

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN

2024/5 – 2027/8





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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Wootton".

TOM WOOTTON

MAYOR OF BEDFORD BOROUGH



OUR BOROUGH IN NUMBERS

2,069

employees
of Bedford
Borough
Council



7,325

Businesses in the
borough



12

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

150

languages spoken
(school census primary
school figures)

189,891

ONS Population
estimate figure
published July 2024



**£183.555
MILLION**

Core Spending Power for
the Council



47

Town and Parish Councils
make up the Borough



1166

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



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

Improve all school achievement, especially Key Stage 2 outcomes in primary education.

Protect and enhance our green and blue areas, where appropriate.

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.

Enable adults and older people to live well and remain independent, and promote strong, safe and healthy communities.

Create opportunities for all children and young people, including Looked After Children.

Secure active travel solutions to improve safety, air quality, health and wellbeing.

Working in partnership to bring investment into the Borough, leading to high quality jobs, more visitors to the Borough and economic growth.

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.

Work in partnership to prevent and address homelessness, secure appropriate housing and continue to develop personalisation in adult social care.

Lead the way in advancing sustainability within our operations and implementing more energy efficient standards for all new developments.

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.

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

