



Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Business Plan 2015-18

Your business, your borough



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**

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About Welwyn Hatfield

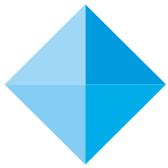
- The borough is located in central Hertfordshire covering an area of approximately 130 square kilometres.
- It contains the two new towns of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City (WGC) plus eight other large villages and settlements. Around 75 per cent of its population live in the two main towns.
- The estimated population is just over 114,000.
- There is a significant student population with the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield and two college campuses - Oaklands College in WGC and the Royal Veterinary College in North Mymms.
- The borough offers good employment opportunities with 1.07 jobs available for every working age resident.
- Health and quality of life is generally good, with life expectancy recorded at well above the national averages for males and females.
- It is well connected to other towns and cities, including London, by road and rail.



About Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

- We are one of ten borough and district councils in Hertfordshire.
- We provide a wide range of local services for people in the borough.
- We are represented by 48 councillors in 17 wards, directly elected to serve four year terms of office.
- We directly employ over 200 full time equivalent employees.
- We work with and support partners such as the police, parish and town councils and the Welwyn Hatfield Alliance to provide local services.
- Our housing stock and some other community services are managed by Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust.
- We also work with commercial partners who provide local services on our behalf.





Introduction from Leader of the Council, John Dean and Chief Executive, Michel Saminaden



This Business Plan sets out the council's vision and priorities over the next three years, and the values that underpin what we do.

Our last Business Plan was published in 2012 in a rapidly changing environment for local authorities. That pace of change continues. New government legislation continues to be introduced, the pressure on our budgets remains and demands on our services are rising as our population grows.

Throughout these challenging times, it is important that we maintain the quality of our core services such as household waste and recycling collections, providing a statutory planning service, cleaning the streets and providing a wide range of sport and leisure facilities.

But we also need to be innovative and forward thinking about how we can continue delivering value for money in these and other areas. It means working more closely with our partners, our communities and local businesses as we face the challenges ahead.

We are also investing to maximise our assets such as the Campus West entertainment

centre and centralising our services in the main council offices at Campus East.

In developing this new Business Plan we have introduced a new priority setting out our role in strengthening the local economy. The development of a new Economic Development Strategy will be key to this, and we intend to work closely with businesses to help us achieve the targets set out in it.

In everything we do as a council, we remain confident that we will be able to continue delivering high quality and value for money services. This Plan will guide us through the next three years as we do so.

John Dean *Michel Saminaden*





Our Vision

Our vision sets out what we aim to achieve. It is:

To make Welwyn Hatfield a great place to live, work and study with a vibrant, growing economy.



Our Priorities

Our vision is achieved by working with our partners, businesses and residents towards our five key priorities. These are:

1. Maintain a safe and healthy community

- Work with partners to keep people safe
- Help improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of residents
- Provide for a wide variety of leisure covering arts, culture, fitness and sport

2. Protect and enhance the environment

- Keep our streets clean and work with residents to reduce litter
- Improve recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill
- Maintain and improve our green spaces
- Deliver effective parking services

3. Meet the borough's housing needs

- Plan for the housing needs of our communities
- Increase the supply of new, affordable homes

- Effectively manage the borough's housing stock

- Allow for sustainable growth that protects our environment and heritage

4. Help build a strong local economy

- Promote the borough as an attractive place in which to invest
- Revitalise our town centres and other shopping areas

5. Engage with our communities and provide value for money

- Deliver value for money
- Provide outstanding customer service
- Ensure fair and open access for our diverse community
- Effectively communicate what we do

Each year we develop and publish an action plan with targets that we use to measure our performance against these priorities.

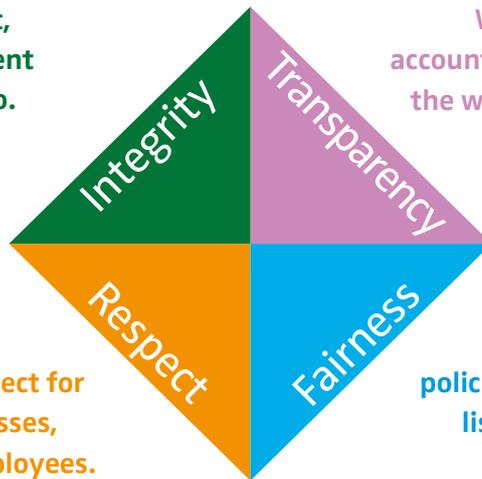


Our Values

Everything we do is underpinned by our values. Our values demonstrate what is important to us in our dealings with residents, businesses, partners and staff. These are:



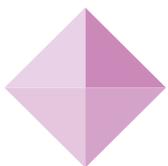
We will be honest, clear and consistent about what we do.



We will be approachable, accountable and transparent in the way we communicate and conduct our business.

We will have respect for residents, businesses, partners and employees.

We will be fair in our policies and decision making, listening to the views and feedback we receive.



Maintain a safe and healthy community

priority one

Residents consistently tell us that tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is a top priority for them. Along with our partners, we will continue to implement projects that reduce crime and focus on its prevention.

lifestyles along with supporting and delivering major events that motivate and inspire local communities to take part in activities beneficial to their wellbeing.

We will also work with partners and local businesses to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of people in Welwyn Hatfield.

Sport, fitness, culture and the arts play a vital role in helping people feel physically and mentally healthy. We will continue to provide services that encourage active



What we know*

- **Life expectancy** amongst residents of Welwyn Hatfield is above the England average for both females (83.6 years compared to 83.0 years) and males (80.1 years compared to 79.2 years).
- **Obesity among primary school** reception year children reduced to 8.8% in 2012-13 from 9.1% in 2011-12. However this remains above the county average of 7.3%.
- 47% of residents are satisfied with our **sport and leisure facilities**, a 16% increase on 2012. With the recent upgrading of some of our sites we hope to see this level of satisfaction continue to rise.
- 40% of residents believe that providing **activities and support for younger people** is important in making Welwyn Hatfield a good place to live.



What we will do

1.1 Work with partners to keep people safe

- Reduce the temptation for young people to be caught up in crime or anti social behaviour by providing life skills events.
- Upgrade CCTV enabling operators to see more easily when people need help, and helping the police bring criminals to justice.
- Work as part of the Community Safety Partnership to keep reducing overall crime within the borough.
- With our partners, continue to support and help those who encounter domestic abuse.

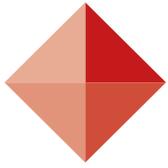
1.2 Help improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of residents

- Deliver our public health and wellbeing strategy.
- Provide support and guidance to volunteer groups and empower local people to make informed health and wellbeing lifestyle choices.
- Through inspections and training, support and work with local businesses to maintain and improve the hygiene standards of food establishments.
- Support and work closely with volunteer groups which care for older, disabled and disadvantaged people.
- Promote a better understanding of, and adaptation to, the needs of people with dementia.

1.3 Provide for a wide variety of leisure covering arts, culture, fitness and sport

- Improve the health and active lifestyle opportunities of our residents by delivering and promoting sport projects and events with local clubs and partners.
- Ensure children have the opportunity to lead healthy and active lives by providing age appropriate play areas.
- Work with our partners to promote and encourage disabled people to participate in sport and make it easier for them to do so.
- Support the local art scene in providing a diverse range of arts and theatre performances at venues across the borough.
- Provide unique and dynamic events that encourage visitors to our museums and other heritage sites and buildings.





priority two

Protect and enhance the environment

This priority focuses our services and partners on making sure the local environment is maintained and protected for future generations.

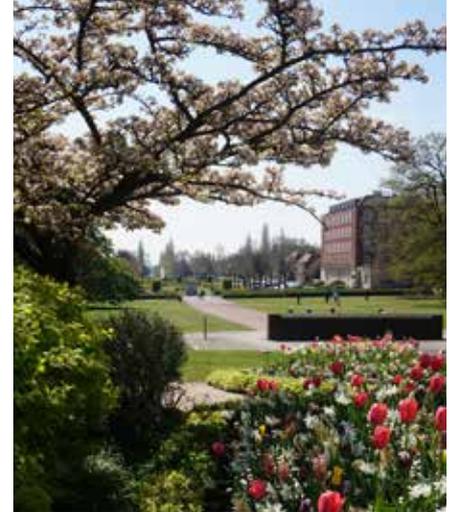
Working with residents, we aim to increase the amount of recycling we collect and improve its quality. It is better for our environment to reduce our reliance on landfill, and also for our finances. Recycling more good quality materials generates valuable income to support the provision of other local services.

We will continue to improve the physical appearance of the borough's public areas, including its tree and woodland landscape, and preserve and encourage our natural habitats and wildlife.

Off-street parking provision and other parking restrictions to relieve areas of high traffic congestion will continue. This will include streets near our town centres and railway stations, and other neighbourhoods where there is high car ownership in relation to the provision of parking spaces.

What we know*

- A clean and green environment consistently rates highly among residents when asked what is most important to them.
- The borough's recycling rate was 46.63% in 2013/14. In comparison, the average of all English district and borough councils was 43.78%.
- The majority of residents are satisfied with the provision of recycling centres (69%), the household refuse service (66%), the household recycling service (64%) and the provision of parks and open spaces (63%).



- 66% of residents feel keeping local streets clean is important in making Welwyn Hatfield a good place to live.
- 52% of residents see parks and open spaces as important in making Welwyn Hatfield a good place to live.

What we will do

2.1 Keep our streets clean and work with residents to reduce litter

- Reduce litter in our towns and neighbourhoods with support from partners and residents.
- Reduce fly tipping by working with partners and local community groups to target problem areas.
- Provide high quality street cleaning services.
- Provide a street warden service to promote community safety, tackle anti-social behaviour and improve the street environment.

2.2 Improve recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill

- Provide a high quality waste and recycling service to all households within the borough.
- Improve the quality and quantity of recycling through publicity and education.
- Reinforce the 'reduce, repair, reuse and recycle' message through effective communication, including school visits and community campaigns with our partners.

2.3 Maintain and improve our green spaces

- Retain and win new awards for the management of our public and open spaces.
- Work with partners to deliver a planned programme of tree planting and maintenance.
- Support local woodlands and open spaces by providing training and development for volunteers and local community groups.
- Manage and plan for the future of our parks, open spaces, nature reserves and woodlands.
- Encourage residents to grow their own food and become more physically active by increasing the take up of allotments in the borough.

- Maintain our grounds and public spaces, including grass and hedge cutting.
- Manage and replace trees, bushes and shrubs as part of a planned approach to our natural environment.
- Protect and retain existing trees, hedgerows and woodland wherever possible.

2.4 Deliver effective parking services

- Work with our partners to increase customer satisfaction levels with our managed car parks.
- Address the parking needs of residents by consulting on local parking improvement schemes.
- Balance the needs of businesses and residents, and have regard to the constraints of our towns and villages in planning parking provision.



priority three

Meet the borough's housing needs

The new Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan will provide a blueprint for growth until 2031 forming the basis for homes, jobs, shopping and leisure facilities, and the infrastructure needed to support these.

The Local Plan must be consistent with national policy but also consider issues important to Welwyn Hatfield, including the protection of the environment.

We recognise the serious shortage of local affordable housing and the construction of more homes remains a high priority. Our innovative Affordable Housing Programme will deliver as many new homes as possible subject to land availability, economic viability and the funding needed to build them.

We work with private sector landlords, letting agents and homeowners to improve housing conditions and fuel efficiency for those who

rent, or who do not have the resources to improve their own homes. We are working hard with our partners to increase the membership of our Landlord Accreditation Scheme, PAL.

We also encourage community involvement in the management and delivery of housing services, in partnership with Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust.



What we know*

- The **borough's population** is now estimated to be just over 114,000.
- New population projections show the population by **2031 could be as high as 135,400**.
- 50% of residents surveyed in 2014 felt that **affordable decent housing** was one of their most important considerations in making their local area a good place to live.
- The proportion of people **privately renting their homes** in the borough doubled between 2001 and 2011, a figure shaped by a large student population (12,600 in December 2014).
- The objectively assessed need in Welwyn Hatfield between now and 2031 is for over **10,000 new homes**.

What we will do

3.1 Plan for the housing need of our communities

- Publish a new Local Plan, approved by the Secretary of State, to ensure there is a robust and agreed blueprint for future housing growth in the borough.
- Protect the metropolitan green belt by bringing 'brownfield' sites back into use as housing, taking appropriate safeguards to deal with any contaminated land.
- Meet the needs of homeless people by providing good quality housing advice and a full range of housing options, including meeting the nationally recognised 'Gold Standard' for our Housing Needs Service.

3.2 Increase the supply of new affordable homes

- Develop new homes through our Affordable Housing Programme, which includes delivering our own, new social housing for the first time in 30 years.

- Use Section 106 planning receipts and the new Community Infrastructure Levy to deliver new affordable homes and improve the local environment.
- With partners, increase the supply of new affordable homes within the borough.

3.3 Effectively manage the borough's housing stock

- Work with Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust to review our sheltered housing schemes, ensuring they are meeting the needs of all our residents, young and old.
- Work with Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust to deliver a new Asset Management Strategy.
- Ensure private landlords and letting agents provide safe and well managed rented homes by giving advice, education and support and, where appropriate, taking formal enforcement action.
- Support our partners in improving the quality of local homes.
- Provide a first class social housing service for our tenants and leaseholders.

3.4 Allow for sustainable growth that protects our environment and heritage

- Oversee local compliance with all planning requirements including our conservation areas and listed buildings, and enforce against breaches of planning control as needed.
- Work with businesses and other organisations to protect our living environment and heritage while also supporting local economic growth.
- Seek to protect our countryside and improve access to our open spaces.
- Work with police and the university to deter and minimise the incidence of noise nuisance.



priority four

Help build a strong local economy

Welwyn Hatfield is an attractive place to invest for small, medium and large businesses.

There is plenty of accessible employment space, a good mix of business and retail premises, educational attainment is high and a good transport network is established. We will build on these strengths by encouraging visitors to our retail and business centres and explore ways to seamlessly link existing developments with new ones.

We have recently committed £3.65 million to refurbishing Hatfield town centre and are setting up a group of key stakeholders in the town to look at the long term vision of Hatfield as a whole. We have also been successful in a bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for £6m which will become available to the council from 2019/20.

For Welwyn Garden City, a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will help developers understand our vision and aspiration regarding the future retail, housing and leisure needs in the heart of the town.

In our town centres and elsewhere we will strengthen our links with local businesses and employers, and we will produce a new Economic Development Strategy, in consultation with them, to set out our role in developing a strong local economy.

What we know*

- 39% of residents feel that good **shopping facilities** are important in making Welwyn Hatfield a good place to live.
- The number of **active enterprises is increasing** and the number of jobs equate to 1.07 jobs per working age resident. However the number of active enterprises is below the Hertfordshire average and there are pockets of higher unemployment.
- We have a **highly professional, scientific and technical local economy** with some big firms based here, and plenty of small to medium sized enterprises working in specialist fields.
- **Students are an important part** of Welwyn Hatfield's economy - the borough has a large student population with a university in Hatfield, Oaklands College in WGC and the Royal Veterinary College in North Mymms.





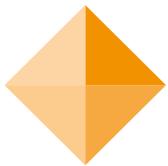
What we will do

4.1 Promote the borough as an attractive place in which to invest

- Promote Welwyn Hatfield as a great place to live and work.
- Work with Hertfordshire’s Local Enterprise Partnership to access grants and external funding to support investment in our local economy.
- Continue to attract businesses to the area by influencing the development of a high quality infrastructure.
- Provide appropriate support and signpost training to local businesses enabling them to grow and strengthen their market position.

4.2 Revitalise our town centres and other shopping areas

- Continue with a programme of refurbishment works in Hatfield town centre while working closely with others to plan for the longer term future of the town.
- Strengthen local business participation in the Hatfield Town Team and Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Partnership.
- Work with others to increase footfall to our town centres and other shopping areas.
- Deliver and support community activities and events such as continental markets and festivals in our town centres.



Engage with our communities and provide value for money

priority five

This priority sets out how we work as a council and how we interact with our communities.

We believe that all residents should have a say in what happens in their borough and that they want to see their council deliver strong leadership and value for money.

We are committed to improving the ways in which we engage with people. We also aim to deliver excellent customer service and make sure that people are informed about what we spend.

What we know*

- 71% of respondents to our 2015/16 budget consultation ranked **maximising income from fees and charges** as their preferred option to balance the council budget.

- **68% of residents say they feel informed** about how their council tax is spent locally, while 63% think that we keep them informed about the services we provide.
- 26% of residents would like to be **more involved in decisions** made by the council on their behalf.

What we will do

5.1 Demonstrate value for money

- Work to deliver balanced budgets each year, seek best value through effective procurement of goods and services, robustly manage our contracted services, and promote strong commercial and community relationships.
- Create opportunities to maximise our income and revenue potential.

- Effectively manage our corporate property portfolio, our investments and other assets.
- Efficiently manage the collection of debts, business rates and council tax charges from local residents and businesses, and prosecute cases of benefit fraud where appropriate.
- Consistently improve how we measure our performance, and do so in an open and transparent way.

5.2 Provide outstanding customer service

- Increase the opportunities for our customers to conduct their business online.
- Continue to gather feedback from residents and businesses and use this information to influence our corporate priorities and services.
- Update our Customer Services Strategy and maintain clear customer service standards for all staff.
- Follow our adopted service standards for all our regulatory work.
- Improve existing reception facilities and services for visitors to the council offices.

5.3 Ensure fair and open access for our diverse community

- Actively promote openness and access to all public council meetings, including filming at these meetings.
- Continue to support councillors and staff with their professional development.
- Make it easier to access public documents.
- Provide an efficient and timely freedom of information service.
- Place as much of our decision making in the public domain as possible.
- Recognise all aspects of equality and diversity in our policies and practices.

- Ensure local residents have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote at local and national elections.
- Aid young people in influencing local decisions by supporting the Youth Council.

5.4 Effectively communicate what we do

- Communicate openly and honestly with residents about what we are doing and why.
- Use plain English when we communicate with residents and avoid using jargon that can make it difficult to understand what we say.
- Be innovative in how we communicate and consult, including on social media, to make sure residents and businesses are aware of what we are doing.

****What we know' data taken from...**

2014 My Council Residents Survey - www.welhat.gov.uk/article/5226/Results-of-past-consultations

LG Inform (ESD) - www.lginform.local.gov.uk

Public Health England (local health stats) - www.localhealth.org.uk

Welwyn Hatfield Annual Monitoring Report - www.welhat.gov.uk/AMR

2013 ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates - www.ons.gov.uk/ons

Nomis (official labour market statistics) - www.nomisweb.co.uk

Budget Consultation (YouChoose) - www.welhat.gov.uk/article/5226/Results-of-past-consultations

Hometrack Housing Intelligence System - www.realtimevaluation.co.uk





How our Business Plan fits in with our other plans and strategies

A number of other plans and strategies set out the detail of how the council will achieve its objectives and the relevant milestones that will measure progress.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 - 2017/18

Our commitment to provide the best possible value for money for the community



Local Plan

How we will support growth in terms of homes, jobs, shopping, leisure and other infrastructure



Community Strategy 2015 - 2020

How we will work with our community partners through the Welwyn Hatfield Alliance



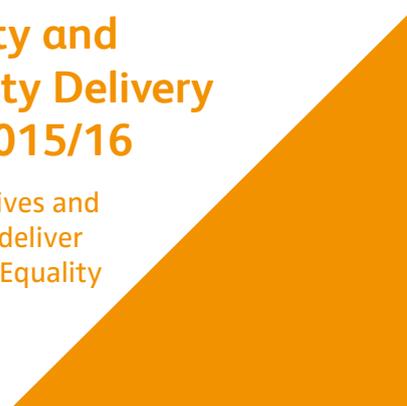
Business Plan 2015 - 2018

Sets out our strategic objectives over a three year period.



Equality and Diversity Delivery Plan 2015/16

Our objectives and actions to deliver our Single Equality Scheme



Service Plans 2015/16

Service plans capture all of our important operational work and include improvement targets and service standards





Working with our partners

Much of what we do can only be achieved by working in partnership.

In addition to working closely with town and parish councils, we work with community, commercial and public partners who help us carry out many services in the borough.

Community partnerships

Welwyn Hatfield Alliance: The Local Strategic Partnership is made up of public, private and voluntary organisations and is responsible for the borough's Community Strategy.

Community Safety Partnership: We are one of six organisations sharing a legal duty to tackle the fear of crime and disorder in the borough.

Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Partnership: A partnership of local businesses working together to maintain and enhance the commercial, social and environmental success of Welwyn Garden City town centre whilst building on its heritage and strengths.

Hatfield Town Team: A partnership of key stakeholders representing private, public and voluntary sector organisations working together to promote the vitality of the town centre.

Commercial partnerships

Our commercial partners include Finesse Leisure, Serco, Mears and Sopra Steria who help us to deliver leisure services, environmental services, maintaining our housing stock and with the collection and administration of our council tax and housing benefits payments. These commercial partnerships represent multi-million pound investments.

We manage all of these contracts to make sure that all contractual responsibilities are met and that people in Welwyn Hatfield continue to receive high quality, value for money services from them.

We have a 15-year contract with **Serco**, worth £5.5 million per annum, for the provision of a household waste collection and recycling service, street cleansing and grounds maintenance in the borough. The current contract expires in March 2020.

We have a 15-year contract with Mears to the value of £11.25 million per annum for the provision of housing repairs and maintenance for around 9,200 council dwellings. The current contract expires in September 2022.

Finesse Leisure manages the majority of our leisure facilities on seven different sites in the borough. These include a leisure centre, swim centre and a golf course, plus four parks and playing fields. They currently receive an annual management fee of approximately £0.7 million from the council. There is a long term management agreement in place between the council and Finesse Leisure which runs to January 2029.

Sopra Steria is responsible for the administration of council tax collection, housing and council tax benefit, the contact centre, switchboard and reception, and ICT services. This 12 year contract, worth £2.8million, expires in December 2022.



Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust

The Housing Trust manages and maintains over 10,000 council tenancies and leaseholds in the borough. It also manages the housing needs register and housing advice/homeless assessment services on behalf of the council, the council's anti-social behaviour service and other community services.

The Trust was developed in response to feedback from tenants, leaseholders and other residents. It is designed to give customers a say over the services they receive and decisions that affect them. It is also committed to community and neighbourhood initiatives to make a positive difference for all residents.

The Trust is led by a Management Board made up of tenant and leaseholder representatives, councillors and

independent people chosen for their skills and experience. A management fee is paid by us to the Trust for managing our council homes. The council remains responsible for strategic housing services such as development and delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, the Affordable Housing Programme and for grants and regulatory work in the private housing sector.

In June 2015 we began the process of reviewing the future management of our housing stock and those community services currently run by the Trust. The review will consider how best to continue providing high quality housing and community services in the most cost effective way.

More information about the work of the Trust and its achievements can be found in its Annual Report.





How we consult and engage with our communities

The council is committed to finding out the views of local residents, businesses, user groups and other stakeholders on their priorities and what they think of its performance. These views are taken into account when setting service objectives, improvement targets or redesigning services. This also applies to the services provided by our contractors.

In many cases consultation is a statutory responsibility of the council. However, we recognise that in other areas consultation is best practice in effective service delivery.

The following are examples of some of the ways we consult:

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Panel – this is a panel of local residents who have indicated they are happy to be consulted on a wide range of council services. Recently they have been consulted on changes to our website, our public health strategy and the council's annual budget.

Resident Survey – every two years the council consults with a sample of residents, selected to represent the demographic balance of the borough, on their perception of the local area and services they receive from us.

Financial Budget Consultation – residents have the opportunity to participate in a budget survey every year to inform the council's budget setting process. This enables people to identify which of the council's services are priorities for them and which are not.

Tenant involvement - the Community Housing Trust has an overarching Tenant Involvement Strategy, setting out the wide range of ways in which it consults with tenants and leaseholders. The borough wide Tenants' Panel comprises 27 members, elected in by fellow tenants and leaseholders. The Trust

consults with other customers through regular satisfaction and other surveys, specialist forums and focus groups, and events such as the quarterly Housing Open Day.

Parking Improvement and Restriction Consultations – we request opinions about proposed solutions to parking issues. Some of the groups that may be consulted are residents, businesses, faith organisations, charities and other community organisations, local councils, Herts County Council, and the police, fire and ambulance services. The aim is to make the best use of available parking spaces in the borough.

Youth Council - the Welwyn Hatfield Youth Council is a body of young people that meets monthly to discuss, debate and action any issues affecting young people in Welwyn Hatfield. Representatives come from schools, colleges and local youth community groups.

Environmental Services Survey – on behalf of the council and our partner Serco, an independent polling company carries out a quarterly customer satisfaction survey on recycling, cleansing, refuse and grounds maintenance work.

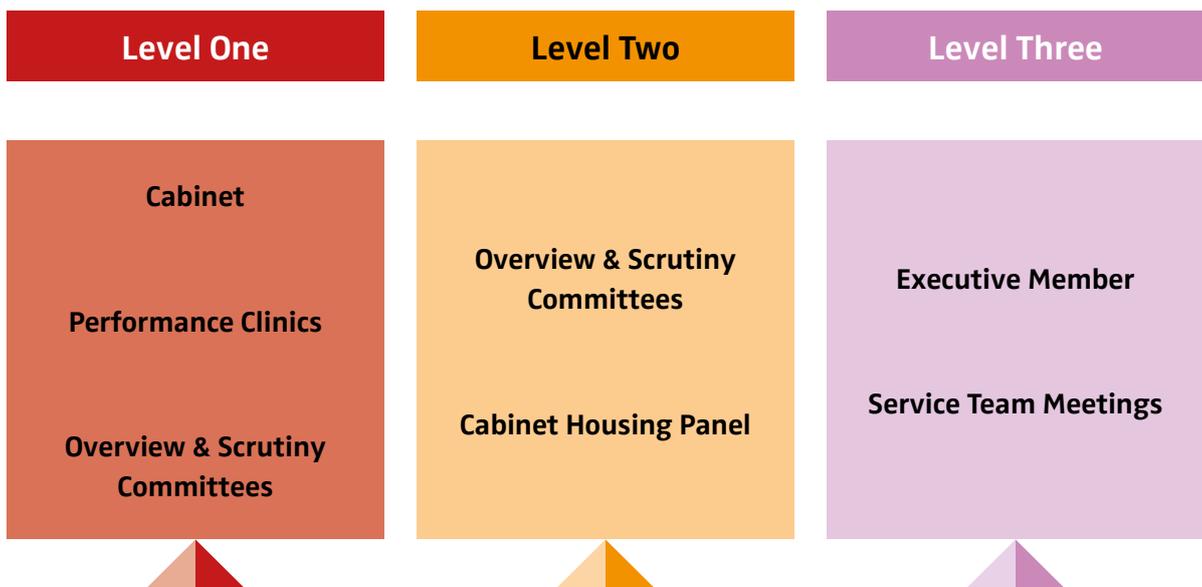
Local Plan Consultation – we have consulted widely on a draft Local Plan document. This proposes sites for new development up to 2031 in terms of housing, jobs, business premises, open spaces, community facilities and infrastructure like schools, roads and healthcare. Further consultation will lead to a new Local Plan being adopted in 2016.

Licensing applications – whenever an application is made for a premises licence (e.g. to provide entertainment or sell alcohol) the views of local people are invited; where there is a concern that the licensing objectives may be undermined the matter is referred to the licensing sub-committee.

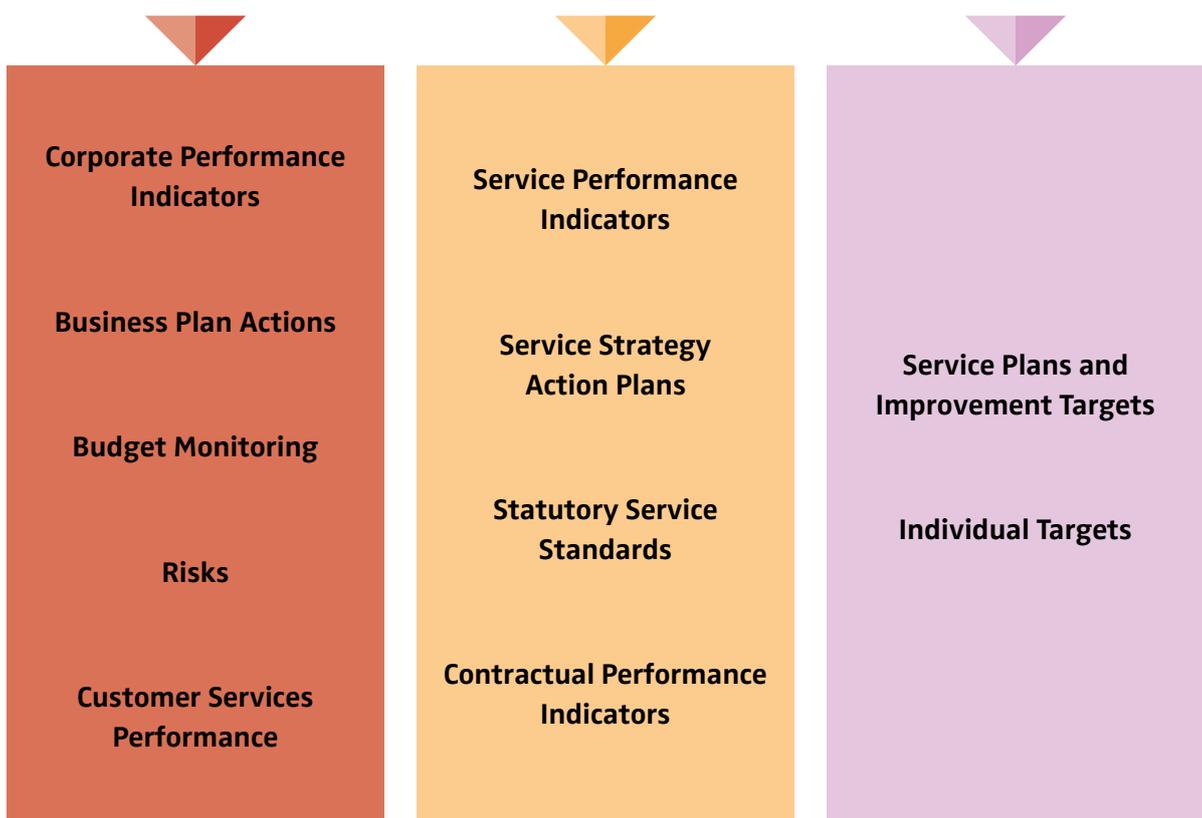


Measuring our Performance

Our Vision, Values and Priorities



The indicators, actions and targets below are reported to the committees and meetings listed above. Feedback from those committees will shape future targets.





Appendix: What we do

The following list sets out some of the things we do and services we provide:

- We collect all household waste and recycling from homes in the borough.
- We manage grounds maintenance and street cleaning in the borough.
- We look after a number of playgrounds, parks and open spaces.
- We investigate and remove instances of fly tipping, fly posting and abandoned cars and manage public car parks and on-street parking.
- We look after public cemeteries in the borough.
- We operate a street warden service patrolling the streets to help keep the borough safe and clean. They also provide a dog warden service.
- We administer local, national and European elections.
- We own over 9,000 rented homes which are managed on our behalf by the Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust.
- We identify suitable building sites and manage the development of new affordable homes on them.
- We make sure brownfield land is cleaned up prior to redevelopment.
- We regulate private sector housing standards, including a mandatory licensing scheme for houses of multiple occupation.
- We administer the borough's Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
- We administer a grants service to support residents who need adaptations made to their homes to enable them to continue living independently.
- We monitor the quality of the air, water and food within the borough.
- We offer a housing advice and a homelessness prevention service.
- We coordinate the community safety, local strategic and town centre partnerships.
- We investigate workplace accidents and carry out projects to make sure employers are keeping their staff and the public safe.
- We support activities and events for young people and offer a range of community grants.
- We administer planning applications, building regulations, new development proposals and tree preservation.
- We provide a service to ensure that national building regulations are complied with.
- We organise a Safety Advisory Team which provides information and assistance to people holding activities such as sporting events and music festivals in the borough.
- We manage council owned trees and formal landscapes in town centres.
- We manage some of the open spaces, nature reserves and woodlands in the borough.
- We oversee the management of many local parks and open spaces which are managed on our behalf by Finesse Leisure.
- We provide a number of arts and culture, and leisure and sport facilities, some of which are managed on our behalf by Finesse Leisure.
- We operate a food hygiene rating scheme which allows consumers to make an informed choice on where to eat in the borough based on the standards of hygiene at every food establishment.
- We provide training for local businesses on food hygiene and food safety.
- We collect council tax and business rates and make payments of housing and council tax benefit to those who need it most in the borough.
- We administer and enforce licences for taxis, premises serving alcohol and several other types of leisure and entertainment establishments.
- We deal with noise and pollution complaints and provide a pest control service.
- We manage a number of commercial and community buildings and provide garages and allotments for rent.
- We encourage energy efficiency initiatives and ways to improve the environment while also looking to reduce our own carbon footprint.



Further information about our business plan and performance is published on our website at www.welhat.gov.uk/performance.

If you have any comments about this plan, would like a hard copy, or would like to receive this document in a different format, please contact:

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