education team there will be a greater emphasis on developing an integrated approach for early years, early help and school ready which will be delivered through a 0-5 strategy. This approach will raise standards earlier in the life of a child's education. Standards of education at all key stages are being forensically analysed to identify underperformance along with a focus on closing the gap. This analysis looks at children's performance in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, special needs, LAC plus other specific areas. Key to this analysis is the collection, interpretation, monitoring and use of the school's data to make a difference to a child's performance and results.

A further area of focus will be the 14-19/25 phase as we aim to work closely with other service areas to develop more links between communities, businesses, industry and other providers, including Universities. As part of this work we will be looking at employability, traineeships and apprenticeships. We will include NEETs and have a focus on working closely with vulnerable young people especially young carers and looked after children. This work will be closely aligned with the youth service provision which is being re shaped to address the core areas of delivery.

Adult Social Care Redesign

The Care Act 2014 is the most significant piece of legislation in the social care sector since the establishment of the welfare state. It builds on a patchwork of legislation built up since the 1948 National Assistance Act. The Act begins by defining the primary responsibility of local authorities as the promotion of individual wellbeing. This is a shift from the duty to provide services to meeting needs. Of course everyone has individual needs so local authorities won't be able to comply with the Act by providing one size fits all services but by putting the person at the centre of their offer.

The act sets out a new framework of local authority duties in relation to the arrangement and funding of social care, along with a number of changes to the regulation of social care providers. It will have a very significant impact on local authorities and the market for social care.

The Care Act and its implementation is not just an Adult Social Care issue and will require joined up solutions across the council and partners. Including it as part of the corporate change programme will help ensure the appropriate level of support and cooperation as well as ensuring that the wider programme, and any locally designed solutions that come out of that, meets the requirements of the Care Act.

The new environment in which we will find ourselves gives us both challenges and opportunities. This element of the change programme will focus on our most vulnerable residents and how we can help them.

Regeneration of the Borough

To make a real difference, we must focus on supporting businesses to create sustainable jobs and support local people into work, at the same time as taking a proactive approach to the development of our environment, making Walsall an attractive place to work, live and visit. To steer this, the work of the regeneration directorate is currently structured around three strands, which when brought together assist in meeting our corporate aims and ambitions. They are:

Place: *Transforming our infrastructure and environment:* Working with a range of private and public sector organisations the directorate is working to create the conditions that will support growth and will then land new investors and support existing business expansion. Effective land use housing and development strategies, together with an effective and well run planning and building control service is essential to shaping and defining what land is available to support future business and housing growth. Examples of this include the transformation of the town centre through major schemes including the: Gigaport, Waterfront and St Matthew's Quarter developments, along with the Darlaston Enterprise Zone and housing schemes underway in Goscote and Moxley. To complement this major transport initiatives including the Darlaston Access Scheme are now on site, with plans to improve M6 Junction 10 on track for a major improvement scheme.

Business: *Improving business competitiveness:* We recognise the vital role the private sector plays in economic wellbeing in the creation of sustainable high value jobs, and the need to create the conditions within which they could move into the borough, expand existing sites and develop new ones. We achieve this by providing them with the best possible opportunities, support and advice they require to facilitate either expansion, relocation and / or for the first time establishing a base in Walsall. Together with key partners we also offer services to support access to new markets, finance and supply chains to support their competitiveness and sustainability.

People: *Raising employability, education and skills:* Creating new jobs will only benefit local people if our residents have access to and the skills required to get them. We need to equip local people with the skills and attitudes that employers are looking for, to give them the best possible chance of getting into work. Those already in work need opportunities to continually develop their skills, and we must understand and tackle any barriers preventing people from entering training or employment. We have developed and deliver together with our partners' programmes that aim to assist residents to do just this; including Walsall Works, Talent Match and City Deal.

ICT/Channel Shift

As the Council changes the way it delivers services, the solutions and systems that support it need to be more flexible and adaptable to that change. The change

programme will approach the redesign of its ICT service in two distinct ways. First, it will enable residents to choose how they contact the Council, whether that is electronically, face to face, by phone or by post. Secondly our systems must be aligned to the services we are delivering and not the other way around.

Successful channel shift comes about not by forcing residents down a particular preferred contact route but by giving them choice and providing access points that work. We have to deliver access to services that work in a timely basis and are user friendly. A snap shot of the population of Walsall would show a lower than average take up of new technologies creating the need for more support in delivering channel shift.

Channel shift will have an impact upon most of what we do, be it access to Adult Social Care Services or accessing information around household waste. It is important that as we grow newly designed channels of delivery we support our residents to make that change.

Corporate Services Redesign

It is recognised that as the Council transforms itself to meet the challenges ahead there is an absolute requirement to ensure that the way it leads and support that transformation is aligned to the new organisational structure. This will be done in a planned and considered way and the redesign starts at the very top of the organisation and work is already underway at Executive Director level.

The further work to align corporate services to our public facing services will first seek to understand the needs of our front line services. We will provide constructive challenge to support decision making and to ensure design is based on sound information that it is right for the residents of Walsall. To ensure this fit, front line services and corporate services will jointly drive the design. The support to be delivered will be effective, robust, scalable and provide value for money.

The redesign will make maximum use of the potential we currently have within our workforce. We understand the creative power, drive and ambition for our residents which is available to us. When we work effectively with our workforce at all levels we will release their potential and achieve greater results.

Working together a programme of work will be prepared which will build new corporate services.

Empowering our Staff

It is well understood that if we are to maximise our impact in a world of reducing resources a key feature is the need to build leaders from managers. We need to value and reward doing the right thing (leadership) as least as much as doing things right (management). We need to encourage our staff to make brave decisions and

not rely on “the system” to hold up giving people the help they need. Our people need to be brave and more challenging of waste. We must be able to support staff using appropriate motivational tools. This element of the change programme will ensure our staff are in the best possible place to meet these increased needs.

Monitoring Progress

We are committed to transparency and will be honest and open about our progress, publishing regular updates on how we are doing in delivering this plan. Progress will be monitored through reporting on delivery of the commitments outlined along with measures of the impact that work is having.

If you would like this document in another language or format contact please contact

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