



Assistant Chief Executive's Service Business Plan

Plan 2018-22



Meeting the challenges

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Meeting the Challenges - Foreword by the Executive Director and Cabinet Member

The past year has been one of change and uncertainty for local government. The changing political and economic landscape continues to shift; with negotiations for Britain's exit from the European Union, uncertainty of central government priorities following the General Election, reducing budgets and changing demographics applying acute pressure on the delivery of our services.

Over the last 5 years, The Council has reshaped services saving more than £100m and generating around £70m in income each year from shared services, traded services, fees and charges. We have strived to improve and innovate in the delivery of our services, responding to the changing expectations of our residents and making a commitment to improved partnership working.

As Buckinghamshire changes, we must develop strategies to drive place based growth, securing economic prosperity whilst protecting our rich and varied natural environment, protecting our most vulnerable and ensuring our residents live happy and healthy lives.

We will focus on building the right skills, developing our commercial acumen to attract investment and secure organisational resilience. We will work with partners, beyond organisational boundaries, across the public and private sector, to deliver beneficial economic and social outcomes.

The Assistant Chief Executive's Service is at the heart of the Council. It provides strategic leadership and corporate guidance, helping the organisation plan ahead by offering clear intelligence, professional policy advice, high-quality member support, developing efficient and effective council-wide strategies and frameworks, working with our partnerships and providing organisational governance. We support our political leadership to shape and respond to local, regional and national developments affecting Buckinghamshire.



Martin Tett
Leader of the Council



Sarah Ashmead
Assistant Chief Executive



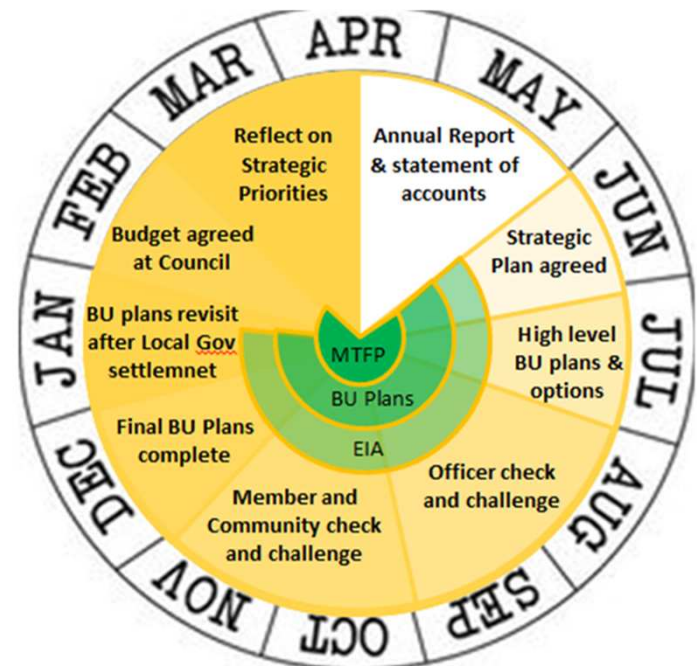
An explanation of the corporate planning process



The Council's corporate planning process brings its key plans together in a clear hierarchy that shows the relationship between long term vision for the Council and the mid-term plan of action; the plan for the Council's finances, all the way down to what each Business Unit plans to achieve in the next year.

These plans cover a four year period but are refreshed every year to ensure they are fit for purpose. Plans are monitored quarterly by the Business Unit Boards (Senior Managers for the service area, Cabinet Member and Deputy) where achievements / risks are escalated to the Corporate Management Team.

Watch the [clip](#) to understand more about the strategic plan priorities.



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Explanation of our Service Areas



Sara Turnbull
Democratic Services

Democratic Services champions the role of Members and supports Members to undertake their various roles. The Head of Service is the statutory scrutiny officer for the Council. The Service provides advice on the Council's Constitution and supports the Monitoring Officer on the Council's standards framework. Governance support and advice is provided to all Committees and the wider organisation.

We are responsible for independent policy support to Scrutiny Committees as well as high quality administrative & clerking support to the Council's Committees and a number of other meetings. The Team also manages, maintains and supports officers to use the Council's governance software system.



Claire Hawkes
Policy and Partnerships

The team provides strategic advice and policy support to Members, leadership team and business units. From research, analysis and regular policy bulletins, the team helps the organisation to have effective forward planning.

We also provide policy support to Members and Senior Leadership in local, regional and national roles allowing the organisation to be represented within the local government landscape.

We also ensure corporate oversight of the equalities framework. Coordinating and monitoring action plans along with researching and disseminating best practice

The team also lead on Brexit planning and the NLGN partnership events.

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Sophie Payne
**Customer and
Communications**

We provide specialist advice and expertise to Members and business units and ensure that communications and engagement activities are coordinated, cost-efficient and effective, directly supporting the achievement of Member priorities and business unit outcomes. Key activities include marketing and behaviour change communications, media relations, branding, internal communications, digital communications and social media, plus support for consultation and engagement.

We operate as a shared communications and engagement service for the Council and the Buckinghamshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups, as well as working in partnership with wider public services across Buckinghamshire on shared priorities.

We also support the Council in ensuring effective and timely handling of Freedom of Information requests.



Jo Baschnonga
**Head of Insight
and Business
Improvement (BII)**

BII brings together several corporate functions working collectively to help the organisation plan ahead by offering clear intelligence, professional advice, developing appropriate and innovative council-wide strategies, frameworks and effective assurance internal controls.

The role of BII is to support Business Units and partners through the provision of high quality insight and intelligence to deliver their strategic priorities and outcomes in the most efficient and effective way; to identify opportunities for improvement and work with colleagues to deliver these.

BII supports Business Units' to understand demand on their services (now and in the future), and to plan, shape, and improve their services resulting in improved outcomes and a better customer experience.

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Linda Forsyth
**Deputy Monitoring
Officer and Head
of Complaints**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer provides legal and governance advice to the Monitoring Officer (Sarah Ashmead) and acts as Monitoring Officer in her absence including attending Cabinet meetings and meetings of the Regulatory and Audit Committee. Responsible for clearing reports to Council and Committees and advising on the call-in process. The Deputy Monitoring Officer is also responsible for the Complaints teams and all Local Government Ombudsman issues.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer is the Contract Manager for the Inter Authority Agreement with Harrow Borough Council (HBPL Agreement).



Clive Parker
**Civic and
Ceremonial Services**

The Civic and Ceremonial Services Team support the Chairman of Council and the Lord Lieutenant in a wide range of duties and advise the High Sheriff on ceremonial matters.

The Team keep the Chairman's diary and organise visits, awards ceremonies and receptions. Promote and manage the Armed Forces Covenant, and organise Armed Forces Day. Other projects include organisation of Royal Visits; Queen's Awards; Honours applications; Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition; the Council's County Show marquee; Heritage Open Weekend; Emotional Wellbeing Conference; management of the Judges Lodgings and the Old County Hall's Exhibition Suite

Who are we? – Key facts and achievements



Supported annual strategic plan refresh, annual report and debate



BII team won the Bucks Innovation Summit with the SEND improvement project



Communications won team of the year at 2017 BCC Hero's Awards



8 Scrutiny enquires conducted last year.




Shortlisted for Association of Democratic Services Officers Team of the Year



LG Communications Silver Award for Active Bucks



100 people trained in Think Councillor



18000 visits to webcasts.



49 Councillors inducted and supported



Cited as best practice in LGA publication for Brexit preparations



57 Best Kept Village Applications



Public Sector Communications Insight Award 2017

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Strengths

- Positive reputation with regular feedback from key partners
- Collaborative style and embedded business partner roles
- Strong relationship with Members
- High quality governance and constitutional advice
- Strong knowledge and skills base around all aspects of democracy
- Team of the year award (communications)
- Clearly defined roles
- Ability to escalate quickly and efficiently
- Good horizon scanning (policy bulletin)
- Experienced event management
- Shared communications and engagement service for the Council and the two Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups

Weaknesses

- Limited access to data prevents the Council harnessing full potential
- In some areas outdated tools and systems prevent smarter working
- Resilience due to small size of some teams
- Challenge of engagement across the Council and amongst all tiers of leadership

Opportunities

- Commercialisation- developing tools and products
- Further development of check and challenge across the Business Units
- Development and nurturing of relationships with key partners
- Further development of outcome focussed scrutiny
- Raise profile nationally

Threats

- Risk around silo based work streams
- Unsighted on high risk issues that could have a reputational and operational impact
- Antiquated systems that cannot support innovative and iterative technology
- Data quality
- Changes in the political landscape
- Staff turnover resulting in loss of knowledge

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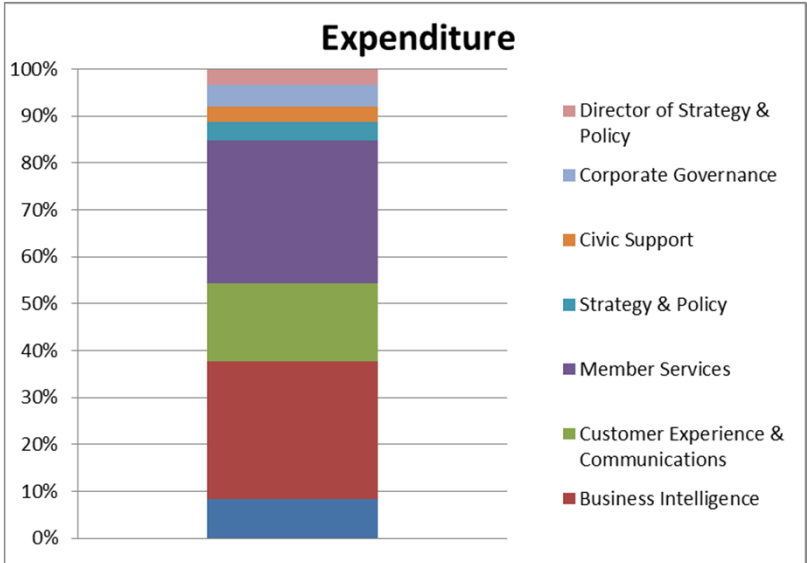
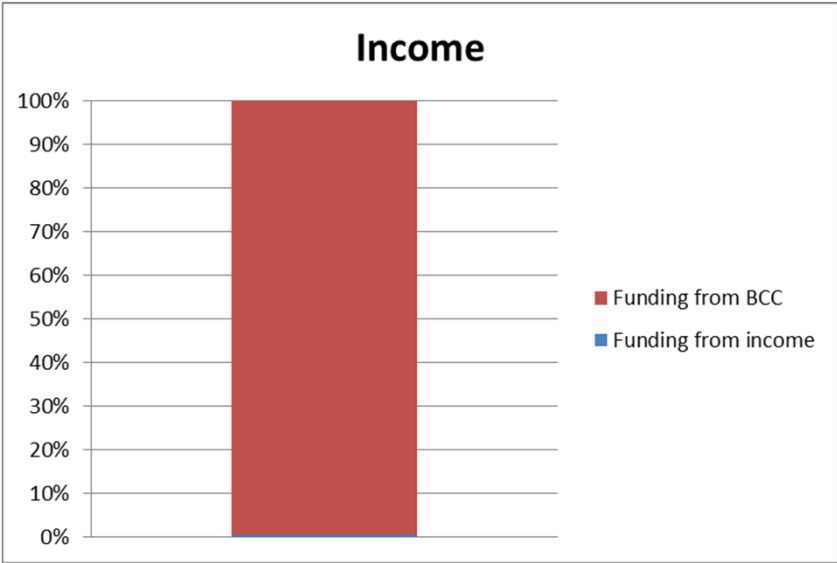
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The Assistant Chief Executive Service budget is predominantly an expenditure budget with a very small amount of income (0.5%), covering corporate strategy and policy activities as well as the support of members. Financial governance is discharged through the monthly ACES Board where the budget monitoring position is considered and feeds into the monthly CMT Budget Board.

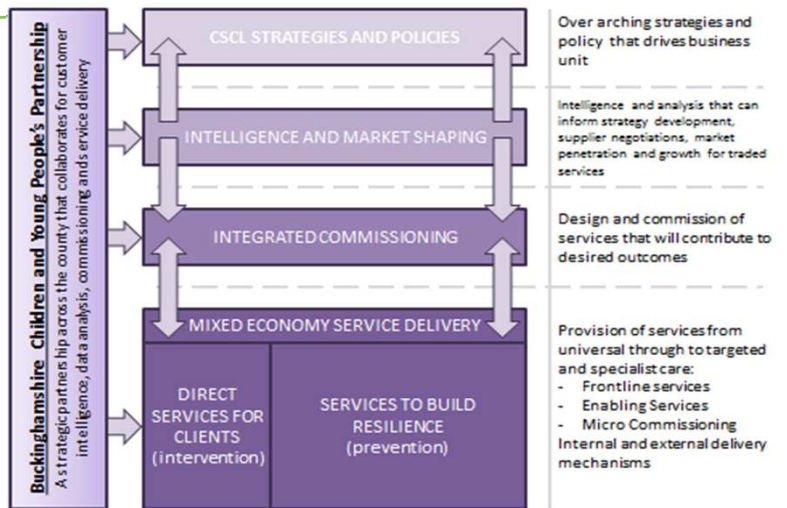


Business Intelligence & Insight

How Insight and Intelligence is informing our work

Key characteristics of Business Insight & Intelligence:

- Add strategic value to services
- Align and enable the delivery of the strategic priorities of our business units and the Council overall – for example assisting with the Change 4 Children programme (figure on right).
- Produce the quarterly corporate performance reports, whilst finding patterns and stories in data – and applying these to understand the drivers of performance.
- Enable services to improve, become more efficient and enhance the customer experience
- Scope and deliver improvement projects to drive corporate change programmes and improve outcomes for residents.



How are we using this information to develop our services / better value for money

BII colleagues have developed a robust process to enable the ongoing evaluation of performance measures, which will feed into the new corporate performance management system (Covalant). This is part of ongoing activity to ensure the authority is capturing the right metrics to successfully measure services across all Business Units.

BII is delivering the corporate BI tool programme to improve data accessibility, strengthen reporting capability, and promote self-service of information. The four delivery strands of the project:

1. Implement the Covalant cloud-based performance management system
2. Manage the tender and development of a 'data Integration platform'.
3. Consolidate and upgrade SAP Business Objects.
4. Improve the analytical capabilities of staff (training) and enhance data visualisation.

BII will also:

- Support delivery of the People's strategy across the organisation by providing accurate and timely information.
- Work side-by-side with the Business Improvement function of BII to inform service & corporate change.
- Continue to examine and improve data quality across BCC.
- Assist in the delivery of new data protection law – General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).



How we deliver our key objectives and priorities

Service Outcome 1

Support **elected members** in their different roles and ensure efficient governance and legal advice is in place to support **good decision-making**

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Supporting elected Members in their different roles and ensure efficient governance service to support good decision-making to the Council's Committees **March 2019**
- Work with Members to refresh the strategic plan, including development of an annual plan to evidence on progress against priorities **May 2019**
- A Constitution review is undertaken by **March 2018**
- The HBPL Contract delivers its KPIs and financial objectives **March 2018**

Service Outcome 2

Provide **strategic advice and support** to Cabinet Members and CMT, ensuring that the Council responds to local and national developments, and contributes effectively to **strategic partnerships**

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Organise the interactive Full Council debate on a relevant policy topic (generated from working with Members on the strategic plan refresh) **May 2019**
- Work in partnership with the Local Government Association to ensure the leader appropriately prepared within his LGA role (**throughout the year until March 2019**)
- Prepare regular policy bulletins to support the organisation with effective forward planning and horizon scanning (**monthly until March 2019**)
- Lead a task and finish group reporting progress / escalations to Members and CMT on planning for a successful Brexit (**March 2019**)

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How we deliver our key objectives and priorities

Service Outcome 3

Coordinate the delivery of an effective **business planning** framework - ensuring that clear priorities are agreed and communicated, supported by delivery plans and **performance reporting** arrangements which enable the organisation to meet its statutory responsibilities and achieve the outcomes set by the Council

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Support the business units to prepare robust BU Plans produced each year with measurable outcomes against strategic priorities **March 2019**
- Complete an equalities self assessment and escalate key issues to CMT **March 2019**
- Support performance reporting across all BU's, including implementation of a new corporate performance management system **March 2019**
- Implement a new people-focused approach to managing performance, designed to turn talk into action – 'Better Performance Every Day' **March 2019**

Service Outcome 4

Promote **collaboration** across the Council, providing expertise, capacity and a critical friend to support business units with their **improvement and transformation** activity

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Support with corporate inspections **March 2019**
- Support the Children's transformation programme **March 2019**
- Support the Adults transformation programme **March 2019**
- Support the move to a unitary authority **March 2018**

How we deliver our key objectives and priorities

Service Outcome 5

Deliver effective **communication services** that enhance the reputation of the Council and the CCGs, and ensure that residents and staff are well informed and engaged in the delivery of services

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Communication projects - Prevention, integration of health and social care, Fostering, Early Help Review, National and regional infrastructure (including HS2), Supported Transport **March 2019**
- Effective operational internal communications, plus employee engagement, culture change and improved customer experience via the Better Every Day campaign. **March 2019**
- Operate as a shared communications and engagement service for the Council and the two Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups. **March 2019**

Service Outcome 6

Promote the **profile of Buckinghamshire** at a local, regional and national level, including through civic and ceremonial activities

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Manage the Chairman’s Diary, Receptions and Awards Ceremonies, Royal Visits to the County and Armed Forces Day **March 2019**
- Administer the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition March and organise the County Show marquee **March 2019**
- Administer the process for the presentation of Queen’s Awards and Voluntary Service Awards **March 2019**
- Support the Honours Committee in considering nominations for honours **March 2019**



How we deliver our key objectives and priorities

Service Outcome 7

Champion excellent **customer service** across the organisation through effective handling of customer feedback and Freedom of Information requests

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Effective handling of customer feedback and Freedom of Information requests to deliver excellent customer service and meet statutory requirements. **March 2018**
- Complaints are dealt with in a timely way **March 2018**

Service Outcome 8

Develop and deliver high quality **insight and intelligence** focused on issues affecting Buckinghamshire and its residents, leading and embedding evidence-based working culture

Our main SMART key actions are:

- Develop a suite of insight and intelligence tools, supporting benchmarking, data collection and analysis **March 2018**
- Develop scoping and delivery of insight and intelligence products, leading and embed evidence-based working culture – positioning BCC as a learning organisation **March 2018**
- Enable sharing of intelligence, data & information via our corporate information governance & data protection function
- ‘Turn the curve’ on a range of performance challenges & ‘wicked issues’ through embedding an intelligence-led approach to driving improvement

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Our Legal Obligations

As a local government authority, Buckinghamshire County Council has a number of legal obligations and the Council is fully committed to meet the requirements of the relevant legislation, particularly in the execution of its statutory duties.

The Council is committed to:

- Address unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism
- Protect and share data and information as appropriate in line with current legislation

As an employer and as service provider we will:

- Ensure Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for projects when deemed necessary.
- Undertake at least annual equalities training for staff and Members
- Ensure corporate complaint procedures, disciplinary rules and practices are accessible.
- Ensure stakeholders will be consulted on change to ensure services remain and/or become more inclusive.
- Monitor our workforce to make sure we're attracting the best candidates from a diverse talent pool

Public Sector Equality Duty Compliance

ACES draws together customer insight and evidence from across the Council which is used to inform the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes. In doing so it highlights areas of inequalities tackling residents' issues around deprivation, disadvantage or health or educational inequalities for example. The Strategic Plan Outcomes aim to help and protect some of the most vulnerable individuals and communities. ACES also develops communications and digital solutions that are inclusive and accessible.

How we achieve this

The Assistant Chief Executive Service recognises its specific duties under the Equalities Act of 2010. We will:

- Provide corporate focus on the Council's Equalities duties, ensuring a best-practice approach across the organisation.
- Monitor the demographic makeup of our workforce to ensure our recruitment and retention processes are fairly applied
- Monitor the workforce to ensure that all staff take advantage of the training offered
- Ensures all staff embed equalities and diversity into their work practices
- Provide equality of opportunity to ensure residents are actively encouraged to participate in our local democracy