

Ready for the future

Our Corporate Plan 2018-2023

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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 Epping Forest  
District Council



# Ready for the future

## Introduction

Our Corporate Plan sets out how we will work to achieve a prosperous district with a high quality of life for everyone. It's the cornerstone of our transformational plans to build an even more confident, capable Council.

Our mission is to work together to serve our community. Our customers are at the heart of everything we do and we will focus on the things that matter the most to local people.

### Measuring our progress

To make sure we deliver on what we have set out to achieve, our performance will be monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to our Management Board, Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet. The purpose of our scrutiny committees is to help ensure our work is delivered effectively, efficiently and in the best interest of our community. You can find out more about how your Council works by going to the *Your Council* pages on our website.



**Glen Chipp**  
Chief Executive



**Cllr Chris Whitbread**  
Leader of the Council

### Your feedback

You can give your feedback on our activities and plans by speaking to your local Councillor. Visit our website and select *Your council* and enter your postcode to find your local Councillors' contact details. You can also send your comments or questions by email to [consultation@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@eppingforestdc.gov.uk). Please include your names, organisation if applicable and contact details with your email.

# A great place where people enjoy...

## ...living

The first three phases of our ambitious Council house building programme are well on the way to completion. Families from our Housing Register have started moving into the 35 new properties at Wood Villas and Roundhills in Waltham Abbey.



Work is also progressing on 51 new homes in Burton Road, Loughton, and further phases are planned.

## ...working – and shopping!

Epping Forest Retail Park in Loughton opened in the winter of 2017, with space for over a dozen retail units and 360 car park spaces. Near

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junction 5 of the M11 and close to Debden tube station, the development is part of our multi-million pound investment in our community.



The park is expected to create 200 jobs and raise £2.5 million each year to fund services, enabling us to keep our Council Tax low.

## ...learning

We have refurbished and extended the district museum at Waltham Abbey, following the award of £1.65 million of Heritage Lottery funding.



The award of further funding from Arts Council England will enable our museum and our

partners in Broxbourne and Chelmsford, to engage more people in our rich heritage and culture.

## ...and leisure

Local school children, councillors and business members gathered to mark the start of construction for Waltham Abbey's brand new state of the art leisure centre.



Places for People are our operating partner for the new facility, having been awarded a 20-year contract to design, build, operate and maintain the centre. The £9.5 million centre features an 80 station fitness suite, two pools, exercise studios, a community room and café.

There are also plans to have sixty independent living apartments on the site, offering an alternative to residential care, as well as a new doctor's surgery.

## Watch the video

Check out our Future Proof video at our [eppingforestdc](https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk) YouTube page.





## Our district

In 2016/17  
**57%**  
of household  
waste was  
recycled

**56,000**  
households

Tourism  
raises  
**£12m** a year  
for the local economy

**13%**  
of children in  
low income  
families

Epping Forest district is a mixture of rural and urban areas and stretches northward from its boundary with Greater London right into the heart of rural Essex.

**15,600**  
residents are  
happy with the  
condition of  
local roads

The number of over  
65 year olds with  
**dementia** is  
expected to raise  
**56%**  
by 2030

**25,300**  
residents  
over 65  
year olds  
20% increase  
expected by 2025

**771**  
residents  
received social  
care support in  
2014/15

Covering an area of 131 square miles, the key population centres are the commuter towns of Loughton, Chigwell and Buckhurst Hill, as well as the market towns of Epping, Waltham Abbey and Ongar.

**83%**  
of pupils attend a  
good or  
outstanding  
school

**71%**  
of pupils want  
to go to  
university

**85%**  
of residents  
say they  
feel safe  
during the day

**4,100**  
unemployed  
people

**20%**  
of adults  
smoke,  
which is higher than  
national average

By 2020  
**97%**  
of residents will have  
access to  
broadband

**64%**  
of adults are  
overweight

Population  
**130,300**  
52% female  
48% male

# Developing our plan

Our previous Corporate Plan ran from 2015 to 2020, with a review undertaken in the third year of delivery. We sought views from our residents, local businesses, partners, staff and councillors to ensure our plan remained up-to-date and focussed on our customers.

We have received a lot of helpful feedback and have worked hard to incorporate the views of key stakeholders into our plan for 2018-2023.

## Priorities

All organisations in the public sector want to do the best with the resources they have, and the Council is no exception. Doing this means we have to prioritise our work. In assessing the priorities we considered:

- The public's priorities
- How high it is on the political agenda; and
- The number of other priorities it is likely to contribute positively to.

In ascertaining the feasibility of a priority we considered:

- Our powers to act
- The level of resources required to make a difference; and
- The availability of resources.



## Our ambitions

The creation of this plan started with identifying the reasons for our work, known as drivers. We grouped these into three interdependent corporate ambitions:

- Stronger Communities
- Stronger Place; and
- Stronger Council

Under each ambition there is a set of aims, which in turn are broken down into objectives.

## Annual business plans

In order to deliver the Corporate Plan we split it down into annual parts. A set of business plans operate below this level, which help Councillors and officers complete our work.

The next page contains the summary of the Corporate Plan for the next five years, followed by the annual objectives for the first year of delivery – 2018-2019.

# Our Corporate Plan 2018-2023

*"Ready for the future"*

## Our Vision

A great place where people enjoy living, working, learning and leisure.

## Our Purpose

Working together to serve our community.

### Stronger communities

People live longer, healthier and independent lives

- 1.1 Supporting healthy lifestyles
- 1.2 Promoting independence for older people and people with disabilities

Adults and children are supported in times of need

- 1.3 Safeguarding and supporting people in vulnerable situations

People and communities achieve their full potential

- 1.4 Enabling communities to support themselves
- 1.5 Promoting culture and leisure
- 1.6 Keeping the district safe

### Stronger place

Delivering effective core services that people want

- 2.1 Keeping the district clean and green
- 2.2 Improving the district housing offer

A district with planned development

- 2.3 Planning development priorities
- 2.4 Ensuring infrastructure supports growth

An environment where new and existing businesses thrive

- 2.5 Supporting business enterprise and attracting investment
- 2.6 People develop skills to maximise their employment potential
- 2.7 Promoting retail, tourism and the visitor economy

### Stronger council

Customer satisfaction

- 3.1 Engaging with the changing needs of our customers

Democratic engagement

- 3.2 Robust local democracy and governance

A culture of innovation

- 3.3 Enhancing skills and flexibility of our workforce
- 3.4 Improving performance through innovation and new technology

Financial independence with low Council Tax

- 3.5 Efficient use of our financial resources, buildings and assets
- 3.6 Working with commercial partners to add value for our customers

### Our Values:

Customer

Trust

One Team

Innovation

Performance



# Building stronger communities

Safe, happy and healthy communities with people who feel valued and included.

Our residents are at the heart of everything we do. In our ambition for our communities, we need to respond to a number of drivers.

Public funding for health, social and emergency care is limited. Demands on these services are increasing. Our residents expect a high quality of life, including being able to live independent and healthy lives, free from abuse or neglect. Building strong communities, where our residents are proud of the character of the district and feel a strong sense of belonging is essential.

Key partners who share our ambition include the National Health Service and local emergency services, and Essex County Council, who have responsibility for social services. We also work closely with and support a number of community partners from the charity and voluntary sector. Our partner VAEF (Voluntary Action Epping Forest) supports volunteers working in the community, playing a vital role in supporting residents to live independent lives.



Our work to build stronger communities is covered through three aims:

**People live longer, healthier and independent lives**

**Adults and children are supported in times of need**

**People and communities achieve their full potential**

## 1.1 Supporting healthy lifestyles

Improving the quality of life, as well as life expectancy of all our residents by supporting and promoting healthier lifestyles, providing opportunities for physical activity and initiatives to support the emotional and mental health of our children and young people.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Ensure all year 6 children at primary schools receive the 'Mlife' emotional, mental, health and well-being 'Startwell' programme (0-19 yrs)
- Provide our 'Active Living' initiative for people who are inactive or who have underlying health issues across four areas of the district via 'Bewell', 'Staywell' and 'Workwell' (working age adults)
- Relaunch our Forever Active leisure and health programme, by providing four 'Staywell' events (60 years+)
- Sign-up local take away food businesses to promote healthy choices, in partnership with Essex County Council



## 1.2 Promoting independence for older people and people with disabilities

Providing additional care facilities as well as future homes which in turn will reduce the demand on social care services and help to support independence.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Undertake a review of our sheltered housing schemes assessing if there is sufficient or over provision and whether they are fit for purpose





### 1.3 Safeguarding and supporting people in vulnerable situation

Protecting people in vulnerable situations from abuse and neglect through a well trained workforce and by challenging the barriers that prevent people from accessing the help and support they need.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Identify and support people with vulnerabilities through multi-agency Neighbourhood Hubs (Health)
- Deliver new and bespoke safeguarding training to our staff across the Council
- Develop our Hoarding Working Group with external colleagues in order to provide support to hoarders to try and effect behaviour change



### 1.4 Enabling communities to support themselves

Developing partnership working with the voluntary sector to help build community capacity and resilience across the district, enabling communities to support themselves.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Increase the number of community leaders and volunteers in partnership with Voluntary Action Epping Forest and Town and Parish Councils
- Promote 'Active Citizens' through Town and Parish newsletters
- Provide opportunities for training and skills development for volunteers
- Deliver Dementia Friends training to communities
- Provide grant funding to voluntary organisations to support community resilience and sustainability

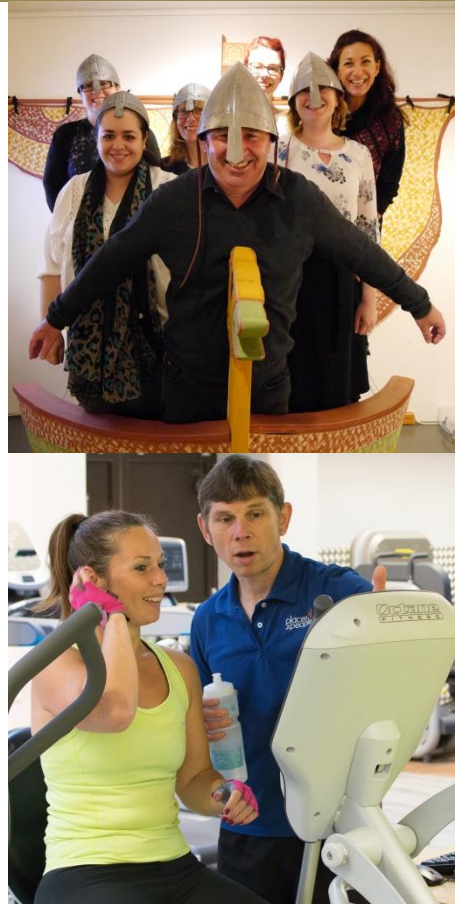


## 1.5 Providing culture and leisure

Residents of all ages and backgrounds enjoy opportunities to participate in cultural and leisure activities which celebrate the rural character and heritage of our district.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Enhance our Leisure Facilities throughout the district through our leisure contractor, Places for People
- Establish a 'Culture Without Borders Development Trust' with our partner, Broxbourne Borough Council
- Deliver new cultural activity to engage with our diverse communities, including a Cultural Festival for all
- Expand our cultural and leisure outreach programme for people of all ages and abilities
- Provide a programme of arts, dance and social activities for our older residents



## 1.6 Keeping the district safe

Working in partnership with Essex Police to prevent crime and ensure our residents feel safe in the community.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Tackle anti-social behaviour - target repeat and high harm anti-social behaviour to protect individuals and communities from distress and disruption
- Protect children and vulnerable people from harm - deliver awareness campaigns for children and young people to improve understanding of healthy relationships, Gangs and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Support vulnerable victims of crime to feel safe through targeted help
- Train and develop front line staff to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and to know how and where to go for help





# A stronger place to live and work

We are a district with great potential and ambitious plans. Public health, safety and well-being are amongst our key priorities and we aim to build and design our services around the needs of all our communities.

Working with our partners we have identified challenges and opportunities that have an impact on our local economy. We will work to improve the district's housing offer, support existing businesses and create an environment to attract new investments and opportunities for local people. The economic growth will see an increased number of housing as well as commercial properties in order to deliver services and infrastructure local people need. Rental incomes will help us pay for local services and ensure Council Tax remains as low as possible for our residents.

## Keeping the district clean and green

One of our priorities is a protection of the Green Belt and we will do so, by ensuring that we develop the most suitable locations with the minimum possible impact on our unique environment.



## Housing and jobs

We will continue to deliver ambitious projects to promote retail, tourism and the visitor economy. Our goal is to maximise employment potential for our residents, including apprenticeship opportunities. We will support business enterprise and attract local investment.

We will also continue to increase the level of affordable housing, ensuring the right infrastructure is provided to support growth. Together we can be proud of our history whilst looking out into the future.

**Delivering effective core services that people want**

**A district with planned development**

**An environment where new and existing businesses thrive**

## 2.1 Keeping the district clean and green

Striving for a cleaner, greener and attractive district in which businesses and communities prosper, where people feel proud to live and work.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Identify and develop efficiencies and improvements in our street cleaning, waste and recycling services
- Protect our environment by deterring littering and fly-tipping incidents, enforcing action against infringements and working together to ensure the district is safe, welcoming and cohesive



## 2.2 Improving the district housing offer

Epping Forest will be a district that has homes and neighbourhoods that are safe, decent and attractive and that can accommodate the needs of those who want to live in the district including homeless people.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Complete 73 residential properties from phases 2 and 3 of the Council Housebuilding Programme
- Supply 6 homelessness pods that will provide an alternative to accommodating single vulnerable homeless people in expensive bed and breakfast accommodation
- Relocate our housing repairs and housing asset teams to Oakwood Hill Depot, reducing our operating costs



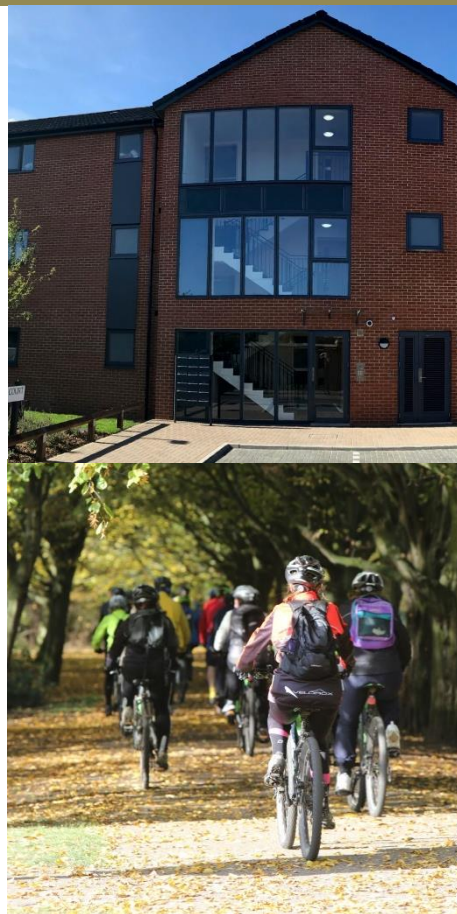


## 2.3 Planning development priorities

Creating a sustainable environment including planning for growth, to address issues such as the provision of affordable housing, whilst protecting the Green Belt and rural landscape.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Deliver approximately 760 new affordable homes that are sustainable and built in the right places, protecting the natural character of the district that we all value so highly
- Meet with relevant stakeholders to establish processes for implementing the Local Plan and for delivering strategically planned growth



## 2.4 Ensuring infrastructure supports growth

High quality sustainable development supported by appropriate infrastructure provision.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Open a brand new leisure centre in Waltham Abbey offering a range of high quality sports and physical activities
- Open the extension to Loughton leisure centre
- Consider the long term funding of Epping Sports Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre



## 2.5 Supporting business enterprise and attracting investment

Achieving the best possible outcome for businesses and residents of the district by encouraging sustainable commercial and economic development. Generating long term financial benefits and increasing employment opportunities for local people.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Commence work on our key redevelopment site, St John's Road, Epping, which will stimulate economic growth, expand the range of services and facilities available and encourage local investment
- Improve levels of digital connectivity and engagement to deliver services through our digital innovation programme and establish a digital innovation zone covering West Essex and Eastern Hertfordshire
- Explore further our Digital Innovation Programme that would build on the successful infrastructure network improvements and further develop the district's potential as a digital innovation zone

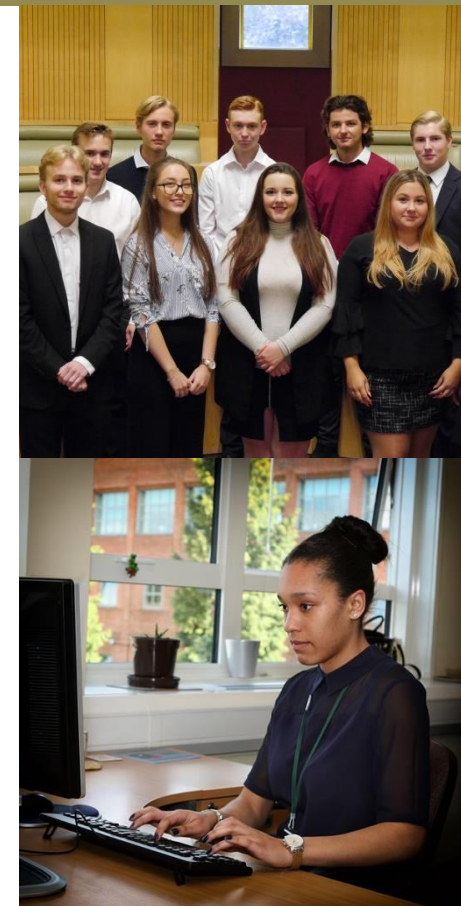


## 2.6 People develop skills to maximise their employment potential

Improving educational achievement, with fewer young people not in education, employment or training. Building opportunities for young people to progress their careers through our apprenticeship scheme – recognising and rewarding excellence.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Continue with the Council's apprenticeship scheme offering structured work placements to young people from the district and assisting them in finding suitable employment





## 2.7 Promoting retail, tourism and the visitor economy

A thriving sustainable tourism and visitor economy which seizes the opportunities of our towns and countryside, history and heritage, and enhances our businesses, communities and environment.

### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Enhance the physical appearance of the district's towns; provide additional facilities and thus visitor experience through targeted projects. This will also increase the level of local pride amongst residents and increase business confidence amongst local businesses
- Develop and maintain an economy that is strong and resilient and meets local needs and aspirations, in partnership with the local community



# Links with other plans

## Our values

The Council's values and behaviours underpin our work.

These show how we will behave as we carry out our work. Everyone at the Council has signed up to these values and is expected to adhere to them at all times.

### Customer

*"We will put the customer at the heart of everything we do, providing services that are tailored to the different needs of our communities".*

### Trust

*"We will be open and honest with each other and our customers. We will treat everyone with respect and take responsibility for our actions".*

### One team

*"We will work together as One Council, supporting each other and our partners to achieve better results for everyone".*

### Innovation

*"We will seek new ways of working to improve and change to meet new challenges".*

### Performance

*"We will take pride in our work and celebrate our achievements. We will learn from our mistakes and always do what we say we will do".*

# Strengthening our council

We aspire to be an efficient and effective Council, that is financially sustainable for the future.

Our Corporate Plan provides a focus for our business planning, and enables our staff and our partners to coordinate their contributions to our achievements. A stronger Council means being 'ready for the future' and putting customers at the heart of everything we do.

The key drivers informing our direction of travel are:

- Meeting changing customer needs and expectations
- Reductions in central government funding and rising costs; and
- The need to reduce spending whilst ensuring our services are reliable and relevant.

The Council has an ambitious transformation programme to ensure we reach our goals. This will involve continually improving our services and adapting to an ever evolving environment. The programme is made up of four workstreams:

- **Customer Experience:** Developing and enhancing the journey our customers take when accessing their services and interacting with us. A key piece of work for this workstream is the construction of a new customer reception and developing new



systems to improve the ways customers can access their services.

- **Business Culture:** Changing the way we work and do business, and improving our performance. This workstream centres around the establishment of our new People Strategy to develop the skills and agility of our workforce to meet our future demands.
- **Resources, Accommodation and Technology:** Ensuring we are organised. A key piece of work for this workstream is to review the

Council's accommodation needs and to make efficient use of the buildings we own; and to improve the use of technology to be ready for the future.

- **Major Projects:** Large projects that will support well-being and economic development in the district. This workstream includes the construction of new leisure centres in the district and the implementation of our Local Plan.



### 3.1 Engaging with the changing needs of our customers

As our customers needs develop, we will change our approach to ensure we meet expectations and have services that are fit for customers.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Implement year two of our Customer Service programme to ensure we have improved, cost effective and faster services for customers. This will involve developments on our new customer reception area – to provide an appropriate access point for support and information, develop the ways that customers can contact the Council and pay for services to meet individual needs
- Engage customers through consultations to ensure we develop and deliver services with customers, not to them. A repeat of our customer satisfaction survey initiated last year will enable us to track our progress



### 3.2 Robust local democracy and governance

The political landscape is going through changes at a Local, National and International level. Our decision making must be ready for these future developments.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Promote voter registration to help all residents have a voice in Local and General elections
- Gain approval for a governance review to review the structure of the Council's Cabinet and committees, to increase the efficiency of decision making

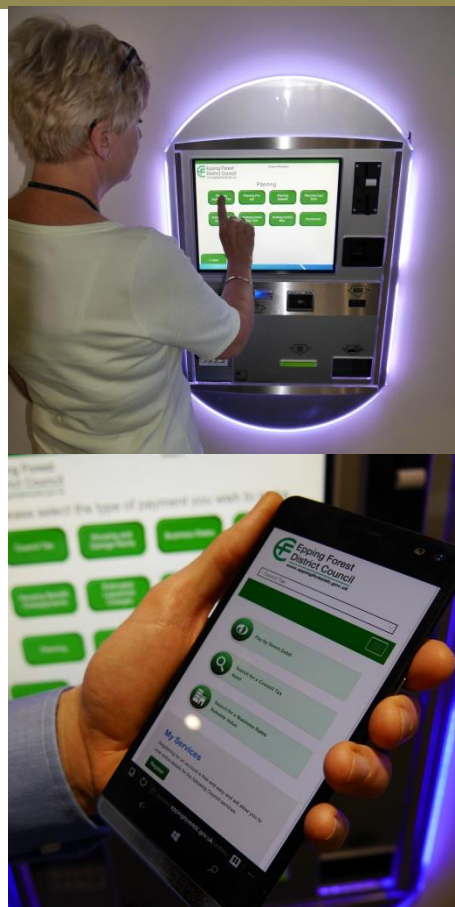


### 3.3 Enhancing skills and flexibility of our workforce

Our staff play an important role in customer satisfaction and successful delivery of services. We want to make sure that our workforce is developed and invested in to meet the changing needs of customers and to keep pace with technological advancements.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Implement year two of the People Strategy to upskill and train our staff to improve flexibility and job enrichment, review how our services are structured to meet the evolving needs of our customers
- Implement year one of our Technology Strategy programme (2018-2023) to ensure technology supports the Council to serve our customers



### 3.4 Improving performance through innovation and new technology

Adapting the ways we work and looking to future opportunities will help us provide high levels of customer service, improve access to services and keep Council Tax low.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Implement new ways of working to improve the speed, accuracy and success of our services. This will include flexible working, utilising technology and removing barriers to working as one team





### 3.5 Efficient use of our financial resources, buildings and assets

As central government funding continues to decrease, we need to find alternative ways to ensure our services perform at a high level. The Council seeks to be financially self-sufficient to continue to keep Council Tax low for our residents.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Implement year two of the Service Accommodation review by relocating services to enable the sale of land and commence work on the civic office refurbishment to reduce our operating costs
- Review the Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure our financial plans are fit for purpose and robust for the uncertainty of future public spending



### 3.6 Working with commercial partners to add value for our customers

Partnership working is increasingly valued by customers. With the pressures on public services to reduce costs yet also provide the required services, it is paramount that we join up with our partners to develop creative solutions to the problems faced by our customers.

#### In 2018/2019 we will:

- Receive increased income from commercial contracts
- Develop our partnership working to support meeting the needs of our customers with other organisations such as the NHS and voluntary groups
- Challenge our partners and welcome challenge from our partners to deliver services in the right way for our customers
- Reduce duplication of services across partners and seek out value for money for service delivery



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