

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO:	Council		
DATE:	26 th June 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	Shaping Readings Future: Our Corporate Plan 2018-21		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Lovelock	PORTFOLIO:	Leadership
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The current Corporate Plan 2016-19 Building a Better Reading was published in February 2016. This report sets out and seeks approval to publish a new Corporate Plan - Shaping Readings Future: Our Corporate Plan 2018-21 to reflect the February Councils refreshed priorities and our medium term financial strategy published at council in February 2018.
- 1.2 This is a forward looking document focusing on the Council's key service priorities over the next three years.
- 1.3 The Corporate Plan is important to provide focus and to ensure that we prioritise what we do to try and safeguard as many services as possible and meet the challenges Reading faces.
The Corporate Plan outlines:
- The context for our service delivery;
 - Our contribution to Shaping Readings Future; and
 - What we will measure to show the difference that is being made
- 1.4 In 2017/18 the Council worked with partners at Reading University and businesses to develop a new Reading 2050 vision document which was launched in October. This sets out a shared view of key priorities for the future of Reading. The Council has endorsed this vision and, in its role as community leader, to work alongside other agencies and organisations to realise the vision's ambitions and are reflected in the plan alongside the refreshed priorities of the Council.
- 1.5 The Corporate Plan is attached at appendix one for consideration.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 Council is asked to approve the Corporate Plan 2018-21.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Policy Committee and Council in February 2016 approved the Corporate Plan 2016-19: Building a Better Reading. The Councils Corporate Plan reflects our priorities for Reading and provides direction for our staff in delivering services to meet the needs of our communities whilst working to a budget set by our medium term financial strategy.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 We have prepared a draft Corporate Plan for 2018-21, based on the refreshed corporate priorities developed by Councillors and Corporate Management Team in the autumn. The plan also reflects the Reading 2050 vision developed by partners. The Corporate Plan 2018-21: Shaping Readings Future is attached at appendix 1.
- 4.2 Progress against our measures of success is reported to Councillors and a half yearly report performance report is published twice yearly.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan priorities have been updated and take account of our need to ensure that we are financially sustainable so that we can continue to shape and influence the future of Reading and play our part in protecting the most vulnerable and shaping the Town's future by:
- Securing the economic success of Reading and provision of job opportunities
 - Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs
 - To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children
 - Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
 - Ensuring that there are good education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading
 - Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Budget-related communications and consultations will continue to be a priority over the next three years as we work to identify savings.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The equality duty is relevant to the development of the corporate plan and an Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal requirements to have a Corporate Plan. Nevertheless, considering the size and complexity of the services we provide and have responsibility for, it is sensible to have a strategic document for the organisation which sets out key priorities and activities against a robust and sustainable financial plan.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Our financial situation is challenging during the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan. Government funding for Reading will have been cut from nearly £58 million between 2010 and 2020, leaving the Council with a Government grant of under £2 million. That grant may be removed entirely by 2020. Over the next years, we have significant savings to deliver in order to balance our budget and move to a sustainable footing in the longer term.

9.2 The priorities within the Corporate Plan form the basis of our spending plans over the next three years with an on-going need to reduce our budget further by meeting challenging savings targets. Therefore, this plan and the budget will continue to be updated every year to take account of changes.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Appendix one -Corporate Plan 2018-21

10.2 Medium Term Financial Strategy, Policy Committee & Council, February 2018

Shaping Reading's Future



Our Corporate Plan 2018-21



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Contents

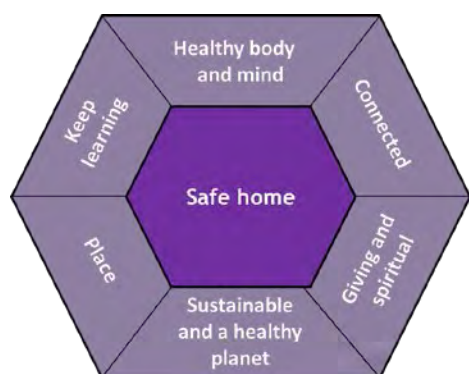
	Page
An overview of our plans	3
Our Priorities:	
Securing the economic success of Reading	5
Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs	9
Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children	13
Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe	18
Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading	22
Ensuring the Council is Fit for the Future	27

An overview of our plans

If you live here, work here or just visit, you will already know Reading is a great place to be. It is also a town of contrasts. We rival London as the UK's top performing local economy. The Council is dedicated to ensuring Reading can achieve its potential and everyone can benefit from its success.

Although we are a unitary authority, the objectives of Reading 2050 and our own priorities, cannot be achieved by the Council alone. We brand our approach "Working better with you" because we believe people, communities and local organisations working with the democratically elected Council can achieve so much more by working together.

This Corporate Plan explains how we will do just that over the next three years, against the backdrop of financial challenges such as reductions in Government funding and growing demands on key Council services. Despite the challenge, we are determined to make a positive difference to people's lives. We also have an opportunity to integrate wellbeing into our services that will support residents and staff through the following ways:



Healthy body and mind - physical activities like walking, running and dance, amongst other possibilities, can encourage people to make healthy choices like stopping smoking and improving their diet

Connected - enable people to connect with others so they don't feel lonely and isolated

Giving - opportunities for giving back to our communities and getting involved through volunteering

Sustainable and a healthy planet - what do we do to look after and take pride in our environment, like recycling and public transport

Place - places that you can visit like gardens, museums and recreational grounds

Keep learning - opportunities to learn new things like singing and languages

Safe home - feeling safe and secure in a place you can call home

We have listened to what you have told us and our priorities for 2018-21 are:

- **Securing the economic success of Reading**
- **Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs**
- **Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children**
- **Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe**
- **Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading**
- **Ensuring the Council is fit for the future**

We want everyone to benefit from Reading's success. That means we need to ensure the economic success of Reading is sustainable. We will build on important infrastructure improvements by continuing to identify external funding streams and by working with key partners, including key public transport projects. The transformation of the Abbey Quarter into a major regional visitor destination, the removal of Reading's biggest traffic bottleneck at Cow Lane and the delivery of a new railway station at Green Park will drive forward the economy and create more inward investment. This will attract new business, creating more jobs and opportunities for residents. Better broadband as part of our 'Smart Cities' project and improved learning and training opportunities will equip people to take advantage.

Demand for new homes - particularly **new affordable homes** - has never been higher. 700 new homes are needed in Reading every year. 58% of these homes need to be affordable. We will use Council land and planning agreements

to increase the amount of new affordable housing. Families will move into new Council housing at Conwy Close and our ambition is to build even more council homes. Homes for Reading will offer a number of private rented homes at affordable rents. We will continue with the regeneration of Dee Park, which has already delivered over 500 new homes, and modernise existing homes at Coley, Hexham Road and Granville Road. We will deliver a borough-wide licensing scheme and a new Rent with Confidence scheme for Reading's large private rented sector, in order to hold landlords to account and drive up standards. We will also continue to develop innovative schemes like the Lowfield Road modular accommodation and our Rent Guarantee Scheme, as part of our proactive work to prevent people from becoming homeless.

The need to **protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children** continues to increase everywhere. Reading needs to adapt to meet the challenge. Older people tell us they want to remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible. We will promote independence through information and advice. Transforming our service through digital self-help options will give us a modernised service to meet the needs of the increasing elderly population. Quick responses will continue to be available where this is needed. For vulnerable children, we will put in place a 'whole system' approach to young people and families, identifying needs and delivering interventions early. We will invest in recruiting permanent managers and staff, and improve training and support to social workers, making Reading a more attractive place to work. The Council's transition to the new children's services company - Brighter Futures for Children - continues with the aim of being operational by autumn 2018. We are investing heavily to improve children's social work and aim to see an improved OFSTED rating as soon as possible.

A **clean, green and safe environment** is what many people judge us on. Greener, because we are working towards an ambitious recycling target of 50% by 2020. We will review our waste services, increase what we collect from the kerbside and work with residents to help reduce contamination of recycling. We have already cut our own carbon footprint by 50%, three years ahead of schedule. We will continue to reduce carbon emissions and water consumption from council premises and operations. Alongside other initiatives, sustainable transport schemes like bus priority corridors will help improve air quality. Safer, because we are introducing Public Space Protection Orders, which will allow the police and the council to take quicker and tougher action on things like littering, dog fouling, street drinking, drug use in public places and aggressive begging. At the same time we will signpost vulnerable people to support agencies and continue working without our safeguarding partners. Cleaner by continuing to focus on rapid responses to fly tipping, regular grass cutting, and cleaning and working with our Business Improvement District Partnership in the town centre to ensure it is clean, safe and an attractive environment. These initiatives will contribute to the approach of a **place** and a **sustainable and healthy** planet in promoting wellbeing for residents.

Our ambition is for **great education, leisure and cultural opportunities** for all. All of these things contribute to improving people's life chances and their quality of life; providing people with a range of health and educational benefits. For young people, outcomes need to keep pace with Reading's strong economic performance. We will work with all schools to improve attainment and help young people overcome any barriers which may be blocking progress. We have created more than 2,500 new primary school places and will deliver a new secondary school by 2021. We are finding new and innovative ways to improve and modernise our leisure and cultural offer at no additional cost. We will partner with a new leisure operator to build new, modernswimming pools and leisure

facilities, replacing outdated and expensive-to-run facilities. We are making the best possible use of our buildings by creating new shared neighbourhood community ‘hubs’ at Battle, Southcote and South Reading, providing library services alongside space for community activities, adult learning and other services. Proposals are being developed for a new Cultural Trust model that could deliver cultural services in the future. The opening of Reading Abbey in summer 2018 will provide a key focal point for culture in the town and region. We hope that these opportunities will promote Reading’s wellbeing through a *healthy body and mind, spirit*, a feeling of being *connected* and a chance to *keep learning*.

To underpin delivery, the Council needs to change to ensure it is **fit for the future** to cope with the significant financial challenges it faces. Government funding for Reading will have been cut from nearly £58 million between 2010 and 2020, leaving the Council with a Government grant of under £2 million. We are still waiting to hear how funding for Business Rates will work in the future. Over the next three years we need to deliver more than £40 million of savings whilst at the same time transforming how we work and how we deliver services to residents. Only by creating a financially sustainable Council can we achieve all of our ambitions. We need to work with all of the town’s different sectors to try and ensure we are all focused on building a town with strong values and with opportunities for all. We will deliver a £122m capital programme to provide more new school places, homes, transport infrastructure and investment. We will also modernise and transform how we work; increasing opportunities for customers to ‘self-serve’ and access more services on line.

We are confident our new Corporate Plan provides a strong framework for the Council and for the town to meet the challenges which we know lie ahead, and ensure everyone who lives and works here has the opportunity to share in Reading’s success story. We are determined to ensure the Council thrives as an organisation so that it can make its contribution to shaping Reading’s future. This Corporate Plan is driven by our specific statutory responsibilities as a local authority as well as the themes and vision of Reading 2050.



Reading 2050 Vision

In 2017/18 the Council worked with Reading UK CIC, Barton Wilmore, Reading University and local businesses to develop a new Reading 2050 vision document which was launched in October. This sets out a shared view of key priorities for the future of Reading.

<i>Reading 2050 themes are developing:</i>	<i>Its vision is to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A city of culture and diversity • A city of rivers & parks • A green tech city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share success to support and enable thriving communities • Deliver a real sense of place and identity • Thrive on cultural and cross generational diversity • Recognise our heritage and natural assets • Embed technology to deliver innovation and low carbon living for all • Welcome ethical and sustainable businesses which support Reading

The Council has endorsed this vision and, in its role as community leader, is working alongside other agencies and organisations to realise the vision’s ambitions. In the plan we have weaved the vision 2050 objectives into our priorities showing how we contribute to the shared aims for Reading.

Our priority: Securing the economic success of Reading

Reading 2050 vision

- Welcomes ethical and sustainable businesses
- Shares success to support and enable thriving communities



Reading is set to become one of the fastest growing economies in the UK but we still face significant challenges; in particular, we need to continue to invest in transportation links, skills development and education.

The average weekly salary of £655 is 18% above the national average. Almost 50% of the working population is educated to degree level or equivalent which is the 6th highest in the UK. Reading also has the 7th highest employment rate in the UK. There are 474 per 10,000 population businesses per capita, an increase of 3.6% on 2017.

What have we achieved?

Economy

- One of the most dynamic economies for wages, jobs, high skills, and productivity and business start-ups in the country. Centre for Cities 'Cities Outlook 2018' ranks Reading 2nd behind London for highest wages and businesses per Capita.
- Excellent performance for productivity, skills and employment.
- Leading UK city for growth, according to the Demos-PwC 'Good Growth for Cities Index 2018'.
- Piloted a Reading on Thames festival led by Reading UK and secured Great Place funding (one of only 16 nationally) to sustain the festival for next three years, further progressing Reading's cultural renaissance and attractiveness to inward investors and a skilled workforce.
- Reading is home to 20 companies that have been voted best place to work.

Skills

- Reading has a higher than average proportion of jobs in high tech sectors.
- Established Elevate Me - the place for 16-24 year olds in Reading to get help, advice and support on employment, work experience, volunteering and mentoring.
- Secured 'Building Better Opportunities' European Social Fund (ESF) /Lottery funding for a similar service for adults so that we can give an 'all-age' range of interventions.

Infrastructure

- Superfast Broadband: High levels of customer uptake of provided broadband services puts Reading as the 5th most successful within the National League Tables. Broadband coverage is now at 98% against a target of 95%.
- Reading UK operates as a private sector led partnership with the public sector, creating opportunities and removing barriers to growth in Reading, enhancing opportunities for all and improving the reputation at all levels.
- Reading's Business Improvement District (BID)¹ led by Reading UK, has transformed the town centre and businesses have voted to extend the BID to 2019.
- The creation of a business rates pilot across Berkshire in 2018/19 will help an additional £35m of business rates income collected in Berkshire to be retained in Berkshire. This money will be spent on infrastructure projects, not day-to-day services.
- Delivery of key sustainable transport initiatives including:
 - £17M funding secured from the Department for Transport and nearby developers to implement Green Park Station.
 - First phase of Route 422, National Cycle Network, shared cycle and pedestrian facilities delivered on the northern side of the Bath Road, completion of Phases 1 and 2 of South Reading Mass Rapid Transit Scheme and £10m secured from the Department for Transport for phases 3 and 4 and £19m funding secured for the proposed East Reading MRT scheme.
- Submission of the Council's Local Plan to Government for formal inspection and approval. The plan sets out where housing and commercial development will take place to provide the homes and jobs Reading needs as well as policies to support open space, the environment and Reading's local heritage.
- For the first time the Local Plan explicitly recognises the 'Abbey Quarter' as a key asset for the town and its future. It will build on the restoration of the ruins and Abbey gate as part of the Abbey Revealed project (the ruins will re-open to the public on the 16th June 2018) and incorporate the Reading Prison site, which will be a key part of the jigsaw to further develop a thriving town centre and secure inward investment.

What are the current issues?

- Three areas of the town are in the most deprived 5% in the country, in terms of 'education, skills and training'.²
- Whilst Reading has a highly skilled workforce overall, there remains a significant cohort of low and unskilled people.
- Keeping the town moving and improving our connectivity to the wider UK economy, through free-flowing roads and easily accessible public transport, are key to our growth strategy.
- Increased competition from new retail developments in Bracknell and Oxford.

¹ Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) is a public-private partnership in which businesses within a defined area of the town pay an additional levy to fund improvements

² Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015

- The need to create a Reading Town Centre Development Framework, to build on the 2050 vision and deliver a vibrant and dynamic town centre that will reflect the changes in retail/leisure/residential mix and deliver high quality development.
- Ensuring that the future re-development of the Prison site meets Reading's long-term 'place-making' ambitions, and reflects its unique significance to the town and potential to deliver culture / heritage based regeneration and growth.

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Major Transport Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of phase 3 of the NCN 422 cycle improvement scheme • Delivery of phases 3 and 4 of South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme • Continued development and delivery of the East Reading MRT 	Autumn 18 Spring 20 Spring 21
Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation draft • Final draft 	October 18 March 19
Extension and renewal of the Business Improvement District (BID)s for Town Centre and businesses surrounding the Reading Abbey area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline services for BIDS • Provide corporate, legal and financial support to BID process • To endorse and promote two new bid plans for 2019-24 	Summer 18 Autumn 18 Oct 18 - Feb 19
Superfast Broadband delivery	Total Homes passed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73582 • 74264 • 74320 	March 19 March 20 March 21
Successful bid to Transforming Cities Fund seeking significant capital funding to enhance public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure in the wider Reading area. The bid will be in partnership with West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell Forest Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 bid • If successful with stage 1 bid submit Stage 2 	June 2018 Spring 2019



- Continue to deliver the Reading on Thames Festival with Reading UK CIC and build sustainability, reputation and impact over the next 3 years
- Deliver the Building Better Opportunities initiative, led by New Directions in partnership with Reading Voluntary Action, to provide skills and employment outcomes for out of work adults
- Review and adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy's (CIL) charging schedule for ensuring that development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure it will rely upon; such as schools, transport and leisure provision.
- Continue to encourage all contractors to use local labour and to offer opportunities for SME's to engage in the tendering process
- Reading station will mark the western end of the Elizabeth Line (formerly known as Crossrail), with services to Reading due to begin in 2019
- Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other Berkshire authorities to agree the allocation of Business Rate Pilot funds
- The Council and development partners continue to work collaboratively to deliver successful regeneration of key development sites, including Hosier Street and Southside
- Work with the Local Education Partnership and other Berkshire councils to develop a local 'Industrial Strategy' to ensure that Berkshire secures the Government investment it needs to remain a driver of UK economic growth and a leading European sub-regional economy

Measures of success

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Percentage of people who are economically active	79.6%	79.7%	79.8%	80%
Growth in Business Rates	0.1%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Superfast broadband coverage	97.62%	99.01%	99.92%	100%
Percentage of people who use sustainable modes of transport to access Reading town centre (i.e. rail, bus, cycle, walk etc.).	79%	80%	82%	85%

Our Priority: Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs



Reading 2050 vision

- Delivers a real sense of place and identity
- Shares success to support & enable thriving communities
- Embed technology to deliver innovation and low carbon living for all



With a strong economy and excellent transport networks in Reading, demand for homes, and genuinely affordable homes, has increased. Reading is a small, tightly constrained urban borough with limited land available for new homes. This means that we have to make the best use of existing housing and do all that we can to increase the supply of housing, and particularly of affordable homes.

There is significant demand for new homes, as is the case nationally. 2,100 new homes have been delivered during 2014-17. The average house price is £306,192 which is above the national average. 27% of Reading's homes are in the private rented sector.

What have we achieved?

- Over the last fifteen years (2002-2017), the Council has delivered almost 10,000 homes, exceeding the policy targets for provision of housing by almost 1,700
- Launched a new housing company called Homes for Reading (wholly owned by the local authority) to buy portfolios of properties for private sector rental, and make a proportion of these available at Local Housing Allowance rent level.
- Reduced use and length of stay in B&B - 146 households, including single people, were in B&Bs on 1st April 2017 and this was been reduced to only 40 in shared B&Bs in February 18
- Further increased the supply of temporary accommodation as part of the Council's new build housing programme. Launched a new Rent with Confidence Scheme to drive up standards in the private rented sector and recognise good landlords
- Launched a Rent Guarantee Scheme, which matches people who are at risk of homelessness with landlords who have properties to let. Rent is capped at the Local Housing Allowance level so that it is affordable for tenants. In return for holding the rents at these levels landlords have their rent and deposit guaranteed by the Council

- Secured £7.3m from the Government’s Housing Infrastructure Fund to facilitate new housing developments including the third phase of the regeneration of Dee Park (this figure includes £1.4m for Central Pool site, see page 24)

What are the current issues?

- House prices and rents are high, with an average increase of 43% since 2008
- A need for 700 new dwellings each year is identified, 400 of which need to be affordable homes, if we are to meet housing need
- Reading has one of the highest levels of Private Rented Sector housing in the country (over 27% of all dwellings) so improving quality and ensuring we have the right mechanisms to secure this accommodation for local people is a priority.
- Impact of welfare reform: The full roll-out of Universal Credit and the Local Housing Allowance (housing benefit payable) being frozen for 4 years continues to present challenges for households reliant on benefit and for the Council in supporting households to sustain or secure affordable housing in a high demand area. Local Housing Allowance was ‘frozen’ at 2015/16 levels. For a 3 bed property, as an example that means a £180 per month shortfall when comparing the benefit rate payable with the amount which would have been payable.
- Rough sleeping has increased in Reading. The annual rough sleeper count in November 2017 found 31 rough sleepers, up from 22 in 2016 - this reflects a rise in rough sleeping in large towns and cities across the country. This reflects a rise in rough sleeping in large towns and cities across the country. Moreover, rough sleeping is known to have an impact on a person’s mental and physical health.
- Ensuring safety in our high rise council homes

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Reduce the level of rough sleeping in the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new homelessness support service contracts • Bid for 18/19 and 19/20 additional government funding • Create new Street Life Guide app 	Sept 2018 May 2018 Sept - Dec 2018
Develop a new Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation • Adoption at HNL Committee 	July - Sept 14th November
New Build Council Housing Programme Deliver Phase 1 & 2 Scope Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the remaining 57 units within phase 1 of the programme • Complete the 86 units of phase 2 • Carry out feasibility study for phase 3 	Autumn 2018/ Autumn 2019. Staggered - Autumn 2019 to Spring 2021 2018/19
Safeguard residents of high rise flats across tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a scheme to jointly inspect high rise properties with Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service to review fire safety • Procure and implement 5 year programme of fire safety works to Council flatted blocks 	Complete 32 inspections of high rise buildings by 30 th September 2018 April and ongoing - per detailed programme

Homes

- Meet as much of the identified housing need as possible within Reading in the emerging Local Plan, and work closely with the neighbouring authorities of Wokingham, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest to identify how any shortfall will be made up
- Develop a new cross-tenure Housing Strategy
- Utilise resources including Local Authority land, retained Right to Buy receipts, and S106 receipts to increase the amount of new affordable housing in the town
- Completion of Phase 2B of the regeneration of Dee Park including 145 new residential units, 4 commercial units with associated infrastructure, landscaping and environmental improvements.
- Continue to negotiate affordable housing contributions as part of new housing developments
- Invest in a programme of planned improvements to our homes, including additional fire safety works following an independent external review of Council Housing fire safety systems and a tenants' review
- Continue to invest in the modernisation of Hexham Road flats and fit gas central heating in Granville Road flats
- Homes for Reading (the Council's housing company) to acquire homes for private rent (target minimum 100 homes in 18/19) including a proportion at sub-market rent as availability viability allows (target minimum 100 homes in 18/19)
- Further develop and extend the Council's under-occupation scheme to make best use of limited affordable housing



Homelessness

- Implement new Homelessness Reduction Act provisions which extend the Council's statutory responsibilities
- Homelessness services are supporting a shift in focus and funding towards a more flexible model that provides immediate and emergency responses to those who are homeless or rough sleeping. This includes a more individually tailored support service for single homeless people; a stronger multi-agency approach to meeting complex needs; and services which prevent homelessness
- Continue to develop innovative options to prevent and relieve homelessness
- Working with partners and across services to ensure that every contact is optimised to prevent homelessness at the earliest stage possible - making homelessness prevention 'everybody's business'
- Complete procurement of new homelessness support services with improved early intervention services for rough sleepers

Private Sector Housing

- Deliver a comprehensive self-funded Borough wide licensing scheme for the private rented sector to reduce the number of Private rented sector homes that fail to meet the requirements of the decent homes standard
- Undertake joint inspections of high rise residential property with the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service to secure an holistic overview of fire safety matters for individual buildings

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Number of additional homes completed per annum	700	671	671	671
Number of additional affordable homes completed (includes council homes and through planning process)	Available end June	406 needed	406 needed	406 needed
Numbers of families in bed & breakfast accommodation (shared facilities)	24	12	0	0
Total number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing homelessness	362	375	400	425
Total number of homeless or "at risk" households assisted to secure private rented sector accommodation	178	185	205	225

Our Priority: Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children



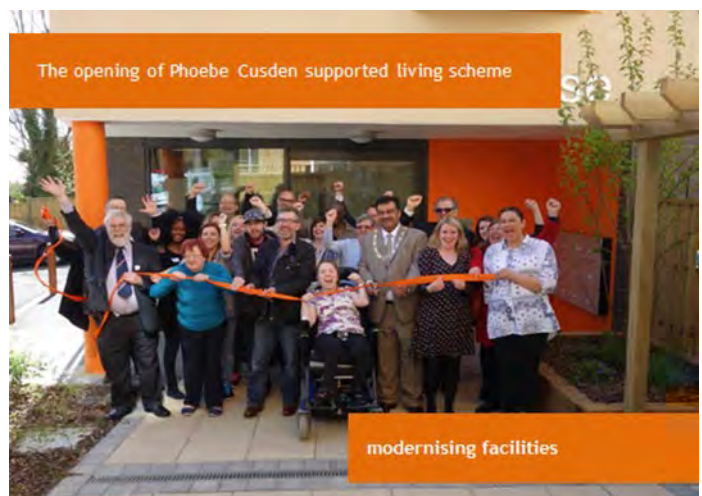
People tell us they want to live independently for as long as possible. We will promote independence through information, advice and a range of personalised options, including digital self-help options to meet eligible social care needs. Permanent admissions to residential and nursing care are reducing with 99 in 2017/18 despite the elderly population increasing to 19,659 - a 10% increase in the past five years. There were 3,504 new referrals to adult social care during 2017/18.

We will place children at the heart of our children's services. We will listen to children and evidence when we have done that. We will also ensure recruitment and retention of our workforce is supported through learning, development and regular management oversight and supervision of all staff. In the past year there have been 3,267 referrals to social care for a service and 276 children looked after as at 31st March 2018.

What have we achieved?

Adults

- Our in house provider services in Adult Social Care have been rated "Good" by the Care Quality Commission
- We have continued to work to reduce delays in discharges from hospital
- HIV tests at all new episodes offered to 100% of people
- 98.1% of people using our sexual health services rated the satisfaction as good or excellent
- 140 older people attend local clubs and 10% are 90+



Children

- The Single Point of Access (SPA) was established in July 2017 to deal with all levels of issues relating to young people, and has resulted in more effective inter-agency working and relationships.
- As part of its ongoing improvement journey, the Council is setting up a wholly-owned company, 'Brighter Futures for Children', to build on progress made to-date and to deliver long-term and sustainable improvements for children and young people in Reading.
- We have Developed an early intervention and prevention partnership strategy which sets out how we
 - identify families who need support at the earliest opportunity;
 - agree which agency is best placed to provide early support;
 - measure the impact;
 - evidence the associated reductions in cost to both the Local Authority & partners
- Children's Services Improvement Plan addresses key areas for development across Early Intervention and prevention, and children's social care services. The plan is monitored, measured and challenged through the Children's Services Improvement Board, which has an independent chair
- Our Special Education Needs and Disability Strategy is focussing on sufficiency for children and young people to ensure their needs are met in the most appropriate settings



What are the current issues?

Adults

- The rising demand, cost and limited availability of services for people with specialist needs
- Recruitment and retention in Adult Social Care at Reading Borough Council and in the wider market
- The transition of children to young adults who require specialist services
- Commissioning services to meet changing demands in an underdeveloped market place.
- Managing the Council's priorities for preventative services against a backdrop of increasing numbers in Reading's population with immediate care needs
- Meeting the demand for appropriate care to facilitate timely hospital discharges

Children

- Increase in number of Looked After Children
- Rising demand for child social care services
- Challenges in recruiting permanent social workers and front line managers
- Improving services for vulnerable children following the challenging Ofsted inspection of 2016

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Early Intervention Reduction of £500K from 0-5 years provision through a partnership approach to service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Help assessments from partner organisations • Annual review of Children's Single Point of Access, Early Help with pilot proposed for reducing demand on front door 	<p>September 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p>
Permanent Staff Recruitment Programme Reduction of agency staff to 15% by 31.3.19 £500K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment specialist appointed • New recruitment partner established • Increase in number of permanent staff by 10% 	<p>May 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>December 18</p>
Increase the number of LAC children in high quality local placements Proposed savings £3.5M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review & refresh of Foster Carer recruitment campaign • Sufficiency 2019-20 strategy agreed and in place • Increase in number of children placed closer to Reading by 25% 	<p>June 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p> <p>June 19</p>
Implementation of an improved Front Door for accessing Adult Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and approve new model of delivery • Implement Phase 1 Changes • Review, amend and implement permanent new model • Release efficiency savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2018 • July 2018 • October 2018 • March 2019
Develop a new learning and development pathway for staff to ensure they are highly skilled and equipped to deliver the services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review training needs analysis and determine gaps • Consult with staff on opportunities and options • Develop and implement revised pathway • Monitor impact in terms of recruitment and retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2018 • November 2018 • January 2019 • March 2019
Develop a 3 year Joint Commissioning Strategy for Reading, 'Caring for our futures', coproduced with key partners which includes future demand and current market intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop first draft of strategy to support consultation • Consult with key partners to further develop the strategy • Launch strategy and associated action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2018 • September 2018 • January 2019
Delivery of a new model to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the people of Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial focus on review of the impact of our prevention and early intervention offer • Address the wider determinants of Public Health • Deliver a wellbeing service for the people of Reading to enable healthier lifestyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2018 • January 2019 • April 2019

Adults

- To review our customer journey for adults and particularly the information and advice available to ensure a quick response is provided when in need of care and support, and more options are available to help people to remain at home.

- Work in partnership with the Voluntary Sector to support people to retain independence through community services that supports services that keep people active and engaged with friends and others who can offer support
- A focus on workforce and improving practice by developing a learning and development pathway for staff and defining the Reading Adult Social care 'staff' offer to improve recruitment and retention rates
- Supporting to develop a sustainable market place offering a choice of high quality services to meet the needs and aspirations of service users
- To improve the prevention of admission and hospital discharge performance by offering re-enablement within 6 hours of a referral to avoid hospital admission and an improved discharge to assess service to allow people to be cared for at home including facilitating discharge at the weekend
- To identify and prioritise the Public Health issues in Reading and allocate resources accordingly to meet local needs and public health concerns, including addressing the negative health impacts in homelessness, sexual health and drug and alcohol dependence
- Re-launch the Safe Places scheme with retailers to provide places of safety for vulnerable adults if they are scared or at risk while out and about

Children

- A 'whole system' approach to children, young people and families to identify needs early and deliver interventions that improve outcomes and support independence. This will be done with a new Access to Resources Team
- Work to support the physical, mental and emotional health needs of children and young people will be focussed on timely assessment and purposeful interventions, and will work in partnership with other professionals
- Ensure that children in care have secure and timely outcomes by being placed in permanent family settings
- Make the transition to the new 'Brighter Futures for Children' company by autumn 2018. This includes the appointment of a Chair and permanent Director of Children's Services
- Ensure children and families can access support at times of need, telling their story only once
- Young people who have been looked after by the local authority have positive independence and develop socially and economically

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Adults				
Reduced Delayed Transfers of Care for Health & Social Care - DToC	5.4%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Increased number of service users receiving direct payments	16% (186)	20% (240)	25% (300)	30% (360)
Decrease the permanent new admissions to Residential or Nursing care per 100,000 population for Older People (65+)	560	550	540	530
Decrease the permanent new admissions to Residential or Nursing care per 100,000 population for Younger people (18-64)	12.1	12.0	11.5	11

Children				
Increase the number of LAC children in high quality local placements	35% outside 20 miles	25%	20%	15%
Increase the number of families receiving early partnership support preventing the need for statutory intervention - reducing the number of open children's social care cases	1800	1600	1500	1400
Increase percentage of permanent social workers	65%	75%	80%	85%

Our Priority:

Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe



Reading 2050 vision

- Embeds technology to deliver low carbon living for all
- Recognises our heritage and natural assets
- Shares success to support and enable thriving communities
- Delivers a real sense of place and identity



Reading has committed to achieving zero carbon by 2050. A key part of this zero carbon development is set out in the Local Plan. Major insulation retrofit schemes and renewable energy programmes will be needed.

Waste collection and disposal services will continue to transform over the coming years, in order to drive down costs, not least by achieving an ambitious recycling target of 50% by 2020 and reducing the 74,000 tonnes of waste collected per year and 400 fly tipping incidents annually.

Reading's Community Safety Partnership brings together the Council, Police, Probation agencies, Fire and Rescue and Health along with other organisations to agree shared strategic priorities for the town. The Council and Police support five Safer Neighbourhood Forums across Reading to work with local communities to tackle local priorities including the 8,408 crimes against the person reported in 2017/18.

What have we achieved?

- New electric-powered vehicles reduce the impact of the Council fleet on local air quality by reducing nitrogen dioxide associated with diesel vehicles
- Forbury gardens and Caversham Court received Green Flag awards for Excellence



- We installed over 9000 solar panels on corporate buildings, schools and houses, enough to supply electricity to 500 houses
- Replaced streetlights with low energy alternatives
- First phase of Route 422, National Cycle Network, shared cycle and pedestrian facilities on the northern side of the Bath Road,
- Completion of Phases 1 and 2 of South Reading Mass Rapid Transit Scheme £10m Funding secured from the Department for Transport for phases 3 and 4 of the South Reading MRT Scheme and £20m funding secured for East Reading MRT scheme
- Despite a national trend of declining bus usage, patronage on Reading Buses services rose by one million trips in 2016/17 to 21.7 million journeys in total during that period. This was the fifth year in succession that bus trips have increased
- Reading Buses' fleet is one of the cleanest and most modern in the country, with a significant proportion of their vehicles using Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). CNG is a much cleaner fuel that produces no particulates, no hydrocarbons, virtually zero carbon and drastically reduces the amount of nitrogen oxide (55% less) put into the air.
- We now collect plastic pots, tubs and trays, as well as food and drink cartons and foil in household recycling bin or box in order to increase the amount of waste we recycle
- The Love Clean Reading app for reporting a range of matters to the council, including, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, highways issues and overgrown vegetation
- Improved the outcome for victims of hate crime, monitoring reporting and running a Hate Crime Forum: over 500 hate crime incidents and crimes have had community oversight scrutiny and challenge by a community panel in 2017-18
- Protected victims of modern day slavery (MDS) within Reading as per the Community Safety Partnership delivery group action plan; a new database that captures non-personal information of victims of crime is improving our understanding of the nature and levels of MDS in Reading.
- Coordinated partnership activity to reduce domestic abuse and improve outcomes for victims. Introduced DARIM (Domestic Abuse Repeat Incident Meeting) to improve the multi-agency response to high volume repeat low/medium risk cases. Increased referrals to, and the effectiveness of, the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference), which coordinates safety planning for high risk victims of domestic abuse. The referral levels are now in line with national targets.
- Worked with the police to protect land from unauthorised encampments, reducing resources spent on evictions and environmental impacts. In 2017-18 sixteen locations across Reading weresecured, with no repeat encampments on these sites to-date.
- Violent crime has fallen in Reading Town Centre by 28%. We have achieved this by working in partnership to ensure Local Authority support for police actions, with more visible on-street presence of police, street pastors and other uniformed staff and taking an early intervention approach.
- Used licensing powers and the provision of a Town Safe Radio Scheme (coupled with CCTV) to reduce town centre crime resulting in Reading achieving the Purple Flag award.



- Supported victims of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) across the borough and the latest figures show a 92% case satisfaction level

What are the current issues?

- While the Government predict that Reading will no longer breach the nitrogen dioxide limits by 2020, work is still required to improve **air quality** principally arising from car and diesel train emissions
- Increased demand for residents parking schemes
- Combatting a rise in drug dealing in public places
- Modern day slavery and adult exploitation work is identifying increasingly complex cases and a rise in vulnerable adults having their homes taken over
- Recent neighbourhood's survey identified **increased public concern in respect of ASB** with 44% of those surveyed at the end of 2017 reporting that ASB had got worse in their area. The top 3 issues identified by the survey were parking issues, drugs and begging.
- The number of reported **Domestic Abuse** cases remains high - although this is positive in terms of those experiencing abuse receiving support, this creates a pressure on commissioned services and internal teams such as Children's Services.
- Increased levels of unauthorised encampments impacting on settled communities
- Rise in drug dealing and aggressive begging
- Increase in **fly-tipping and environmental and highways infringements**.
- Waste - low rates of **recycling** compared with similar Councils
- Cost of Maintaining and improving our public realm especially in the Town Centre

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Market testing and increase trading of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strong in house options • Undertake market testing 	March 2019
Update Local Transport Plan & develop and implement a new borough wide car parking and air quality strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a targeted feasibility study to deliver nitrogen concentration compliance • The development of a coherent Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure strategy to facilitate the adoption of Electric Vehicles with the Borough • Publish updated Local Transport Plan setting out our vision for reducing congestion and improving air quality 	July 2018 2019-20
Thames Valley New Energy (EU funded project)	Renewable energy, storage and retrofit schemes.	2019 to 2022

Community Safety Strategy (CSP) 2019 - 2021- supports targeted reduction of crime and ASB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New priorities for the CSP with plans and targets agreed • Plan published. 	March 2019
Reduce impacts of Class A Drugs in the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Drug and Alcohol Partnership Group (Police to Chair) • Action plan developed/ measures of success to be agreed 	June 2018 September 2018

- Drive down costs of waste collection and disposal and drive up recycling rates to 50% by 2020 through a range of service improvements, including both enforcement and education.
- Work with partners to deliver air quality improvement projects and deliver planned changes to the air quality monitoring network.
- Review current Streetcare operations in relation to the National Litter Strategy which focuses on clear messages to reduce waste, cleaning up the country and improving enforcement.
- Carry out initiatives to install renewable energy technologies and meet the objectives set out in the Council's Carbon Plan.
- In partnership with other local authorities, establish a 'white label' service to sell energy to residents in order to provide residents with a reliable, good value local energy tariff.
- Introduce Public Space Protection Orders to take action to tackle a range of nuisance behaviours including littering, dog fouling, street drinking, drug use in a public place and aggressive begging.
- Reduce aggressive begging by linking enforcement and support activity to help vulnerable individuals to access specialist services through coordinating partnership work.
- Work together in partnership to proactively support those who suffer from a drug addiction problem to access treatment. This will be done by taking enforcement action against those who deal drugs on the streets of Reading, and in tackling the environmental and other impacts of drug dealing. This includes protecting vulnerable adults and children from being exploited by drug dealers.
- Protect victims of modern day slavery within Reading as per the Community Safety Partnership delivery group action plan.
- Coordinate partnership activity to reduce domestic abuse and improve outcomes for victims including work with adult social care staff to increase referrals of high risk domestic abuse cases for adults with a disability, learning disability or mental health issue.
- Carrying out the Play and Recreational Space Review and identifying investment opportunities.
- Maintaining and improving public realm including parks and open spaces.

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	30.47%	39%	50%	50%
Satisfaction with Antisocial behaviour case handling	97%	97%	98%	99%
Reading Borough Carbon Footprint (kilotonnes of CO2 emissions eq)	618*	695	677	659

*2015 data published in 2017

Our Priority:

Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading

Reading 2050 vision

- Share success to support and enable thriving communities
- Deliver a real sense of place and identity
- Thrive on cultural and cross generational diversity
- Recognise our heritage and natural assets



Outcomes for young people are below the regional average and in Reading's economic context should be much better. Whilst our workforce is highly skilled overall, there remains a significant proportion with few if any qualifications. Embracing Reading's diversity and equipping all our residents to access both economic and social opportunities will be crucial in ensuring that Reading continues to thrive as a multi-cultural and tolerant town.

We will ensure that the accessibility and quality of leisure and cultural provision is enhanced, including ensuring that the needs of those who face barriers to access are addressed.

What have we achieved?

Education

- The Council recently completed its £61 million expansion programme to create 2,500 additional primary school places, with the opening of Civitas Academy, in Great Knolly's Street, in February
- £6million of Housing Infrastructure fund secured to help bring forward the delivery of phase 3 of the Dee Park Regeneration including a new school.
- Sure Start Whitley retained their "good" rating following Ofsted inspection. Inspectors thought the leadership team



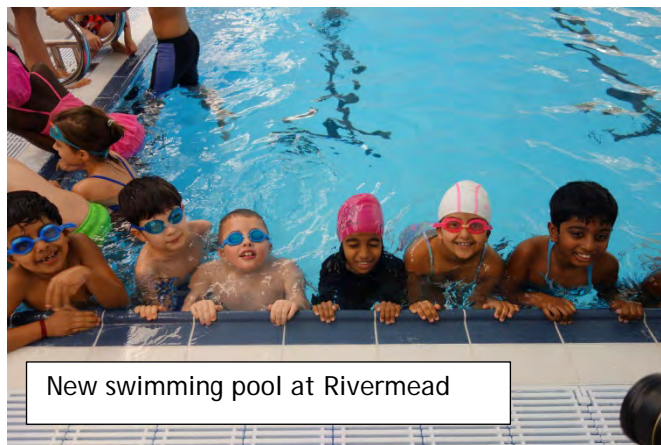
at Sure Start Whitley had maintained a good quality of education in all areas since the last inspection in 2015.

- Consolidation of 2017 Key Stage 2 results show that the borough has improved 80 places in the National League Table.
- Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 2017- 2022, which addresses the key areas for improvement and development that will support universal and specialist provision across a range of agencies in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Rapidly improving Ofsted outcomes in early year's settings: August 2015 88% good or better to August 2017 94% good or better to exceed the England average (93%).
- Primary Ofsted ratings good or better have improved: 73% August 2015 to 89% good or better August 2017.
- Special schools 100% rated good or better since 2015.
- Contractor appointed and carrying out conservation work on Reading Abbey revealed project
- Reading Libraries secured £40,000 from the Arts Council England to commission Reading Rep to develop a festive show 'Alby the Penguin Saves Christmas'. Special Alby Rhyme time and Storytime sessions delivered in Reading libraries.
- Adult Education - New Directions Learning & Employment service is Ofsted rated good and maintains Matrix accreditation for the quality of its Information, Advice and Guidance Services.
- New Directions are leading on the delivery of 'Building Better Opportunities' in partnership with Reading Voluntary Action, to improve employability and reduce unemployment for adults not currently accessing jobs.
- The Cultural Education Partnership is established and functioning well, providing quality arts and cultural experiences for children and young people in Reading, especially those who would otherwise miss-out, giving them the opportunity to aspire, achieve and participate.

Leisure & Culture

- Reading Museum awarded Full Accreditation status by Arts Council England.
- The Abbey Revealed project has been implemented to time and on budget. A new Abbey linked Gallery at the Museum opened in February 2018 and openings for the Abbey Gate in April 18 and Abbey Ruins in June 18, thanks to £1.7m secured from Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Secured £500k of Arts Council funding to complete the refurbishment of South Street Arts Centre which improved facilities by extending the building, revamping the main hall, and installing new seating, toilets and a purpose-built bar that will support financial sustainability.
- For the first time over 40,000 people attended the Pantomime at the Hexagon, the vast majority being local residents, families and lots of school children.
- Forbury Gardens and Caversham Court Gardens have both received Green Heritage Site awards, which are awarded to parks which have conserved their historical features to a high standard and maintain their historic character and appearance.
- Reading has maintained its Purple Flag award and is recognised for providing a vibrant and diverse mix of dining, entertainment and culture while promoting the safety and wellbeing of visitors and local residents.
- Three organisations in the town received National Portfolio (NPO) status for the first time: Readipop, CultureMix, and Museums Partnership Reading, partnership between Reading Museum and Museum for English Rural Life, received grants from NPO worth £1.7m over four years, giving Reading three NPO funding organisations and a big boost as Reading moves towards becoming a major cultural destination.

- Great Places scheme to build on the success of the 2016 Year of Culture: following the award of a £550k grant to put arts, culture and heritage at the heart of the town. The support will also help to create the “Reading-on-Thames” festival, which marries Reading’s waterways heritage with a rich cultural programme.
- Invested significantly to improve the condition of South Reading Leisure Centre which reopened in February.
- £1.4m Housing Infrastructure Fund received for development of Central Pool site.
- Technology is supporting Library Service development. Self-service kiosks have been introduced at all libraries in 2017. Wi-Fi is now available at all sites, fixed computers were upgraded in 2015, and Reading Online support digital inclusion through the provision of 1:1 support at regular sessions in branches. A new Library Management System has been implemented. New e-book, e-magazine and online learning resources have all been introduced.
- Re-opening of The Weller Centre (formerly known as the Amersham Road Community Centre) after a £600,000 extension and refurbishment. The Centre is now operated by Earley Charity, who funded both the project and Catalyst Housing, providing a vibrant community hub offering activities and support for local people.



New swimming pool at Rivermead

What are the current issues?

Education

- Increase in pupils being placed at The Avenue, which thereby increases the demand for transport for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) pupils.
- Closing the gap in attainment, for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, including those in care and with learning disabilities, is vital to ensure equality of life chances later on.
- Secondary School places experienced sharp upturn for year 7 pupils in September 2019, which will require 8 forms of entry of that provision, bulge classes and building a brand new secondary school in central Reading.
- Reduce the number of days lost due to exclusions from school.
- Resolve issues regarding a proposed free school at Mapledurham.

Leisure

- The key strategic issue impacting on leisure and cultural services is modernising facilities and ensuring they can be operated without a revenue budget subsidy. New models of delivery are needed that secure additional resources from external partners to ensure they are commercially viable.
- Whilst the town’s culture and leisure opportunities are accessed by the vast majority of residents there are significant cohorts who face barriers to access. This can lead to increased levels of obesity and poorer health and well-being for both adults and children in respect of physical activity; and poorer quality of life, mental health, social isolation and well-being with regard to culture. Addressing these barriers and widening participation is a key target.

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Leisure procurement of a new operator to manage existing and develop new facilities including a competition standard pool with diving provision and a new pool at Palmer Park to replace Arthur Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult key stakeholders & user groups Key stages of the procurement process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline solutions Detailed solutions Consult public on new facilities Final Tenders 	June - Sept 18 July 18 November 18 March 19 April 19 Award contract June 2019 New contract commences September 2019.
Establishment of a Cultural Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission consultants to develop business case and financial model. Feasibility report. Decision on next steps. 	June 2018 October 2018 December 2018
Great Place scheme implementation: 'Reading a Place of Culture.'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading- on-Thames Festival Agree 'cultural commissions' to meet priority social outcomes Community led research and evaluation. Detailed planning for year 2. 	September 2018 June/July 2018 Ongoing October 2018 - January 2019
School building and provision programme - Developing a new secondary school to open in September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bid for government funding for new secondary school Secure appropriate Trust partners Establish interim bulge class provision until the new school opens 	June 2018 June 2018 Sept 2019

Education

- Participate in national Library -led schemes: Bookstart/Summer Reading Challenge to improve levels of literacy
- New Directions basic skills course provision - supported by the Library service to improve levels of literacy
- Agreement to the location of bulge classes to meet future secondary place needs and progression of options for the development of a new permanent secondary school to open in September 2021
- Provision of new Special Education Needs accommodation at The Avenue and Blessed Hugh Farringdon.
- Work with our development partner to deliver a new primary school at Dee Park
- Commencement of the development of a new two form primary school at Green Park

Leisure & Culture

- Provide high quality leisure facilities - progress procurement of a new leisure operator to run the Council's facilities, including development of new facilities and refurbishment of those retained. This includes development of new swimming, diving and leisure facilities to replace Central and Arthur Hill Pools. This

will be a complex process involving competitive dialogue over a twelve month period.

- Develop an overarching physical activity and well-being strategy
- Create new shared neighbourhood community 'hubs' at Battle, Southcote and South Reading to provide library services alongside space for community activities, adult learning and other services, to make better use of buildings and resources and improve local facilities. Consult on a proposal to reduce library service branch open hours and other changes.
- Increase the use of library buildings by community groups, partners and other Council services to make best use of the facilities
- Move the Toy Library to a more accessible location at Central Library and promote the offer more widely
- Extend the Library Service programme of technology, supporting inclusion and develop the online service offer further.
- Develop proposals and a business case for a Cultural Trust (or similar) model for the delivery of cultural services into the future.
- Encourage a thriving culture and heritage sector delivering the aspirations of the Culture & Heritage Strategy including reopening of Reading Abbey in summer 2018 with the project running until 2020.
- Extensive improvement and refurbishment of the Town Hall allowing marriages and other ceremonies to take place there, a new inquest room for the Coroner and new café offer.
- Delivery of Museums Partnership Reading business plan, the National Portfolio Organisation partnership between Reading Museum and Museum for English Rural Life, including development of a joint youth strategy in year 1

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Improved Key stage results and narrowing gap in attainment	59%	61%	63%	65%
Percentage of schools rated good or outstanding on assessment	92%	96%	100%	100%
Reduce number of days lost through fixed term exclusions in secondary schools	1685	842.5	800	750
Reduction in the percentage of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	2.8%	2.1	1.7%	1.3

Our Priority:

Ensuring our Council is fit for the future



In many areas the Council performs well, achieving good outcomes for residents, and the quality of staff and services are good. This is reflected in external accreditation; for example, achievement of Customer Service Excellence Accreditation within the Customer Service Centre. In excess of 25,000 customer contacts are dealt with via the Call Centre and Customer Hub on a monthly basis. 12,000 residents are in receipt of housing benefit and the council has undertaken 660 financial assessments for benefits received in the past year.

However, in recent years the Council has struggled to perform as it wishes across all areas and in the way residents have a right to expect. The Council faces a significant financial challenge over the next three years with a requirement to deliver savings of over £40M. To deliver these savings and achieve the ambitions in this plan the Council will have to change to ensure it can thrive in the current, constrained financial environment.

Our improvement approach is called TEAM Reading and its rallying cry is challenging everyone to

- *work Together*
- *be Efficient*
- *Ambitious and*
- *Make a difference.*

Team Reading is not just about the 2835 Council staff. It is about ensuring all of Reading's different sectors are focused on building a town with strong values and a shared vision for its success.

What have we achieved?

- Berkshire Local Authorities Business Rates pilot - will enable each local council to retain at least an additional £1m of business rates, while the remainder of the estimated £35m retained will be set aside for agreed infrastructure improvements across the county
- The Customer Services Team has maintained both Customer Service Excellence (CSE)'s Compliance Plus and Contact Centre Association (CCA) Global Standard 6 following an in-depth review of the service. Reading remains one of the few local authorities in the country to achieve the two standards for both its call centre and face-to-face service.
- Delivered £80m of budget savings whilst minimising service reductions and managing budget pressures

- During the creation of the Medium Term Financial Strategy every effort has been made to protect services and to find even more efficient means of service delivery, including through early intervention to manage demand.
- The total cut in the Council's carbon footprint to 45% since 2008. In cash terms, it means the Council is estimated to have saved £5.8 million in energy costs since 2008 and are currently on track to meet the 2020 target of 50%. £1 million was saved in 2016/17 alone.
- We have continued to deliver and expand our online offer with over 135 services available on line for customer self-service. Our web site receives 90k unique visits a month, 40k customers have registered for self-service and over 10k to receive their council tax bills on line.
- Self-service kiosks have been introduced in all Reading libraries; offering a quick and efficient way of issuing, returning and paying for items.
- 86% of customer queries are resolved at the first point of contact.
- The percentage of customer satisfied with the Call Centre and Customer Hub continues to exceed 85%.
- Developed Delivery Plans for each department to plan improvements in performance and value for money.



What are the current issues?

- To meet the financial challenge the Council needs to transform and become a more agile and forward thinking organisation, exploring commercial opportunities as well as different delivery models.
- Building the capacity and resilience of staff to ensure services are delivered effectively.
- Completing the audit of the 2016/17 accounts.
- Delivery of an ambitious £43.2m savings programme.
- Making the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sustainable in the longer term will require broader thinking about the size and shape of the Council.
- Delivery of a Children's Company - Brighter Futures for Children by October 2018.
- Customer focussed digitisation - investing in enabling and digital technologies such as modern gov.
- Reducing our reliance on agency staff to fill gaps, increasing the proportion of posts with a permanent staff member.
- Improve the effectiveness of procurement of goods and services.
- Resolve the 80 outstanding pay claims against the council.

Next Steps

We intend to deliver the following key projects

Project	Key Milestones	Timeline
Plan and deliver new ICT service to follow current ICT Managed Service Contract which ends in March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and appraise options for service and delivery model • Agree future model • Procurement and/or service design • Transition to new service • New service starts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sep 18 - Mar 19 • April 19 - June 19 • July 19 - Sept 20 • Oct 20 - Mar 21 • Apr 21

Launch of the new Children's Company	Go Live Successful Management	October 18
Completion of the 16/17 and 17/18 audit of the Council accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits signed off 	November 18
Delivery of the of 3 year savings plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings achieved 18/19 £17,062,000 Savings achieved 19/20 £15,416,000 Savings achieved 20/21 £7,649,000 	March 19 March 20 March 21
Maximise Business Rates to support income collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with rateable value finder company Visiting empty premises Prompt recovery to ensure payment 	March 21
Increase take up of on line services	In line with digitisation corporate programme workstream	March 21

Customers

It is essential that we enable our customers, residents and people who use our services to work with us to shape services to suit their needs. Increasingly, collaboration, co-production and shared or integrated services will be required to ensure we deliver sustainable services for the future, with increased opportunities for customers to access information and services online to reduce costs.

Managing Change

The Council will need to work differently in the future, to ensure provision of sustainable services that meet the needs of our communities. The new environment, within which the Council is operating, is very different to our past experiences and as such, requires new ways of working.

A delivery programme, with eight workstreams, has been implemented to manage and oversee the business transformation and savings that are needed, and ensure that limited resources are used as effectively as possible in meeting our priorities. This will include:

- Maximise external funding options and income generation opportunities
- Using organisational development interventions to ensure we have a multi-skilled, and flexible workforce, with the appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the demands of future services
- Investing in improving and enabling ICT to deliver services as efficiently as possible including enabling residents to self-serve.
- Improving secure information sharing facilities both internally and with partners
- Developing our data analysis and reporting capabilities to inform decision making
- Enabling our staff to make healthy lifestyle choices

Investment & Assets

We will deliver a £122m capital programme to provide new school places, homes, transport infrastructure and investment to consolidate our buildings.

The rationalisation of the Council's property estate is making good progress and continues to reduce running costs and future maintenance liability whilst improving customers' experience and optimising income generation. Including the following:

- Rationalisation of office accommodation to enable disposal of surplus properties and reduce running costs including two RBC buildings vacated for potential future disposal
- Improved utilisation of existing buildings by consolidating Adult Services staff at the Avenue Centre and Children's Services teams at the Civic Offices and Whitley Health Building
- In addition, the council will invest in commercial properties in the Greater Reading area to both generate a sustainable income flow and to stimulate and / or maintain economic growth

Success Measures	2017/18 Result	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Improve Customer satisfaction with our front of house	88%	70%	75%	80%
Increase in take up of online services - number of people signed up for an online account	New Measure	10%	20%	30%
Delivery of Medium Term Financial Strategy - total budget requirement	125.3m	142.9m	126.7m	128.5m
Reducing agency spend	£13m	£10m	£8m	£6m
Percentage of Council Tax collected	96.60%	96.85%	97.1%	97.35%
Percentage of Business Rates collected	96.28%	97%	97.25%	97.50%