Harlow Council: *Working Together for Harlow* Corporate Plan 2018/19 - 2020/21



Harlow Council Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, Harlow Essex CM20 1WG www.harlow.gov.uk



Foreword by Cabinet

We are pleased to present this update to Harlow Council's Corporate Plan: Working Together for Harlow 2018 - 2021. This plan outlines the Council's vision, priorities and goals to drive improvement over the next three years and what we have already achieved in meeting them.

The Council has had a number of notable successes, including regenerating the Town Park, driving forward the delivery of the Enterprise Zone, modernising thousands of Council homes, the celebrations for Harlow's 70th birthday and planning permission achieved for Junction 7a of the M11.

The new Living Wage rate was announced last November, Harlow is proud to be an accredited Living Wage employer which means the Council pays at least the voluntary Living Wage rate. It was in 2013 that the Council was the first Council in Essex to become an accredited Living Wage Employer and today it is one of over 3,500 employers to pay the rate, including the Council's Local Authority Trading Company HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd.

The Council hosted an 'immersive visit' from the Cities and Local Growth Unit, Government's local growth team – a partnership between the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy & the Department for Communities & Local Government. The visit was attended by over 60 representatives from the Growth Unit, as well as local stakeholders. The visit included a tour of the Town and the Town Centre; and discussions on the future of Harlow such as Town Centre regeneration, skill needs, infrastructure, housing and economic growth.

The resources available to the Council are under increasing pressure and cuts will continue to its external funding. However, the creation of a Local Authority Trading Company has enable the Council the flexibility to meet future challenges whilst making efficiencies in the delivery of the services for housing repairs and maintenance, street cleaning and ground maintenance.

It is more important than ever that the Council is open and transparent about the decisions it needs to make and that it is driven by a set of values and priorities that have fairness and equality at the heart of everything it does. This enables everyone to participate and take advantage of the many great things that Harlow has to offer.

Introduction

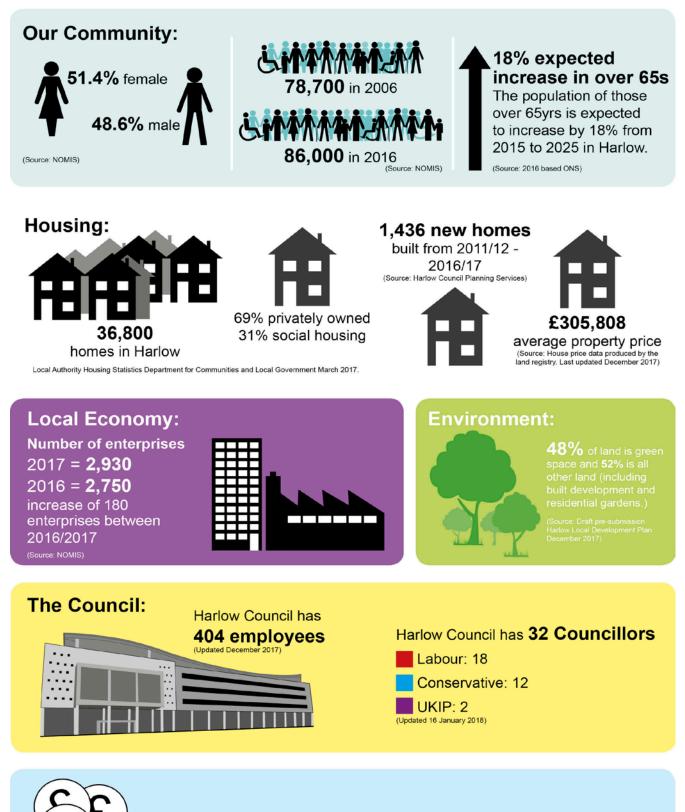
A Fairer Harlow, A Harlow to be Proud of

Working with the whole community of Harlow, including Government, the Voluntary Sector, Businesses, Faith Groups and others, the Council wants to achieve the following:

- Reducing inequality and supporting all Harlow's citizens to reach their full potential, actively contribute and benefit from all that Harlow has to offer.
- Harlow to be a great place to grow up, with children getting the best start in life, being protected from harm, being healthy, happy and ready to learn as they start school, enjoying school and achieving their academic and social potential. Children and young people should have access to a range of activities to enable them to make a positive contribution to their communities and to realise their potential and talent.
- To develop opportunities for learning beyond school age, providing a mix of further and higher education suited to the needs of residents and employers.
- Harlow to be an excellent place to do business, with the right infrastructure and with a highly skilled workforce that meets the needs and expectations of existing and potential employers in the town and provides employment opportunities for Harlow people that pay a decent wage.
- Harlow residents to have good health and wellbeing, with the Council playing a leading role in tackling the underlying root causes of poor health and the issues that affect wellbeing.
- Harlow to be a great place to grow older with people living happy, healthy and independent lives.
- Harlow to have great community spirit, with people actively participating in sustainable communities, taking pride in Harlow, its environment and its people.
- All of the neighbourhoods in the town to be desirable places to live with homes appropriate for people of different needs and resources and at different points in their lives, attractive and well-kept buildings and open spaces, good roads, parking and public transport and with people being and feeling safe and secure.
- People to get along, including with people from different backgrounds.
- Projecting local pride in Harlow onto a regional and national stage to promote Harlow as a great place to live, shop, work, visit and do business.
- Harlow to have high quality community cultural and sporting events, attractions and facilities for residents and visitors to experience, with a range of places for visitors to stay.

Signed by The Cabinet of Harlow Council

Harlow in Numbers



Annual Budget (NET) 2016/2017 £10.5 million March 2017

Corporate Plan Achievements 2017/2018

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	Housing		Regeneration & Thriving Economy
•	Five year £100 million investment in Council housing renewal and improvements has been invested in Council homes, with over 48,000 improvements in more than 9,000 different homes.	•	Development of the Enterprise Zone continues. The new access road and infrastructure has been delivered, resulting in a fully serviced site for the Harlow Science Park. At Kao Park, the first data centre has been completed.
•	Continued the strong performance in the collection of rent and service charges, the turnaround of empty properties and repairs to tenants' homes. Achieved a National Accreditation Award for	•	The regeneration of the Briars, Copshall Close and Aylets Field has progressed well, with the first new tenants moving into their new homes at the newly named Atelier development.
	Supported Housing services and continuing to provide extra care housing at a time when funding has ceased for providing support to the elderly and vulnerable tenants.	•	Regeneration of the Town Park and Pets Corner continues. The education and volunteering elements of the project are successfully continuing.
•	Continued to make the best use of stock, tackling local priorities, prioritising energy efficiency schemes that can make a difference in tackling	•	Public Health England completed the purchase of their new site and Planning permission for their new HQ and Science Hub has been granted.
	fuel poverty; and implement a five year Modern Homes Programme (HIP) for maintaining the housing stock.	•	A new Economic Development Strategy was produced and adopted by the Council.
•	Managed the smooth transition from Kier Harlow Ltd to HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd for the	•	Planning permission for M11 Junction 7A was achieved.
	delivery of the Council's Repair, Maintenance and Environmental Services.	•	Hosted an 'immersive visit' from the Cities and Local Growth Unit (DCLG) and other senior civil
•	Celebrated for the fourth year running the partnership with Essex County Council and		servants to explore opportunities for working together to deliver benefits for Harlow.
	Manorcourt Homecare to provide extra care housing at Sumners Farm Close for the most elderly and vulnerable.	•	Harlow has been highlighted in the Government's Industrial Strategy.

Successful Children and Young People

- The outstanding educational progress and contribution of 66 young people was recognised at the fourth annual Harlow Educational Progress Awards.
- The Council in partnership with Essex County Council have been working to address the issue of school readiness. Since the inception of the project the percentage of early year's children who have reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) has risen from 38.1% 2013 to 72.1% 2017.
- The Council employs a total of five apprentices in a range of service areas and is looking to employ more in the future.
- Harlow Youth Council published a Mental Health leaflet to help young people deal effectively with stress and anxiety.
- The Council has appointed a Member's Safeguarding Champion.

Wellbeing & Social Inclusion

- The Health and Wellbeing Board for Harlow has been established with a new strategic approach and framework for delivery.
- A new Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being developed and will be adopted by the Council in 2018/19.
- Age Well Group has undertaken projects such as 'Stay Well this Winter' campaign, seated exercises, falls prevention and support for carers.
- The Active Harlow network has supported community based organisations to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities to many residents.
- The Leah Manning Centre has provided a wide range of activities to support older people and reduce social isolation.
- As part of the Council's commitment to mental health, Councillors have appointed a Mental Health Champion to drive this agenda forward. A programme of external training on Mental Health Awareness was delivered to over 250 frontline employees, which they now use in day to day operations.
- The Council's Environmental Health Team delivered TuckIN, a healthy-eating campaign supporting take-away and food businesses in offering healthier menus. The TuckIN campaign was a finalist at the LGC Public Health Awards in 2017.

A Clean and Green Environment

- Removal of fly-tipping has consistently performed better than the tight target of 3.5 hours.
- Harlow is amongst the best performing areas in the country with regard to the lowest amount of residual (black bag) waste collected per household.
- Harlow Town Park and Parndon Wood Nature Reserve have both retained Green Flag status, placing them amongst the best publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the Country.
- The Council's historic Oakwood Pond has been transformed by a restoration project in partnership with the County Council, contractors and local volunteers.
- Court action under Health and Safety law resulted in a landmark £1.8 million fine, after a National Company based in Harlow failed to protect its workers from the risk of Legionnaires' disease.
- Over 95% of businesses in Harlow met the Food Standards Agency's "Broadly Compliant" standard for food safety, placing the Town in the top 20% of local authority areas.
- Inspection of houses in Multiple Occupation under the Council's Additional Licensing scheme were carried out to target; with 100% of the re-licensing work completed, ensuring safer and healthier homes for residents.

Council Values

The Council strives to be an organisation where people make things happen and promote excellence, good customer service and continuous improvement. We want to ensure that all staff are consistently aware of how their role contributes to the achievement of corporate priorities, are clear about what is expected, and share the Council's values. The Council is committed to promoting equality, challenging discrimination and developing community cohesion.

The Council's values are:

Integrity	Clear, meaningful and honest two way communication with staff, customers and partners.
Value People	Treating everyone fairly, equally and with mutual respect. Investing in staff, recognising individual and team contributions to achieve success.
Inspirational	Support and encourage accountability, creativity and innovation amongst our staff, key stakeholders and partners.

Council Priorities

Five priorities and three principles have been identified for the next three years.



Council Principles

Being the Community Leader

Sound Resource Management

Equalities and Fairness

These are described in more depth on the subsequent pages of the Corporate Plan.

Our Vision: Working Together for Harlow

More and Better Housing



"Housing remains a top priority for me and the Administration.

It has been another year of challenges, with fewer resources to tackle local priorities. Despite this, the Council continues to perform to meet the challenges and opportunities facing housing in Harlow with reduced budgets. The Housing service continues to report strong landlord performance overall with our top priority continuing to be for more and improved housing, that is generally affordable.

The Council will continue to have fewer resources to meet its priorities, but will continue to plan ahead. No financial planning can ignore the decision of the EU Referendum for Britain to leave the European Union; Brexit is unchartered territory bringing uncertainties regarding the Nation's economy.

My priorities for housing and what is important locally are; making more housing available in Harlow, with a wider choice of housing types which are genuinely affordable. Tackling the growing need for Supported Housing, helping to improve choices for those in housing need, improving residents' health and wellbeing by improving housing conditions, improving housing standards with energy efficient, modern home facilities and tackling local priorities and statutory requirements."

Councillor Mark Wilkinson – Portfolio Holder for Housing

Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 Invest in the Housing stock. More housing available in Harlow, with a wider choice of housing types of all tenures which include affordable, social rented and council housing. Work towards improving choices for those in housing need. Encourage and facilitate effective tenant and leaseholder engagement. Tackle homelessness by implementing the Homelessness Strategy. Increase the range and type of supported housing. 	 Providing and maintaining high quality housing stock, with all the Council homes in the Town meeting the Modern Homes standards. Publish an annual Housing Investment Programme (HIP) and invest in improvements to housing conditions. Commencing a £1.9m modernisation programme to replace District Heating schemes over a planned period addressing the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock. Undertaking any additional 'fire safety' works that may result from the outcomes of the Grenfell Inquiry. Commencing a long term programme of 'house building' for all housing types that are genuinely affordable. Updating the Homelessness Strategy & Action plan, and Harlow Homelessness Partnership Implementing the Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. Implementing a five year plan of Housing Related Support (HRS) to provide an effective framework for reducing resources both within the Council's General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to balance priorities against reduced resources and the wider priorities of the local Council landlord service. 	

Regeneration and a Thriving Economy



"Harlow New Town was built around principles of sustainable communities, with its green spaces a fundamental part of the design. We remain committed to these principles and the regenerating of the Town with high quality jobs for local people, and reinvigorating Harlow as a great place to live and work. This renewal has been accelerated with work on the Town Park, the renewal of our housing estates, building Council homes, and the successful delivery of the Enterprise Zone which is making significant progress.

We will continue to focus on driving forward this regeneration, renewing neighbourhoods, attracting inward investment, providing high quality jobs and lobbying to ensure we have the right infrastructure in place to enable sustainable growth. Our new Economic Development Strategy builds on our success of the past five year setting out our strategy to continue and build on the successes in terms of business, jobs, place and people. The Council will continue with its plans to improve the look and vibrancy of Broad Walk and Market Square to help attract investment. Harlow has a bright future and the Council will play a full and active role in bringing this about."

Councillor Tony Durcan – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Enterprise

Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 Produce and deliver a new Regeneration Strategy for Harlow. Address the challenges and opportunities as set out in the Economic Development Strategy. Lead on the delivery of the Enterprise Zone (EZ). Drive forward the regeneration of the Town Centre. Deliver the Briars, Copshall Close & Aylets Field housing regeneration scheme. Deliver more housing of all tenures, ensuring we maximise the opportunity for affordable housing. Deliver a number of neighbourhood regeneration schemes. Work with Public Health England to deliver real benefits for local residents and businesses. Work with the government and other partners to ensure we address growth in an inclusive, creative and cohesive way. Maximise opportunities from Public Health England. Promote Harlow as an attractive location for business. Increasing investment in infrastructure required for Harlow's economic and housing growth. Working to ensure our numbers of successful businesses increase. 	 Progressing our dialogue with Government and Essex County Council to ensure that Harlow's needs and opportunities, as identified in our economic development and regeneration strategies, continue to be raised and addressed in the light of the Industrial Strategy, and that investment is leveraged. Continuing to lead the Harlow Enterprise Zone Board and with our development partners progress the build out of the Harlow Science Park and attract target sector businesses. Producing an Area Action Plan for the Harlow Town Centre, delivering public realm improvements and continuing to explore and develop opportunities in partnership with town centre stakeholders and potential investors. Ensuring the delivery of Phases 2 & 3 of the Briars, Copshall Close and Aylets Field housing regeneration scheme. Continuing to develop and deliver our programme of neighbourhood regeneration schemes including Prentice Place, Lister Medical Centre, Perry Road and a programme of housing site developments. Working in partnership with Public Health England to deliver real benefits for local people and businesses addressing employment, skills development and supply chain opportunities. Establishing a Harlow Skills Forum to work together to promote skills development with residents and businesses. Continuing to support business sector e.g. M11 Health Enterprise Forum, the Manufacturing and Engineering Forum, and the Harlow & District Chamber of Commerce. Working as active partners in the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium. 	

Wellbeing and Social Inclusion



"Harlow is an enterprising Town with a proud history of promoting fairness and equality. Despite these successes however, health inequalities and deprivation exist within some of our communities. We will continue to work with partners to address the inequalities that affect our population so as to actively engage in making Harlow healthy and a great place to live well and work. We want all Harlow residents to have good health and wellbeing and for residents to have a role in tackling the underlying root causes of poor health and the social issues that affect wellbeing.

Harlow Council continues to do all that it can to tackle Anti-social behaviour and to help us achieve this we have recruited an additional three Community Safety Officers who will concentrate their work in the town centre and neighbourhood centres. We hope that this will have a significant effect on how safe people feel and reduce the fear of crime. The restoration of the Town Park with its gardens, paddling pools, Pets Corner, outdoor gym and many other facilities, provides a glorious location for the residents of Harlow to spend their recreation time whilst improving their health and wellbeing. The provision of the "Changing Places toilet facilities during 2017 ensures that's Pets Corner and the Town Park is accessible to all members of the community."

Councillor Emma Toal – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community

Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 Achieve the key ambitions of the Harlow Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plans. Embed Public Health and Wellbeing to deliver a more coordinated approach to addressing the wider determinants of health in Harlow. Work more collaboratively with the wider partners to deliver Health and Wellbeing such as Essex County Council, the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and West Essex Public Health Partnership in order to inform wider policies and developments as well as to attract opportunities and funding for Harlow Council. Develop a Mental Health Strategy 2018-2021. Work with partners to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse. Further develop and maintain a robust partnership approach to the provision of discretionary services. Improve the customer experience across the Council. 	 Launching Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2028 and 'live well' campaign. Monitoring Health and Wellbeing outcomes and initiatives with reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board. Promoting and implementing workplace Health and Wellbeing. Setting up an internal Public Health Officers Group to bring together (and deliver) all the elements of public health in a coordinated approach. Identifying the options for the Leah Manning Centre and prepare for the Essex County Council tender exercise. Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and undertaking targeted work on priority local community safety issues, including emerging trends by working with partners from the Safer Harlow Partnership and the production of Action Plans. Reviewing the Council's Emergency Planning strategy and implementing procedures together with training for both internal Harlow Council employees and community volunteers. Reviewing the Council's PREVENT Strategy and producing both internal and external Action Plans. Continuing to implement the Action Plan from the Customer Service Review. Continuing to support the work of the Harlow Domestic Abuse Forum and roll out the J9 domestic abuse initiative Town wide. Developing and implementing a revised Community Engagement Strategy. 	

A Clean and Green Environment



"The master plan of Sir Frederick Gibberd took a landscape-led approach to developing Harlow New Town where the compact urban structure was formed around the protection of natural features. Land was saved by concentrating housing developments and this was added to the landscape which separated one neighbourhood area from another. This led to the creation of the Green Wedge network, fundamental to Harlow's unique character.

Just under half of the entire land in Harlow is formed of open space – with a mix of designated Green Wedge, Green Belt and other Open Space. We will complete the production of the Local Plan in 2018, enabling such assets to be protected against the threat of unwarranted intrusion and inappropriate development for the benefit of both current and future generations.

I know from talking to residents and from previous budget consultations that keeping our streets and public places clean and tidy and looking after our parks and open spaces remain high priorities for Harlow residents. Improvements in street cleaning and maintenance of our green spaces have been sustained.

Protection and maintenance of these spaces, comes at a cost and efficiency savings have been reinvested in extra grass cutting and green space management and have made a positive impact. I look forward to continue to work proactively with HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd to improve the care of our green spaces and streetscapes. I also look forward to the completion and adoption of the new Local Plan for Harlow and the Town Centre Area Action Plan. These important documents set out the land use policies and objectives of the Council in pursuit of the regeneration of Harlow."

Councillor Danny Purton – Portfolio Holder for Environment

Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:
 Improve the cleanliness of the Town and the maintenance of open spaces. Deliver a Town wide 'spring clean'. Minimise domestic waste and maximise reuse and recycling. Invest in unadopted roads and pavements. Tackle Town-wide parking problems Complete Harlow's Local Plan Complete the Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) Advance the regeneration of Harlow via the Local Plan and the Garden Town initiative. Improve Flood Defence capability. 	 Re-investing the efficiency savings from the Annual Service Charge to improve the services in Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance. Continuing to promote and enhance residents' participation in wider waste minimisation and recycling issues by working with Essex Waste Management Partnership to deliver a communications campaign emphasising the importance of proper use of the full range of waste and recycling services available. Working with Essex County Council to improve its highway inspection regime to ensure problems are identified sooner to minimise trips and slips. Completing Regulation 19 Consultation and the Local Public Enquiry for Harlow's Local Plan. Working with Essex Flood Defence Board to identify and address 'land drainage' issues in a sustainable way.

Successful Children and Young People



"The Council works to support the young people of Harlow in a wide range of ways.

We have implemented a school readiness programme to help ensure that children get the best start in life, and in November 2017 the Educational Progress Awards were held for the fourth year running. The awards aim to recognise and reward young people who have made significant progress in their education and recognise the contribution that they have made to their schools and the community. The Council continues to prioritise the improvement of educational outcomes in Harlow and will be working hard toward this goal in 2018-2019.

The Youth Council, with whom I have had the opportunity to work with closely this year, offers young people the chance to develop a huge number of skills, interact with the towns' decision makers and have their opinions heard."

Councillor Emma Toal – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community

Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 Help to improve outcomes for Harlow's children and young people Support young people to be more involved in decision making Work with partners to support families with complex needs Supporting Apprenticeships for young people Safeguarding children and young people 	 Continuing to develop the Youth Council. Continuing to work with partners to improve the educational attainment of Harlow's young people. Ensuring Harlow's Educational Attainment Awards continues. Continuing to support officers to attend a range of multi-agency partnership meetings that promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all Harlow children. Increasing the number of apprentices the Council employs over the next three years. Continuing to support the delivery of the Short Break services for children and young people with disabilities. 	

Our Principles

Being the Community Leader		
Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 Promote the needs of Harlow. Maintain the Council's role as the recognised community leader. Improve opportunities for Harlow residents to participate in local democracy and decision making. Improve communication with the public through the Community Engagement Strategy. Increase transparency through Joint Finance Performance Reports (JFPR), the Procurement Strategy, Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). Ensure the Council's procurement framework supports ethical businesses. 	 Continuing to lobby Essex County Council and Central Government for key infrastructure improvements for Harlow. Continuing to implement the changes for transparency through Open Data, Freedom of Information (FOI) and General Data Protection Regulations. Continuing to lobby Central Government to relocate Princess Alexandra Hospital in order to meet the needs of a growing population and increasing demand. Continuing to lobby Central Government in regards to the Council keeping control of its Local Plan. 	
Sound Resource Management		
Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
Ensure the Council is economic, efficient and effective.Get the best from the resources available.	 Continuing to roll out innovative technologies to improve efficiency. Implementing the Council's ICT Strategy which addresses the future investment required. Continuing to seek new and innovative ways to secure alternative sources of funding to meet projected budget shortfalls and protect services wherever possible. 	
Equalit	ties and Fairness	
Our goals for the next three years:	We will achieve our goals by:	
 The Council is committed to ensuring that its decision making is open, transparent and fair, taking into account the diversity of the district and ensuring equalities are incorporated. 	 Continuing to ensure the Council's Procurement Strategy reflects its values of Fairness and Equality. Ensuring appropriate Equality training is rolled out to (and taken up by) all Officers and Councillors. Reviewing and updating the Corporate Equalities Policy for the next three years. Developing a Corporate Equalities Action Plan in consultation with representatives from the people with protected characteristics. 	

Performance

To ensure the Council remains on target, it is essential to monitor the progress of our priorities and goals. This is done by monitoring performance indicators relating to areas such as waste management, services for planning, benefits and housing. We regularly compare our performance against other councils, celebrate areas of good performance and provide challenge to areas where we are not performing so well.

The Council publishes a statement of its performance each quarter. These reports include information on the milestones achieved, performance indicators and the Council's finances. Performance reports are presented to Cabinet and when agreed are published here.

http://www.harlow.gov.uk/performance-reports

Corporate Delivery Plan

The Corporate Delivery Plan provides further details on how the Council will deliver its goals for each of the Corporate Priorities and Principles in 2018/19.