

Three Rivers District Council

# Corporate Framework 2023-26

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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# Forward by the Leader of the Council

TO BE ADDED




# Our Vision

## Three Rivers:

### A great place to live, work and visit.

We want Three Rivers to be a district:

- that is inclusive and where people feel they are welcome, belong and are safe,
  - where people have access to good quality housing,
  - where local infrastructure supports healthy lifestyles and addresses health inequalities,
  - where our most vulnerable residents are supported,
  - that takes action to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency and
  - where local people, organisations and businesses benefit from the prosperity of the district
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# Our Objectives

In order to realise our vision, our objectives are to:

- Provide responsive and responsible local leadership
- Expand our position as a great place to do business
- Support and enable sustainable communities
- Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient



# Delivery Themes

This Corporate Framework is influenced by three important and interlinking factors which cut across all of our objectives. Action will be needed under each to achieve our vision.



## Responsive, responsible, local leadership

Recent years have, without doubt, been some of the most challenging local government have ever faced. The Council responded quickly and comprehensively to provide reassurance, guidance and practical support when the pandemic saw many of our local communities and businesses reaching crisis point. For many, including the Council itself, these difficulties are expected to continue and will inevitably impact on services and finances as we face increased costs, increased demands for our services and national economic uncertainty. This external environment is challenging for the resilience of our district and makes future planning a very uncertain process. The Council will, nevertheless, continue to assume a strong leadership role in supporting our residents and working with partners to ensure the continued prosperity of our district, its business sectors and the communities that call Three Rivers home.

The Council will continue to be responsive to the needs of our communities through the services we plan and deliver, especially when those we serve find themselves vulnerable.

Modernisation and the improvement of customer experience remains a priority for our services and this will be delivered through the continued development of our Customer Experience Strategy. Supported by a new Customer Engagement Strategy we will continue to work with, and through, our communities to not only listen, but to hear, in order that we can properly respond to current and plan for emerging local needs.

The Council will act responsibly to ensure the continued provision of services and support for which we have statutory responsibilities and which are vital to supporting our most vulnerable residents. With increasingly limited resources and finances that will need to be balanced carefully against increased demands for our services, prioritisation will be needed.

The Council recognises that we cannot deliver our vision alone, it is only by working in partnership with our communities that we will be successful. The council's leadership will adapt as needed to maximise and promote a shared responsibility where the future state of our district is everyone's business.

### **To provide responsive, responsible, local leadership we will:**

- **Listen to and understand our communities and their changing needs**
- **Continue to develop and improve our Customer Experience**
- **Promote greater collaboration between organisations across and beyond the district**
- **Manage a well-run Council that delivers efficient and effective services, prioritising our statutory responsibilities**
- **Make fiscally responsible decisions that protect our core public services**

## A great place to do business

Three Rivers is one of the most prosperous economic areas outside London. The district hosts several national and international headquarters and the largest state-of-the-art film studios in Europe which with a strong arts and entertainment sector creates areas of growth opportunity.

The local economy has a range of technological, pharmaceutical, Information Technology and construction companies offering a range of high-quality jobs. This, combined with the strong cultural sector and a culture of enterprise, all serves to make Three Rivers a welcoming, distinctive and attractive place to live, work and visit.

A lasting impact of the pandemic has been rapid cultural shifts in the way that people live and work. The development of this new Corporate Framework is an opportunity to recognise and adapt to this new environment and, as we face the challenges of the cost of living crisis, to build a fair and environmentally responsible recovery ensuring a just transition for our local economy and those it supports.

Close partnership working with local businesses will form the cornerstone of the delivery of our Economy Strategy and this, complemented by a more locally focused approach to the district's cultural offer, will celebrate our heritage and community histories whilst shaping our future business and visitor economies.

Three Rivers benefits from a number of high quality and popular local visitor attractions including the Council owned and managed Watersmeet Theatre. This offer has the potential to support significant growth in the local visitor economy as well as offering affordable access to arts and culture to our residents.

We need and want to see economic growth in our District, but as a Council we are committed to that growth being delivered in an informed and responsible manner that ensures it is clean, inclusive and sustainable.

Our High Streets are a vital and valued resource at the heart of our communities. Recent years have been challenging for this critical business sector as it adapted rapidly to survive. As a council we have supported and worked with business and communities to support this evolution and we will continue to do so. Our High Streets need to be liveable, and to adapt to meet the changing needs and expectations of the communities they serve and we will support our traditional and emerging High Street businesses in their transformation and ongoing role as anchors of sustainable community resilience

### **To expand our position as a great place to do business we will**

- **Provide and nurture an attractive environment for sustainable business and “green” jobs**
- **Attract inward investment that delivers inclusive growth**
- **Support and enable agile working cultures**
- **Develop and raise the profile of our local cultural and wider visitor economy**
- **Strengthen local entrepreneurial ecosystems**

## Sustainable Communities

The strength and resilience of our communities is impacted by all aspects of life from health and wellbeing to the local economy and environment. Whether based on geography or brought together by a shared characteristic, communities provide a sense of connection, an ability to influence and a channel through which to contribute. Strong communities possess the local knowledge, passion and perspective to create community cohesion and resilience as well as real and lasting change – but they also face challenges. While we need to acknowledge the needs in our communities, it is important that the Council recognise and build on the strengths already present to address those needs. By doing so we will create in Three Rivers the sustainable communities that are the ambition reflected in the [UN Sustainability Goals](#).

The Council remains committed to its longstanding approach to comprehensive community engagement, co-design and community based delivery.

Physical environments that are clean green and safe are a critical factor in the sustainability of our communities. The Council has already been delivered significant local improvements with more planned in key locations across the District. In South Oxhey high quality, mixed-use development, has provided 500 additional homes, and shopping facilities with a direct London Overground connection to Central London and the benefits of the new and rejuvenated facilities, sympathetic restoration and conservation management delivered at Leavesden Country Park are clear to all who visit it. Plans for future regeneration programmes will aim to provide further homes, infrastructure, services, and job opportunities and we will continue our ambitious work to ensure that the Rickmansworth Aquadrome has a sustainable future which balances the needs of the community with those of the natural environment.

The Council will continue its work to identify and address health inequalities within the district adopting a place based approach to support specific communities where this is needed alongside the further development of our core Healthy Hub offer. Three healthy hubs have been established in South Oxhey, Mill End and Abbots Langley, bringing services and health prevention into the heart of communities. We will continue to provide and expand upon these services in partnership with our local Health and Wellbeing and Health Protection Boards and working with our Leisure Centres to increase universal participation as well as providing targeted health and fitness initiatives for those who need them most.

### **To support and enable sustainable communities we will**

- **Improve the wellbeing of our residents by reducing Health Inequalities and bringing health services into the heart of communities**
- **Maintain and, where possible, expand our leisure and cultural offer**
- **Co-ordinate a Domestic Decarbonisation programme**
- **Work collaboratively with partners to reduce violence, exploitation and the drivers of crime**
- **Progress towards approval of a new Local Plan that meets the needs of the district**

- **Work with Communities to support those vulnerable to the cost of living crisis**

## **Net Carbon Zero & Climate Resilient**

The Council has been at the forefront of bringing forward work streams to mitigate the Climate Emergency which we declared in 2019. We will continue to lead responsibly, by our own example, whilst encouraging and enabling others to join us on that journey. Our net zero route map will provide a clear framework, not just for the Council, but for the wider district, including setting out the steps needed to green our supply chains within and beyond the District.

As a top recycling authority in England, the Council has taken a proactive approach to waste reduction. This will continue and we will continue, through a new Resources and Waste Strategy to work with our communities to minimise waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use for as long as possible and support the regeneration and protect of natural resources.

It must, however, be acknowledged that mitigation alone is no longer sufficient; Climate adaptation is now also critical to the future of our district and will be a priority under this Framework. There is an increasing understanding of the ways in which the climate changes we are already experiencing exacerbate existing inequities with lower-income and other marginalized communities who are, for example, disproportionately affected by the extreme weather conditions increasingly experienced, not least because they are often unable to meet the expense of the adaptation measures that now must go hand in hand with carbon mitigation. We will ensure that our transition to a low, net zero, carbon economy is a socially just one.

**To achieve net carbon zero and ensure a climate resilient district we will:**

- **Make further progress towards the management of a Net Carbon Zero Council estate**
- **Co-ordinate a domestic decarbonisation programme**
- **Support local transition to a low carbon economy**
- **Facilitate the design and implementation of sustainable, low carbon, infrastructure**
- **Ensure our emergency and public health plans account for more severe weather and its community impacts**
- **Prioritize climate adaptation efforts that explicitly help our most vulnerable populations**
- **Maintain our position as a top recycling authority in England.**
- **Progress towards approval of a new Local Plan that can secure the highest standards of environmental performance and sustainability in development.**



## How we will deliver our Vision

This Framework will guide the Councils service delivery for the coming three years as we continue to deliver our statutory obligations as well as working towards our longer term goals and ambitions.

Through the annual Service Plans the Council will identify and prioritise where needed, those programmes and projects that will have the greatest beneficial impact on sustainable growth in the district and provide support for the most vulnerable in our communities. This will appropriately balance the resources needed to deliver our core day to day services with our desire to develop, grow and improve.

Delivery will focus first on the areas where the District Council has statutory responsibilities and then where the Council can most positively contribute. This will not always be directly, but where the Council can support and enable other organisations that are better placed to make an impact.

▶ Deliverability:

- Actions will be ambitious, but deliverable and affordable

▶ Sustainability and Resilience

- Actions will focus on the greatest need and impact
- Actions will contribute to, not hinder, the achievement of net carbon zero

▶ Collaborative

- Actions will strengthen partnerships and be focused at the right spatial level
- Actions will add value to, rather than duplicate, other interventions
- Actions will encourage wider public, private and third sector engagement and investment

▶ Evidence based accountability

- Actions will be directed by data and local insight
  - Actions will be framed by clear performance indicators
  - Actions will be based on solid business cases
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