

Corporate Plan Update

2011 – 2016



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Foreword

This Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the council over the next five years. It lays out what we will do to ensure the best possible services are delivered for our residents, partners and businesses at a time of significant change in local government.

This is a period of sustained downward pressure on public finances and as the new Government is focused on reducing the budget deficit, we will need to do more with less to meet the rising expectations of the quality of public services. This means continuing to build on our growing reputation for changing the way services are managed and delivered. This has the potential to save taxpayers money, while services are maintained or even improved.

The way local government operates is changing and the “Big Society” is about empowering people to get more involved in their local communities and in the running of public services. It is centred on “localism”. Crawley already has a strong tradition of community involvement and it is something we want to build upon. There will be more opportunities for people to get involved, which presents an exciting opportunity for local people to shape the place where they live and be at the heart of the future developments in public services.

There will be some uncomfortable choices and we are fully committed to making those decisions after a dialogue with the community, local businesses, the voluntary sector, councillors, staff and others affected by proposed changes to services.

The achievement of the priorities set out in this Corporate Plan will be hugely dependant on the professionalism, energy and creativity of councillors and staff. We recognise and applaud the enormous efforts and dedication of the councillors and staff who work together to do their very best for the town. We are committed to supporting them through this difficult economic period and move the council and community into a more prosperous future.



Cllr Bob Lanzer
Leader of the Council



Lee Harris
Chief Executive

The key challenges facing the council

This is a time of significant change with a new Coalition Government setting out a major step change in the way public services will be delivered at a time when Government funding will be reduced. The Coalition has set out a very different way of working with a focus on three themes: deficit reduction, Localism and the Big Society, which they are committed to delivering within their five-year term. In light of these changes, the Corporate Plan has been updated and takes account of and acts upon the key external and internal factors that will impact upon us. This Plan is ambitious and is designed to:

- encourage economic growth and prosperity
- continue to support our communities especially the most vulnerable
- enhance the quality of the built and natural environment and meet Crawley's housing needs and aspirations
- provide greater value for money as public spending is reduced whilst maintaining good customer satisfaction.

Local challenges

The Council has a good understanding of Crawley and this Plan is informed by research and numerous consultations with the community. Councillors and staff know Crawley well and have made a valuable contribution to the Plan.

The Plan also takes account of Crawley Together, the Local Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Executive of Crawley Together work collaboratively to bring about change against the partnership's priorities. Their work is focused on the priorities of domestic violence, safeguarding children and the local economy.

Crawley has a population of 105,000 and the town is the principal urban centre in West Sussex. It has an increasingly diverse community with for example, long- standing and well established black and minority ethnic communities from the Indian sub continent and newer migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe. There are at least 90 different languages spoken by pupils in Crawley schools. The population is ageing and is projected to grow by 7.8 per cent by 2016.

Economically, Crawley sits at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond sub region with Gatwick Airport within the Borough. The Borough accounts for 40 per cent of business in West Sussex and is a major centre of wealth creation. Transport links, proximity to London and good quality leisure and community facilities attract many people to Crawley to live, work and visit.

Crawley has a long history that pre-dates its new town status and will do more to celebrate its heritage. The Town has an attractive environment with award winning parks and gardens and a strong community focus on improving the town. Parts of the Borough are also vulnerable to flooding which is being addressed. We will continue to build the case amongst the public, through positive leadership and action, that local people and the Council have a central role in tackling climate change, reducing energy and water consumption and encouraging more sustainable and healthy means of transport.

Key strategic challenges

- To take steps to maintain a climate that encourages local economic growth and more employment. We will promote initiatives that will bring about a more diverse economy including greater entrepreneurship and steps that will raise the aspirations of Crawley people to attain higher skilled jobs.
- Gatwick is a major international airport and is a key economic asset to the town and the sub-region. Together with our Gatwick Diamond partners, we are engaging with the new owners of the airport on how it can continue to make a major contribution to the local economy. The

Gatwick Diamond area has achieved national recognition as the economic centre of the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This will involve working closely with the local business community and public sector partners, including Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council, Croydon Council and Brighton and Hove City Council to face the challenges ahead to increase employment, income, trade and investment.

- To create a confident and self-reliant community capable of championing neighbourhood issues that embrace pride of place. To build trust and respect within our increasingly diverse community, and to develop a clearer sense of local identity.
- To work with GPs and partners who will have a lead role in ensuring services across the NHS, social care and public health are joined up and meet the needs of local people. There is a gap of more than five years between life expectancy in the east and west of the town and the rate of teenage pregnancy is the highest in West Sussex. There is also an increasingly elderly population, which creates more demand for health, social and well-being services.
- To continue to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and build greater public confidence in our ability to deliver such a reduction with our partners.
- To meet housing needs and aspirations, without compromising the quality of the built and natural environment. With a focus on progressing the West of Bewbush development and pushing for a decision on the North East Sector.
- To protect our environment through, for example, reducing the Council's and the town's carbon footprint and through maximising the use of waste as a resource and minimising waste sent to landfill.
- To improve the physical infrastructure of the Town. As a new town, parts of Crawley are showing their age, necessitating capital infrastructure works to make them fit for the 21st century. For example, we will continue to undertake significant work to reduce the likelihood of flooding and will complete the neighbourhood improvement schemes. We have plans for a new museum that celebrates our heritage. We also intend to acquire land for a new cemetery by 2015. The major Town Centre North scheme has been put on hold, but we remain committed to bring this forward as the national economy recovers.
- To implement the outcomes of the Leisure Options appraisal. To raise the quality of the Hawth Theatre, Tilgate Park, venture play facilities and community centres to a more sustainable footing that keeps Crawley at the forefront of the region's leisure offer.

This is an ambitious agenda in the current financial climate. We have developed a budget strategy that complements this Corporate Plan to enable us to deliver our priorities. The Workforce Strategy and action plan will equip us with the skilled and flexible workforce that is vital for delivery.

International, National and Regional challenges

The international, national and regional outlook is an especially difficult one at the present time. In summary, the headlines, which form a context to this Plan, are set out below.

- The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2011/12 and 2012/13 have confirmed the extent of the reduction in Government grant. Together with the impact of low investment interest, the Council expects to use reserves to maintain services in 2011/12 despite having identified over £1m of savings. The Council has already identified additional savings measures for 2012/13, which together with projected increases in interest rates should mean that it can return to a balanced budget in 2012/13 in a planned and managed way. To achieve this, new savings measures will be identified during 2011 as part of the 2012/13 budget process.
- The Localism Bill sets out the future challenges for local government. There will be changes to the planning and housing systems, which are intended to return decision-making powers to local councils. The Bill sets out how local government can respond to the Big Society agenda, which is fundamental to giving back power to local people by encouraging them to take on more responsibility in shaping the place where they live.

- With the abolition of primary care trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs), the government is to create a new public health system in England. The new system is made up of two elements: the creation of Public Health England and of local government taking on new responsibilities for improving people’s health and tackling health inequalities at the local level. The *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health (Public Health White Paper)*, sets out the changes to the future of the NHS.
- Globalisation, creating more diverse local communities and “footloose” businesses. With its economy dominated by large businesses, Crawley is more affected by this than many other places.
- Foreign conflicts, terrorism, natural disasters and incidents have an impact on diverse local communities. Nationally there has been a sustained high risk of terrorism. This has led to a greater focus on and priority afforded to community cohesion and integration.
- Climate change. This is high on the agenda and there is pressure from the Government on local government, which is expected to play its part in reducing the UK’s carbon footprint. In the last two years Crawley has experienced colder winters with more snow and disruption to public services.
- The London 2012 Olympic Games. There is a once in a generation opportunity to build on the legacy of the Games.

Our Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is the key strategic business document that sets out the overall vision and direction for the Council over the next five years and which has been assessed against the current local, regional and national challenges facing the council. It links the various individual service strategies together and gives an overview of the key actions to be undertaken over the five-year period.

The Plan forms the basis for the council’s performance management activities and will drive the distribution of resources, time, effort and attention towards the identified priorities across all our activities, services, initiatives, projects and events. The Corporate Plan will be updated annually as necessary in line with the Budget to reflect any necessary changes to priorities or services.

Our Corporate Planning Triangle shows how the priorities filter down into the organisation and are delivered through service plans and strategies.



Our mission

Crawley Borough Council's mission is ***“to be a high performing Council creating a successful future for Crawley”***. We have identified four themes, and ten priorities within these themes, on which the council will act in order to deliver the mission:

- **Prosperity**
- **Community**
- **Environment**
- **Value for money**

Our values

We have identified the following organisational 'core values' to underpin and guide the way we work and we will promote them as enablers of exceptional performance:

- Customer focused
- Open and honest
- Positive and creative
- Recognising and rewarding good performance
- Valuing diversity, inclusion and equality
- Value for money

Our staff

A new Workforce Strategy was adopted in 2010 to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. We understand that the quality of our staff is key to developing an organisational culture that will deliver the ambitions of the Corporate Plan in line with our values. We will support staff to be professional, customer focused, creative, empowered and positive. We will invest in staff development to create the skilled and flexible workforce that modern local government needs. We will recognise and reward good performance and we will be more proactive in addressing underperformance.

The downward pressure on public finances has necessitated a move towards a flatter management structure in order for us to maintain high quality services. This process has begun and will continue over the lifetime of this plan. We are likely to share more functions with other councils and see a growth in the level of public services that are delivered in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors. Changes of this nature are sensitive and we are committed to a continuing dialogue with staff to help them to cope with the changes that impact on them.

In delivering our Corporate Plan, we expect to:

- Continue to reduce sickness absence levels year on year
- Increase staff satisfaction with organisational change
- Reduce the gender pay gap
- Achieve Age Positive accreditation
- Increase the numbers of trainees, apprentices and work experience opportunities in line with our Young People's Employment Framework.

The Council's roles

The Council's work in achieving much of this Plan will be through all of the applicable roles:

Leading

inspiring, galvanising and encouraging others to work with us

Influencing

lobbying, communicating, pressing and campaigning

Partnering

actively engaging with others and jointly committing time, money and resources

Providing

having the ability to do something independently and directly for residents

The council's role as a direct provider of services is likely to change over the plan period with a shift towards leading, influencing and partnering services.

Our themes

Prosperity

Our priorities

- To encourage sustainable local economic growth and employment with a focus on enhancing the potential of our principal business centres – Gatwick Airport, Manor Royal and the Town Centre. We will also seek out opportunities for drawing new elements into our economy to broaden the contribution to and potential for Crawley's future prosperity. These actions will be supported by efforts to raise the aspirations and skills of local people and nurture an enterprise culture.
- To identify additional financial resources and to maintain strong delivery of our capital investment in Crawley. This will include reducing the likelihood of flooding; completing the neighbourhood improvement schemes, investing in our housing stock and delivering a new museum that celebrates our heritage.

Key milestones of success 2011/12:

- Progress formal negotiations for a revised Town Centre North Scheme
- Actively encourage the development of key sites in the Town Centre and determine any related planning applications
- Gain the commitment of landowners and other partners to an improved Crawley Station and surrounding area
- Work with our economic partners develop a coherent approach to support business and enterprise in Crawley
- Production and implementation of the Manor Royal Improvement Business Plan in partnership with the business community.
- Undertake the neighbourhood parade improvements scheduled for completion in 2011/12.

Community

Our priorities:

- To create a confident and self-reliant community capable of championing neighbourhood issues that embrace pride of place. To build trust and respect within our increasingly diverse community, and to develop a clearer sense of local identity.
- To reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and to build greater public confidence in our ability to deliver this reduction with our partners.

- To work with GPs and partners to improve the health and well-being of our community in a way that focuses on reducing health inequalities and recognises the needs of the increasingly elderly population.
- To maintain high quality leisure, cultural and sport facilities and activities that enhance residents' quality of life.

Key milestones of success 2011/12:

- Reduce overall crime rate
- Improvement in the way the council responds to Anti Social Behaviour as a result of the Systems Thinking intervention
- Increase the proportion of adults and children who regularly participate in sport and cultural activities
- Play an active role on the Joint Commissioning Board with GPs and partners and contribute to the production of the Board's three year work plan
- Implement the recommendations from the Leisure Options appraisal with regards to the future of the services at Tilgate Park, the Hawth theatre, venture play facilities and community centres
- Complete and publish a three-year programme of equality impact assessments and publish the outcomes on the Council's website
- Develop and support the delivery of a corporate consultation programme to ensure the views and opinions of all communities in Crawley are reflected in decision making
- Develop and deliver a programme of targeted capacity building within the voluntary sector in Crawley to support civic participation
- Implement and deliver the Prevent Partnership Plan

Environment

Our priorities:

- To enhance the quality of the built and natural environment and meet Crawley's housing needs and aspirations.
- To protect and enhance our environment by reducing the Council's and the town's carbon footprint. Key actions will include maximising the use of waste as a resource, whilst minimising waste sent to landfill, and keeping the streets, parks and other public open spaces clean and attractive.

Key milestones of success 2011/12:

- Increase the number of net additional homes to the housing stock
- Ensure the delivery of affordable homes in the current climate
- Progress the planning application for the development of homes West of Bewbush
- Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- Deliver the other actions for year 1 of the Climate Change and Waste Reduction Strategy: 2011 – 2050 action plan
- Submit the final application to the Heritage Lottery Fund stage 2 for the restoration of Worth Park Gardens in 2011
- Achieve a "Gold" South East in Bloom award and be invited to participate in Britain in Bloom when next eligible in 2012.

Value for money

Our priorities:

- To deliver high quality services at the lowest possible cost to our residents.
- To deliver a budget strategy that directs financial resources to priorities, balances the revenue budget with no reliance on reserves, frees up investment income for capital investment and minimises the burden on the council taxpayer.

Key milestones of success 2011/12:

- Achieve the overall savings set out in the Budget Strategy 2011 – 2016
- Identify options for budget savings of 10% and 15% when undertaking Short Reviews
- Identify options for budget savings and improve customers' experience and satisfaction through undertaking Systems Thinking Interventions
- Develop a new ICT strategy
- Enable customers to access more services on the web.

Monitoring, Measuring and Review

Each of the above priorities is accompanied by key milestones that will enable us to track the progress made in achieving them and to take corrective or alternative action where necessary.

There are also some performance measures collected locally by staff who manage services and together they form the backbone of our performance management framework and are reported on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Management Team, Improvement Planning Group and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel in order to ascertain progress and to take corrective action if appropriate. Delivery of the Plan and performance against the milestones will be supplemented by an annual report to Cabinet.

Appendix 1

Other Plans and Strategies

In addition to annual service plans, the Council has a number of other Plans and Strategies that have been formally approved and which set out agreed action plans for our services. These Plans and Strategies are a useful source in finding more information about how we will deliver our priorities.

Many of the Strategies are interlinked and interdependent and the following diagram supports our corporate planning triangle by explaining how the documents inform and feed upon each other.

Strategies & Plans – How they all fit

