



Corporate Plan 2015-16



Introduction...

Welcome to Harborough District Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2016, the Council's vision for the district and its priorities.



Blake Pain
Leader
Harborough District Council

Our Corporate Plan for 2015-2016 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.

Our vision...

Working with communities in a vibrant, safe and prosperous District.

Our Priorities...

- Working with communities to develop places in which to live and be happy.
- Provide public services which are effective and deliver value for money.
- Encourage a vibrant and sustainable business community intent on prosperity, employment and learning opportunities.
- Support the vulnerable in the communities where they live.

Our values...

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



Beverley Jolly
Corporate Director - Resources
Harborough District Council



Norman Proudfoot
Corporate Director - Community Services
Harborough District Council



Welcome to Harborough District



Welland Park



Stanford Hall



Sir Frank Whittle jet



Foxton Locks



Old Grammar School

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 – many 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, a popular destination 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 86,000 and around 37,000 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 the district's 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 and apprenticeship 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 has saved £1.3 million in recent years by ensuring our services offer value for money.

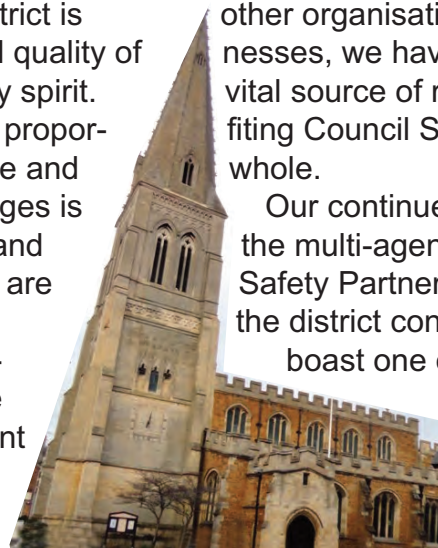
We have also made better use of our assets, by revitalising Harborough Market, located in Market Harborough, and by refurbishing The Symington Building to provide a multi-agency facility.

This enables the community to access a variety of services under one roof.

By leasing out space to other organisations and businesses, we have created 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 whole of the East Midlands.



Council priorities for 2015 - 2016

Priority

To work with communities 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 and residents

We did...

- Our Grants Panel successfully allocated over £1million worth of funding to community projects.
- Worked with parishes to inform the Open Spaces Plan.
- Implemented a Planning Enforcement pilot scheme with three Parish Councils to utilise the communities' local knowledge.
- Supported two Parish Councils through the Neighbourhood Plans submission process, and ran the referenda where residents voted to adopt the plans. We were one of only three councils to achieve this.
- Supported a range of community events across the district including Market Harborough by the Sea, Christmas events, Arts Fresco, Mo'ket Harborough, and Harborough in Bloom where Market Harborough was awarded first prize in the East Midlands.
- Introduced a monthly e-newsletter to inform and support the business community.
- Worked with partners on anti-crime and community safety schemes to reduce burglaries and anti-social behaviour.
- Increased uptake in commercial recycling.

We will...

- Work with residents to increase community facilities and open spaces
- Work with partners on community safety schemes
- Develop options for the new waste, recycling and street cleaning contract.
- Review facilities at our leisure centres
- Identify and consult on options for potential developments throughout the district for the New Local Plan.
- Engage with communities to help them deliver Neighbourhood Planning.
- Work with parishes on district and local priorities.



Council priorities for 2015 - 2016

Priority

To provide public services which are effective and deliver value for money

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

You said...

- Keep Council Tax low and 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...

- Maximised the cultural and commercial benefits of The Symington Building.
- Worked with partners to provide successful Street Games across the district.
- Supported communities to take local decisions on Neighbourhood Plans and the Flood Plan.
- Nearly 35,000 attendances at sport and physical activity sessions provided across the district.
- Worked with housing associations to provide affordable homes, including homes in rural areas.
- Developed a new website to provide more online services, enabling customers to access our services at a time suitable for them.
- Froze Council Tax for the fourth consecutive year.

Next steps...

- Continue to develop online services to enable customers to self-serve.
- Will freeze Council Tax for the fifth consecutive year.
- Maximise income opportunities for our commercial services
- Maximise the benefit of grant funding to support community projects.
- Implement the options identified in the Property Review for improved use of Council's Assets.
- Continue to support communities to develop their Neighbourhood Plans.



Council priorities for 2015 - 2016

Priority

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

Working in partnership to support businesses and create jobs

You said...

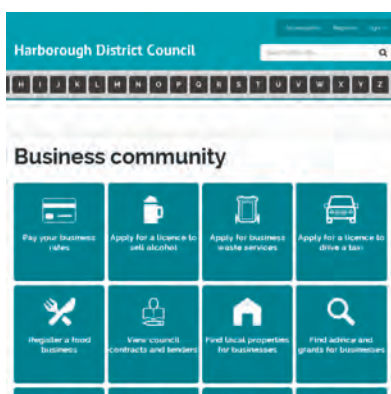
- Promote business community
- Maintain vibrant town centres
- More shopping facilities
- Support independent retailers
- Help start up businesses
- Develop broadband

We did...

- Maximised the use of The Symington Building by creating a public sector hub.
- Invested to provide access to broadband to a number of villages.
- Filled all rental space at the Harborough Innovation Centre ahead of scheduled date.
- Worked with partners in the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to attract national funding to the county
- Contributed to the delivery of affordable homes across the district
- Held regular meetings with business leaders.
- Redeveloped Harborough Market as a vibrant facility which is increasing visitors to the town.
- Supported new business start up through the Harborough Innovation Centre.
- Encouraged growth in the local economy through effective engagement with local businesses through our tendering process
- Created a post dedicated to supporting local businesses.

We will...

- Improve businesses ease of access to Council Services.
- Consider further investment to connect more communities to broadband through the Superfast Leicestershire programme.
- Maximise the benefits of grant funding opportunities.
- Promote Culture and Tourism throughout the district.
- Maintain and improve relationships with local businesses.
- Support businesses in taking on apprenticeships.
- Support business to enable them to grow and increase skills and training.



Council priorities for 2015 - 2016

Priority

To support the vulnerable in the community 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
- Services for elderly and vulnerable
- Home improvement grants
- Provide facilities for children

We did...

- Worked with our health and wellbeing partners to provide funding to 9 health related projects.
- Supported older people by offering a range of physical activities.
- Supported private home improvements through funding schemes.
- Developed a Prevention of Homelessness Strategy.
- Worked with partners to provide support to 37 families with complex needs
- Halved the time to process housing benefit claims.
- Provided support to the elderly through the befriending scheme.
- Worked with partners to mitigate the impact of welfare reform, providing assistance to those most in need.

We will...

- Promote a programme to reduce fuel poverty.
- Worked with partners to enable vulnerable people to remain in their homes for longer.
- Work with partners to ensure provision of affordable housing meets the needs of the community.
- Review funding schemes available to improve private sector homes.
- Increase opportunities for the elderly and vulnerable at the district leisure centres.
- Develop the Harborough Lifeline service.
- Continue to work with partners to support our families with the most complex needs.
- Work with partners to provide support to Universal Credit claimants that need assistance.



Managing the Council's finances 2015 - 2016

Planning for the future

The Council continues to respond to a contraction in public sector finances through a more focused and coordinated priority and financial planning process, innovation, efficiencies and through maximising locally generated funding and income streams.

This means that by 2016 significant savings (in excess of £1.3 million) will have been made on an ongoing basis, year-on-year whilst at the same time making significant investment into the key priorities of sustainable communities and economic prosperity.

The Council's success in promoting and delivering proportionate housing and business growth within Harborough District has generated approximately £3 million of locally generated funds to support the Council's priorities for 2015/16 and has as-

sisted in mitigating against the impact of reductions in core Government funding in recent years.

The Council's success in this area is the best in Leicestershire and among the leading Councils nationwide for 2013/14.

Targeted additional investment (£ ½ million) into Business Support Initiatives , improved skills through apprenticeships and Super-fast Broadband will continue to make Harborough District an attractive place to live and work and will further generate locally retained growth funds and make the Council less reliant on core Government funding.

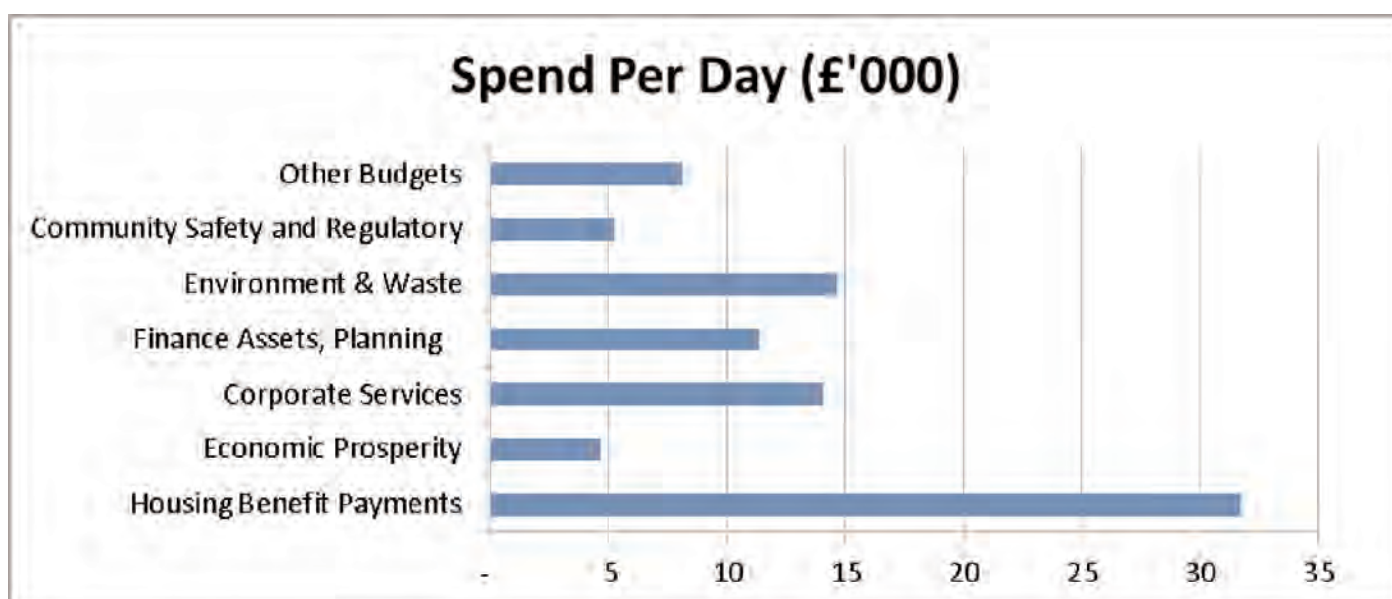
The Council has proposed a 4 year Capital programme, totalling £10 million for the period to 2018/19. This follows the successful investment of



almost £8 million in The Symington Building and Harborough Market. Increased utilisation of both buildings, visits and customer feedback clearly demonstrate the success of these projects for the residents of the District and reducing the Council's costs.

The Council intends developing schemes for business move on space and market town redevelopment and low cost housing over the next four years.

The Council spends nearly £90,000 a day on services and supporting residents on the following priorities:



Elected members & political management

We have 37 councillors who represent 25 wards.

The **Conservative** group, led by Cllr Blake Pain, has the majority with 25 seats.

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

There are three **Independent** councillors

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

Improving our online services

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 have developed 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.

Vision, objectives, strategy, governance, commitment, ownership, leadership, capacity

Starting position – contact volumes & reasons, performance, meeting customer needs


Redesign service delivery processes to be lean, efficient, suited to self-service, integrated

Create a website which is "fit for purpose", for all customers and customer facing staff to use

Communication, outreach, information, digital inclusion and promotion

Monitoring progress – contact volumes & reasons, performance, meeting customer needs

Six steps to channel shift

 www.socitmconsulting.co.uk

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 continue to develop superfast broadband across the district and our investment to make accessing online services faster and easier for residents and businesses.

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 us 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.

Visit our website at www.harborough.gov.uk

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 and LinkedIn, to communicate with customers





Contact the council

Visit our website at: www.harborough.gov.uk

Email us: customer.services@harborough.gov.uk

Make a payment using our Payment line (charged at local rate) on 0845 03003283



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LinkedIn [/company/harborough-district-council](https://company.linkedin.com/harborough-district-council)

Call us on: 01858 828282

(available from 8am to 5pm - closed for training from 9am to 9.30am on Wed)

Text: 07797 87 82 82

Visit us at:

Harborough District Council
The Symington Building
Adam and Eve Street
Market Harborough
Leicestershire LE16 7AG

Open - Mon/Tues/Thu/Fri: 8.45am - 5pm. Wed: 9.30am - 5pm



www.harborough.gov.uk