

Creating a successful future for Crawley

Corporate Plan 2010-2015



Contents

03	Foreword
04	The key challenges facing the council
06	Our Corporate Plan
06	Our mission
08	Prosperity
09	Community
10	Environment
11	Value for money
12	Monitoring, measuring and review



Foreword

This Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction and priorities of the council over the next five years. It lays out what we will do to ensure that the best possible services are delivered for our residents, partners and businesses at a cost that is affordable to the taxpayer.

Increasingly our priorities will be achieved by working more closely in partnership with other public sector bodies, in particular other local authorities, the police and the NHS. We will also be working more closely with the private and voluntary sectors. Both are already major providers of public services in Crawley.

In this plan period, the financial climate is a challenging one for the public sector in general. The council is comparatively well-placed to weather the storm as the Government seeks to reduce the national debt. Government grant is our main source of income. We have the resilience to adjust to the new financial realities of less Government grant in a measured and planned way. The outcomes at the end of the plan period will be a greater focus by the council on what matters most to Crawley and the provision of those public services at less cost to the taxpayer.

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 dependent on the commitment, 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 to rise to the challenges that lie ahead and to take the council to the next stage in its development.

Councillor Bob Lanzer
Leader

Lee Harris
Chief Executive

The key challenges facing the council

This is a time of economic recession, political uncertainty and a period of sustained downward pressure on public finances. It is also a time of rising expectations about the quality of public services. This Corporate Plan 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 need
- Provide greater value for money as public spending is reduced.

Local challenges

The council has a good understanding of Crawley. This plan is informed by research such as the Place Survey 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, which sets out a long-term vision for the town and priorities that will focus the work of all partner organisations. The Crawley Together Executive has agreed to focus on the priorities of domestic violence, safeguarding children and the local economy.

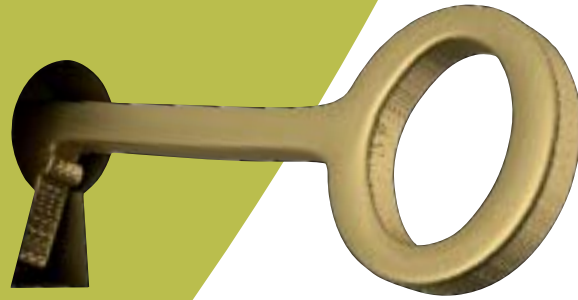
Crawley has a population of 100,000 and the town is the principal urban centre in West Sussex. It has an increasingly diverse community with, for example, longstanding and well established black and minority ethnic communities from the Indian sub-continent and newer migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe. The population is ageing and is projected to grow by more than 2.4 per cent by 2016.

Economically, Crawley sits at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond sub-region with Gatwick Airport in 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 could 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 and this needs to be addressed. We need to do more to persuade a sceptical public that local people and the council can play a part in tackling climate change.

Key strategic challenges

- To take steps to maintain a climate that encourages a return to 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 keen to engage with the new owners of the airport on how it can continue to make a major contribution to the local economy
- 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 partners to improve the health of our community. 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
- To protect our environment through, for example, reducing the council's and the town's carbon footprint and through minimising waste and improving recycling rates
- 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 expect in the plan period to have undertaken significant work to reduce the likelihood of flooding. We will complete the "decent homes" works to improve the quality of the council's own housing. We have plans for a new museum that celebrates our heritage. The major Town Centre North scheme has been put on hold by the recession and we will want to bring this forward as the national economy recovers.

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. We will put in place a new Workforce Strategy that 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:

- Economic recession and the Government's response. The UK is expected to be out of the recession in 2010, although unemployment is projected to continue to rise for some time afterwards
- Political uncertainty due to the General Election being held in 2010. Large reductions in public spending are expected and the squeeze on public sector pay is anticipated to continue for the next year or so. What is less clear is the speed of spending reductions, where these cuts will fall and whether some sectors will be protected. In order to try to protect public services there is likely to be greater partnership working and collaboration within the public sector
- 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 incidences 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
- The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. There is a once in a generation opportunity to build on the legacy of the Games
- This plan takes account of a number of strategies and plans, in particular the South East Regional Plan, the SEEDA Regional Strategy, the Gatwick Diamond Business Plan and the West Sussex Local Area Agreement.



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 council's budget to reflect any necessary changes to priorities or services.



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. Within these themes, there are 10 priorities, on which the council will act in order to deliver the mission.

The themes are:

- Prosperity
- Community
- Environment
- Value for money.



Our values

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

- 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 is being developed and will be adopted in 2010 in order 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.

It is likely that the downward pressure on public finances will mean that we will emerge at the end of the plan period as a smaller organisation with a flatter management structure in order for us to maintain high quality services. We are likely to share more functions with other councils and we will see a growth in the level of public services that are likely to be 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:

- Be in the top quartile for district councils for staff absence levels
- Have increased levels of satisfaction in the 2010 and 2012 staff surveys for job satisfaction and line management
- Retain our relative position in the Best Place to Work in the Public Sector ratings
- Retain our Investors in People accreditation.

The council's roles

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

Leader – inspiring, galvanising and encouraging others to work with us

Influencer – lobbying, co-communicating, pressing and campaigning

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

Provider – having the ability to do something independently and directly for residents

Prosperity

Priority one:

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.

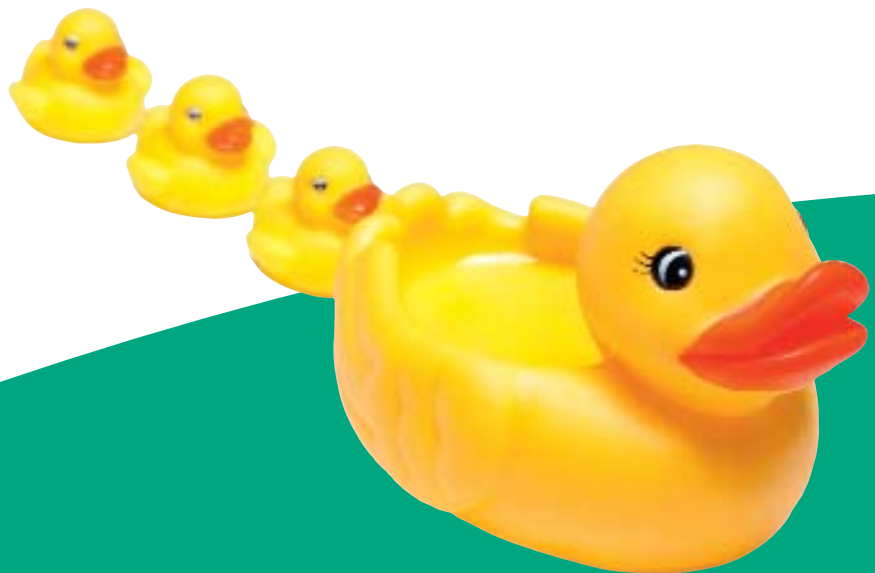
Priority two:

To identify additional financial resources and to improve the delivery of our capital investment in Crawley. This will include reducing the likelihood of flooding; completing the "decent homes" works to improve the quality of the council's own housing and delivering a new museum that celebrates our heritage.

Key outcome measures of success:

- Increase the number of new businesses registered
- Increase the percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth
- Reduce the number of working age people on out of work benefits
- Increase the percentage of decent council homes
- Actions are completed on the long-term flood risk management plan
- Deliver a new museum by 2015
- Complete the Langley Green and Bewbush regeneration programme
- Complete the neighbourhood parades improvement programme.





Community

Priority one:

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.

Priority two:

To reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and to build greater public confidence in our ability to deliver this reduction with our partners.

Priority three:

To work with 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.

Priority four:

To maintain high quality leisure, cultural and sport facilities and activities that enhances residents' quality of life.

Key outcome measures of success:

- Increase the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- Increase the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- Reduce overall crime rate
- Improve effectiveness in preventing people being involved in violent extremism
- Increase the percentage of residents agreeing that local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues are being dealt with by the local council and police
- Improve the self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing
- Maintain top quartile performance of residents satisfied with sport and leisure facilities
- Maintain top quartile performance of residents satisfied with theatre and concert halls
- Increase adult participation in sport and active recreation
- To achieve Level 2 in the Local Government Equality Framework.

Environment

Priority one:

To enhance the quality of the built and natural environment and meet Crawley's housing needs and aspirations.

Priority two:

To protect and enhance our environment by reducing the council's and the town's carbon footprint. Key actions will include minimising waste and improving recycling rates and keeping the streets, parks and other public open spaces clean and attractive.

Key outcome measures of success:

- Increase the number of net additional homes to meet local demand
- Increase the number of affordable homes delivered
- Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Increase the percentage of residents satisfied with services provided or supported by the council in keeping the land clear of litter and refuse
- Reduce CO₂ emissions from local authority operations by 20 per cent
- Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- Improve street and environmental cleanliness
- Increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with parks and open spaces
- Secure approval to a new LDF Core Strategy
- Achieve a gold Britain in Bloom award.



Value for money

Priority one:

To deliver high quality services at the lowest possible cost to our residents.

Priority two:

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 outcome measures of success:

- Continue to direct a high level of resources to maximise the investment of an ambitious capital programme in the town
- Score "performing well" in the Audit Commission's Use of Resources and Organisational Assessments
- Achieve annual value for money gains
- Increase the percentage of residents who agree that the council provides value for money
- Provide evidence that expenditure against quality of service is consistent with that of other councils, using the Audit Commission's value for money profile tool.



Monitoring, measuring and review

Each of the priorities above is accompanied by key measures and targets, which include consulting and communicating with residents and service users. These enable us to track the progress we can make in achieving them and to take corrective or alternative action where necessary.

Some performance measures are set nationally and others are collected locally by staff who manage services. Together they form the backbone of our performance management system and are reported on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Management Team, Improvement Planning Group and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel to ascertain progress and to take corrective action if appropriate. Delivery of the plan and performance against the outcome measures will be supplemented by an annual report to Cabinet.

If you have any comments on any aspect of this Corporate Plan, please contact the Chief Executive, Lee Harris, in any of the following ways:

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