



Breckland
COUNCIL

Breckland Corporate Plan 2019–2023



Introduction



William Nunn
Council Leader



Anna Graves
Chief Executive

Welcome to Breckland Council's Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023, the Council's vision for the district and its priorities for this period.

Our Corporate Plan sets out how we will work with our partners and the community to ensure that Breckland continues to be a place that people choose to live, work, visit and enjoy.

It is informed by what we know about the area and identifies how we will achieve our long-term vision, what our key priorities are and how we will deliver our services.

Our Strategic vision is:

'Breckland: A place where people and business can thrive'

Our Priorities:

- Your Place
- Your Health & Wellbeing
- Your Opportunity
- Our Council

Our approach

We are a forward-thinking, entrepreneurial and innovative council whose elected members and officers work closely together to support local people and businesses. Meeting the needs of our residents through the delivery of quality, cost-effective core services - such as regular bin collections - is at the heart of what we do, but we also seek new opportunities to enhance the district and help local people fulfil their full potential.

We strive to ensure each of our five towns and their surrounding areas are great places in which to live, work, and invest. We want people to choose to live and work in Breckland and to attract visitors to the district, as this keeps our communities vibrant



and because increasing footfall will boost the local economy and protect our independent traders and local people's jobs.

Investing in our communities

One way we are driving this is through significant investment in community-based initiatives, including £6m over four years from our community reserve fund and around £0.5m through our Market Towns Initiative. We've put in place innovative projects such as a community lottery to help financially support and promote local good causes and a range of help for independent traders in order to protect our high streets and local employment.

We're able to make these major investments into our district partly because we have been brave in the past. We were among the first councils to invest money in commercial space – such as offices and warehouses – to generate new income.

Introduction

We now receive around as much money in commercial property rent as we get from local council tax. We have built a reputation as being a financially well-managed organisation that makes decisions that stack-up financially as well as being for the good of local people. This means we can keep our share of local council tax low – among the lowest in the country – and avoid making cuts to services in order to balance the books.

Moving with the times

We have a good track record but we are also an evolving council; we anticipate and adapt to the changing needs of local people, the challenges of falling funding and increasing demand, and new opportunities to 'go digital'. We have restructured our teams and are providing access to more of our services online – such as new online application forms and payment options – so people who choose to interact with us in his way can do so quickly, easily and at a time that suits them.



Improved efficiencies and greater automation means our staff can focus on residents with the greatest needs.

We are also putting time and money into our staff's development so we can make sure they have the right skills and can excel. We welcome innovation from all corners of the organisation as our skilled and experienced staff are perfectly placed to spot opportunities to drive further service improvements. We therefore value and reward talent and seek opportunities to promote from within or to broaden staff's skills by working with new teams.

Strong partnerships

We recognise that we can't always achieve our goals alone and we have a strong history of buying-in external support when needed as well as joining up with our partners. In some cases we are still learning how to get the most from these relationships and we are committed to refining them as they help us become more efficient and drive up service quality.

We have a shared management team, which has helped save around £8m of public money since 2011, and we often work closely with other organisations to deliver services, bring them together, or apply for national and regional funding to help with local projects. For example, we share office space with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) which creates 'one-stop shops' for our joint clients while bringing in commercial income at our premises.

A bright future

Looking to the future, we have a clear and considered plan for the district's growth - both in terms of housing and jobs - as outlined in our Local Plan, which we will adopt in 2019

and use as a blueprint until 2036. We are building on our strong foundations - including our solid financial position, commercial approach, and quality core services - to directly drive growth, encourage the creation of new jobs, and support our communities to flourish.

Our district

Breckland spans over 500 square miles of beautiful countryside and forest in the heart of Norfolk. With a range of thriving rural village communities and the five bustling market towns of Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton.

The area's rural nature is characterised by its 112 parishes, numerous villages and low crime rate which make Breckland one of the most attractive and safe places to live in the UK. The Council is committed to reducing its impact on the environment by minimising its carbon footprint.

Breckland's population is set to grow from the current 140,500 residents to 159,400 by 2041. Half of the current residents live in one of the five market towns with the remainder living in rural village homes. This means that the district has a low population density.

Agriculture, advanced engineering and manufacturing, logistics and forestry are the dominant business sectors with professional, scientific and technical and food processing not far behind. Breckland's local economy continues to grow bringing new employment to the area.

Thetford and Attleborough are key areas for future housing and business growth which is expected to deliver economic benefits for the whole district.

Priority: Your Place

We strive to ensure each of our five market towns and their surrounding areas are great places in which to live, work, visit and invest. The delivery of quality, cost-effective services – such as regular bin collections, housing support and tackling anti-social behaviour – is at the heart of what we do, but we are also investing heavily in community-based initiatives and delivering innovative projects which benefit local communities, support our residents, and provide a boost to businesses.

The Council is committed to supporting ex-military personnel and is signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant.



We will...

Use our Market Town Initiative to ensure that our five market towns are attractive places that people want to visit with a vibrant economy while still meet the needs of their communities

Continue to use our Community Reserve to deliver targeted benefits to our communities based on their needs

Work with Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, and North Norfolk Councils to procure a new waste, grounds maintenance and street cleansing contract that delivers value for money and high quality services

Grow the 'Our Breckland Lottery' to fund community projects and organisations including sports and social groups
Deliver a programme of maintenance and replacements to our street lights across the district

To deliver substantial and continued growth as proposed through our Local Plan, in conjunction with our key partners

Adopt a proactive approach to land management and maintenance of council owned land to ensure the Council gets best value from its land assets

Work together with partners and local communities to improve the quality of public spaces to be cleaner, greener and safer

Ensure the district continues to have high levels of safety while continuing to work with our partners to further reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and protect the community and the environment

Work with our partners to ensure that key infrastructure such as roads including the A47, rail links, broadband and telecommunications in the district are improved enabling us to be a location of choice

Work to prevent and mitigate homelessness, including by continuing to work with partners across Norfolk to deliver solutions

Enable the effective planning and delivery of housing solutions to meet local needs and aspirations to ensure that our residents including veterans have access to a range of housing options in the district

Work to ensure that our residents have access to a high quality and diverse leisure, arts and cultural offering

Priority: Your Health & Wellbeing

In addition to funding swimming, gym and sports facilities across the district, we also provide activity and arts programmes for people of all ages to support their physical and mental wellbeing. We work with our partners to deliver an overarching approach to preventing ill-health and, on a day-to-day basis, keep people safe through business licensing, food safety checks and monitoring the environment.



We will...

Ensure that our public protection services continues to enable our communities to remain healthy and safe through our regulatory activities including food safety, environmental protection and licensing

Continue to ensure that our leisure provider delivers a broad range of options targeted at increasing physical activity in our district

Lead and support activities and partnerships to address key local physical and mental health, social care and wellbeing issues

Continue to engage with partners to lead early intervention activities such as the Early Help Hub to support, reduce and prevent complex needs

Proactively address social isolation through initiatives such as the 'Silver Social'

Deliver a targeted programme of Health and Wellbeing activities to improve health outcomes across the district

Proactively influence the Norfolk Sustainable Transformation Programme being delivered by the NHS to ensure the best health outcomes for Breckland

Ensure that our residents are enabled to live in high quality housing no matter the tenure

Enable vulnerable residents to remain living independently in the community by using Disabled Facilities Grants to make adaptations

Maintain our current leisure provision but explore where we can enhance the provision of this across the district

Ensure that through the Anglia Revenue Partnership our residents are given high quality advice to help maximise their income and manage their debts

Priority: Your Opportunity

Our Local Plan, which we will adopt in 2019, will act as our blueprint for the district's growth through until 2036. We are investing in the district ourselves and working with our partners on a number of different projects which will attract new businesses to the area while supporting existing businesses to grow and succeed.

This will safeguard their futures and create new jobs within Breckland. We are also working with businesses and education services to provide training which will close identified skills gaps and help people into new or higher-paid employment.



We will...

Proactively work with partners to identify and optimise funding opportunities that will draw resources into our district to support our plans for substantial and continued growth

Continue to deliver a clear “open for business” approach across all Council services that promotes and supports business growth

Proactively lobby the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to improve skills levels and access to further education in Breckland, supporting the prosperity of both our residents and our businesses

Address barriers to better opportunities such as transport to work, digital skills, employment and housing support, by using the Breckland Community Reserve to create initiatives to help improve these

Develop and deliver a clear strategy for ‘Invest in Breckland’ with a view to supporting the growth of businesses located within the district, whilst also working proactively to attract new inward investment that can bring further prosperity to Breckland

Maximise the benefits that the ‘Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor’ will bring to business growth

Work with our partners to stimulate housing and employment development in our major growth areas, with a particular focus on Thetford, Snetterton and Attleborough

Maximise the benefits that any improvements to the A47 will bring to business growth

Internal Priority: Our Council

We bring in around the same amount of money from our investments as we receive in local council tax, which helps us keep our share of local council tax the lowest in the country. We are also adapting to the changing needs of local people and the challenges we face.

For example, by providing access to more of our services online, including new online application forms and payment options, people can choose to interact with us quickly, easily and at a time that suits them. This means our staff can focus on residents with the greatest needs and in doing so we can offer the most appropriate and tailored support to everybody we serve.



We will...

Ensure that our services are digital enabled, efficient and meet the expectations of our changing community whilst not exclude those that are unable to interact in that way

Ensure that our staff have the skills needed to drive the organisation forwards and meet the expectations of our changing communities and how they wish to interact with us

Ensure that national policies for protecting children and vulnerable adults are effectively implemented across all areas of our business and that safeguarding is at the forefront of all we do

Continue to ensure that our regulatory and statutory services remain fully compliant with all current and emerging legislation

Continue to strengthen our commercial approach which will secure our financial position by identifying income generation opportunities and efficiencies through trading and sharing

Maximise the returns generate by the Council's commercial and operational assets

Continue to maximise grant income brought into the Council

Continue to work effectively with all our partners to deliver significant benefits to the communities of Breckland

Help shape and influence emerging national and local policy in order to be at the forefront of change and to maximise the opportunity for Breckland

Ensure the delivery of cost effective, high quality service provision through a robust approach to procurement and contracts management

Keep residents, businesses, and partners informed about council services and latest opportunities through clear and effective communications

Partnership Working

Breckland Council works in partnership with a number of different organisations to deliver services.

We have a strategic partnership with South Holland District Council, in Lincolnshire, with whom we share our strategic management capacity. These officers oversee a number of shared services and corporate functions such as performance, risk and audit, contract management and procurement, client HR, IT and digital requirements. The senior team represent our council on our Norfolk partnerships with health, police and businesses.

We also work with a number of non-council partners, including: Capita, to deliver our planning functions; Serco, who deliver services such as waste collection on our behalf; Parkwood Leisure who run a number of local sport and leisure centres in the district; and Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP), which collects council tax and processes benefits applications on behalf of a number of local councils.



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CAPITA

serco



Breckland Council
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1EE
www.breckland.gov.uk • email: contactus@breckland.gov.uk



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