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# The Draft Council Strategy 2019 - 2023 – Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Council Strategy (the Strategy) is West Berkshire Council's medium term strategic planning document that sets out the priorities for improvement, the key activities planned to deliver them (commitments) and highlighted core services.
- 1.2 The Strategy is produced every four years and refreshed every other year. The current Strategy was adopted in 2015 covering the period ending 2019 and aligns with the electoral cycle. This paper present the proposed priorities for improvement and the commitments that are planned for inclusion in the new Council Strategy 2019 - 2023.
- 1.3 Based on the feedback from the latest Corporate Peer Review, the new Strategy will continue the approach to focus on a small number of priorities for improvement. The core business of the Council (safeguarding children and adults, roads maintenance, bin collection etc.) will continue to be delivered.

## 2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 The methodology used for the strategic planning process that identified the priorities for improvement and commitments for the new Strategy included:
  - (1) A review of the evidence base (District Needs Assessment, the latest corporate performance information, contextual measures results, the refreshed Council Strategy 2018 etc.);
  - (2) Identification of 'areas of focus' that could become priorities for improvement – during a workshop with Members and officers;
  - (3) Work to re-assess the Council's Core Values;
  - (4) A process of refining the evidence base - this included making the links with the Vision 2036 priorities and aspirations and identifying what could the Council potentially do to improve identified areas;
  - (5) A second round of stakeholders' engagement (Members and officers) to conclude the identification of priorities for improvement;
  - (6) Work with individual services of the Council to identify the commitments that will ensure the delivery of the priorities;
  - (7) A third round of stakeholders' engagement to rationalise the commitments for inclusion in the new Strategy, including to ensure a joined up approach (non-silo working) amongst the Council's services.
- 2.2 There are two more key steps to be completed:

- (1) Public consultation (January – February 2019) on the draft Strategy – with the purpose of understanding how appropriate residents find the proposed priorities for improvement and the involvement that they feel they can provide to support the priorities' delivery.
- (2) Council Strategy and the response to the public consultation's feedback are taken through the Executive Cycle – to ensure an appropriate response to the feedback received from the public consultation in finalising and adopting the Strategy.

2.3 Once the Strategy is approved, all Council's services will ensure they establish smart objectives (key performance measures and targets) on an annual basis for the delivery of all commitments and as a result of the priorities for improvement.

2.4 As part of the Council's strategic framework, linked with the Council's Strategy, a number of supporting strategies are developed to focus on specific areas (e.g. the Economic Development Strategy, the Workforce Strategy, Housing Strategy etc.).

### 3. Options for Consideration

3.1 There are no alternative options proposed as part of this report. The process to identify the priorities for improvement included a number of iterations of reviews of the evidence base, to identify and prioritise areas for improvement and actions that can be implemented by the Council to deliver improvements for the identified areas.

### 4. Proposals

4.1 The priorities for improvement and the associated commitments for ensuring their delivery are:

- **Priority:** Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes

- Commitments:

Support children, young people and vulnerable adults at an earlier stage, ensuring they are safe through prevention and early intervention.

Improve outcomes for our Looked After Children and other vulnerable children and adults.

Ensure better outcomes for social care users and improved satisfaction

Safeguard against new and emerging risks

Support more vulnerable people into employment

- **Priority:** Support everyone to reach their full potential

- Commitments:

Support everyone on their learning journey to achieve their best

Improve the health and well being of children and families through appropriate intervention, procedures, through all Council's policies and support

Help people to help themselves and others

- **Priority:** Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire

- Commitments:

Improve the help and guidance for start-ups and existing small businesses to grow including by facilitating access to business incubators, or similar resources/initiatives

Ensure planning policies which positively provide start up and growth of business in the district

Provide incentives and opportunities to enable businesses to grow

- **Priority:** Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy

- Commitments:

Develop an Integrated Infrastructure Plan to deliver regeneration, housing, flood prevention and alleviation and travel and transport infrastructure

Further develop digital infrastructure and information assets in the District

Enhance the arts, culture and leisure offering in the District

- **Priority:** Maintain a green district

- Commitments:

Develop more sustainable transport solutions which protect the environment

Promote and improve cycle ways in the district

Develop opportunities and expertise to take advantage of the production, storage and utilisation of green energy.

Improve our use of data and intelligence on enviro-crime for targeted enforcement

Minimise impact on the environment in delivering services (e.g. use assistive technologies in social care)

- **Priority:** Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

- Commitments:

Expand our work with partner organisations and communities to improve services for local residents

Increase the sustainability of our business models by expanding on the initiatives to generate income for supporting vital Council services

Implement a Workforce Strategy which supports leadership development, recruitment and retention and employee wellbeing

Use data to better understand our services' beneficiaries to improve the way we interact with them and the services we are providing

## 5. Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1 Extensive engagement and consultation has been conducted in the process to identify and prioritise areas for improvement and the associated commitments. These will now be the subject of public consultation.

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### Background Papers:

Council Strategy (March 2018 Refresh)  
Vision 2036 and the associated evidence document  
West Berkshire District Needs Assessment

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### Wards affected:

All wards.

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### Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

- BEC – Better educated communities**
- SLE – A stronger local economy**
- P&S – Protect and support those who need it**
- HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**
- MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- BEC1 – Improve educational attainment**
- BEC2 – Close the educational attainment gap**
- SLE1 – Enable the completion of more affordable housing**
- SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy**
- P&S1 – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults**
- HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves**
- MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**

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# Framework - West Berkshire Council Strategy 2019 - 2023

