

Watford Together

OUR TOWN. OUR FUTURE.

DELIVERY PLAN
2020-2022



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

Watford is a council that gets things done.

WE MAKE BOLD CHOICES
AND FOCUS ON WHAT
MATTERS TO OUR TOWN
AND RESIDENTS.



**WE PRIDE OURSELVES
ON THINKING BIGGER FOR
WATFORD. OUR FOCUS
IS AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN
TO ACHIEVE THE BEST
FOR OUR TOWN, OUR
RESIDENTS AND OUR
COMMUNITIES.**

**IN WHAT HAVE BEEN
SOME OF THE MOST
CHALLENGING TIMES WE
HAVE EVER FACED, IT IS
NOW MORE IMPORTANT
THAN EVER THAT OUR BIG
IDEAS CAN SET THE RIGHT
DIRECTION FOR WATFORD
AND ACCOMPLISH GREAT
THINGS FOR THE FUTURE.”**

Elected Mayor of Watford, Peter Taylor
Watford Borough Council Plan 2020-24



Our Council Plan 2020-24 sets out our ambitions and our three overarching themes for Watford over the next four years – a council that serves its residents, delivering a thriving, diverse and creative town, and a healthy and happy town. We know that our plans are ambitious, but we are driven by our shared purpose to make Watford even better for everyone.

This Delivery Plan shows how we will focus our work to bring the Council Plan to life, making sure we deliver what we said we would over the next 18 months.

Under each theme, we clearly set out our key priority areas of action, which we are committed to achieving by 2022. These actions cut across and support the delivery of our themes, linking together to shape a bright future for Watford.

Everyone in the council has a part to play in the success of this Delivery Plan and we will regularly check how well we are doing through quarterly reports to our Elected Mayor and Cabinet. We will also publish an annual update to our residents and community, so they can be confident that we are keeping our promises.

Whilst not everything we do is captured in this plan, we apply the same rigour and high standards to all our work so we continue to achieve more for Watford and our residents. Sitting alongside both our Council Plan and Delivery Plan is our Organisational Development Strategy, which shows how we will support our staff to reach their potential and rise to the challenges of working at Watford, and our Financial Plan, which makes the vital link between our budget and our ambitions.

THEME 1:

A council that serves our residents

MAKE SURE OUR COUNCIL IS A CARING AND COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATION THAT PUTS WHAT MATTERS TO PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

1

Provide an excellent customer experience

We will deliver a new Customer Experience Strategy covering the next five years to ensure that we provide an excellent end-to-end customer experience across all our services.

2

Ensure a continual focus on customer needs

We know our customer needs constantly change, so we will continually review the services we are providing to our residents and businesses, ensuring we make the most of new technology without overlooking those who require a personal service.

3

Address digital isolation

We will work with our partners, volunteers and community groups to support residents who do not have access to technology, or do not currently have the skills to use IT, so that they have the same opportunities as others in our town.

DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY SUSTAINABLE SERVICES

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

1

Deliver a new waste and recycling offering for Watford

We will deliver the new waste and recycling service to cut waste, increase recycling and ensure the sustainability of our service.

2

Embed a continuous improvement approach across all of our services

We know that our customers value great and easy access to excellent services. We will develop a new approach to ensure we learn from leading practice and our changing customer needs, and challenge ourselves to continually improve to deliver excellent, high-quality services to our residents and businesses.

3

Manage our organisational renewal post COVID-19

We will support the council to bounce back from COVID-19, addressing any backlogs and learning from ways of working during the emergency to ensure that we make the most of new opportunities to meet our resident and customer expectations.

**EMPOWER LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS IN OUR COUNCIL
TO INSPIRE OUR ORGANISATION AND OUR COMMUNITY**

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE’LL DO

1

Introduce a new Organisational Development approach

We want to make sure that we develop, motivate and inspire our staff, whilst ensuring they feel supported and empowered to do their best for our residents and businesses. To do this, we will develop a new approach to Organisational Development, which will recognise the strengths and commitment of our staff, whilst helping them to work as one team in the best interests of our town, residents and businesses. We will ensure that our approach protects their health and wellbeing, and that it provides opportunities for genuine two-way engagement.

2

Improve our internal decision-making so that it is agile and effective

Learning from the experience of COVID-19, we will ensure our internal governance structures allow us to make well-considered, transparent decisions as quickly as possible to support our ambition to react efficiently to deliver our commitments to our residents and community.

3

Improve succession planning and talent management and recruitment

We will ensure we open up opportunities for staff to build their skills, experience and knowledge so that working for our town can be a fulfilling career. Where we do need to recruit, we will ensure we recruit the very best candidates from those that apply and seek to ensure they represent the diverse backgrounds of our residents.

**FOCUS OUR BUDGET SO WE CAN DELIVER
ON OUR COMMITMENTS AND SECURE
INVESTMENT TO WORK FOR WATFORD**

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE’LL DO

1

Ensure our investment portfolio delivers maximum value to the council

We will ensure we are actively managing our investment portfolio, including exploring new opportunities to protect our income levels, manage risk and maximise value over the longer term, so that we can continue to provide high-quality services to our residents and businesses.

2

Assess the feasibility of Growth Fund

We will assess the feasibility of using our financial strength to support economic growth and provide an investment return through investing in start-up and growth opportunities.

3

Deliver the council’s financial recovery

We will reset our finances in the light of the pressures created by COVID-19 and based on insight about possible future pressures, which will allow us to fund priorities to help Watford recover.

4

Manage the council finances

We will ensure that our budgets align with our priorities and that budget management is robust, forward-looking and supports the best possible service outcomes for the money we have available.

OPPORTUNITY

**WELCOME INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND NEW
WAYS OF WORKING TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE**

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

1

Ensure that our use of digital technology matches our ambition to deliver the best possible service to our residents

We will deliver a new ICT strategy for the next five-year period to ensure that we are making the most of new ICT and digital opportunities.

2

Deliver our Business Intelligence Strategy

We will improve how the council uses data and information to support well-informed decisions, improve performance and provide a better customer experience. We will use this information to monitor the delivery of our services for customers and to take action if something needs improving.

3

Ensure that the council's future office accommodation is fit for purpose

Learning the lessons from COVID-19 and listening to our staff, we will develop plans to ensure the council has modern, fit for purpose, sustainable and good value for money offices to work from.

4

Enhance agile ways of working for our staff

We will ensure that our staff are able to provide high-quality and efficient services to customers when they want them by opening up opportunities for staff to work remotely or in an agile way, helping the council to become an employer of choice.

5

Embed resilience across the organisation

We will ensure that our staff are planning ahead and have the necessary information, understanding and agility to manage any future disruption to services and learn from this.



THEME 2:

A thriving, diverse and creative town

CREATE THRIVING AND AFFORDABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR BUSINESS TO FLOURISH

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

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|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Progress our plans for the High Street North and Cultural Hub | We will take forward plans to revitalise the High Street North area to create a vibrant and attractive neighbourhood for all our residents to enjoy, as well as establishing a new area in the town for culture to flourish. |
| 2 | Develop Watford Business Park | We will develop Watford Business Park to create new, high-quality business space and employment opportunities for local people. |
| 3 | Create new neighbourhoods at Riverwell | We will continue to develop the new and vibrant neighbourhood at Riverwell with a high-quality mix of new homes, jobs, open spaces and community facilities, including a new car park for Watford General Hospital. The work at Riverwell will support the opportunity for West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust to deliver its ambition for our local hospital. |
| 4 | Make the best use of our small sites | We will renew sites owned by the council through the creation of new facilities for our community and new homes for local people to ensure that we are doing all we can with the land we own to provide what residents want and need. |

PROMOTE WATFORD AS AN ENTERPRISING TOWN WHERE BUSINESSES CAN INVEST, GROW AND SUCCEED

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

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|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Drive the economic recovery of Watford | We will develop our Watford 'Survive, Revive and Thrive' Recovery Plan to support the economic engine of our town as it survives COVID-19, revives and once again thrives. The Plan brings together a number of work streams to support our town through the immediate challenges that have arisen during lockdown and will help us all plan for the future in a very uncertain landscape to ensure Watford remains a vibrant economic hub in south west Hertfordshire. |
| 2 | Re-mobilise our town centre and local economy and support its recovery | We will continue our close working with Watford BID, intu, our businesses and other partners to position Watford town centre as the town centre of choice for our local people as well as the wider region, making it safe, welcoming and somewhere people know they can visit to socialise, dine-out, shop and enjoy. |
| 3 | Invigorate our small and medium businesses across the town | We will speak regularly to our smaller and medium-sized businesses and local business owners across the town. We will understand their strengths and concerns and, based on this, we will produce a package of practical help, support and advice to enable them to bounce back and thrive following the impact of COVID-19 and to support them through exit from the EU. |
| 4 | Attract and retain big business in Watford | Recognising the importance of big businesses to employment in the town, we will introduce new ways to engage with the town's larger businesses and major employers to give them a strong voice in Watford's economic future and to support their business plans for growth. This will include moving to a key account model for our top 50 firms, providing them with a direct link to the council. |
| 5 | Maximise opportunities for Watford | We will work closely with local partners, including the Hertfordshire Growth Board, to maximise opportunities for Watford within the county and wider sub-region. This will include joint working on schemes to benefit the whole town, such as improving the town's travel options, public spaces and schools. Our aim is to make Watford the obvious option for public investment in infrastructure to encourage economic prosperity to improve the lives of our residents and opportunities for our businesses, which will support the wider communities in Hertfordshire. |

ENSURE THE RIGHT MIX OF FACILITIES, SERVICES AND TRANSPORT LINKS AS PART OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO CREATE SUCCESSFUL, WELL-DESIGNED NEW COMMUNITIES

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE’LL DO

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| 1 | Achieve the right long-term balance of development, services and transport links for our town | We will produce, and deliver, a comprehensive new Local Plan for Watford, which will shape how the town will develop sustainably over the next 20 years and make sure that key development sites are underpinned with creative and well-considered masterplans. We will also work with other Hertfordshire councils on long-term spatial plans for Hertfordshire. |
| 2 | Champion high-quality design in Watford | Through the creation of a Place Shaping Panel, use of our 3D model and developing planning guidance, we will expand how the council’s planning function ensures that any development proposal designs are of a high quality. |
| 3 | Develop the Watford Junction Quarter | Recognising the importance of the Watford Junction area for so many of our residents and businesses, we will bring landowners together so we can move forward with our plans to create a new Watford neighbourhood that successfully combines new homes, station facilities, jobs, public space, school provision and community facilities for both our existing and new residents. |

MAKE SURE WE HAVE QUALITY HOMES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS, INCLUDING HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE THROUGH OWNERSHIP, PRIVATE RENTAL AND SOCIAL HOUSING

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE’LL DO

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| 1 | Deliver our Housing Strategy | We will produce and deliver a forward-looking Housing Strategy so that Watford continues to offer affordable and good-quality homes in thriving and sustainable neighbourhoods. |
| 2 | Delivery of Private Sector Housing Renewal activity | We will work to support the improvement of the standard of the town’s privately owned homes, including ensuring regulatory compliance, particularly where this can help people’s health and wellbeing. |
| 3 | Review our strategic partnerships | To ensure that we are making the most of our opportunities to deliver quality homes that meet the needs of local people, we will review our strategic housing partnerships and ensure that we all work together to provide quality homes for our residents. |

COMMUNITY

BUILD ON OUR NEW, GREENER WAYS TO TRAVEL IN AND AROUND WATFORD AND PROMOTE THE TRANSITION TO A LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

- 1** **Position Watford as a Sustainable Travel Town**

We will consult with a range of stakeholders to develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy. The Strategy will position Watford as a Sustainable Travel Town that promotes greener ways to travel, reduces congestion, helps people to make healthy travel choices and stimulates economic growth.
- 2** **Implement a demand-responsive transport scheme**

We will launch the ArrivaClick on-demand bus service for Watford and make sure it links effectively with all of Watford's greener ways to travel so that we can reduce congestion, improve air quality and provide another sustainable, but innovative, way for our residents, visitors and commuters to get around.
- 3** **Improve the cycling and walking network in Watford**

We will work with Hertfordshire County Council and our cycling community on our Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan to improve the cycling and walking network across our town so more people choose to cycle and walk around it. This will promote health and wellbeing, encourage residents and visitors to enjoy our public places, and ensure that our town becomes greener and cleaner for everyone, both now and for years to come.
- 4** **Champion proposals for a Mass-rapid Transport Scheme for Watford**

As part of our plans to encourage sustainable transport options, we will work closely with Hertfordshire Growth Board to secure the best Mass-rapid transport system for our town, providing a further option for our residents, visitors and commuters to travel sustainably.
- 5** **Continue to investigate opportunities to create a Low Carbon Transport Hub**

We will continue to investigate the potential for a Low Carbon Transport Hub in Watford town centre to encourage more use of public transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality for everyone.
- 6** **Make Watford a sustainable town**

Working with our partners, businesses and residents, we will, together, make Watford a more environmentally-friendly town that meets the target of net zero carbon by 2030. We will continue to implement sustainable transport initiatives, support low income households and the community to improve energy efficiency, implement our Tree and Green Spaces strategies to increase biodiversity, promote clear air campaigns and increase domestic recycling rates.
- 7** **Ensure that the council is a greener organisation**

We will ensure that the council is active in reducing its environmental impact and carbon footprint through our staff, our buildings and our operations. Sustainability will be integrated into our plans, we will reduce our use of single-use plastics, lead by example on low carbon travel, and carry out energy audits of our council buildings.



THEME 3:

A healthy and happy town

ENABLE OUR CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS TO FLOURISH

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

1

Maximise the cultural opportunities for the town

We will refresh Watford's Cultural Strategy to ensure our cultural and creative sectors can flourish, help to bring our community together, and provide a vibrant, diverse and exciting offer to residents and visitors.

2

Making the most of the town's cultural and entertainment venues

We will ensure that council-owned entertainment venues continue to provide a high-quality, varied and diverse entertainment programme for all in our town and further enhance the buildings so that they are modern and sustainable.

3

Enhance our cultural partnerships

We will work together with Watford's cultural partners and the South West Herts Growth Board on shared initiatives to build on the strength of the town's creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit and provide a strong cultural offering for the town and our residents which works to attract people to the town and supports businesses.

CELEBRATE OUR DIVERSITY, HERITAGE AND CULTURE TO MAKE WATFORD A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO SUCCEED FROM CHILDHOOD TO OLD AGE

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

1

Ensure that everyone living in our town has the opportunity to achieve their potential

We will work with all parts of our diverse community to ensure that we tackle inequality so that background is not a barrier to success in our town and all of our residents have the same opportunity to reach their potential.

2

Develop a heritage trail for Watford

Recognising Watford's rich culture and past, we will celebrate the town's heritage through developing a new innovative, digital heritage trail to bring Watford's past to life.

3

Review and reinvigorate how we celebrate our local heritage

Develop proposals for a modern and inspiring heritage service and museum that engages and educates our residents and visitors by telling the story of our town and its rich, diverse history.

4

Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing, including those with mental health issues

We will work closely with our partners to ensure that the right support is available for our residents who need it across the town. This will include Watford's Healthy Hub which will strengthen the health support available for local people, including mental health help and guidance.

5

Create a Dementia-Friendly Community

Working with businesses, partners, carers and residents living with dementia, we will champion Watford as a place where people living with dementia are understood, respected and supported.

6

Commemorate Watford's response to COVID-19

Building on the community spirit and outstanding work across the town during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will evolve Watford Together so that it commemorates Watford's response to the pandemic, recognises the invaluable contribution of our frontline workers, and provides opportunities for reflection for all parts of our community.

7

Enhance the town's character and its physical heritage

We will produce a refreshed Conservation Area Management Plan which ensures that we continue to protect the character of our town and enhances its future for local people.

ENSURE WE HAVE QUALITY EVENTS, RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTDOOR SPACES FOR PEOPLE TO GET TOGETHER, FEEL PART OF THE TOWN AND BOOST THEIR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

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| 1 | Complete Oxhey Activity Park | We will deliver Oxhey Activity Park, an exciting new venue for skateboarding, BMX and cycling, combined with a café and community facilities. |
| 2 | Create Woodside Sports Village | In order to provide modern and attractive facilities for sports and leisure for all the community, and our young residents in particular, to enjoy, we will deliver a new vision for Woodside that makes best use of the space available to provide new sports and leisure facilities in the town. |
| 3 | Revitalise the River Colne | We will improve the River Colne through Watford to make it a more appealing place for local people to enjoy and a better environment for plants and wildlife to flourish. |
| 4 | Improve our local parks | We will upgrade Watford's much-loved parks and open spaces, including Meriden Park, Lea Farm Recreation Ground, Cassiobury Park performance space and the town's outdoor playgrounds, so that they provide opportunities for our residents to exercise and spend time together, and enhance the biodiversity of the town. |
| 5 | Enhance our public spaces | We will improve public spaces across the town to provide excellent, safe and attractive outdoor spaces that support a greener Watford. This work will include the enhancement of key areas of our town such as St Albans Road, Clarendon Road and the Watford Junction Gateway, as well as other local street and open space improvement initiatives. |

WORK EVEN MORE CLOSELY WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR, TO BUILD A RESILIENT COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE SUPPORT EACH OTHER

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

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|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for those in need | We will build upon the success of our Watford Helps initiative and harness the community spirit established during the COVID-19 crisis to work in partnership with charitable, community and voluntary organisations focused on helping our vulnerable residents live healthy, happy and independent lives. |
| 2 | Ensure our community buildings benefit local residents | Through our Community Asset Review, we will make sure our community buildings are well maintained, and we will work with our community tenants to make sure the buildings maximise the benefits for our local people. |
| 3 | Ensure a safer Watford | We will work with partners and use our statutory powers to ensure that Watford is a safe place for all our residents. |

HEALTH &
WELLBEING

**WORK WITH PARTNERS TO END ROUGH SLEEPING
AND HELP PEOPLE ENJOY BETTER LIVES**

OUR ACTIONS

WHAT WE’LL DO

1

**Achieve and maintain
zero rough sleepers on
the streets of Watford**

We will agree a new Homelessness Strategy for Watford, which will be reviewed on an annual basis and adapted regularly to ensure that it remains valid and supporting those in our community to achieve and maintain zero rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.

2

**Support our residents with
more complex needs and
housing requirements**

We will develop a focused scheme to help those with more complex needs, looking at areas such as housing and other targeted support, and working with partner organisations to ensure that these services are provided.

3

**Continue partnership
working**

We will work with partners to ensure that there are no rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.



Staying focused on what matters



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