



**Reigate & Banstead**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
Banstead | Horley | Redhill | Reigate

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<b>TO</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE</b>	10 September 2020
<b>EXECUTIVE MEMBER</b>	Cllr Lewanski, Executive Member for Corporate Direction and Governance

<b>KEY DECISION REQUIRED</b>	No
<b>WARDS AFFECTED</b>	All (All Wards);

<b>SUBJECT</b>	Five Year Plan Performance Report 2019/20
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<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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- 1. To note the progress during the final year of the Council's 2015-2020 Five Year Plan priorities, as set out in the report, and to make any observations.**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>
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2019/20 represented the final year of the Council's 2015-2020 Five Year Plan, which commenced in 2015-16.

A new plan for the period 2020-2025 has now been adopted, so this report provides the final progress annual report for the 2015-2020 plan, covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

As a high performing organisation, the Council developed the 2015-2020 Five Year Plan in order to identify its vision and objectives over the medium term period. The plan sought to ensure that the Council continued to meet the needs and aspirations of our residents and Members, whilst overcoming the challenges (particularly financial) facing the organisation, and the wider local government sector, over the plan period.

From April 2020, Reigate and Banstead 2025 (as adopted by Council on 16 January 2020) will provide the framework for Council activity. Performance against the new Plan will be reported on an annual basis as the plan progresses.

## **STATUTORY POWERS**

1. There is no statutory requirement for the council to produce a five year plan or Corporate Plan.
2. The Council adopted its 2015-2020 Corporate Plan to set out the vision and priorities that would guide its service and financial plans. This is consistent with a best practice adopted by many organisations, in both the public and private sector.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The Reigate & Banstead 2015-2020 Corporate Plan was adopted five years ago as a result of substantial research and consultation. The core purpose of the plan was to put into action what is important to our residents, who should be at the heart of everything we do. The plan has ensured that our work and resources have been directed towards the issues that matter the most to our residents. The plan has covered a challenging time for the Council, as central funding for local authorities has been taken away, whilst the need to support our communities has continued. Despite this context, the plan was ambitious in its goals and was supported by sound financial management, smart ways of working, and dedicated staff.
4. The plan is organised around three key themes:
  - People, supporting residents to enjoy healthy and happy lifestyles;
  - Place, a great place to live and work; and
  - Organisation, a great council.
5. This report represents the final report into progress in delivering the 2015-2020 corporate plan.
6. Looking to the future, the Council has now adopted an updated Corporate Plan, Reigate & Banstead 2025, covering the period 2020-2025. In a similar way to this plan, the new plan explains the Council's priorities for the next five years, and how we will deliver services to those living, working and spending time in the borough. The new plan has been developed looking at local evidence, resident feedback, and what has changed and is likely to change in the borough in the five years. We will continue to report on the progress of the new plan, with the first progress report to come this time next year.
7. Additional information on how the progress on delivering the 2015-2020 Corporate Plan and the challenges faced by the Council were considered and taken into account in developing the 2020-25 Corporate Plan is set out in Annex 1 to this report.
8. The current situation around the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly had a significant impact on many people, and may continue to do so for some time. Matters such as unemployment levels, exercise and leisure, and many businesses will likely be influenced by this for an extended period. The Council has been heavily engaged in

the local response to the situation. Detail about the Council's role in the COVID-19 response and recovery has been reported elsewhere.

9. Notwithstanding the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this report provides an update of the progress we as a Council have made during the last, and final year of the Reigate & Banstead 2015-2020 Corporate Plan.

## **KEY INFORMATION**

### **PEOPLE – Supporting residents to enjoy healthy and happy lifestyles**

10. This section sets out a summary of the performance during 2019/20 under our People priority area. Our priorities have been to support residents into employment, provide great services to help older people stay independent, encourage healthy lifestyles through use of our leisure centres and open spaces, and help keep our communities safe. We have also provided a broad range of support across areas such as homelessness, benefits payments, dealing with anti-social behaviour, money support and community development.

Across our plan priorities:

#### **We will support residents into employment – particularly those in vulnerable families and young people**

11. Employment levels have been at record highs nationally, and this has been reflected in the borough, with metrics consistently exceeding national averages. The Council's Family Support Programme has helped families with complex needs find employment opportunities that work for them, and the Council has provided additional direct opportunities for over 250 people through our Workers scheme and apprenticeships. The current COVID-19 situation has evidently had an impact on many people, and we will be continuing to look at what action is needed locally and where we can help as we seek to deliver our 2020-2025 plan objectives.

#### **We will work with and support our partners to provide great services for older people to help them stay independent**

12. The average age of residents in the borough has been going up, so we've been working to ensure that systems are in place to enable older people to stay active and access the services they need. These include subsidised leisure centre memberships, taxi vouchers and home improvements. We also operate social activities from the Harlequin Theatre and community centres around the borough, and work with our partners to support a range of sporting options, along with specific assistance for concerns such as dementia.
13. Participation and satisfaction figures for our leisure and community centres have remained on target in 2019/20, and we've updated our work with the voluntary sector to help different groups to coordinate effectively. Our website maintains an updated directory of available activities and services for older people.

**We will encourage healthy lifestyles, particularly through the use of our leisure centres, parks and open spaces**

14. We have continued to work, both directly and with partners, to ensure that all residents have access to high quality leisure centres and open spaces. Leisure centre visits have remained at a consistently high level of over 1.2 million annually, whilst parks across the borough have continued to be popular for both individual activities and a range of events.
15. The use of our sites and facilities has been supported by the Wellbeing Prescription Service, which is operated in partnership with NHS East Surrey and Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Groups, Tandridge District Council and Surrey County Council. Its wellbeing advisors offer expert advice and direct local people to services to assist their wellbeing and help them maintain healthy lifestyles. User feedback from the service has been very positive.

**We will improve safety through joint working with Surrey Police and other partners**

16. The Council was nominated for a Surrey Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour award in 2019, reflecting the work of our Community Development Workers in supporting and developing the strengths of our communities. The JET team have also worked to reduce anti-social behaviour through updated patrol arrangements and a focus on identified hotspots.
17. We have also continued to work with the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership to raise awareness around and help to reduce serious organised crime, domestic abuse and other concerns such as modern slavery and preventing terrorism. Coordination between community development workers, the JET team, and other Council services and agencies has helped us to continue to support safer communities and protect our most vulnerable residents.
18. Other notable areas of activity across the people theme have included:
  - a. The wellbeing prescription programme has grown by more than 25% to support over 2500 people within the standard service during 2019/20 and another 260 people accessed the Plus service. The majority of people accessing the service were able to reduce their need for GP appointments following intervention, and in the fourth quarter 98.2% of users reported that they found the service useful or very useful.
  - b. The leisure centre contract performance in 2019/20 continued to be on target, as demonstrated by monthly performance reports from (GLL) Greenwich Leisure Limited, covering areas such as customer satisfaction, health and safety and usage figures. During 2019 there were over 1.2 million visits to the council's three centres. A large focal point is to promote the health and wellbeing of our residents. This was important to the community based on results from a 2019 survey.
  - c. The Family Support Programme supports families with complex and multiple needs, particularly around Education, Employment, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, Children's Services, Domestic Abuse and Health. Quantitative data shows that all families show improvement with the average change being 59%. This is 7% higher than average. The family feedback shows that 79% of families feel their lives have improved as a result of our intervention, with 95.4% rating the service they receive from the team as Good or Excellent.

- d. The Council's Refugee Resettlement continues to support 10 households within the borough, 4 of which joined in 2019. The households consist of 20 adults and 15 children. 3 of the adults are in paid employment, 5 are engaged in volunteering activities, and 5 are undertaking training for future employment. All 15 children are in full time education.
- e. The Money Support team supports families and individuals to help people save money, avoid debt and maximise their income. In 2019 we supported an additional 122 families which resulted in £13,331 of overall debt cleared.
- f. The Council helps around 7,000 households in the borough with help through Housing Benefit (£32m) and Council Tax Support (£7m)
- g. The Revenue and Benefits service collect £119.5m of Council Tax per year from 61,585 households. Our collection rate is one of the best in England and Wales at 99.10%
- h. This service has a forecast income totalling £378K in 2019/20 from external work such as providing high quality, and bespoke services around the areas that we do best – Council tax, business rates, debt recovery, benefits and fraud.
- i. The Council received 1105 approaches during 2019/20 relating to housing issues, of which 536 became homeless applications. Following casework, 339 cases (64 more than previous year) received positive outcomes (homelessness prevented) and the main housing duty (to secure affordable accommodation) was accepted for a further 72 cases.
- j. The Council also nominated 335 households from the waiting list to social housing vacancies whilst for the same period the waiting list grew from 841 households to 884 households. Just over 700 households made unsuccessful applications to join the housing register. Throughout the year the average number of households living in B&B accommodation was 19 (up average of 2 on previous year).
- k. Through the successful detection of fraud, in 2019/20 the fraud team made savings of £786,065.04. Due to high performance that had secured a measurable impact on fraud prevention and detection, the Council won the "Excellence in counter fraud" award at the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) annual ceremony in 2019.
- l. The establishment of a team of Community Development Workers supporting and developing the strengths of our communities has resulted in us being nominated for a Surrey Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Award in 2019.

## **PLACE – A great place to live and work**

- 19. This section sets out a summary of the performance during 2019/20 under our Place priority area. Our priorities have been to encourage existing and new businesses in the borough, ensure our towns and public spaces are clean and attractive, and establish a DMP reflecting the needs of the borough. We have also provided a broad range of support across areas such as planning, refuse and recycling, parking enforcement and environmental health.

Across our plan priorities:

**Encourage existing businesses to thrive and grow within Reigate and Banstead and attract new businesses to the borough**

20. Businesses in the borough have continued to support local prosperity and offer jobs for local people. As identified above, employment levels have remained above national and regional levels, and business survival rates have been similarly strong. Since the start of the plan, the number of businesses in the borough grew by over 25%.
21. We have been continuing to encourage local businesses through providing advice, networking and grants to local businesses, including the first ever Reigate & Banstead Business Awards event in June 2019. Although falling outside this reporting period, with the recent COVID-19 concerns for businesses, we have been helping to provide additional support through business support grants and business rates relief, which we were one of the fastest authorities in the country to process.

**To ensure our towns and public spaces are clean and attractive to residents, businesses and visitors**

22. The cleanliness and quality of town centres and public spaces has consistently been ranked as an important factor for residents, and we have maintained our efforts to ensure that they continue to meet to the expected standards.
23. Recent efforts have included the completion of our compulsory purchase order and commencement of enabling works at Marketfield Way which will help the Council to bring forward its mixed use leisure scheme in Redhill town centre; completion of a comprehensive upgrade to Horley's pedestrian precinct; improvements to Preston Park, including path resurfacing and a new outside gym; and the installation of new playground equipment in Priory Park.

**Establish a Development Management Plan (DMP) to deliver affordable and other types of housing, employment space and infrastructure, whilst protecting the borough's pleasant environment**

24. The new DMP was approved and adopted early in the year. This set out plans to enable appropriate development for homes and businesses, whilst managing activity to ensure that the borough retains its character and qualities. A review of the Local Plan Core Strategy was also conducted and was determined in July to remain up to date, supporting development management in the borough remaining plan-lead and reflective of local conditions.
25. These key elements have been supported by the adoption of the Local Enforcement Plan, providing certainty around planning enforcement, and the development of additional supplementary planning documents and guidance to help inform developers and encourage best practice.
26. Other notable areas of activity across the place theme have included:
  - a. The Community Infrastructure Levy has started successfully operating since 2016 and has generated millions of pounds from new development to be spent on new

and improved infrastructure within the Borough, including schools, roads, green spaces and community facilities.

- b. The DMP replaced the remaining 2005 Borough Local Plan, some policies of which dated back to 1994. This means applications are determined against an up-to-date policy base giving greater certainty and allowing for better results from development, such as realistic parking, more affordable housing and better environmental and sustainability measures. A recent review of our Core Strategy has allowed our Local Plan to remain up to date, enabling the Council to keep control over development, its housing needs and as a result remaining a plan-led authority.
- c. We have adopted The Local Enforcement Plan, which sets out how planning breaches will be considered and against what timeframe, giving certainty and accountability for residents and developers.
- d. Home building is consistently meeting annual targets, indicating that local planning policy and development control are working effectively to meet requirements.
- e. The new Housing Delivery Strategy was adopted by the Executive in December 2019, and projects at Cromwell Road, Pitwood Park and Lee Street all received approval to progress in February 2020.
- f. The first ever Reigate & Banstead Business Awards event was held in June 2019. The event succeeded in celebrating the vibrancy of our local economy and raising the profile of the Council's work to support local business. The event attracted 57 nominations across 8 categories. More than 100 business guests attended and almost £3,500 was raised for charities Stripey Stork and George & the Giant Pledge.
- g. Our highly successful Business Support Grant programme has continued to provide up to £1,000 to businesses wishing to start, develop or grow in the Borough. The Business Support Grants programme has supported more than 250 local small businesses since it was launched in 2013 (more than £250k in total). Follow-up research completed in 2019 has found that the funding helps businesses to improve productivity, grow their customer base/ turnover and take on more employees (32% of recipients have gone on to employ new staff - equating to an additional 96 employees plus contract staff).
- h. In 2019-2020, the Council paid out £265,000 in funding to over 30 local voluntary and community organisations.
- i. The Council has awarded £14,000 in grants to 7 local organisations. The latest organisations to receive funding are Sight for Surrey, Princess Alice Hospice and Age Concern Merstham, Reigate and Redhill, who have each received between £1500 and £2500. Their projects include communication classes for the visually impaired in Redhill, and a community allotment in Banstead.
- j. Our annual Big Bang Careers Fair, held at the Harlequin, provides local pupils with a fun and informative way of finding out where their STEM studies can lead them. In 2019, the Big Bang Careers Fair welcomed more than 600 students from local schools with 15 local employers to inspire the next generation of talent.
- k. The fleet of vehicles delivering the Council's domestic refuse collection is now being refurbished and replaced. The new and updated vehicles are more reliable and efficient, and we've also been implementing the use of electric bins lifts to further reduce fuel usage. As the service has been working to extend its recycling service to an additional 4000 flats, it is important that our fleet is as efficient and cost effective as it can be.

## **ORGANISATION – A great organisation**

27. This section sets out a summary of the performance during 2019/20 under our Organisation priority area. Our priorities have been to be financially self-sufficient without impacting our residents' priorities, communicate and engage with our residents and businesses, increase the value of and income from Council assets, and maximise the potential of our staff. We have also continued to promote transparency and openness, efficient practices, and moved towards environmental sustainability.

Across our plan priorities:

### **We will be financially self-sufficient by 2020, without impacting on residents' priorities**

28. As the Council now receives no direct central government funding, and continues to face increased demands for local services, remaining financially self-sufficient in presents a considerable challenge.
29. Revenue budget expenditure in 2019/20 was £15.4 million. This was less than the allocated budget for the year of £17.5 million, with an underspend greater than the allocated use of reserves, due significantly to in-year savings and increased income. As such, the Council was therefore able to operate financially self-sufficiently last year.
30. However, with the Council now receiving less than 70p for every £1 it received per resident in 2010 from regular funding, allowing for inflation, maintaining services will need to be supported through efficient operating, maximisation of the value of Council assets and an effective approach to commercial and investment activity.

### **Communicate and engage with our residents and businesses, to help inform service delivery**

31. Work has been continuing to enhance our engagement with the community and improve the customer experience. We have expanded our digital and social media offerings, including the roll-out of an individual focussed tool (My Reigate & Banstead) whilst maintaining the availability of more traditional engagement routes.
32. The My Reigate & Banstead Account for residents offers a one-stop-shop for most services, and the number of users continues to grow. Increased webcasting of meetings, and the introduction of Facebook Live Q&As with the Leader have also helped increase openness and accessibility.

### **We will increase the value of, and income derived from, the Council's properties and assets**

33. When the Five Year Plan 2015-2020 came into effect in 2015, the Council generated £1.3 million annually from property and assets. Income from property and assets in 2019/20 was assessed at over £3.5 million, representing an increase of over 175%.
34. The Council has developed a new capital investment strategy, and will need to continue to maximise the return on its assets, whilst maintaining benefits to the local

community and economy, in order to support the delivery of future services. The new Commercial Ventures Executive Sub-Committee has been taking a lead role in overseeing this work.

### **We will maximise the potential of our staff**

35. Over the period of the 2015-2020 Five Year Plan, the Council has developed its organisational culture and worked with all those in the organisation to establish its values. The Great People programme has sought to create a positive and supportive work environment and enable staff to perform to their best.

36. We have been an Apprenticeship Levy paying employer since 2017 and our 2019-20 budget to fund the Levy payment was £63,900. We accessed the fund to provide training and improvement opportunities via apprenticeships for new and existing employees and have been meeting our target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of staff as new apprentices.

We work in partnership with the Surrey District and Borough Councils to provide a shared generic training programme to upskill managers and employees. During 2019-20 nearly twice as many of these courses (204) were booked by our employees compared to other authorities which demonstrates our healthy and positive learning culture.

37. Whilst outside the period of the 2015-20 corporate plan, and therefore not strictly within this scope of this report, it should be noted that during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, our staff have had to adapt to a range of new ways of working under challenging circumstances, whilst continuing to deliver services to our residents.

38. Other notable areas of activity across the organisation theme have included:

- a. In 2019 the Council introduced paperless committee meetings with the implementation of tablets. It is a modernised integrated software approach, which in turn has reduced risks. Meetings now operate with members using a tablet provided by the Council. They have full access to all papers, and as the documents are encrypted, they are much more secure. The introduction of paperless meetings supports our emerging Environmental Sustainability Strategy.
- b. Results from a survey conducted on elected members found that 91% agreed that access to, and transparency of, supporting information and key policy documents (e.g. Annual Budget, Borough Local Plan etc.) has either improved or is easy with the tablet.
- c. 18 apprenticeships were live in 2019-20 within various teams across a range of different levels.
- d. Savings in the electoral budget after the boundary review has contributed to budget efficiency.
- e. 2019 saw the implementation of Windows 10, Office 365, new laptops for staff and an upgrade of the Windows server environment. By having secure and future proofed systems, we will enable staff to deliver their workload with fit for purpose technology.
- f. The multi-award-winning Graphical Information Systems (GIS) service hosting hundreds of internal datasets to over 120 users has contributed to speeding up decision-making and supporting service improvement. Customer satisfaction in the

IT Service Desk has improved significantly since 2016, and remained at a high (80%) confirmed satisfaction level in 2019/20.

#### **NEXT STEPS FOR 2020-21 AND BEYOND**

39. The Council have adopted its new corporate plan for the period 2020-2025, 'Reigate & Banstead 2025'. This plan includes updated priorities under the themes of "People, Place and Organisation", based on consultation and engagement with residents, councillors and staff, progress in delivering the 2015-20 corporate plan and national and local policies and priorities.
40. New priorities include in relation to housing provision (with a new Housing Delivery Strategy having been agreed in December 2019) and environmental sustainability (with a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy agreed at Executive in July 2020).
41. Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that the focus for the first few months of 2020/21 have been on our emergency response, based on what we currently know it is considered that the objectives set out within Reigate & Banstead 2025 remain appropriate. The council continues to manage the COVID-19 emergency response and recovery with governance structures in place, including the Recovery Scrutiny Panel. However, in the short to medium term, consideration will need to be given to how we prioritise their delivery given current and ongoing resource diversion.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

42. No direct legal implications have been identified regarding this report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

43. No direct financial implications have been identified regarding this report.

#### **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

44. The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
  - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
45. The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy/maternity; race; religion/faith; sex and sexual orientation. In addition, marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
46. There are no direct equalities implications of this report, however an awareness of the Council's obligations with respect to these duties should form part of the consideration of this report.

47. The development of the Council's new corporate plan, Reigate and Banstead 2025, was supported by an Equality Impact Assessment, to assess its implications with regard to these duties. The new plan also sets out the Council's commitments to these duties more strongly, and consideration of these duties will form part of ongoing reporting against the performance of the plan.

#### **COMMUNICATION IMPLICATIONS**

48. No direct communication implications have been identified regarding this report.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

49. In support of its corporate plan and service delivery, the Council has a robust risk management system in place with regular reports to Executive, Audit Committee, and Management Team.

#### **CONSULTATION**

50. The material for this Five Year Plan performance report has come from the activities identified in service business plans for the reporting period noted above.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

51. Corporate Plan 2015-20 - [http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/610/our\\_5\\_year\\_plan\\_2015-20.pdf](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/610/our_5_year_plan_2015-20.pdf)
52. Borough Quality of Life Profile – 2018 - [http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5146/borough\\_quality\\_of\\_life\\_profile\\_2018.pdf](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5146/borough_quality_of_life_profile_2018.pdf)
53. Reigate & Banstead 202 - [http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6014/rbbc2025\\_full\\_plan.pdf](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6014/rbbc2025_full_plan.pdf)