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# Corporate Plan 2013-15



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## Introduction...



**Blake Pain,**  
Leader  
Harborough District Council

Welcome to Harborough District Council's Corporate Plan 2013 -2015, the Council's vision for the district and its ambitions and priorities.

Our Corporate Plan for 2013-2015 sets out how we will work with our partners and the community to ensure that living, working or visiting the district is the best possible experience.

It is based on information about the area and customer feedback and identifies how we will achieve our long-term vision, what our key priorities are and how we will deliver the services our residents want.



**Anna Graves,**  
Chief Executive  
Harborough District Council

## Our vision...

Working with communities in a vibrant, safe and prosperous district and bringing the best opportunities to all.

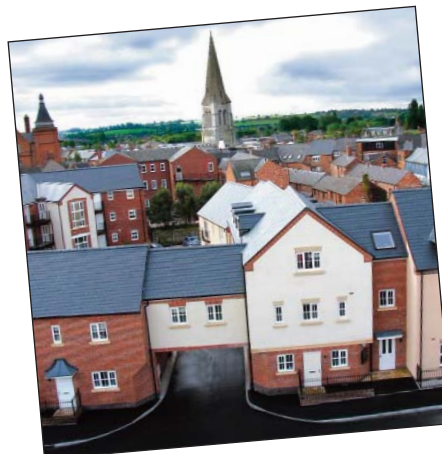
## Our ambition...

We have four aims through our Transformation Programme:

- Revitalise the organisation (injecting new approaches)
- Engage with the community (focussing on people and asking them what we want)
- Strengthen accountability (both democratic and officer)
- Become more efficient (and continue to improve)

## Our values...

- Value each other
- Strive to be the best we can
- Challenge and innovate
- Are open, honest and accountable



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## Welcome to Harborough District



**Welland Park**



**Stanford Hall**



**Sir Frank Whittle jet**



**Foxton Locks**



**Harborough Leisure Centre**

The Harborough District, situated in rural south Leicestershire, is one of the most prosperous areas of England.

The main settlements are Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley. There are more than 90 villages – most with populations of less than 200.

The district is characterised by high quality countryside and attractive settlements, many of which have retained much of their historic character.

It also boasts a number of tourist attractions including Foxton Locks, one of the most popular destinations in the East Midlands.

Reflecting its high quality environment, and accessibility to larger centres, the desirability of the district as a place to live has increased demand for new housing, services and facilities.

The area is relatively affluent with low unemployment, high owner-occupancy, high skills levels and above average earnings.

With a population of around 85,000 and around 36,000 properties, the district is known for its good quality of life, and community spirit. We have a higher proportion of older people and one of our challenges is to ensure elderly and vulnerable people are cared for.

House prices remain strong, while its buoyant

business community has done much to buck the national economic downturn.

Harborough District Council is working hard to maintain this trend despite the Government announcing a continued period of austerity.

The council's 'Open For Business' strategy aims to attract the best business and economic benefits, stimulate the jobs market and promote training opportunities with the involvement of key business leaders.

We are also joining forces with major economic bodies and other local authorities to help open up new funding streams.

As well as this, the Council's ongoing Transformation Programme sets out to save at least £3million over the next five years by transforming the services offered by the council and the way it uses property assets. This includes a revitalised Market Hall building in Market Harborough and improved use of the council headquarters, which includes leased out space to other organisations and businesses, creating a vital source of revenue benefiting council services as a whole.

Our continued work with the multi-agency Community Safety Partnership means the district continues to boast one of the lowest crime rates in the East Midlands. The district

regularly features in surveys ranking the best places to live in England.



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## Council priorities for 2013 - 2015

### Priority

#### To develop places in which to live and be happy

*We aim to improve the well-being of people in the district*



### You said...

- Develop green spaces
- Keep streets clean / promote recycling
- Keep crime low
- Live in sustainable environment
- Encourage community activities
- Listen to businesses & residents

### We did...

- New play area at Farndon Fields
- Launched new blue-lidded bin collection service with plastics recycling
- Online form for reporting flytipping
- HARTradio link up theft detections
- Established housing sites, monitored delivery of housing and future land supply
- Ensure planning decisions are enforced
- Strengthened links with parish councils
- Business workshops and residents' surveys

### Next steps...

- Work with parishes on open spaces plan
- Work with our contractor FCC to boost trade waste and encourage recycling
- Work with police on anti-crime schemes
- Publish the new Local Plan
- Work with Leicestershire Promotions to finalise the Tourism blueprint
- Review Community Safety Plan

### Priority

#### To provide the right public service to the right standard and deliver value for money

*We aim to provide the services people want which are value for money*



### You said...

- Keep council tax low & value for money
- Offer funding for local projects
- Provide activities for teenagers
- Provide affordable homes
- Empower people to take decisions
- Better online access to council services

### We did...

- Savings through 'Transformation and maximised use of council assets
- New Homes Bonus grants distributed
- Super Saturday event to promote sport & youth-led activities like Rock on the Rec
- Affordable homes built in Husbands Bosworth
- Worked with communities to create their own Neighbourhood Plans
- New centralised telephone contact centre

### Next steps...

- Grants panel to allocate funding to successful projects
- Maximise the cultural and commercial benefits of The Symington Building
- Work with housing associations to provide more affordable homes
- Maximise the use of the council website & develop online services to fit customer need

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## Council priorities for 2013 - 2015

### Priority

#### Encourage a vibrant and sustainable business community, intent on prosperity and employment opportunities

*Working in partnership to support businesses and create jobs*



### You said...

- Promote business community
- Maintain vibrant town centres
- More shopping facilities
- Support independent retailers
- Help start up businesses
- Develop broadband

### We did...

- Launched 'Open For Business' strategy
- Offered free parking initiatives
- New shops in The Symington Building
- Magna park community event
- Shop Local campaigns
- Market Hall improvement project
- Spark entrepreneur competition
- Small Businesses procurement charter

### Next steps...

- Maximise use of The Symington Building
- Work with regional economic bodies such as LLEP to attract investment
- Regular meetings with business leaders
- Actively promote Market Hall
- Business start up through Innovation Centre
- Provide broadband to more rural areas

### Priority

#### To support the vulnerable in our society at the heart of communities where they live

*Talking to vulnerable people about their needs and aiming to meet them*



### You said...

- Develop health opportunities
- Promote activities for older people
- Maintain safe environment
- Facilities for elderly and vulnerable
- Home improvement grants
- Provide facilities for children

### We did...

- Provided disabled facilities grants
- 'Wii-retirement' activities for older people
- Warmth at home programme
- Dementia DVD project launched
- Supporting Leicestershire Families programme helping vulnerable families
- Helped people stay in their own homes through 'mortgage rescue' scheme

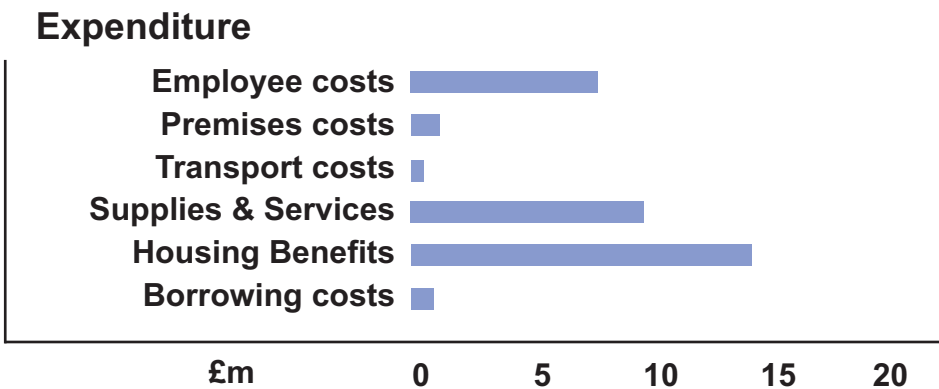
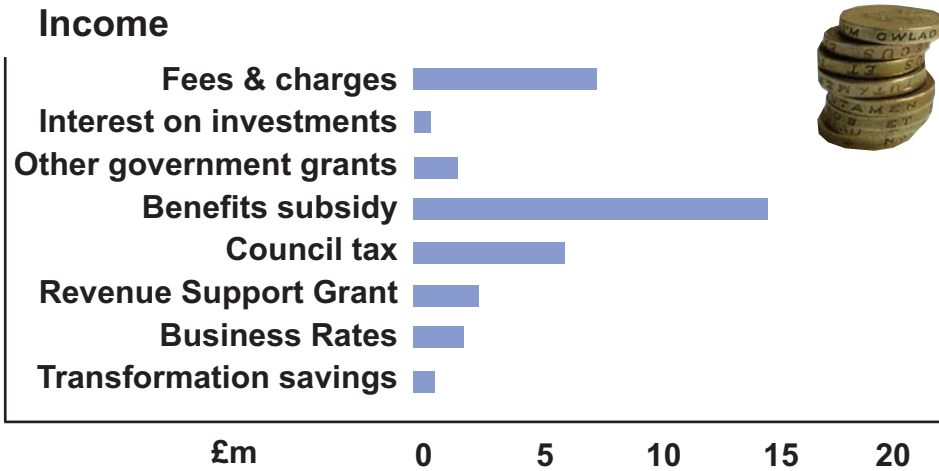
### Next steps...

- Work with Health & Wellbeing Partnership
- Support Older Person's Forum with voluntary sector
- Manage impact of welfare reform
- Continue Discretionary Housing Payments to help those in need
- Promoting Children's Centre initiatives
- Prevention of homelessness action plan

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## Managing the Council's finances 2014 - 2015

### Income & expenditure forecast 2014/15



## Striving for excellence and value for money

Funding for public services, and especially Local Government has shrunk by over a third since 2010.

The Council has responded in three main ways.

Firstly in becoming a smaller and more efficient Council delivering £3 million of savings over a five year period.

Secondly, in maximising use of assets including the exciting opening of The Symington Building in 2014 after a £6.8 million refurbishment, with funding from a number of partners.

Thirdly, the Council is

committed to engaging with communities and customers in an open and transparent manner.

This is against a background of no HDC Council Tax precept increase for the last three years.

The priority for 2014/15 is to ensure that all the major changes over the past few years are built upon and that we continue to strive for excellent customer service.

However, it is clear that further cost savings will be required from 2015/16

onwards.

The Council will respond to this in a planned way including looking at partnerships to share costs, maximising income for discretionary services where people can afford to pay and maximising opportunities for income generation from assets and other services.

We will continue to make savings in a manner which strives to protect front-line council services and to focus these services on those who need them most.



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## Elected members & political management

We have 37 councillors who represent 25 wards.

The **Conservative** group, led by Cllr Blake Pain, has the majority with 27 seats.

The **Liberal Democrats**, led by Cllr Phil Knowles, has 9 seats.

There is one **Independent** councillor (Alan Birch)

 Cllr Steve Charlish <b>Billesdon</b>	 Cllr Lesley Bowles <b>Bosworth</b>	 Cllr Mark Graves <b>Broughton Astley - Astley</b>	 Cllr Colin Golding <b>Broughton Astley - Broughton</b>	 Cllr Paul Dann <b>Broughton Astley - Primethorpe</b>	 Cllr Bill Liquorish <b>Broughton Astley - Sutton</b>	 Cllr Neil Bannister <b>Dunton</b>	 Cllr Alan Birch <b>Fleckney</b>
 Cllr Charmaine Wood <b>Fleckney</b>	 Cllr James Hallam <b>Glen</b>	 Cllr Grahame Spendlove-Mason <b>Glen</b>	 Cllr Christopher Holyoak <b>Kibworth</b>	 Cllr Phillip King <b>Kibworth</b>	 Cllr Lynne Beesley-Reynolds <b>Kibworth</b>	 Cllr Blake Pain <b>Lubenham</b>	 Cllr Richard Tomlin <b>Lutterworth - Brookfield</b>
 Cllr Geraldine Robinson <b>Lutterworth - Orchard</b>	 Cllr Richard Dewes <b>Lutterworth - Springs</b>	 Cllr Janette Ackerley <b>Lutterworth - Swift</b>	 Cllr Dr Sarah Hill <b>Market Harborough - Great Bowden and Arden</b>	 Cllr Barbara Johnson <b>Market Harborough - Great Bowden and Arden</b>	 Cllr Phil Knowles <b>Market Harborough - Great Bowden and Arden</b>	 Cllr Derek Evans <b>Market Harborough - Little Bowden</b>	 Cllr Francesca McHugo <b>Market Harborough - Little Bowden</b>
 Cllr Dr Paul Bremner <b>Market Harborough - Logan</b>	 Cllr Peter Callis <b>Market Harborough - Logan</b>	 Cllr Roger Dunton <b>Market Harborough - Welland</b>	 Cllr Jo Brodrick <b>Market Harborough - Welland</b>	 Cllr Julie Simpson <b>Market Harborough - Welland</b>	 Cllr John Everett <b>Misterton</b>	 Cllr David Beatty <b>Nevill</b>	 Cllr Neville Hall <b>Peatling</b>
 Cllr Amanda Burrell <b>Thurnby and Houghton</b>	 Cllr Simon Galton <b>Thurnby and Houghton</b>	 Cllr Peter Elliott <b>Thurnby and Houghton</b>	 Cllr Michael Rook <b>Tilton</b>	 Cllr Rosita Page <b>Ullesthorpe</b>	<p><b>Find out more</b> To find out more about each councillor, including contact details and information about which committees they sit on, visit our website at <a href="http://www.harborough.gov.uk/councillors">www.harborough.gov.uk/councillors</a></p>		

## Moving forward in the digital age

The way we communicate, make payments and access the services we need is changing. In the digital era, many people are no longer as reliant on the telephone, letters, or face to face services. Much of what we need to do can be done quicker and more effectively via the internet.

Customers' expectations of our online services are changing, as are the ways in which they access them.

They want services that are easy to access, simple to use, convenient, and available as and when required.

They may want to pay their Council Tax online using their laptop while sat on the sofa at home, or report fly-tipping using their mobile phone while out walking the dog.

As a council, we are working hard to respond to these evolving needs.

We are developing our website to ensure that it is easier and more user-friendly than ever before, and provides an excellent customer



experience. This approach also helps the council be more efficient and save money.

Use of our website and online services has been increasing significantly year-on-year, and customers in the district are keen to make greater use of this way of communicating with us.

Fundamental to this are our plans to develop superfast broadband across the district and our investment to make accessing online services faster and easier for residents.

Digital communications offer new tools and ways of working,

and can open up council services to people who haven't previously felt able to engage with services before.

Our website is also our shop window to the world and can often provide the first point of communication for a global audience. The importance of this is highlighted by the Government's approach towards providing services as digital by default. We share their goal of providing digital services that are so effective and easy to use that people will prefer to use them over other forms of communication.

## How we plan to achieve this...

- Provide the public with a website that is accessible to everyone, with online content that is up-to-date useful, useable and used
- Ensure all council services are available online, providing a robust 24 hour service for customers
- Promote the benefits of our online services to customers, and lower the need for customers to telephone, write to the council or visit face to face
- Regularly review of our online services to ensure they are up to date and meet customers' needs
- Explore new areas and software that could benefit and improve our online services for customers
- Engage with customers more effectively online, and make greater use of social media channels, such as Twitter, to communicate with customers





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## Contact the council

[www.harborough.gov.uk](http://www.harborough.gov.uk)

 [customer.services@harborough.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@harborough.gov.uk)



Twitter @HarboroughDC




Facebook/harborough.council

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