

# DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2020

The Corporate Plan sets out Dartford Borough Council's overall vision for the area, which is:

**To make Dartford “the place of quality and choice, a place where people choose to live, work and enjoy their leisure time”.**

The Corporate Plan delivers this vision through the following five themes;

- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Health and Wellbeing
- Safer Communities
- Environment and Sustainability
- Housing and Stronger Communities

In addition the Plan includes a theme relating to the Council itself:

- A Council Performing Strongly

These themes are underpinned by the following values:

- Ensuring Value for Money: The Council recognises that the majority of the money it spends comes from tax payers and it will therefore provide high quality services, whilst constantly looking at ways in which they can be delivered in a more efficient and effective way.
- Transparency in Decision Making: The decisions taken by the Council will be made in an open and transparent manner through the Council's governance framework. The Council will be accountable for the decisions it makes and how tax payers' money is spent.
- Delivering Accessible Services: The Council will ensure that its services are accessible to all who need them and that customer views are taken into account in the delivery and development of services.
- Valuing Our Heritage: Ensuring Dartford's history is celebrated and our built heritage preserved for future generations.
- Valuing Council Staff: Our staff are at the heart of service delivery and are the Council's greatest asset. Staff will be encouraged to propose new ideas for improving and developing services. Development and training opportunities will be available to staff.
- Working in Partnership: The Council will work with a range of organisations, communities and individuals to deliver improvements to the Borough.

Under each of the six themes, set out above, are a number of strategic aims and objectives, which state what the Council wants to achieve. Under the aims and objectives are a series of statements setting out what the Council intends to do to meet the aims and objectives by 2020. This will either be by itself or in partnership with others. The statements will be linked, where possible, to a relevant service area, and to partner plans.

Set out under each theme are a set of performance indicators relating to the theme's strategic objectives and a set of overall Borough indicators. The performance indicators relate to the Council's own service performance whilst the Borough indicators contain information about the wider performance of the Borough, where the Council does not have direct control over outcomes and often works in partnership with others.

The Corporate Plan is closely linked to the policies and targets as set out in the Local Plan (Core Strategy and other adopted planning documents). There have been a number of changes since the Corporate Plan was last updated. There have been two General Elections, the last of which resulted in no party having an overall majority, Britain has voted to leave the European Union, and the Country has a new Prime Minister.

Whilst there are still many uncertainties surrounding leaving the European Union, and the single market, development across the urban part of Dartford has continued to accelerate, particularly along the Thames Waterfront, at Stone and north of the Town Centre. Over the last 3 years, 2,700 homes have been built in the Borough and a further 6,000 homes are expected to be built by 2022.

Major development has also begun in the Ebbsfleet area, under the auspices of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. There will be associated improvements to the transport infrastructure, particularly the Fastrack network, new walking and cycling routes, as well as improvements to the A2.

Also, since the Corporate Plan was last updated, plans have come forward for a major development on the Swanscombe Peninsula involving the construction of a leisure resort, which could have in excess of 50,000 visitors per day. The developers are proposing to open the park in 2022. This development alone would generate 17,000 jobs on-site and a further 10,000 indirect jobs.

Key changes are underway in the Town Centre. Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of development on Lowfield Street and funding provided for major improvements to the public realm in the Town Centre. The Acacia Hall site is to be redeveloped to create a major new venue, increase the number of parking spaces on the site and return the historic buildings to their original setting. Development of the Co-op site will also begin, including a hotel, cinema, residential units and possibly a new health hub. New development at the Northern Gateway to the Town Centre is now well underway with additional phases coming on stream.

A number of major transport improvements to support development in the area are taking shape. Improvements to the St Clements Way/London roundabout have been consulted on and construction is likely to start in 2018/19. Designs are also being progressed for the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junctions, funding has been identified and construction is due to start in 2020. Government has now announced its preferred location for the Lower Thames Crossing as east of Gravesend. This will help relieve congestion at the Dartford Crossing. Detailed design of the scheme is now to be progressed. New buses have been introduced on the Fastrack and Arriva services. Dedicated Fastrack lanes are being implemented as part of new developments, including at Ingress Park and Northern Gateway. A route through the Eastern Quarry development will be provided as the development is progressed.

Dartford's economy continues to perform well. Unemployment in February 2017 was 1.2%, lower than both the Kent average (1.7%) and Great Britain (1.9%). Average wages are also higher than both the Kent and Great Britain average. Since 2010, 590 additional active businesses have been created in the Borough, bringing the total to 3,950 in 2014. The Borough provides a large number of job opportunities for its residents as well as in-commuters. The number of people travelling in to jobs in the Borough exceeds the number of residents commuting out with 5,384 more people commuting into the Borough than leaving for work (NOMIS 2016). This is the highest level in Kent.

One of the main health issues facing the Borough remains childhood obesity, where both at Reception and Year 6 obesity rates remain higher than the Kent average. Dementia and mental health issues are also of increasing concern. A series of health programmes are being delivered in the Borough including Don't Sit Get Fit, Dynamo Clubs, Summer Sizzlers, Dementia Awareness training, Adult Healthy Weight Programmes and Park Run and Junior Park Run.

The Council, in partnership with Places for People, reopened the rebuilt Fairfield Leisure Centre, which has been highly successful with 448,005 visits during 2016/17 and the company meeting its three year membership targets within the first year. The Council has also invested in a number of sport facilities in the Borough, including the new cricket pavilion at Hesketh Park, new athletics facilities in Central Park and a proposed Rugby Club on Stone Lodge. It continues to support sports clubs throughout the Borough through its grants schemes.

The Council has made significant investments in parks and open spaces, in particular Central Park and will be making further significant investments in opening up areas such as Acacia Hall and land at Stone Lodge. The Council is currently looking at ways in which communities can be helped to take a role in maintaining a clean environment.

In terms of crime, numerically, violent crime, theft and handling, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage are the main problem areas. The Council has a number of partnership arrangements actively implementing initiatives to reduce crime in the Borough including the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership and Dartford Town Centre Against Crime (DTAC). These partnerships have lead a number of projects, such as the use of exclusion orders to prevent prolific offenders entering

particular areas of the Town Centre, improving links between the Police, CCTV and retailers, working with licensed premises to reduce violent behaviour, and the use of tools such as Anti-Social Behaviour Agreements, Community Protection Notices and Public Space Protection Orders.

Whilst there is a large scale house building programme being undertaken in the Borough affordability remains an issue both for buyers and those who privately rent. There continues to be an issue about London Boroughs moving temporary accommodation tenants into Dartford, because of lower rental values and making financial offers to landlords which the Council cannot match, thus lowering its options in the area. The Council has built the first Council houses in the Borough for a generation and is preparing another development of its own. The Council also continues to work with developers to deliver affordable housing on the development sites in the Borough.

The Council itself has had to cope with a substantial reduction in Central Government grant, whilst maintaining a balanced budget. The Council has continually reviewed the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations leading to considerable savings whilst maintaining and improving services. The main challenge for the Council over the Corporate Plan period will be the ending of Central Government grants to the Council to be replaced by 100% retention of Business Rates.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION**

**STRATEGIC AIM: TO ENSURE THAT REGENERATION IN DARTFORD IS SUSTAINABLE AND OF BENEFIT TO ALL OF OUR COMMUNITIES**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**ED 1.** Improve the quantity and range of jobs in the Borough.

**ED 2.** Ensure jobs growth and housing delivery are balanced.

**ED 3.** Improve the economic performance of the Town Centre.

**ED 4.** Ensure the delivery of timely transport infrastructure.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Work with land-owners and developers to bring forward the next phases of development on Lowfield Street, which includes community space and housing.
- Appoint and work with a developer to redevelop the Co-op site.
- Design and implement a Town Centre improvement scheme which will include an improved public realm and improved access into and around the Town Centre, particularly for those on foot.
- Create an enhanced space in Market Street which links the town to the Park and enhances the setting of the Library and Museum with room to expand the market space and provide a public square.
- Work with developers and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to deliver 6,000 homes.
- Work with developers, KCC and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to plan for the improvement of the Fastrack system and its extension to the new developments.
- Rejuvenate the Acacia Hall site by providing a new entrance into Market Street, removing unsuitable buildings, improving the riverbank and increasing the number of car parking spaces.
- Set up a business advice website which will provide information and useful links for businesses in the area or looking to relocate to Dartford.
- Introduce a new Dartford Business Awards competition.
- Continue to develop the quality of the Town Centre appeal, attractiveness and ambience.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
PPI-29	Community Infrastructure levy Income
PPI-31	Delivery of key projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acacia Hall</li><li>• Dartford Town Centre Improvements</li><li>• Stone Lodge Site</li></ul>

## OVERALL BOROUGH INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
BI1a, BI1b	Overall business birth/death rate
BI2	District wide unemployment rate
BI3	Town Centre footfall
PPI-27	Number of new homes built annually

## LINKS

More detailed information about how the above actions are to be delivered can be found at:

[Dartford Local Development Framework](#)

[Kent Local Transport Plan 2016 – 2030](#)

[Ebbsfleet Development Corporation – The Vision](#)

[Thames Gateway Kent Partnership – Plan for Growth 2014 – 2020](#)

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

**STRATEGIC AIM: TO REDUCE OVERALL HEALTH INEQUALITY IN DARTFORD AND TO PROVIDE FOR A RICH AND VARIED QUALITY OF LIFE**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**HW 1.** Increase the opportunities for participating in sporting, cultural and leisure activities.

**HW 2.** Reduce overall health inequalities in the Borough.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Develop a new rugby facility on the Stone Lodge site, in conjunction with related green space, including formal and informal recreational facilities.
- Continue to deliver public health initiatives across the Borough, including Healthy Weight, Dementia Awareness, Don't Sit Get Fit, Health Walks and Healthy Workplaces.
- Continue to grant fund organisations which support better physical and mental health outcomes.
- Work with Places for People to develop the Council's leisure offer.
- Work with commercial and community groups to widen residents' access to culture and arts in the Town Centre.
- Deliver a range of free and paid for events throughout the year.
- Continue to deliver green space as part of residential and business developments.
- Work with Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group to bring forward plans for a health hub on the Co-op site.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
PCS-17, PCS-18, PCS-19, PCS-20	Usage of Borough Council sports facilities
PCS-2	Number of local groups supported through Community Grant and other grant schemes
PCS-3	% attendance at the Orchard Theatre. (% of total seats available which are used)

## OVERALL BOROUGH INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
BI5	Overall life expectancy gap in the Borough
BI6	Percentage of obese children in year six
BI7b	Percentage of adults achieving at least 150 minutes of physical exercise per week

## LINKS

More detailed information about how the above actions are to be delivered can be found at:

[Kent Public Health Annual Report](#)

[Dartford Preventative Health Projects](#)

[Dartford Borough Council events page](#)

[Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group](#)

## **SAFER COMMUNITIES**

**STRATEGIC AIM: TO CREATE A SAFER BOROUGH IN WHICH TO LIVE, WORK AND SOCIALISE**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- SC 1:** Use the Council's statutory functions to increase public safety in the Borough.
- SC 2:** Reduce anti-social behaviour.
- SC 3:** Increase public perception of the Borough as a safe place.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Continue to utilise measures such as Community Protection Warnings/Notices, Public Space Protection Orders, and Acceptable Behaviour Agreements to modify behaviour that impacts negatively on others.
- Work with partners to deliver programmes designed to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Ensure that businesses are meeting their regulatory safety duties in relation to food hygiene and employee/public health and safety.
- Continue joint Police and Council Licensing Team visits to licensed premises in Dartford to ensure adherence to licensing conditions and to ensure the responsible sale of alcohol.
- Continue to develop the Better Cars and Better Cabs accreditation scheme in Dartford.
- Continue to work with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Borough businesses and public open spaces, providing vital intelligence and assistance to the Police and reassurance to both Day and Night time economy businesses and the public.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
EARPI-14, EARPI-15	Total number of arrests instigated or supported by CCTV
EARP-32	Number of businesses supporting DTAC
EARP-33	Number of DTAC Exclusion Orders
EARP-34, EARPI-35, EARPI-36, EARPI-37	Number of Community Protection Warnings/Notices and Acceptable Behaviour Agreements issued
EHPI-5	% of high risk (categories A and B) food hygiene inspections due and completed

## OVERALL BOROUGH INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
BI8	Total number of crimes committed in the Borough
BI9	Number of criminal damage offences in the Borough
BI10	Number of recorded anti-social behaviour incidents in the Borough

## LINKS

More detailed information about how the above actions are to be delivered can be found at:

[Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Strategy 2016 – 2019](#)

[Dartford Borough Council Environmental Health Enforcement Policy](#)

## **ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

**STRATEGIC AIM: TO PROMOTE AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS ATTRACTIVE, WITH IMPROVED AIR QUALITY AND WHICH PROVIDES A REALISTIC CHOICE OF TRAVEL OPTIONS**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- ET 1.** Reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in the Borough.
- ET 2.** Ensure that development in Dartford is sustainable, with high standards of design, layout and water/energy efficiency.
- ET 3.** Minimise the amount of waste going to landfill.
- ET 4.** Ensure a high quality street scene.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Procure a new waste collection contract.
- Enforcement Officers will continue to appropriately enforce legal requirements in respect of littering, dog fouling, fly tipping, and parking.
- A scheme to actively involve communities in helping to keep their local area clean will be implemented.
- Work with developers to agree standards of design, layout and energy efficiency on proposed developments.
- Work with partners to ensure that the Lower Thames Crossing, east of Gravesend, is expedited at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Produce a scheme for the repair of the Civic Centre, which will include energy efficiency measures.
- Continue to monitor air quality in the Borough in accordance with national requirements and will seek to identify and implement measures within our control which have a positive impact upon air quality and/or reduce the potential health impact of pollution incidents.
- As part of the Town Centre Improvement Programme a Transport Strategy will be produced setting out how compliance with EU NO<sub>2</sub> thresholds will be achieved.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
WRPI-15	Percentage of household waste going to landfill
WRPI-4	No of households participating in the green bin service
WRPI-7	Number of graffiti incidents
WRPI-8	Number of fly tipping incidents
WRP18	Standard of cleanliness in the Borough (% of areas with an acceptable standard for litter)
HPI-43	The number of households taking part in home energy efficiency improvement programmes/works
DATA-EH10	The average results from all air quality monitoring stations in the Borough

### LINKS

More detailed information about how the above actions are to be delivered can be found at:

[Dartford Borough Council Air Quality Management page](#)

[Dartford Local Development Framework](#)

## **HOUSING AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

**STRATEGIC AIMS: TO FACILITATE QUALITY, CHOICE AND DIVERSITY IN THE HOUSING MARKET, ASSIST IN MEETING HOUSING NEED IN DARTFORD AND DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO SERVICE USERS.**

**TO CREATE STRONG AND SELF RELIANT COMMUNITIES**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- HS 1.** Work towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough.
- HS 2.** Provide high quality housing services and to strive to improve the quality and condition of the Borough's private rented housing sector.
- HS 3.** Promote self-reliant communities.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Encourage, facilitate and enable all types of housing to be built, which will meet the various types of need in the Borough. This will include the Council's own build programme.
- Work with developers and registered providers to deliver 120 affordable homes during 2017/18.
- Include community facilities as part of major new developments.
- Provide grants to communities and individuals through the Community Grant and Salute to Youth schemes.
- Deliver or support events such as Dartford Festival, St Georges Day and the Festival of Light.
- Submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the refurbishment of Dartford Museum.
- Maximise the number of people registered to vote.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI Codes	Description
HPI-27	Number of applicants on the Housing Register
HPI-12	Number of homeless applicants placed in Temporary Accommodation
HPI-15	Number of households where homelessness has been prevented
HPI-8	Average time taken to re let Dartford Borough Council housing
HP-30	% of repairs to Dartford Borough Council stock completed on time
HP-17a	Number of service requests completed for Private Sector Housing

## OVERALL BOROUGH INDICATORS

PI Code	Description
PPI-27	Number of new homes completed
HPI-19	Number of affordable homes completed
HPI-18	Number of private sector dwellings returned to occupation
HPI-17b	Number of service requests received for Private Sector Housing

## LINKS

More detailed information about how the above actions are to be delivered can be found at:

[Dartford Borough Council Housing Strategies](#)

[Dartford Local Development Framework](#)

## **A COUNCIL PERFORMING STRONGLY**

**STRATEGIC AIM: TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES THAT REFLECT PUBLIC ASPIRATIONS AND DEMONSTRATE IMPROVEMENT**

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**PS 1.** Deliver high quality services, offering value for money and demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement.

**PS 2.** Inform and consult residents and stakeholders about Council services.

### **KEY ACTIONS**

- Deliver a Channel Shift programme providing excellent service to customers, where, how and when they want it and delivering value for money.
- Deliver a Flexible Working scheme to reduce the running costs of the Council.
- Undertake a continuing review of budgets and processes to ensure maximum value for money and ensuring a balanced budget.
- Undertake a programme of repairs to the Civic Centre which will reduce running costs.
- Work with other Local Authorities in Kent, the Local Government Association and Government to introduce 100% retention of Business Rates.
- Work with the Boundary Commission to review warding arrangements in the Borough and introduce any changes by May 2019.

## COUNCIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<b>PI Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
BRPI14	% of Council Tax collected
CTPI14	% of Non Domestic Rates Collected
HBPI12	Average time taken (calendar days) to process a new Housing Benefit claim
FPI-5, FPI-6	Average number of working days lost because of sickness per employee
FPI-8	% of supplier payments made within 30 days of receipt of invoice
HPI-1	Rent collected as a proportion of rent due
ITPI-24	Number of visits to DBC website
CSPI-45	Number of phone calls received by the Council