

7. The Council That Gets Things Done



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Context

Our council and staff work hard to deliver many different services for our residents - keeping our streets clean and safe, providing high-quality social care, delivering and maintaining homes, providing support for people in financial need and much more. To ensure services are the best they can be for residents, it is vital that the council maintains its financial resilience. However, this is increasingly challenging in the recent climate of high inflation. We have also seen continuing growth in demand for our services, especially in areas such as temporary accommodation and social care. This means services are getting more expensive to deliver and more people need them which adds pressure to our finances.

The Government has made a number of positive changes recently including the first multi-year settlement for Local Authorities, commitment to action on SEND and recognition of the scale of the challenge in Adult Social Care.

Whilst these are welcome, Greenwich, like many authorities, still faces significant financial challenges with rising inflation and demand. We also acknowledge the national focus on devolution and await further details as to what this could mean for London and Greenwich.

As an organisation we must remain adaptable, tackling these challenges head-on to deliver on our commitments to you. We must respond to changing priorities whilst not losing sight of our longer-term goals, including our vision for 2050. Our council needs to continue its journey of modernisation, embracing new technologies and ways of working to increase our efficiency and effectiveness.

Our vision for 2050 is written for the whole borough, but the council has a particular responsibility to help make it real. It should be a promise residents can hold us to, a message every member of staff can see their own work

in, and a story partners know they are joining. This theme is about equipping the council to play that part: financially sustainable, with a skilled and diverse workforce, and working openly with communities and partners.

To enable innovation, our workforce must be diverse and equipped with the skills to meet challenges. This means valuing, investing in and developing our workforce to be the best they can be, supporting them to deliver high-quality services for residents. We want to build on work such as our Workforce Strategy and Race Equity Framework, to ensure Greenwich is a place where people want to work and everyone feels safe and happy.

We are committed to working with our communities, taking an open and collaborative approach to generating solutions. This includes being honest about the financial constraints of the council and the challenges we face. We want to ensure communities feel heard, and that decision-making responds to

what we hear from residents. We will continue building on our strong networks with the voluntary, community and faith sectors, using their rich insight about our communities to collaboratively tackle problems.

Much of what we want to achieve for Greenwich depends on working with others. Health outcomes, community safety, safeguarding, jobs and growth are shared responsibilities, involving the NHS, the police, schools and colleges, housing providers, employers, and the voluntary, community and faith sectors. Arrangements such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Safer Greenwich Partnership and our safeguarding partnerships bring partners together to agree shared priorities and act on them, while Anchored in Greenwich brings the borough's larger institutions together around local benefit. With resources constrained, making the most of these relationships is more important than ever.

7.1 We use public money responsibly to ensure we are financially sustainable and continue to deliver efficient and effective services

What this means

- We will never put our financial sustainability at risk. In a tough climate for local government, we will manage our money carefully, live within our means and make every pound work harder for residents.
- We will drive efficiency and effectiveness across all our services, and use our spending power, land and influence as a major local anchor to deliver the best possible value — and more — for our communities.

Commitments

Modernisation and Change

- Develop an organisational change programme which includes plans for each service of the council to take advantage of new ways of working to improve outcomes for residents and make our council more effective and efficient
- Set out a bold direction for our Digital approach which will modernise the organisation and improve our digital infrastructure so services are better for residents and businesses

Financial Management

- Set a balanced budget every year and deliver our commitments within it
- Make better use of the land and buildings we own, whether for services, income or new homes
- Ensure that every pound we spend delivers maximum benefit to residents and the local economy through our improved approach to commissioning, procurement and contract management

Customer Services

- Improve our customer service offer so that more enquiries are resolved at first contact, without passing residents between teams



Indicators (9)

**Level of reserves
(Council Indicator)**

The amount of money the council has set aside in savings, compared to what it spends each year

**Change in reserves
(Council Indicator)**

The amount by which the council’s savings have gone up or down over the past three years

Interest payable / net revenue expenditure (Borough Indicator)

The proportion of the council’s yearly spending that is used to pay interest on money it has borrowed

Gross external debt (Council Indicator)

The total amount of money the council has borrowed

**Social care ratio
(Borough Indicator)**

The amount of the council’s overall spending that goes on caring for adults and children who need extra support

**Fees and charges to service expenditure revenue
(Borough Indicator)**

The cost of running services that is paid for by charges to residents and businesses, rather than other funding

**Council tax requirement / net revenue expenditure
(Borough Indicator)**

The amount of the council’s spending that is paid through council tax

**Growth above baseline
(Borough Indicator)**

The amount of extra income the council is earning from business rates, above the amount it was originally allocated

Resident satisfaction (Council Indicator)



7.2 We are a great place to work, with a diverse workforce that has the skills, expertise, tools and motivation to make the council fit for 2030

What this means

- We will build the council of the future — developing a more productive, highly skilled workforce and modernising our services with data and new technology.
- Our leaders will lead with compassion and drive continuous improvement, making the council an employer of choice with a diverse workforce and an excellent culture.

Commitments

Physical and Digital Workplace

- Set out a bold direction for our Digital approach which will modernise the organisation and improve our digital infrastructure and ensure our staff have the skills and opportunity to utilise new ways of working
- Improve our offices and depots so they are ready for what services will need by 2030

Workforce

- Review our staff values to ensure they represent what it is to be a Greenwich employee and support the delivery of this Corporate Plan
- Build on our Workforce Strategy so Greenwich is a place where people want to build a career
- Deliver our Race Equity Framework to create a workplace where everyone feels they belong, are respected, and can thrive
- Continue our improvements to internal communications and engagement making sure it connects colleagues to our vision for the borough, their role in delivering it and their role within the organisation

Indicators (7)

Percentage of roles filled by agency staff
(Council Indicator)

The proportion of positions in the council currently filled by agency (temporary) workers rather than permanent staff

Percentage of appointments filled internally
(Council Indicator)

The proportion of vacancies filled by existing council staff, rather than by external candidates

Percentage of all employees – B&GM / Disabled / Female
(Council Indicator)

Percentage of all Top 5% (PO7+) – B&GM / Disabled / Female
(Council Indicator)

The proportion of senior staff who are from a Black and Global Majority background, disabled or female

Percentage of employees who choose to leave RBG (voluntary turnover rate)
(Council Indicator)

Staff know and understand the direction of the organisation
(Council Indicator)

Staff satisfaction
(Council Indicator)

Resident satisfaction
(Council Indicator)

7.3 We work with our communities and partners to solve challenges to shared problems and deliver for our borough

What this means

- We will work hand in hand with our communities and partners — communicating honestly and clearly, listening to our residents and giving them a strong voice in shaping the services and decisions that affect them, and, in the co-operative spirit of our borough, empowering communities to act for themselves.
- We will work in real partnership across the borough to tackle shared challenges together, and we will follow through, delivering on the commitments we make.

Commitments

Communications and Resident Engagement

- Through our Casework Review, we will strengthen how enquiries and problems raised on behalf of residents are handled — resolving them faster and more effectively and enabling councillors to serve their communities with greater efficiency and accountability
- Build an open and inclusive approach to engagement with residents — using a variety of routes to hear feedback, apply it to the work the council does, and keep residents informed of how and why we have taken decisions
- Understand our residents and adapt the way we communicate and engage with them according to their needs. Set up a regular poll/survey to understand how residents feel about key issues across the borough

Empowering Communities

- Strengthen young people’s routes into council decision-making through the Greenwich Young People’s Council and Young Advisors
- Support voluntary, community and faith organisations through our new grants programme — continuing to fund the sector directly while investing in the infrastructure partners that make it more resilient

Indicators (4)

Percentage of people who feel they can influence local decisions (Borough Indicator)	Percentage of people who have engaged in volunteering in the last 12 months (Borough Indicator)
Based on the government’s Community and Engagement Survey	Based on the government’s Community and Engagement Survey
Benefits realised through third-party contract commitments from suppliers (Borough Indicator)	
The value or amount of social, economic, or environmental commitments (such as local jobs, training, or community projects) that suppliers have delivered as part of their contracts with the council, tracked through the Match My Project platform	
Percentage of CYP who feel they can influence local decisions (Borough Indicator)	