

Bedford Borough Council Corporate Plan

2024/5 – 2027/8

Bedford Borough Council Corporate Plan.....

Foreword from the Mayor3

Our Borough in Numbers3

Ways of Working4

Our Priorities6

Our Objectives7

Reporting back8

Finding out more8

Foreword from the Mayor

Bedford Borough's best days are ahead. As the elected Mayor of Bedford Borough Council, I am honoured to present our new Corporate Plan for 2024/5 – 2027/8.

Our residents have consistently expressed a desire for efficient council operations and a council that truly listens to their concerns. Supporting individuals and families, promoting health and well-being, and stimulating economic growth are central to our shared vision for a prosperous future. Additionally, environmental protection has gained increasing importance as these challenges grow both nationally and locally.

The Corporate Plan outlines Bedford Borough Council's role and approach to collaborating with communities, partner organisations, and businesses, in line with our commitment to fulfilling the 'Place Leadership' role.

I am confident that Bedford Borough's best days are ahead, and the Borough Council is dedicated to realising that potential. Together, we will create a vibrant, thriving, and inclusive community that we can all be proud of.

This plan is a crucial tool in shaping our path forward.

Tom Wootton

Mayor of Bedford Borough

Our Borough in Numbers

2,069 employees of Bedford Borough Council

7,325 businesses in the borough

150 languages spoken (school census primary school figures)

189,891 ONS Population estimate figure published July 2024

47 Town and Parish Councils make up the Borough

1166 The Borough of Bedford was awarded Charter status by Henry II in 1166

£183.555 million core spending power for the Council

12 nature reserves, 4 green flag award winning parks and 120+ play areas, 5 libraries and a mobile library, a museum and art gallery

Ways of Working

We aspire to be a council that embodies these principles:

- Forward-Thinking: We aim to be ambitious and proactive in our approach
- Place Leadership: We strive to work with our public sector partner organisations to support our vibrant Borough
- Service Excellence: We are committed to providing top-quality services for residents, and to be recognised for excellence
- Benchmark for Quality: Learn from others and strive to deliver innovative and excellent services
- Community Collaboration: We prioritise working in partnership with our residents, communities and local businesses
- Results-Driven: We are determined to achieve our ambitions
- Proactive: to deliver services that focus on prevention and early intervention

We will work in the following ways to deliver our goals:

- Optimise Council Assets
- Enhance Efficiency
- Embrace Change
- Appreciate our Staff, for example through the Employee Recognition Scheme
- Engage, Inform, and Empower all communities and all ages in developing our services
- Deliver against our Care Act 2014 duties in all our operations
- Ensure cost-effectiveness
- Leverage new technology for maximum impact
- Embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in how we deliver our services

Key considerations in shaping and delivering our plan include:

- Financial Stability: Maintaining a balanced budget and a solid financial foundation, while ensuring affordability and sustainability for our services
- Affordability: Mindful of the financial challenges for our residents and the Council
- Population Dynamics: Addressing the challenges posed by population growth and change
- Legal Obligations: Meeting our statutory duties and responsibilities

Our Priorities

Supporting Individuals and Families

- We are dedicated to adopting a “family-friendly” approach involving them in crucial decision-making processes and across all services. We will focus on achievement and early intervention and support our vulnerable residents. We will enable people to participate in their community and celebrate our vibrant culture. We will support communities in helping one another to thrive and support people to fulfil their potential.

Protecting the Environment

- We are committed to delivering a cleaner, greener and safer place for urban and rural communities. We will effectively manage the planning process, the delivery of infrastructure and work to mitigate climate change.

Stimulating Economic Growth in Bedford Borough

- We will create town centres that people are proud to live in and excited to visit. We will also encourage sustainable economic growth, attract high quality jobs, investment in skills and innovation in urban and rural areas.
- We will support educational attainment and skills development for all ages.

Promoting Health and Wellbeing

- We will help to build healthier communities by working with our partners to strengthen the foundations of physical and mental health (including good education, stable employment, strong community and good quality housing) and address health inequalities.
- We will ensure that residents of all ages are able to access services that support them to live healthier lives.

Our Objectives

Supporting Individuals and Families

- Improve all school achievement, especially Key Stage 2 outcomes in primary education.
- Create opportunities for all children and young people, including Looked After Children.
- Work in partnership to prevent and address homelessness, secure appropriate housing and continue to develop personalisation in adult social care.

Protecting the Environment

- Protect and enhance our green and blue areas, where appropriate.
- Secure active travel solutions to improve safety, air quality, health and wellbeing.
- Lead the way in advancing sustainability within our operations and implementing more energy efficient standards for all new developments.

Stimulating Economic Growth in Bedford Borough

- Revitalise our town centres to make them vibrant hubs. They will have distinctive offers for shopping, services for the community, leisure, culture, business and a great place to live.
- Working in partnership to bring investment into the Borough, leading to high quality jobs, more visitors to the Borough and economic growth.
- Work with partners towards the Borough having good digital connectivity in both urban and rural areas, to support the development of the local economy and benefit residents.

Promoting Health and Wellbeing

- Enable adults and older people to live well and remain independent, and promote strong, safe and healthy communities.
- Maximise our sports and leisure assets, including our open spaces, to help residents lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Create better travel connectivity and attractive environments by using the river and parks to link town centres and the Borough.
- Partner with the NHS and the voluntary sector to improve access to health and care services, including primary care, and ensure that care is provided in a more joined-up way.

Reporting back

As set out in the plan, the Council is committed to fulfilling our duties and reporting responsibilities, ensuring each service continues to maintain its operational measures. However, for the delivery of this plan, the focus will shift towards key strategic measures specifically aligned with Bedford Borough's agenda. These measures will provide a comprehensive overview of our performance, benefitting our residents, businesses, and staff.

Each service area employs specific methods to measure and track performance, including numerous indicators and data sets mandated by the Government and other regulators. Our "key measures" will be consolidated into an annual delivery report.

Finding out more

Bedford Borough Council

Borough Hall

Cauldwell Street

Bedford

MK42 9AP

Email: CorporatePlan@bedford.gov.uk

Phone: 01234 267422

www.bedford.gov.uk