

Appendix Two.

Future Town, Future Council Outcomes and Focus for 2017 /18

1. Stevenage Centre Town Centre Regeneration Programme

1.1. Programme Outcomes

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2020/21 and one to begin 2019/20.

1.2. Programme Overview

1.3. The Council wants to make Stevenage a destination of choice through delivering a new vibrant town centre, with quality shopping, office and leisure facilities. New homes will be built in the town centre and a new hub for public services will be created.

1.4. Regeneration of the town centre is the Council's number one priority and the associated programme progressed well during 2016/17. Stevenage is now the single largest regeneration zone in the East of England. In March 2017, the Council commenced the procurement process to appoint a preferred developer to take forward SG1, which is the first phase of the regeneration scheme. The key building blocks of SG1 include:

- **Stevenage Core** – signature public space, new retail, residential, restaurants and cafes; and other civic uses.
- **New Public Sector Hub** - new health facilities, a library, civic spaces and offices.
- **Southgate Park** – which will include new residential apartments, a linear park and potentially a new urban primary school.

1.5. The aim is to have a preferred developer appointed by February 2018.

1.6. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Securing a development partner for the first phase of the town centre regeneration.
- Beginning development and progressing more detailed plans for a public sector hub in the town.
- Completing public realm improvements within the town centre.

2. Housing Development Programme

2.1. Programme Outcomes

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage.

- Improve access to the housing market in Stevenage for greater number of residents.

2.2. Programme Overview

2.3. Providing decent, affordable homes appropriate to the needs of residents is one of the Council's key priorities. The Council is meeting this priority by establishing a programme of building new homes and buying others on the open market.

2.4. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Delivering 43 homes across a range of planned schemes.
- Setting up a Council owned Housing Development Company to provide a variety of housing types across the town and consideration of a joint venture to bring further housing development forward.

3. Excellent Council Homes Programme

3.1. Programme Outcomes

- Transforming the housing service

3.2. Programme Overview

3.3. The Council's aim is to provide high quality, efficient and effective housing services. The Council has committed through the Excellent Council Homes programme to transform its housing services to better meet the needs of its customers.

4. Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme

4.1. Programme Outcomes

- Residents feel that they can work with the council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area.
- Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to deliver the change that is required.
- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live.
- The Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs.

4.2. Programme Overview

4.3. The Co-operative Neighbourhood Management programme sets out how the Council will work with communities to improve the neighbourhoods. Through working together with residents and other partners the Council believes public spaces can be made more attractive and in turn help to give people pride in the place they live.

4.4. The programme has now begun to deliver against the expected outcomes after a year of planning and implementation. During 2016/17 £10M was allocated by the Council to improve the quality and look of its garage blocks over the next 10 years. The Council has also allocated £1.5M to be spent on rejuvenating play areas over the next 5 years.

4.5. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Delivery of £800k of investment (relating to Green Space signage, public realm work, nine play areas, litterbins and hardstanding) into Pin Green, Shephall, St Nicholas and Martins Wood.
- Encouraging partner agencies to work in partnership with the Council to help improve public spaces and other local assets and engage with communities.
- Undertaking a Resident Survey to determine future neighbourhood priorities.
- Reviewing the effectiveness and usage of Community Centres.
- Engaging with partners and communities on the next phase of the planned physical improvement works in the wards of St Nicholas and Martins Wood.

5. Connected to our Customers Programme

5.1. Programme Outcomes

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help.
- Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services.
- Online customer data will be protected, better used to provide useful insight, and the technology reliable.
- The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices.

5.2. Programme Overview

5.3. The Connected to our Customers programme aims to improve the way residents can access Council services through increasing the use of digital options. The programme will specifically target high cost / low value transactional activities. It will ensure that the Council will use technology to meet its ambitions and make the workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs. The programme will encourage the use of self-service so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help and will see the development of a much improved website with more self-service choices.

5.4. During 2016/17 the programme started to deliver against its key aims following a year of scoping and planning. The Executive approved more than £2m capital funding for this digital change programme which will fund the required team and works to deliver digital services. The Assistant Director for Corporate Projects, Technology and Customer Services started as Programme Sponsor in March 2017. Initial focus for the current year is to ensure that the technology foundations are right to enable the Council (and its shared service partner) to deliver services that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

5.5. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Delivering a Technology Improvement Plan to support a range of new digital applications and services.
- Recruiting digital specialists to drive the programme.
- Achieving quick wins to expand the customer self-serve offer through use of digital technologies, including new online Council Tax and Business rate services.
- A number of supporting projects relating to Public Sector Network and General Data Protection Regulation requirements to provide the Council with a resilient platform to establish a new range of digital applications and services.
- Completing the telephony upgrade across the Technology Shared Service to improve resilience and reduce costs.
- Working towards the development of a new website and intranet.

6. Partner of Choice Programme

6.1. Programme Outcomes

- Develop new and existing shared services with our preferred partners to improve resilience, create efficiencies and establish income opportunities.
- Develop reputation as a professional partner to work with.

6.2. Programme Overview

6.3. The Council believes that through working with partners it can achieve better outcomes for the town and deliver services more efficiently. The Council has a proven track record of developing a range of partnerships such as those under the Stevenage Together umbrella. As a partner of choice the council continues to proactively work with partners from across all sectors to deliver projects that make a difference to the lives of Stevenage residents.

6.4. A key success during 2016/17 has been the creation of a joint Building Control Partnership. The Council as a founder member has worked

alongside other local authority partners to establish Hertfordshire Building Control Services.

6.5. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Finalising the legal shared services arrangements.
- Setting out further potential shared service options.

7. Performing at our Peak Programme

7.1. Programme Outcomes

- The provision of high quality performance management software tools.
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making.
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation.

7.2. Programme Overview

7.3. The Council aims to become an insightful Council with improved service performance and slimmed down decision-making processes. The programme will improve the organisation's insight, analysis and intelligence to help us to make better informed business decisions. This is being achieved through more timely coordination of data and the adoption of tools to support ongoing strategic and operational analysis.

7.4. During 2016/17 a new software tool has been developed to help managers access up-to-date service information and data, and work has been completed to create 'live' performance dashboards for the Council's Senior Leadership Team.

7.5. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Continuing to build dashboards at a business unit level and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for our customers.
- The introduction of a new devolved governance and performance framework, including a new scheme of delegation, to help improve decision making and accountability at a business unit level.

8. Financial Security Programme

8.1. Programme Outcomes

- As set out in Figure 2: Financial Security Workstreams.

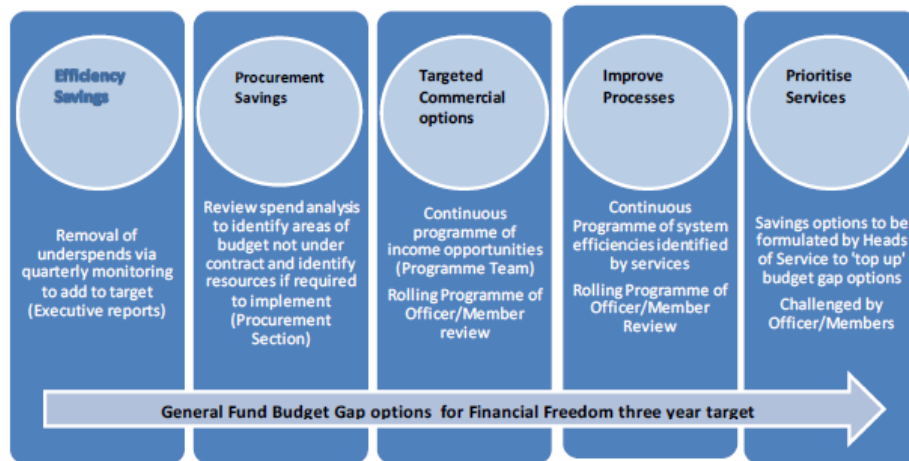


Figure 2: Financial Security Workstreams

8.2. Programme Overview

8.3. This programme aims to ensure that the Council has sufficient funds available to deliver quality services that residents want and need. The aim is to break away from the cycle of dependency on Government Grant through becoming more efficient in processes and developing new and innovative funding streams to ensure the Council has the resources to be a Council fit for the future and build a vibrant town that residents deserve.

8.4. Despite continued national government austerity the Council has managed to balance the books whilst protecting the much valued front line services and providing funding to support the FTFC programme.

8.5. The Executive approved the allocation of £15m towards a Commercial Property strategy in March 2017 to enable the purchase of commercial assets that yield a financial return.

8.6. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Generating significant savings from the leisure contract.
- Finalise savings of approximately £40k per annum through a move to digital post.
- Prioritise services to generate further savings and ensure a balanced budget.

9. Employer of Choice Programme

9.1. Programme Outcomes

- Improved employee engagement.
- Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts.
- Improved managerial competency.
- Improved reputation as a place to work.

- Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles.

9.2. Programme Overview

- 9.3. The Council aims to create a flexible, collaborative, creative and modern workforce to ensure the Council can deliver the priorities set out in the FTFC programme and give residents the standard of services they expect. This programme aims to transform the way the Council works; ensuring that staff have the skills, abilities and experience to deliver excellence. The Council must become an employer of choice so that it can compete in today's market place and attract and retain the best staff to build for the future.
- 9.4. During 2016/17 the Senior Management review was completed and a new leadership team is now in place. Through Future Council Business Reviews, work has begun on shaping the next stage of the transformation programme to ensure the Council has the right structures, teams and people in place.
- 9.5. The Leader of the Council secured the prestigious 'Leader of the Year' from the Local Government Information Unit highlighting the organisation's creative and continued delivery of excellent services despite continued government austerity.
- 9.6. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
- Further rollout of online services for staff, including a new e-learning system and intranet.
 - Creation of new leadership and management development programmes.
 - Development and implementation of a competency framework for staff up to Grade 9 of the Council's pay structure.
 - Introduction of new performance management policies, tools and processes.