

Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead Transformation Strategy 2020-2025

August 2020

**“BUILDING A COMMUNITY CENTRIC BOROUGH OF
OPPORTUNITY AND INNOVATION”**

Our vision is underpinned by six priorities:

Investment in our children and young people

People who live well and age well

Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods

A strong and inclusive economy

A green and sustainable borough

A connected and accessible authority with quality infrastructure

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*What if 2020 isn't cancelled?
What if 2020 is the year we've been waiting for?
A year so uncomfortable, so painful, so scary, so raw — that it finally
forces us to grow.
A year that screams so loud, finally awakening us from our ignorant
slumber.
A year we finally accept the need for change.
Declare change. Work for change. Become the change. A year we finally
band together, instead of
pushing each other further apart.

2020 isn't cancelled, but rather
the most important year of them all.*

Leslie Dwight -

LONG TERM VISION AND AIMS

Our vision

BUILDING A COMMUNITY CENTRIC BOROUGH OF OPPORTUNITY AND INNOVATION

The Royal Borough is here to serve, safeguard and represent the interests of its residents and communities. At the same time the opportunity to radically rethink our strategies has been given to us through the pandemic. Continuing to deliver the best possible service whilst innovating and transforming the offer for, and with, our communities will enable us to benefit from strategic changes in, for example, the economy, the environment or Government action. The council is committed to making a strong council through inclusive and sustainable growth. We will provide trusted leadership and deliver our vision through three enablers:

- Transforming our services by developing new community centric ways of working that empower residents and stakeholders to work alongside us to achieve our vision;
- Investing our time, energy and resources on our priorities through a commercially minded approach to achieving outcomes,
- Strengthening our partnership working across the authority and with our partners to ensure everyone is working to the same end of improving outcomes for all.

The vision and these enablers will drive the longer term aims of the organisation. The approach will cross all new and existing strategies and become embedded into the operational culture.

Long term aims

In order to build a community-centre borough of opportunity and innovation, the council has identified six long term aims which are derived from a number of key strategies:

1. **INVESTMENT IN OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**
All our children and young people enjoy the best possible quality of life and are able to reach their full potential. (*Frimley ICS Strategy 2020 – 2025*)
2. **PEOPLE WHO LIVE WELL AND AGE WELL.**
Working with our health and care partners, improve health and wellbeing for all, prevent ill health, promote independence and provide quality personalised care and support for those who need it. (*RBWM Adult Social Care Transformation Plan 2020 – 2025*)
3. **QUALITY HOMES IN THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS.**
All residents have access to quality housing, that creates a ladder of housing opportunities and a sense of belonging and wellbeing living in a safe and sustainable neighbourhood. In particular, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is a place where agencies work effectively together to support

those who are, or may become, homeless guided by a focus on prevention and early help. (*Homelessness Strategy 2018 – 2023*)

4. A STRONG AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY.

Growing an increasingly modern, productive, and fair economy, within the context of the Thames Valley growth corridor, where the benefits of growth are more equitably shared amongst all citizens. (*Thames Valley Local Economic Partnership Strategic Economic Plan 2015 – 2021*)

5. A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE BOROUGH.

A borough where the community collectively works together to achieve a sustainable future, protecting and enhancing our natural environment and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. (*RBWM Environment and Climate Strategy 2020*)

6. A CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE AUTHORITY WITH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Smart, clean, accessible and integrated infrastructure that meets the needs of a modern and productive council, its partners and its residents.

Community Centric Design

Community centric design means moving from experts designing for people, to people designing for themselves. Traditionally, experts design and implement solutions for the people, community or residents. The community centric design leverages creativity within communities to solve their own problems, on the basis that people within communities best understand the problems, obstructions and benefits that can hamper and support change. The experts then become the facilitators and supporters, providing tools, workshops and support in all forms. By undertaking a new design philosophy, our residents will experience:

- A growing, diverse, innovative, collaborative, community centred borough.
- Easy to access information/ interaction with the council and its partners.
- Their voice heard and visible in developing services.
- Open and transparent view of the democratic process.
- Outcome based value for money on services.
- Well-looked after in time of need – prevention better than cure.
- Strong voluntary and community sector.
- Education and employment opportunities including skills based and vocational.

Commercial Approach

As a council, we know that we cannot continue to fund and deliver services in the way that we do now. We need to do things differently, whilst maintaining our focus on achieving the best outcomes for the authority and protecting our most vulnerable residents and key services.

Commercial skills and approaches need to run through all that we do as part of our commissioning strategy in order to deliver financial and social return. By this, we mean that we will focus on:

- optimising our assets.
- maximising value for money and innovation from contractual relationships.
- considering new and innovative ways of generating income.
- making robust decisions on a consistent basis with evidence and a sound business case.
- considering the whole life cost of policy decisions, including market impact.

The council already has a number of significant commercial activities in place. A new asset management strategy has been agreed that assesses all the council's current commercial and operational assets and determines whether they should be retained, retained and improved, redeveloped or disposed of.

Overall, the council operates a number of alternative service delivery models for a wide range of services and has a very active property trading company. A number of these arrangements have been reviewed to ensure that they are the best option and all are subject to regular scrutiny and audit, and the review recommended by CIPFA of the property company will be undertaken. The council's commissioning strategy sets out a clear methodology for reviewing, planning and implementing new commissioning activity and this will continue to be used as the basis for this work.

Partnership Working

Working with partners has been the model for the Royal Borough for some time. The commissioning model was introduced to achieve both savings and flexibility of delivery. Both Achieving for Children and Optalis are key examples of this, as Teckal companies operating for the council but with the ability to grow and deliver better outcomes for both residents and staff, affording a more sustainable solution in the long term. Partnership working is delivered at all levels, from joint ventures with individual companies, through to East Berkshire groups, the Frimley Integrated Care System and the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum – all allowing us to maximise our internal resource.

Ongoing commitment to our key strategic partners will allow us all to engage and work with community groups throughout the borough, delivering much more place-based services where organisations are more integrated and focussed on outcomes rather than the traditional silo'd solutions.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values help us keep our promises to our customers.



We know that our workforce is our most important asset – their talent, skills, passion, knowledge and experience are central to all that we do and all that we will achieve. We also know that our councillors are well connected to their communities and can help us create links and partnerships that will strengthen relationships and outcomes.

Our values reflect our culture and help to draw us together as an organisation.

Underpinning our values is a commitment to invest in strong foundations:

Invest in strong foundations
What this looks like in practice

| What we want | What we don't want |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decent, clean and well-maintained offices• Attractive meeting spaces for formal and informal meetings• Suitable places for staff to have lunch and breaks away from their desks• Modern and robust IT• Fair and consistent working practices• Investment in developing our staff• An excellent induction process that helps people to work to our values | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dirty, cramped offices• Toilets that don't work• Out of date and unreliable IT• Unfair or inconsistently applied working practices• Training as a tick-box exercise |

Each of our values is supported by a set of behaviours, which govern our actions. How we do things is as important as what we do:



Empowered to improve

What this looks like in practice

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>What we want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take ownership of problems • Focus on outcomes • Hold yourself and others accountable • Give and receive constructive feedback • Proactively challenge what isn't working • Plan improvements to the things that aren't working well • Celebrate successes • Recognise staff for a job well done • Learn the lessons from when things don't quite work out • Innovate and try new things • Have fun and enjoy your job | <p>What we don't want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not doing what we said • Not trying new ideas to fix things • Being defensive • Blaming – looking for whose fault it is • A bad atmosphere at work |
|---|---|



One team and vision

What this looks like in practice

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>What we want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support other teams and departments • Deliver the vision together • Share information and resources with other teams • First try to help, even if it's not your responsibility • Understand how what you do relates to the overall vision for the organisation • Take the time to build good relationships • Be clear which teams you need to work with • Get to know what other teams do • Make sure all colleagues feel valued and part of the team • Acknowledge other people's ideas | <p>What we don't want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting the needs of the team before the needs of the organisation • Passing the buck - saying, 'that's not my responsibility' before trying to help • Ignoring the impact of what you do on other teams • Failing to support others that need our help |
|--|---|



Respect and openness

What this looks like in practice

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>What we want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace diversity in all ways • Be polite and courteous • Follow our guidelines for respectful communication • Smile and say hello to people you interact with • Talk to people rather than sending an email • Seek other people's ideas and listen to them • Be honest with people • If you can't do something, let people know • Be discreet when discussing sensitive issues or giving negative feedback • Be truthful and open • Let people know when there are things that might affect them | <p>What we don't want </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being rude to people • Ignoring people • Avoiding people when they need to talk to you • Not getting back to people when they contact you • Criticising people in front of others |
|--|--|

INTERIM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2020-2021

We are clear on our long-term vision, but we recognise that we are in a period of unprecedented challenge. The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the council, its partners and its communities.

Our Interim Strategic Framework is designed to address the immediate challenges, namely, responding to, and recovering from, the pandemic and positioning ourselves positively for our future ambitions.

RBWM Interim Strategic Plan



TRANSFORMING THE ROYAL BOROUGH: OUR TRANSFORMATION PLAN

Introduction

The Royal Borough has achieved a significant amount over the last few years.

- There have been demonstrable improvements made in Children's Services with the service securing a 'Good' rating from OFSTED after a previous 'requires improvement' judgement.
- A fundamental review and re-establishment of the housing service has seen considerable improvements in performance and practice.
- Work to transform the adult social care functions is underway and has already led to improved practice and process.
- Services with good performance such as the Revenues and Benefits service continue to achieve high standards.
- Customer satisfaction overall remains very high driven by great work from many teams.
- The Royal Borough has become a key player in the Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System and is leading the work to develop the borough as "place" within the system.
- Progress has also been made in relation to the council's approach to tackling climate change; with the strategy approved by full Council in June 2020.
- Mobile and remote working has significantly increased which is an enabler within the Climate Strategy and essential during Covid-19 lockdown.
- In partnership with Countryside properties, the Royal Borough has begun the regeneration of Maidenhead Town Centre.

With this strong base of excellent performance, the council is in a good position to make a step change, delivering a radical programme of transformation based on technological innovation and a data driven approach.

We want to enhance our key partnerships with a variety of stakeholders and, internally, develop a different culture and flexibility which can set us apart from other local authorities. This shift in culture is designed to enable us to deliver our ambitions and better solutions for our community with a reduction in overall service cost.

Community centric service redesign is at the centre of the council's transformational thinking. Rather than change a service or system based on existing technologies or "how we have always done it", we will focus on the benefit for the customer or community. The move towards communities and partnership, creating a true borough council, will build a working culture of community empowerment and creativity. To do this we need to harness the power and talents of all stakeholders, from councillors and council staff, to our citizens, community groups, businesses and employers.

The transformation plan will evolve as we go forward – seven key elements are at the heart of the plan and an annual delivery plan will identify the deliverables against each element each year.



Finance

Like all local authorities, the Royal Borough has to balance a number of conflicting priorities with the availability of resources. We are facing financial challenges that are greater than ever, having been affected by a global pandemic that has increased the costs of some of our services and reduced our income levels that have supported our usual service delivery.

As a result, we are refreshing our medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) during 2020 together with all the assumptions on which we base our budget. One-off financial support has been received from central government during 2020/21 but the council will have to find sustainable ways to close any gaps for future years, especially given that the way local government is funded will be changing in future too.

It is important that transformation is not seen purely as a way of making savings although by transforming our services we create more efficient use of our resources, including maximising income sources, which can in turn lead to reduced overall costs. True transformation is more likely to result in the financial sustainability of our local authority.

As part of our transformation considerations, we also need to explore options around different ways to generate funding, including supporting our community to identify ways to generate additional external funding.

Making a strong connection between financial information and the outcomes we are looking for will ensure that we are able to prioritise our resources appropriately and improve our overall understanding of true value for money.

Finance sustainability is something that we need to consider not just for the council but also for our residents and businesses. Part of our overall financial sustainability has to be about ensuring that we work closely with all of our partners to identify opportunities to work together to provide the right guidance for those who are financially vulnerable.

Organisational Culture

Our workforce is our greatest asset. It is the dedication and professionalism of our staff that has enabled the council to achieve all that it has over recent years. This transformation journey will be challenging and we need to support our staff throughout it. Through embedding the core values, there will be a much greater emphasis upon:

- developing a working culture that provides collective leadership from the top of the organisation and distributes, enables and encourages leadership throughout the whole organisation, empowering all staff to innovate and make positive contributions;
- interdependency, team working and collective ownership of issues between teams to identify and deliver better outcomes;
- transforming our policies and procedures based on the principle of our “workforce matters”, ensuring managers nurture talent and help people meet their potential, investing in learning and development, and supporting flexible working practices;
- effective partnership working with our residents, communities and stakeholders, and
- using digital capability and technology to deliver efficient and effective services.



It is vital that all staff understand the importance of their roles and how they contribute to the success of the council and its communities. We want them to feel empowered to take responsibility for their own engagement and development and for delivering a great service to the citizens of the borough, creating a golden thread running through the entire organisation from strategic aims to individual appraisal.

Environment

The Climate Change strategy was approved by Council in June 2020 and will deliver on the vision of a borough where the community collectively works together to achieve a sustainable future, protecting and enhancing our natural environment and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The four key themes of the climate strategy focus action on areas we have control over at a local level:

1. Circular Economy
2. Energy
3. Natural Environment
4. Transport

In order to reduce waste, encourage material re-use, increase recycling and support less resource intensive lifestyles, the council will support residents in achieving a circular economy by retaining as much value from products, properties and materials as possible. In order to shift to a circular economy, the council will ensure that all stakeholders are properly supported and guided where needed to create a less wasteful, more sustainable borough.

Currently, sixty six percent of the borough's emissions are a result of energy consumption within buildings. The council will seek to reduce its own energy consumption by decarbonising its energy supplies. Further to this, by investing in digital infrastructure the council will reduce the need for office spaces and continue to promote remote working where possible. Reducing our energy consumption and decarbonising our supply of energy will aid the borough's net zero emission ambitions.

Quality of life and the role of the natural environment in creating great places is a critical part of the success of the Thames Valley economy, and to our residents' health and wellbeing. The council will conserve and sustainably deliver biodiversity net gain in order to protect our natural environment and in doing so we will receive ecosystem service benefits such as clean air and water.

By encouraging walking and cycling as well as investing in digital infrastructure, the council will reduce the need for carbon intensive travel. Sustainable travel will be more accessible through the provision of infrastructure within the borough such as cycle routes and electric vehicle charging points which will, in turn, minimise the impacts of road traffic by encouraging cleaner vehicles.

Prevention

Achieving better outcomes for all residents is a key priority and this means working together in different ways, taking action earlier to prevent the need for more costly crisis interventions, and building on people's strengths and capabilities. Tackling issues in a different way is fundamental to achieving our vision.

The council remains firmly committed to helping our most vulnerable citizens and especially those in crisis, such as people who are homeless, or families who need support to make sure their children get the best start in life. Too often, we find ourselves providing support at the point of crisis where it is harder to achieve the right outcomes and always more expensive. Working with our health partners, schools, charities and businesses, we will put a greater emphasis upon prevention and early intervention and focus our resource on where it can achieve the most impact by working alongside those we are supporting in order to do what is best for them as individuals.

This means providing support at the right time, when it will achieve better outcomes and will save money in the long term. For example, in terms of homelessness, for some people providing immediate housing support is critical to keeping them safe. That can be expensive and does not always tackle the underlying causes of someone becoming homeless. Providing support earlier, focused on the real risk factors such as unemployment, domestic violence, mental health issues, or alcohol and drug abuse can be more successful and is much more cost effective.

Providing good quality social care for older people and learning and physically disabled people sits at the core of our role as a local authority. We want to support people to be as independent as possible, as early as possible and for as long as possible so they can do as much as they can for themselves with support when they need it. We want to make the most of the many health and wellbeing benefits that come from being close to friends, family and the local community, such as improved mental health and reduced loneliness and isolation.

Digital

Maximising the use of digital technologies and information will be central to successfully delivering the transformation programme and securing the future success of the Royal Borough. The council will use digital technologies to deliver better quality services that are more responsive and convenient to use, that are more intelligent and more efficient, and give people access to services they might not have been able to take advantage of before. We will engage in a digital capability programme with support from local businesses to ensure that no one is left behind.

With the increase in the use of The Internet of Things (IoT) in everyday life for both the consumer market and business, the use of big data analytics will give us a fundamental change to the way we support and work with our communities. Using data securely and ethically will be key to these developments but innovation and efficiency in the use of new data insights and digital technologies will drive the council forward.

Implementing our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution is the first step in using digital platforms to become more community centric. We will enhance this investing in a Low Code¹ solution to enable service areas to quickly build solutions for both staff and residents, linking back to the CRM. We will continually look for new ways to use digital to simplify processes and make services more efficient, effective, customer focussed, accessible and responsive. This will support our citizens and communities to be more independent and in control of the services they need and will help to promote fairness and inclusion.

The council will take a “Digital First” approach by making all services, where possible, accessible online. It is important that all council functions are more digitally accessible so that people can interact with us and use self-service options at any time of the day or night. In this way, we can focus our human resource to support those in greatest need, including continuing to provide assisted digital support where it is needed. The Royal Borough is setting digital goals that will enable each resident to have their own account, as well as the ability to access an individualised website or app for a single view of themselves and their interactions with the council.

Our workforce must also have the right tools, technology and skills to deliver services to residents effectively, in a flexible and person-centred way. As well as working within communities, we will also develop our workforce’s digital capabilities, while maximising the use of digital and technology to deliver effective services, further improving productivity and efficiency allowing us to focus more resources on progressing other priorities. Better use of digital technology will help us pinpoint people who need support before they fall into crisis.

Data underpins all of the council’s transactions. We will encourage data sharing between our partners to help us to understand, predict and prevent problems from

¹ A low-code development platform is software that provides a simple development environment for individuals to create application software instead of traditional hand-coded computer programming.

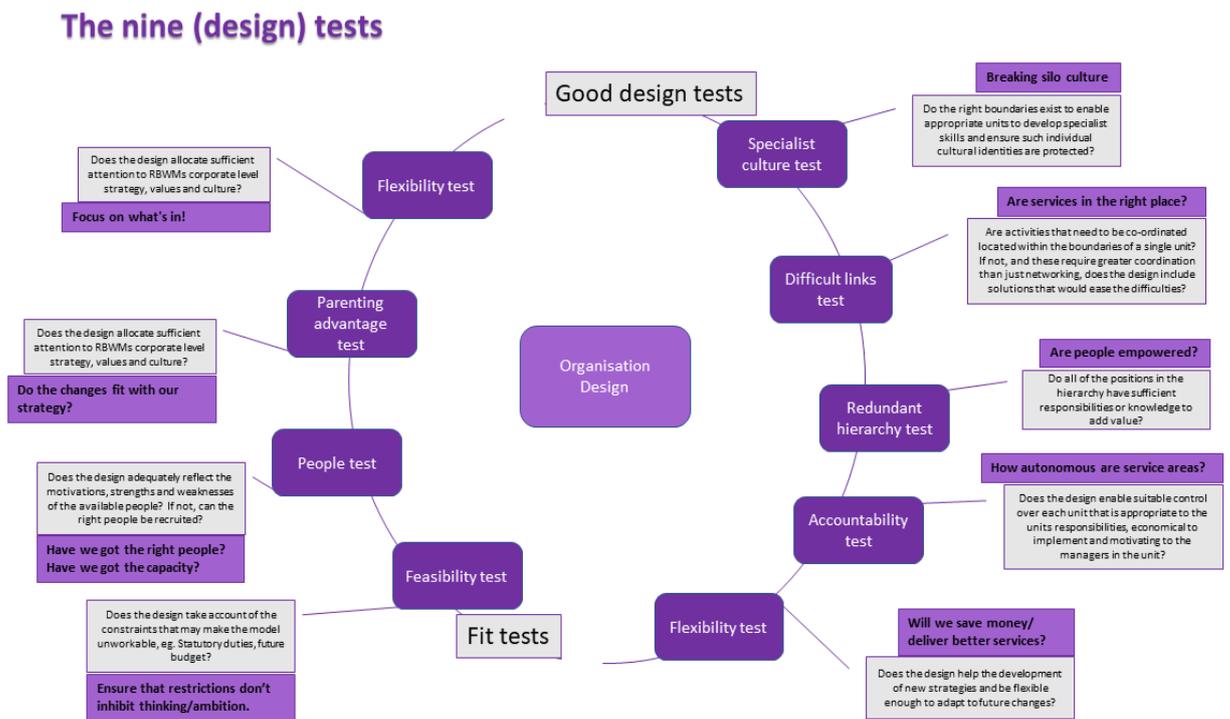
occurring, make better decisions and use resources more intelligently to improve outcomes for residents.

We will also use digital technology to grow the economy by supporting new and existing businesses to harness the value of digital. We will empower our residents so they can make the most of the opportunities that digital offers and are able reach their full potential. Key to this work will be enabling an ethical approach to artificial intelligence and machine learning, making use of technologies such as robotic process automation (RPA) and embedding this into process redesign.

Process Redesign

Operating on the basis of a commonly agreed and understood set of business processes is key to an efficient and effective organisation. To maximise the benefits of digital innovation will require a fundamental focus on streamlining, modernising and automating council processes. We will create a blueprint for teams to follow and own, based on an iterative process of service redesign, supported by the transformation team. The process must be community focussed whilst looking at new ways of delivering using new and alternative solutions. Heads of Service will drive the change rather than having redesign done to them.

We want all staff to understand how their service is funded, where the money is spent and be engaged in the process of coming up with ideas for how income could be generated or cost reduced. To do this we will need to support them with the right information and the right skills development.



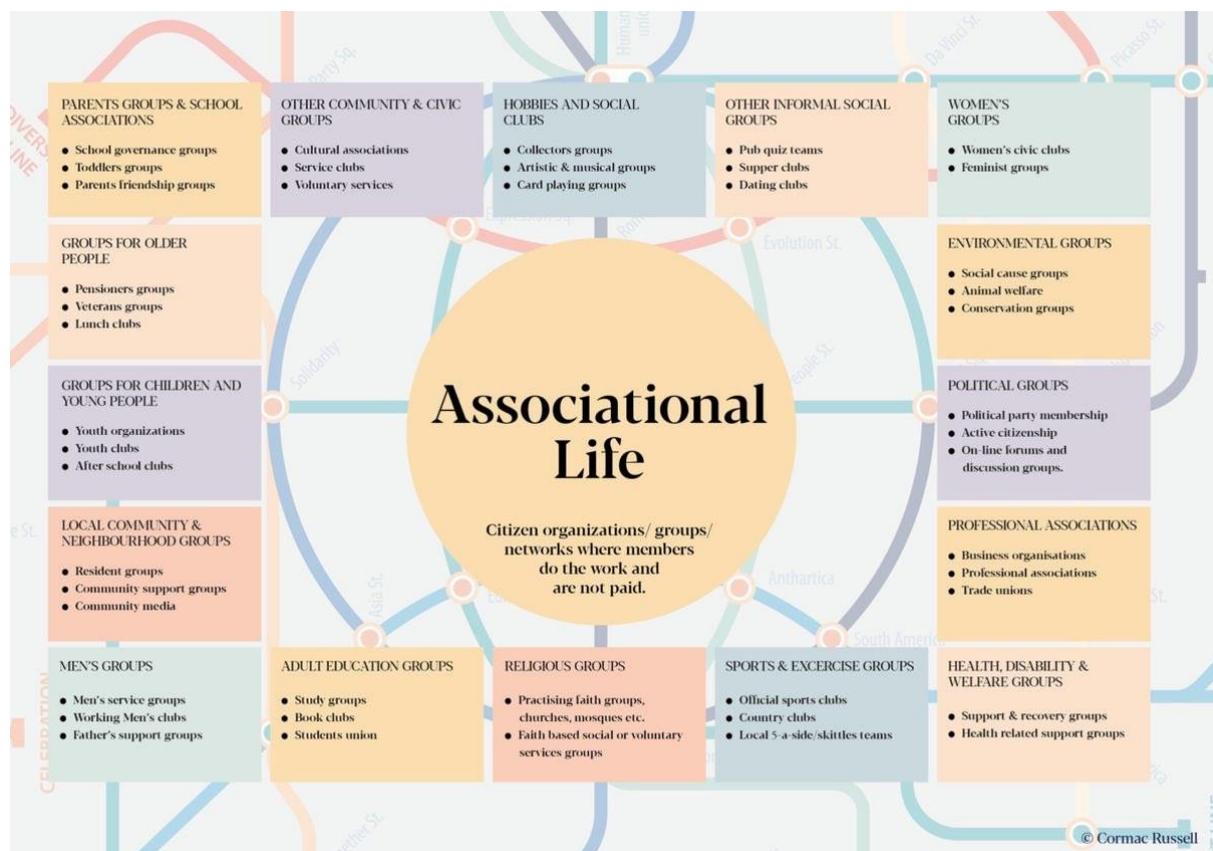
Community

At the heart of our Transformation Plan is a major Community Conversation programme.

The conversation will explore how we can collectively work towards achieving fairness and inclusive growth. It will explore how we can make our services more responsive to the needs of local communities and how communities can be supported to do more for themselves. We will invite residents and communities to share their ideas on how we can empower them to take a more active role in shaping the delivery of services and how we can harness their knowledge, capacity and expertise to improve the lives of people in all areas of the borough.

The conversation provides a real opportunity for radical thinking that could result in a fundamentally new relationship, involving shared decision making, co-production and innovation in service delivery. It will need a commitment from both sides to work together to make the borough stronger and fairer and a better place for everyone. For our part, we will make sure that we set local priorities to reflect the identified needs of neighbourhoods and communities and ensure that local councillors play an effective role in building this new relationship.

We will support communities to become more resilient and independent, providing high quality services in line with local priorities and helping communities take greater responsibility for, and control of, the things that really impact on their quality of life.



The work of the local authority, voluntary sector groups, volunteers and the community has been relentless. As an authority we have quickly had to build and

strengthen those relationships into solid delivery partnerships to meet the needs of local vulnerable people and have experienced a resurgence of local ‘activism’. The Royal Borough has the opportunity to embrace the work and to go further and experiment with digitally-enabled, and local community innovations. The successes achieved through the COVID response, set out in the table below, can be built on to create a long term legacy.

| COVID Response | RBWM Legacy |
|---|--|
| Rapid connection with voluntary and community sector and communities including spontaneous groups | Consideration of new operating models especially around commissioning where the borough become the matchmaker, incentiviser, |
| Quick adaptation of existing services to meet new demands and new ways of working such as Citizens Advice Bureau. | Develop more strategic partnerships with the private, voluntary and independent sector based on each other’s strengths. |
| Different demographics have experienced different needs | Fundamental reform of existing services to target and support local need |
| Three different approaches towards the use of technologies have been made clear: buy, use or build it? | We build digital platforms such as local apps and databases for communities to own and use and then create sales opportunities to other local authorities. |
| Engaged comms team into community response | Engage comms teams into service response |
| Joined up partnership work | Join up data with partners and create targeted joint projects to support prevention |

GOVERNANCE

Governance of the transformation programme, in line with Our Values, will work from the principles of:

- All work will be transparent and open.
- Decisions will be made in line with delegations within the Constitution, but most decisions should be made at team level or as close to the team as possible.
- When a decision impacts more than one team, those teams are responsible for discussing and agreeing what to do between them
- Where a decision impacts the whole council, corporate leadership team are responsible for discussing and agreeing what to do.

Running an agile transformation programme requires:

- the required remit, power, authority and support to make the decisions that need to be made, and implement them,
- a team of people with enough time, energy and skills to do the things that really need to be done, and
- a place to work that can, at least to some extent, be adapted to meet its needs

Transformation Sub-Committee

The transformation strategy and accompanying action plan will be overseen by the Transformation Sub-Committee of Cabinet, working with the Directors Forum. Meeting quarterly, the Sub-Committee will be chaired by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health and has delegated authority from Cabinet to:

- Approve the transformation plan and any subsequent amendments.
- Approve any projects within the plan that would require Cabinet approval.
- Monitor progress on the delivery of the plan.
- Report progress to Cabinet from time to time.

A Senior officer board will act as the virtual programme management office and will sign off and have oversight of all projects relating to the transformation programme. The transformation team, under the leadership of the Transformation and Systems Manager, will support the delivery of the plan.

Delivery Model

Any new project within the transformation plan must meet the criteria set out for change:

- Its design, development and execution will be community centric
- It will deliver an efficiency –in terms of service and/or resource
- It will be innovative

All projects will in the main follow the Government Digital Service Standard and each project will have a costed business case but using agile methodologies wherever possible.

In line with Our Values, the ethos of the delivery of projects in the plan will be to:

- Keep a good pace
- Manage risks
- Do it with the right people
- Go see for yourself
 - It's everyone's responsibility to stay well informed. Delivery teams talk face to face wherever possible and the best way to measure progress is to 'see the thing'.
- Report and plan
- Only do it if it adds value

In support of this programme of work, a review of existing procurement strategies and the most suitable routes for procurement will be undertaken. Wherever possible, the Royal Borough will use existing government frameworks to expedite the procurement process.

Transformation Team

The existing core transformation team has been recruited on the basis of the skills and competencies required to support transformation, specifically:

- Project management
- Community development
- Consultation and engagement
- Performance, data, systems and analytics

In order to deliver corporate transformation, the team will leverage the support and input of a wider range of teams in the council, including IT, communications and marketing, digital development and property. It will also engage with a delivery partner to facilitate the digital transformation of the council and its processes.

The team will need the ability to flex and increase capacity in order to deliver elements of the plan in line and costed as part of individual project business cases.

Everyone engaged in delivery of the transformation programme at all levels is responsible for and involved in its governance. Agile tools and techniques (daily stand-ups, regular planning meetings and retrospectives) are all ways of governing delivery.