

Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2021/22 Progress to 31 August 2021

Vision: Making Uttlesford the best place to live, work and play

Putting Residents First				
We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
<i>1. Be a council that listens to and acts for residents</i>				
<i>a. Increase the voice and influence of residents in planning and other Council matters</i>	Review the Scrutiny Committee's findings (when received) regarding major planning applications and planning obligations, pending completion of EELGA review	Planning Advisory Service (PAS) final report to Scrutiny by 30 June 2021 Planning Obligations final report to Scrutiny by 30 June 2021	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning
<u>Comment:</u> PAS is unable to complete its work until the Court Appeal against the Stansted Airport Inquiry decisions is concluded. PAS is concerned that its report could be used to influence the legal process. An officer report relating to the development of the Planning Obligations work programme was recommended to Cabinet by Scrutiny Committee in June. Cabinet accepted the recommendations. The Planning Transformation Plan will incorporate this issue.				
<i>b. Administer public consultations that are effective, accessible, timely and high quality</i>	Undertake consultations and discussion groups as required throughout the year	Enables Members to take better informed decisions. Key consultations include on the draft local plan, budget and Local Council Tax Support	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Council and Public Services/Assistant Director of Corporate Services
<u>Comment:</u> LCTS consultation conducted according to timetable, with results to be reported back in October. Budget consultation is in draft and timetable prepared for reporting results to Cabinet in December.				
As part of the Local Plan process, a series of successful Community Stakeholder Forums were held, concluding during the first quarter of 2021. These forums were a new approach to public engagement and provided an opportunity for the community to share ideas as part of the plan-making process. The project has now been				

Putting Residents First				
We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
<p>put forward as a finalist for the East of England Awards for Planning Excellence 2021 by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). The awards highlight exceptional examples of how planning and planners have a positive impact on quality of life in creating exceptional places and protecting the environment.</p> <p>Internally, officers are considering best way to resource corporate consultation activity given recent retirement of previous responsible officer.</p>				
<p><i>c. Provide opportunities for young people</i></p>	<p>Provide positive opportunities for young people to engage with their local community and do things that keep them safe and support improved mental wellbeing. Work with Town and Parish Councils, voluntary sector partners, county youth service and schools etc. to encourage youth participation in the community.</p>	<p>As a result of the recent change to the Corporate Plan to expand the scope, the details of what is to be provided, when, etc. have not yet been scoped. The plan will evolve as the Covid19 related restrictions ease over time</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Communities, Youth, Public Safety, Emergency Planning and liaison with the Police and Fire & Rescue Service/ Assistant Director of Housing, Health and Communities</p>
<p>Comment: Due to COVID restrictions it has been difficult to hold face to face community events for young people. Theatre Group TicBox productions has been commissioned to produce and deliver a 'Theatre Experience' for senior schools in regard to Domestic Abuse and Healthy Relationships. Work continues to re-establish to the Youth Council with a recruitment campaign in schools/colleges and through community projects aiming to create better links and communication between young people and their local councils. Projects aiming to achieve this are taking shape in Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley, Thaxted and Saffron Walden. The Environmental Working group are planning some recruitment events to attract new members and promote participation in the Great Big Green Week.</p>				
<p><i>d. Improve the council's use of the web and social media to increase communication with residents</i></p>	<p>To provide enhanced customer contact opportunities including self-service facilities at remote site and extended opening hours through the introduction of 'live chat'</p>	<p>Public launch of live chat facility by 31 August 2021 as part of Uttlesford Moving Forward</p> <p>As part of Uttlesford Moving Forward, a review of self-</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council and Public Services/Assistant Director of Corporate Services</p>

Putting Residents First

We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
		service facilities for customers will be undertaken. The detailed project plan is not yet complete to expand on precise timing of the review.		

Comment: The LiveChat functionality forms part of the wider 8x8 telephony project, both of which went live as planned. It will provide a valuable additional communication channel for residents. The council is also progressing a project to install an appointment booking system for residents who need to speak to specialist officers. This is scheduled to launch in the Autumn and will provide a more efficient service for residents.

<i>e. Actively and positively engage with and listen to our town and parish councils</i>			The Local Councils' Liaison Forum is now well embedded as is the Planning Forum with Town and Parish Councils. Within existing resources.	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Youth, Public Safety, Emergency Planning and liaison with the Police and Fire & Rescue Service /Chief Executive
--	--	--	---	---

Comment: The first LCLF meeting in the current council year is to be held in September. Potential Items for the agenda have been collated to inform the matters to be raised and ensure that the Forum is relevant to local councils' priorities.

<i>f. Support town and parish councils to better represent their communities</i>			EALC regularly attend the Local Councils' Liaison Forum and provide presentations on best practice. Within existing resources.	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Youth, Public Safety, Emergency Planning and liaison with the Police and Fire & Rescue Service /Chief Executive
--	--	--	--	---

Comment: The first LCLF meeting in the current council year is to be held in September. Potential Items for the agenda have been collated to inform the matters to be raised and ensure that the Forum is relevant to local councils' priorities.

2. Deliver local government with outstanding levels of transparency and accountability

Putting Residents First				
We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
<i>a. Implement a corporate change programme to increase accountability, transparency and democracy at the Council</i>	Complete work of Governance Working Group to review current and possible future governance structure	This action falls to the working group of council; any actions arising for Cabinet will be detailed at the appropriate time. GRWG are aiming to present a report of their findings to Council by 31 July 2021	Within existing resources	Leader/Chief Executive
<i>a. Implement a corporate change programme to increase accountability, transparency and democracy at the Council</i>	Planning Committee working group to review arrangements for start time and/or geographical location of applications (north committee/south committee)	Review completed. Recommendations to be considered and adopted when possible, post COVID	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning
Comment: The recommendation to implement Portfolio Holder briefings of the Governance Review Working Group was presented to Full Council on 20 July but was referred back to the working group for further consideration, due to the lack of unanimous support across the Council. The working group will reconvene in autumn 2021 to review its recommendation. This work stream will form part of the wider Planning Transformation Plan that is currently being developed.				
<i>a. Implement a corporate change programme to increase accountability, transparency and democracy at the Council</i>	Planning Committee working group to review arrangements for start time and/or geographical location of applications (north committee/south committee)	Review completed. Recommendations to be considered and adopted when possible, post COVID	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning
Comment: This work stream will form part of the wider Planning Service Review and associated Action Plan that is currently being developed.				

Putting Residents First				
We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
<i>a. Implement a corporate change programme to increase accountability, transparency and democracy at the Council</i>	Implement delivery of Equalities Policy	Local Government Equality Framework level 1 to be achieved by 31 March 22	Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues; Equalities / Assistant Director of Housing, Health and Communities
Comment: Community Listening Event has been held to allow feedback from the community regarding their experiences of 'RACE' whilst being a resident in Uttlesford. 8 further events are planned to ensure feedback for all protected characteristics. Training has been provided for all staff and Councillors and a staff network is being established. Visible Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) advocates are being sought across the organisation and a survey has been produced to seek the views and ideas of all staff to help develop further workshops and training. An 'inclusive Community bookclub' initiative led by a community member identified through the listening event is evolving. UDC Equality Webpage has been updated. EQHIA's completed with each new policy/procedure.				
<i>b. Seek external review of and recognition for positive change achieved by the Council</i>	Planning Advisory Service reviewing the process of major planning applications	Action plans to be developed once the outcomes of the review have been presented to Scrutiny Committee by 30 June 2021	Within existing resources and pending completion of EELGA review	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Local Plan/Assistant Director of Planning
Comment: This work stream has been picked up as part of the EELGA Review and associated Planning Transformation Plan that is currently being developed. PAS is unable to complete its work until the Court Appeal against the Stansted Airport Inquiry decisions is concluded. PAS is concerned that its report could be used to influence the legal process. The major planning applications review has therefore been removed from the Scrutiny work plan. A separate workstream on the Stansted Airport Appeal remains on the work plan.				
<i>c. Deliver a comprehensive continuing member development programme</i>			Opportunities for further development continue to be identified within existing resources	Leader/Chief Executive
Comment: The member development programme largely came to a halt in 2020-21 due to the outbreak of Covid-19, although virtual workshops were arranged with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and the East of England Local Government Association. The programme has picked up in 2021-22, with sessions already held or arranged on issues such as governance and legality, Code of Conduct, procedure rules and committee specific training.				
3. Be responsible with your money and mitigate the impact of government cuts				

Putting Residents First

We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
<p><i>a. Be a self-sufficient Council that generates its own resources from local taxation (Business Rates and Council Tax) and commercial investments thereby removing the reliance on Central Government grants</i></p>	<p>To actively source commercial investments to support the council revenue streams</p> <p>Strengthen the governance of the Council's investment management to ensure it meets the objectives of the commercial strategy</p>	<p>Complete the commercial investment portfolio of £300m, by end 2021/22.</p> <p>Quarterly reports to the Investment Board</p> <p>Development of a business plan for the portfolio as a whole and each asset individually by 31 December 2021</p> <p>Development of an Investment Protocol, to include ethical criteria for future acquisitions by 30 June 2021</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Portfolio holder for the Economy, Investment and Corporate Strategy / Director of Finance and Corporate Services/Assistant Director of IT, Facilities and Assets</p>
<p>Comment: The Investment portfolio is on track for completion by the end of May 2022. One forward funding deal completes in October, a further one in November and the final one in May 2022. Cabinet approved a draft of an Ethical Investment Policy which will go to Full Council in October.</p>				
<p><i>b. Deliver cost-effective and efficient services that live within the Council's means</i></p>	<p>Actively monitor and report the cost effectiveness of the Council services</p> <p>On going service reviews, including through Uttlesford Moving Forward (UMF) to ensure services are</p>	<p>Quarterly finance reports to Cabinet.</p> <p>Annual outturn report to Cabinet</p> <p>Outcome of the external audit</p> <p>UMF actions to improve existing operating methods and develop new ones</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget/Assistant Director of Resources</p>

Putting Residents First				
We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
	operating effectively and efficiently			
<p>Comment: The Quarter 1 outturn forecast for General Fund, HRA and Capital is in progress and will be presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT) on the 15th September, Joint Executive Team (JET) 27th September (tbc) and Cabinet on the 19th October. This will identify any cost pressures, efficiencies and risks that are current or anticipated and will form the predicted net spend for 2021/22. UMF has undertaken staff surveys and commenced work on developing the council of the future. Customer and Member surveys about to be commissioned to further understand delivery requirements.</p>				
<i>c. Constantly seek to improve the quality of contracted out services</i>			Contract monitoring is used to assure service quality, within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Council and Public Services/CMT
<p>Comment:</p>				
<i>d. Apply for all relevant grants</i>			Grant applications are made regularly subject to the criteria, work required and likelihood of success, within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget/Assistant Director of Resources
<p>Comment: All grants that are applicable to the district and supports the work of the Council are actively pursued. The pandemic has had a significant impact on initiatives and most grants available are focussed on support for residents, businesses, and the recovery of the local economy. A detailed log of grants is being maintained which records grants received and any conditions applied plus the associated work programme and resource requirements.</p>				
<i>e. Set a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to fund council services by a prudent mix of investment, services and tax income, while maintaining adequate reserves</i>	The MTFS is a working document and is constantly under review, when any financial risks or impacts are identified these will be assessed and if they have a significant impact on the current MTFS approved at Council in February 2021 a	A revised MTFS ready for Council approval in February 2022	A MTFS that reflects the ambitions of the Council and the resources available to it is produced at least annually. Within existing resources	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget/Assistant Director of Resources

Putting Residents First

We Will:	Activities	Outputs/Milestones	Resources	Lead CM/ Officer
	revised version will be produced and submitted to Members.			
<p>Comment: The annual update of the MTFS will begin in September and will be presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT), Joint Executive Team (JET), Scrutiny, Cabinet and finally Council during January and February. The MTFS will be produced taking account of the administration's priorities and the Financial Settlement, it will provide a medium-term prediction on the financial stability of the council over the next five years using the most up to date information available.</p>				
<p><i>f. Follow best practices for investment risk management and board composition</i></p>	<p>Strengthen the governance of the Council's investment management to ensure it meets the objectives of the commercial strategy</p>	<p>Quarterly reports to the Investment Board Development of a business plan for the portfolio as a whole and each asset individually by 31 December 2021</p> <p>Development of an Investment Protocol, to include ethical criteria for future acquisitions by 30 June 2021</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Portfolio holder for the Economy, Investment and Corporate Strategy /Director of Finance and Corporate Services/Assistant Director of ICT and Facilities</p>
<p>Comment: Members of the investment Board agreed the process for the recruitment of replacements for one of the Independent Members of the Investment Board and one of the Non-Executive Directors on Aspire (CRP) Ltd and advert and interviews will take place in the Autumn. Cabinet approved a draft of an Ethical Investment Policy which will go to Full Council in October.</p>				