

# Council Plan

2017-2020

*“Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work,  
through community leadership and excellent services”*



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

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



# Welcome to the Bromsgrove District Council Plan.

It sets out what matters to our residents and our priorities for 2017-2020. It looks at how we can work together with our partners for the benefit of all of our communities to create a Better Bromsgrove for everyone.

As newly appointed leader for the Council I am keen that while our priorities remain realistic and achievable, they also embrace a new and effective way of approaching the challenges which local government faces. We are all aware of the financial pressures impacting on local Councils. Therefore, we need to reduce costs and generate income to increase our longevity and so we can reinvest this money in the areas which will benefit our residents the most, especially those who are on limited incomes. As other Councils have done, we will review all our assets and consider how best they can generate income for the Council.

This plan is split into strategic purposes to guide us and includes actions for each of our strategic areas, providing us with a clear focus for addressing issues and allocating funding for the next four years. They will be a tough challenge to achieve and we will be working as a team (Cabinet and Officers) to ensure they are implemented. However we will not be complacent and, with my Cabinet Members, who are responsible for their own strategic purposes, we will review this plan annually to make sure it is still relevant to the needs of our customers and the priorities we have set out.

**Cllr Geoff Denaro,**  
Leader of Bromsgrove District  
Council

**This Council plan has been put together with 2 main provisos:**

- *That we listen to our residents in terms of what services they wish us to provide*
- *That economic development and income generation will be our prime drivers to sustain financial stability*

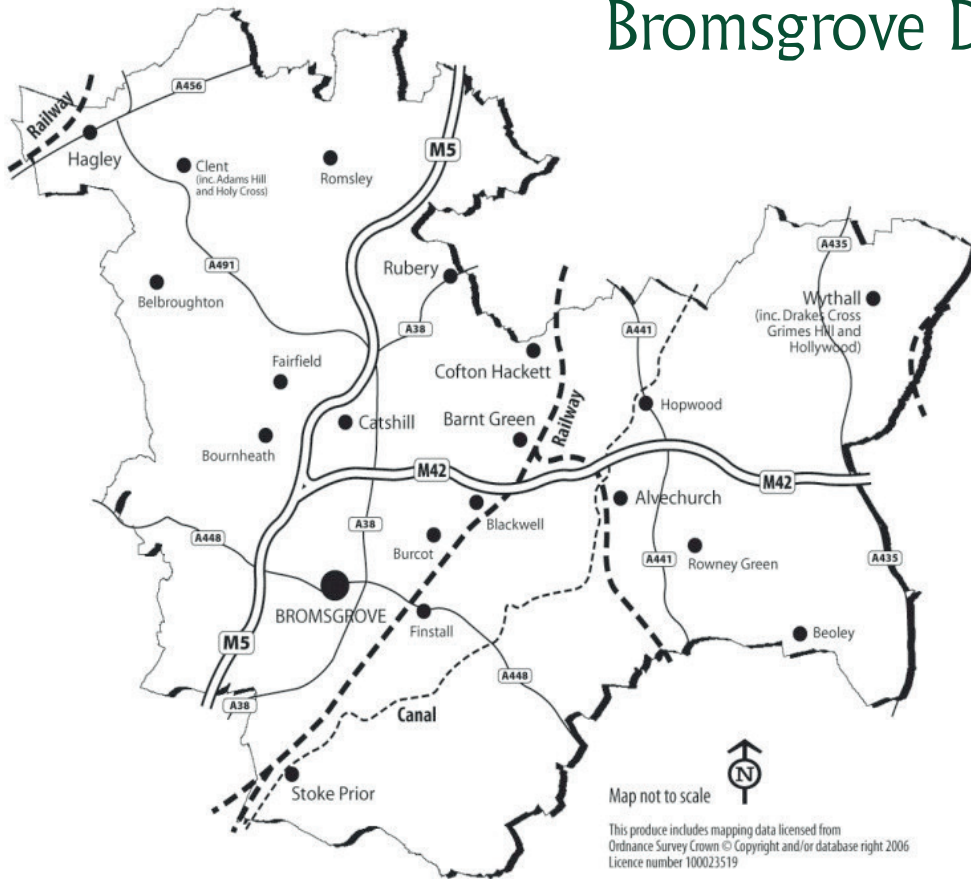
**During 2017-2020, we intend to focus on the following 6 key priorities:**

- *Financial stability for the Council*
- *Economic development within the District*
- *Balancing urban and rural needs, especially for housing needs*
- *Delivery through partnerships or joint ventures*
- *Quality services for residents, with affordable charges where appropriate*
- *Working with WCC to reduce congestion in Bromsgrove Town Centre and other District Centres*



*Bromsgrove District Council Cabinet*

# Bromsgrove District



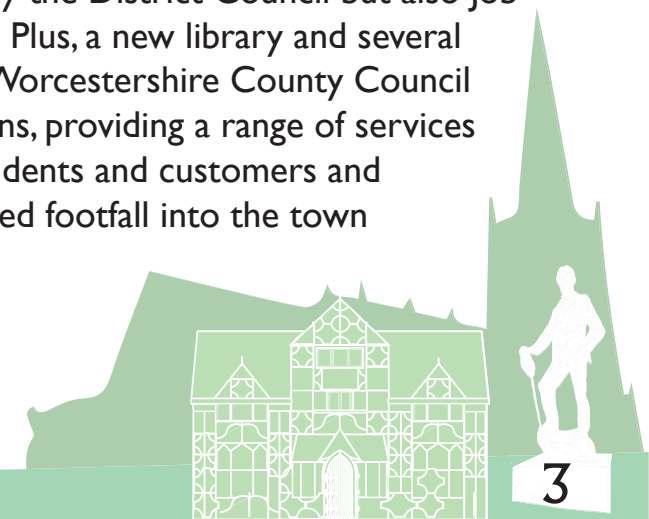
*Bromsgrove District is in the north of Worcestershire and over 90% of its 217 square kilometres is greenbelt. With 95,768\* residents, there are population clusters including Hagley, Rubery and Wythall, with the town of Bromsgrove accounting for just over a third of the total population of the District. Approximately 20% of the population are children and 21% are over 65 years old.*

*Issues such as an ageing population, affordable housing and developing the local economy all impact on the District.*

\*ONS mid-year population estimate 2015



Bromsgrove District Council moved to its new facilities at Parkside in 2015; this heritage site, in the heart of Bromsgrove Town Centre, houses not only the District Council but also Job Centre Plus, a new library and several other Worcestershire County Council functions, providing a range of services for residents and customers and increased footfall into the town centre.



# Context

The **economic** picture for Bromsgrove District is positive, with consistently low unemployment. However, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (specifically income, employment and education indicators) show there were issues, particularly in parts of Charford and Sidemoor.

**North Worcestershire edR** Supporting **business** is incredibly important for the District. Through North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration we will continue to support these businesses and established companies within the District to grow.

**Bromsgrove town centre** is a major area of focus and extensive redevelopment is under way. Recent improvements to the town centre include enhancement of the High Street, a new retail park and planning permission for an exciting development on the Market Hall site.



The **local centres** are also key to improving facilities and opportunities for all of our residents and improvement projects are underway across the district.

Bromsgrove has the highest level of **home ownership** in Worcestershire, and the smallest private rented sector in the county; demand for housing within the district has had a significant impact on property prices which are higher than the Worcestershire average.

**During 2015/2016 166 affordable homes were completed**

Whilst the **health** of people in Bromsgrove District is generally good, health priorities include improving mental wellbeing, increasing physical activity and ageing well.

Through the Bromsgrove Partnership various local agencies, including Bromsgrove District Council, have been playing their part to address these issues.

The district is rich with biodiversity, geodiversity and attractive landscapes. The Council is committed to protecting our **environment** and has undertaken partnership work such

**time to change time to talk day 2017**  
let's end mental health discrimination



as the 'Love Your Rivers Project' to improve ecology and biodiversity in Sanders Park with the creation of a wet grassland area.

It is important for the Council to ensure that Bromsgrove District remains attractive for everyone, and our Place Teams provide a strong **environmental** service across the District based on local needs and priorities. This focus gives our staff greater ownership and develops important local knowledge to support our communities, from picking up litter to cutting the grass.

Bromsgrove District is a low **crime** area; however the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership has been working hard across the district to address causes of crime and to support victims.

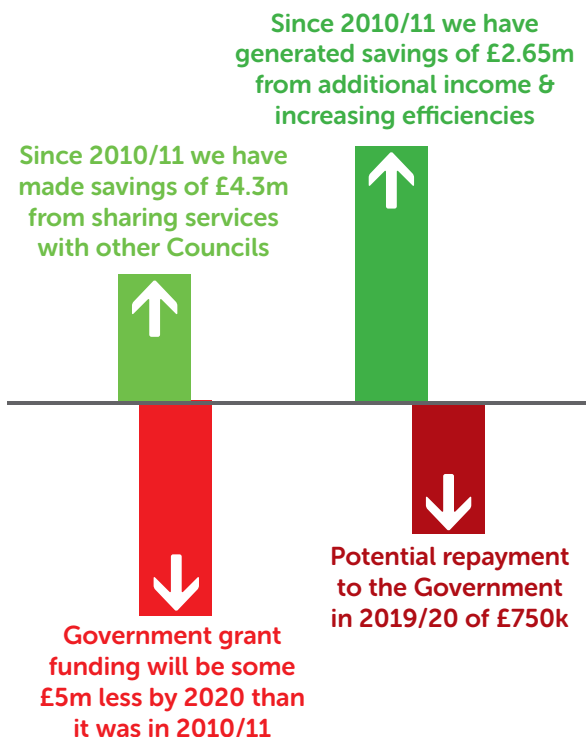
**The Redditch & Bromsgrove Community Safety schools programme has mentored 81 young people across both districts since september 2015.**

There has been continued investment in providing **activities** and facilities for all ages, such as an outdoor gym at Lickey End, inclusive play facilities at the ASDA Recreation Ground and a new skate park and risky play facilities in Hagley.

**There were over 55,000 attendances at Bromsgrove District Council events during 2015/2016.**

# Finances

The December 2015 Government Spending Review announced an indicative four year funding settlement for local authorities. For Bromsgrove the settlement gives a much lower than anticipated level of revenue support grant from the Government with a potential unexpected repayment to Government in 2019/20 of £750k. Consultation has also started on planned changes to New Homes Bonus, which will see a reduction in the amount we receive towards the end of the five year period.



The Council currently receives £1.7m of this grant and allocates £100k for community funding to support projects in those areas affected by housing growth. Government grant funding will be some £5m per year less in real terms by the end of this plan than it was in 2010/11. This equates to losing funding for just under half of the Council's net budget.



The Council has a proven track record in delivering cost and **efficiency savings**. Since 2010/11 the Council has made savings from sharing services with other Councils of £4.3m and generated other savings of approximately £2.648m from additional income and increasing efficiencies.

With the continued cuts to our funding we will have to find more innovative ways to meet the on-going financial pressures that the Council faces.

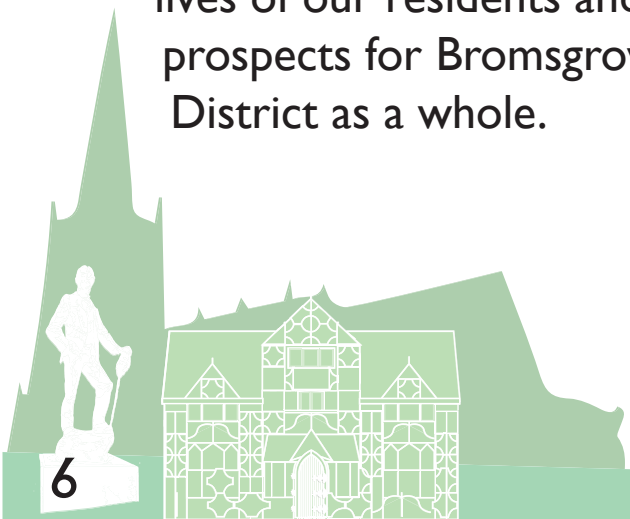
We are working with partners to achieve savings across the public purse which will ensure that valuable front line services continue to be delivered to our communities. The financial funding available will be aligned to our priorities as detailed in this document to ensure we meet customer and community need.

In order to address the financial challenges, over the financial planning period the Council will look at generating growth in our services to **increase income**, redesigning services to make them as flexible and efficient as possible and to work with others to maximise the value of Council services with the limited funding we have available.



# What matters

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to providing residents with effective and efficient services that not only meet their needs but understand them too. Through considering what really matters to our residents we have developed six key priorities for the next four years, supported by six strategic purposes. Working to these purposes will help us to understand the needs of the District and how, together with our partners, we can improve the lives of our residents and the prospects for Bromsgrove District as a whole.



## Key priorities 2017-2020



## Strategic Purposes



# Ensuring a sustainable council

To continue to meet the needs of our communities we need to focus on financial stability and look at how we work within the organisation and with our partners. Our internal support services are fundamental in enabling us to meet our priorities and strategic purposes and allow us to continue to deliver services that matter to our residents and customers.

Key actions to ensure that we maintain our position as a sustainable council are:

## **Ensure the financial stability of the Council**

- Identify opportunities to increase growth and revenue (priority action)
- Develop a four year balanced financial plan

## **Explore delivery opportunities through partnerships or joint ventures**

- Work with partners and the Bromsgrove Partnership to deliver appropriate family support through the 'Connecting Families' and 'Sunrise' programmes (priority action)

## **Deliver quality services for residents, with affordable charges where appropriate**

- Review where charges may be appropriate whilst ensuring we support customer needs (priority action)
- Deliver quality and relevant services by involving our communities



# Strategic Purpose: Help me run a successful business

## What matters

### Encourage local business and inward investment

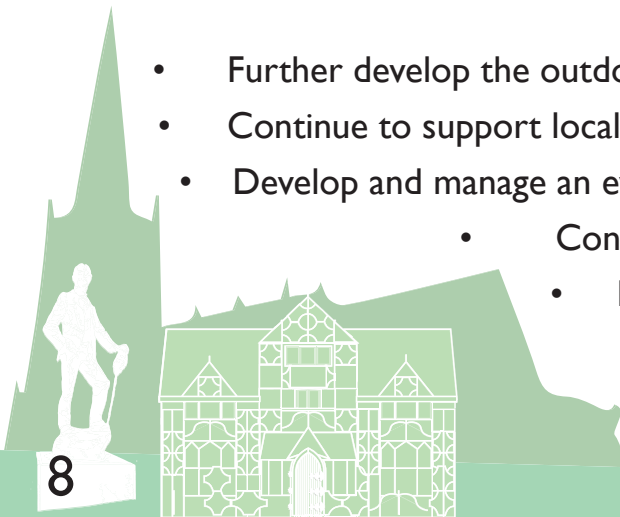
- **Develop and promote key employment sites (priority action)**
- Develop the 'Business begins in Bromsgrove' brand
- Identify potential sites, funding and delivery partners
- Encourage businesses to come to Bromsgrove
- Introduce a package of support mechanisms to help new businesses and inward investment
- Promote Bromsgrove Enterprise Park
- Organise events to promote grants and access to national finance schemes



### Create a more vibrant Bromsgrove Town Centre and flourishing local centres

- Further develop the outdoor market in Bromsgrove
- Continue to support local centres across the district
- Develop and manage an events programme
  - Continue the town centre regeneration programme
  - Develop a car parking strategy for the Town Centre

*Between January and June '16 the highest number of business start-ups outside of London were in Bromsgrove – 29 for every 1,000 residents*







## Improve connectivity within Bromsgrove (Digital and Transport)

- Work with WCC to identify a long term solution to tackling congestion, with the A38 as a priority (priority action)
- Ensure Bromsgrove's public transport needs are integrated into Local Transport Plans and delivered
- Continue to work with WCC to rollout superfast broadband, including to rural areas.

## Invest in our local workforce by supporting training and apprenticeships

- Organise a programme of local Apprenticeships events and fairs
- Ensure SMEs can access Apprenticeship grant support
- Understand employer needs by carrying out a local skills audit
- Work with Heart of Worcestershire (HoW) College and other providers to deliver training that matches employer needs
- Work with local employers to promote career opportunities for young people in Bromsgrove
- Work with schools and other partners to understand the barriers to employability
- Undertake a fundamental review of our economic strategies and priorities

In the last 9 years, there has been a **3 fold increase in the number of apprenticeships completed**

**Almost 700 apprenticeships were started in 2014/15**



# Strategic Purpose: Help me to be financially independent

## What matters

### Develop education and skills to sustain financial independence

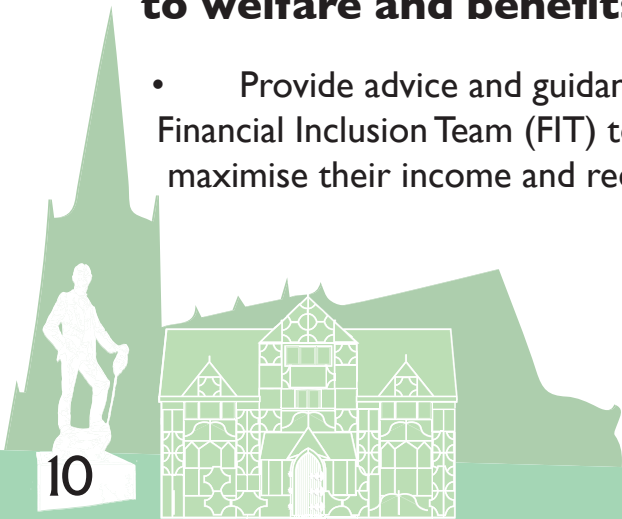
- Work with schools and colleges to deliver life skills in money and debt management
- Work with businesses to identify the skills that are required to enable local people to secure employment in their community
- Engage businesses to develop and grow in the area to continue to provide local jobs
- Support people in getting back to work

### Support communities during changes to welfare and benefits

- Provide advice and guidance through the Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) to help residents maximise their income and reduce debt



People who live in Bromsgrove have the **highest average wage in the West Midlands**, however average wages for people who work in Bromsgrove are the **6th lowest in the region**





## Support residents to reduce levels of individual debt

- Support residents to understand and manage all of their debts
- Work with voluntary sector and other partners to provide debt advice and support
- Promote schemes that encourage savings & financial independence

## Support reductions in winter deaths and fuel poverty

- Work with stakeholders to ensure homes are energy efficient
- Provide funding to improve homes to reduce fuel poverty

## Support the provision of affordable housing in the District to meet the needs of the community

- Work with partners to develop different options for housing provision
- Support older people who wish to realise the value of their homes
- Understand affordability through a rents audit

**Fuel poverty in Worcestershire has reduced from 12.6% in 2011 to 9.1% in 2014**



# Strategic Purpose: Help me to live my life independently

## What matters

### Help and support the vulnerable

- Work with health and other partners to reduce hospital admissions and keep people in their own homes
- Work with partners to support victims of domestic abuse
- Access to appropriate housing

### Promote independence and reduce social isolation

- Work with partners to deliver adaptations/ improvements to homes (Disabled Facilities Grants)
- Access to (or support to find) appropriate transport
- Promote volunteering opportunities to reduce social isolation, particularly within rural communities

Over the last 2 years **nearly 300 people have been helped to continue to live at home** through disabled facilities grants

Over **1600 vulnerable or elderly residents have been supported** by a Lifeline unit in their homes





## Help people to be fit and well

- Work with partners to deliver appropriate mental wellbeing support
- Support in the Five Ways to Wellbeing
- Access to quality open space and facilities

## Strengthening and supporting families and individuals

- Work with partners and the Bromsgrove Partnership to deliver appropriate family support through the 'Connecting Families' and 'Sunrise' programmes (priority action)
- Access to work and employability skills

*More than  
400 residents have  
received activity  
and falls prevention  
referrals in the last 2  
years*

# Five ways to well-being

# 1

**Connect** with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.



**Be active** Step outside. Go for a walk or run. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

# 2

# 3

**Take notice** Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.



**Keep learning** Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

# 4

# 5

**Give** Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.



# Strategic Purpose: Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality

## What matters

### Support the development of appropriate and affordable housing in the district

- Use the Local Plan and Green Belt Review to drive development (priority action)
- Understand community housing needs through a strategic assessment
- Encourage developers to adopt Safe by Design standards
- Work with developers to increase the number of eco/energy efficient properties

### Assist in making the best use of all housing across the district

- Review the housing waiting list
- Work with partners to ensure appropriate level of occupancy
- Support people to downsize where appropriate
  - Ensure the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) process is meeting the needs of our communities
    - Work with stakeholders in the private rented sector



*In 2015/16  
483 homes  
were built in  
the district  
(net)*





## Prevent and respond to homelessness

- Review current housing and homelessness delivery arrangements
- Work with partners to resolve issues that can lead to homelessness
- Work with partners and providers to deliver accommodation appropriate to need

Between  
July '15 and  
June '16 **over 220**  
**households have been**  
**prevented from**  
**becoming**  
**homeless**



# Strategic Purpose: Keep my place safe and looking good

## What matters

### Help support and create communities where people feel safe

- Work with partners, schools and our communities to reduce crime, nuisance and anti-social behaviour
- Encourage developers to adopt Safe by Design standards
- Ensure that premises and vehicles licensed for various activities are safe
- Work with local businesses to deliver safe products and services

### Look after our district to provide clean and tidy streets and open spaces

- Ensure our resources are aligned to the different needs of our local areas
- Work to reduce litter, fly tipping, dog fouling, fly posting and chewing gum in the district
- Develop our commercial services to better support local businesses and residents
  - Work in partnership with our communities



**Over 1100  
bulky waste  
collections  
undertaken in  
2015/16**







## Protect and enhance the environment spaces

- Work with communities to enhance the environment
- Monitor air quality and encourage our communities to reduce emissions where possible to limit the effect of climate change
- Endeavour to reduce our emissions
- Change the way we maintain the environment to improve biodiversity
- Work with partners to achieve proactive tree management
- Work with stakeholders to improve the infrastructure for cycling and walking
- Promote the ethos of 'reduce, reuse, recycle' within the community and our organisation

On average  
**4275 tonnes**  
of waste was  
recycled



17.5%  
reduction in  
carbon  
emissions

19,000  
customers are  
benefitting from  
garden waste  
collection  
service



# Strategic Purpose: Provide good things for me to see, do and visit

## What matters

### Provide a leisure, cultural and arts programme for the whole district

- Engage with communities to develop an events programme
- Develop new Leisure facilities to provide a range of activities for the community
- Ensure play areas and parks meet the needs of all ages of the community
- Work with partners to develop a diverse range of arts and cultural activities

### Create a more vibrant Bromsgrove Town Centre and flourishing local centres

- Progress regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre and local centre sites across the district
  - Further develop the outdoor market in Bromsgrove
  - Develop and manage a Bromsgrove Town Centre events programme
  - Develop an action plan for the local centres

Approximately  
**10,000 people**  
attended the **street**  
**theatre events**





## Help people to be fit and well and reduce social isolation

- Develop a programme to raise awareness of social isolation
- Work with partners to explore opportunities for Council facilities to improve health across the District
- Continue to support '5 ways to wellbeing'

**140+**  
**weekly**  
**attended the**  
**junior park**  
**run course**

*We allocated  
£188,000 from  
the New Homes  
Bonus to community  
projects during  
2015/16 &  
2016/17*

### **Five ways to well-being**

Connect...  
Be active...  
Take notice...  
Keep learning...  
Give...



# How we work & our principles

“We will lead the way for the future of reshaped public services, enriching the lives of our citizens by providing high quality services to all, as well as radically improving outcomes for those most in need, by removing barriers and solving their underlying problems.

We will meet our challenging goals by designing all of our services from a customer perspective accepting that they differ from area to area, community to community. This approach will enable us to work with partners and towards organisational change. This includes posing questions around whether we are the right people to do what we determine is necessary.

We will treat our workforce fairly, with respect and honesty, engaging their passion and talent and growing leaders”.

## Our Principles

1. *Design all our services from the customer's perspective to ensure we respond to the needs of our communities*
2. *Help people to help themselves where appropriate*
3. *Be corporately responsible by ensuring we meet our ethical, environmental and social responsibilities, and that services support our communities to develop*
4. *Constantly innovate, to make the best use of our resources to ensure we deliver efficient, quality services and eliminate waste*
5. *Make decisions and provide challenge based on data, evidence and learning*
6. *Use the Council's unique position in the community to encourage and support change amongst partners and other agencies*
7. *Put the customer at the heart of what we do, treating people and issues fairly, with respect and honesty*
8. *Identify the best way to work, to satisfy customers' needs, by pushing departmental and organisational boundaries*



# How we work

## We will ensure that we:

- Provide excellent customer care at all times
- Listen to our residents to understand their needs
- Deliver our core services efficiently and effectively
- Make the best use of our resources, with residents at the heart of all we do
- As a community leader, work with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors to ensure residents of Bromsgrove District get the services and support they need
- As a good employer, support our employees to provide services that meet the needs of our residents

As issues within the District can change we are committed to understanding whether we are delivering our strategic purposes; we do this by using measures to capture data which Officers, Managers and Members use to understand the services we provide. This data will be used to allocate resources and to help us gain a true picture of the District. We also need to recognise the continuing changes in national agendas and the impact they could have on our outcomes

As the strategic purposes cover issues fundamental to our customers' lives, we are working differently with our partners. The Bromsgrove Partnership, the local strategic partnership for Bromsgrove District, is a key stakeholder in developing and supporting these new ways of working. We are also continuing to work in a more local and place driven way, which helps the Council to understand the differing needs of communities within our district and how public services can support them.

The Council Plan is central to the strategic direction of Bromsgrove District Council and links to other corporate documents, including the Local Plan, the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Corporate Performance Strategy.

**Bromsgrove**  
Your District Your Future  
Partnership



# Political & Corporate Ownership

**Help  
me run a  
successful  
business**

Councillor K. J. May  
Kevin Dicks,  
Chief Executive

**Help  
me to be  
financially  
independent**

Councillor G. N. Denaro  
Jayne Pickering,  
Director Of Finance  
and Resources

**Help  
me to live  
my life  
independently**

Councillor K. J. May  
Sue Hanley,  
Deputy Chief Executive

**Help  
me to find  
somewhere to  
live in my  
locality**

Councillor C. B. Taylor  
Sue Hanley,  
Deputy Chief Executive

**Keep my  
place safe  
and looking  
good**

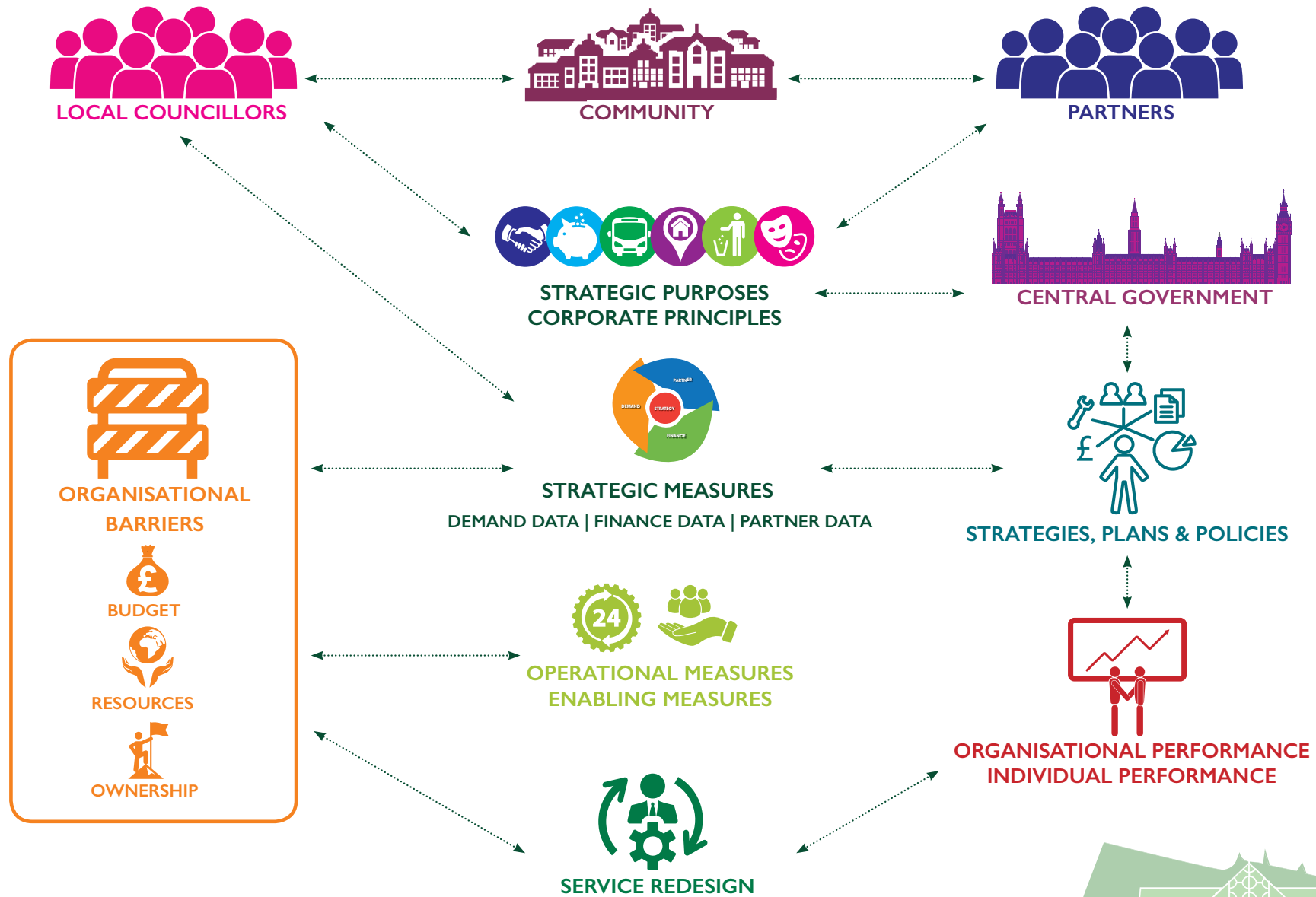
Councillor R. D. Smith  
Sue Hanley,  
Deputy Chief Executive

**Provide  
good things  
for me to  
see, do and  
visit**

Councillor P. J. Whittaker  
Jayne Pickering,  
Director Of Finance  
and Resources



# HOW WE WORK



We welcome comments; if you would like to share your opinions or priorities for Bromsgrove District please contact us

Phone: 01527 548284

Email: [policy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:policy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)



## **Bromsgrove** District Council

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

**01527 881288**

Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove,  
Worcestershire B61 8DA

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone: 01527 548284

Email: [equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)