

Warwick District - a great place to live, work and visit

Fit for the Future

1 Our Purpose

Our purpose as a council is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits Warwick District. With our partners we aspire to build sustainable, safer, stronger and healthier communities.

2 Background and Context

The Council is delivering its services in a world that is changing at an increasingly fast pace. We are facing a range of complex challenges.

Our finances are under considerable pressure because of the recession. We need to find ways of reducing our costs and increasing our income by nearly £3 million over the next four or five years.

People's expectations continue to increase. They expect real value for money from the Council Tax or Council rent.

Housing development could lead to housing growth in the district. This and other changes in demand will mean we need to adapt existing services or offer new ones.

Government policy continues to evolve. This provides us with opportunities and challenges.

3 Understanding our priorities and planning for the long term

Working with our partners who share the same vision we have consulted widely to find out the views of residents, local community groups and neighbourhood forums. Together we have produced a long term plan, known as the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will guide us towards creating a District where people feel safe, enjoy a healthy lifestyle and sense of well being, have their housing needs met and there is a strong, diverse economy.

The two Leamington wards of Brunswick and Crown as well as West Warwick will also receive priority to ensure there is no area within the District amongst the more deprived in the country. Our Town Centres of Kenilworth, Leamington and Warwick will also be targeted to boost economic activity.

Our Key Aims
<p>In the Warwick District of 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • everyone will feel safe going about their daily lives • everyone will be able to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and sense of well being • everyone will have their housing needs met • there will be a strong, diverse economy which provides jobs for all

To ensure we tackle causes, not symptoms, we are working to devise cross-cutting solutions which:

- narrow the gap between affluent and poor people
- minimise the impact on the environment
- improve the quality of life and provide opportunities for families at risk
- engage communities and strengthen their cohesion
- improve rural communities

Clearly these ambitions cannot be achieved overnight. The strategy sets out the vision for the Warwick District of 2026. In the context of this vision, the purpose of Warwick District Council, its Councillors, all of its members of staff and everything it does should be to enable that vision to be fulfilled.

The Council knows that it needs to listen to and lead the community it serves to learn how to deliver exceptional quality services at good value for money.

4 Making a difference

Whilst it may take many years for us to fully achieve our vision, we will make a difference to people's lives more quickly than that. We have identified a number of benefits which we can use to measure how well we are doing. Listed below are some examples of the key benefits we are trying to bring about:

By:	We will have:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Recycling levels • Minimising environmental impacts • Ensuring our environment is clean and green. 	An enhanced and protected natural environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having more cohesion between people from different backgrounds • reducing poverty • involving you in decision making and community 	A reduced gap between affluent and poor people

life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting communities from harm • Reducing serious crime and anti-social behaviour • Enabling older and vulnerable citizens to feel safer 	Communities that are safe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving everyone more healthy lifestyle opportunities • Having a stronger learning culture • Providing more opportunity for children and young people • Providing sports opportunities for all. 	Improved health and well being for all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting more innovative tourism, sporting, cultural activities • Providing arts and cultural opportunities for all 	A thriving tourist industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating more sustainable, affordable and quality housing • Enabling older and vulnerable people to live more independently • Reducing homelessness 	Met all housing needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a strong local economy • Improving rural communities • Supporting businesses • Improving the transport infrastructure 	An economically vibrant and creative community

5 A Council which is Fit for the Future

For many years the Council has had an ambition to be Acknowledged as Excellent and be a World Class organisation. Several times since 2004 we have received external recognition of our achievements.

External Recognition	
2004	Awarded 'Excellent' rating by Audit Commission
2008	Received Investors in Excellence award
2008	Received two Midlands in Excellence awards

We still have the same level of ambition, but how we achieve that has changed.

Like the rest of the public sector, we are facing big reductions to our budget. Over the next five years we need to save nearly £3million by reducing costs and increasing income. These pressures on our budget mean that all our services have to provide value for money.

We realise that to deliver quality services with a reducing budget we will have to become better at what we do.

To deliver our vision and meet our purpose we need:

- leaders who are fit to meet the challenge
- a strategy which sets out clearly what people can expect from us, and
- valued services which are delivered by motivated, empowered and flexible staff.

We have put together a Programme of Change which will enable us to provide high quality services which our customers value, improve the way we develop as an organisation and balance our budget. Our Programme currently consists of thirty one projects which will be completed over the next four years.

A key element of our Programme is to adopt an approach to organising service delivery called Lean Systems Thinking. This is a radically different approach which, focuses on delivering what matters to customers. It will enable us to deliver benefits such as reducing the end to end time of services, being better at getting services right first time and improving our decision making.

One consequence of our approach is that fewer staff will be needed to deliver our services. We aim to minimise the number of staff redundancies by managing the way we fill vacancies. Typically, up to fifty staff choose to the leave the council in any one year. These vacancies will not be filled if they occur in teams where fewer staff are needed.

Lean Systems Thinking can be applied to everything we do. For example, we will use it to help us:

1. Reduce energy use and costs in our offices and other buildings.
2. Make saving by achieving better value for money for the things we buy.
3. Increase income especially by increasing recycling levels and supporting the local economy.
4. Consider delivering services alongside our partners where this would improve quality or lower cost.

To ensure that the Change Programme delivers its benefits we have set up ways for us to monitor progress. Some of this will involve understanding how our services are performing by measuring our effectiveness.

Measures not targets

Part of our Lean Systems Thinking approach has involved removing many of the performance targets we used to have. We now use measures simply as a learning tool to help understand how we are doing.

Another key aspect is how we work together to achieve our purpose. Our leaders (both managers and Councillors) and staff all have a part to play as we adopt Lean Systems Thinking right across the Council. Projects will be scrutinised before they start and be monitored as they progress to make sure they deliver what is needed.

By looking closely at what we do the Council believes it is able to meet the challenges of the next few years.

6 Our Commitment to you

Our Fit for the Future programme is based on our commitment to focusing on what is important to you.

We will:

Our Commitments to you
✓ Deliver high quality, effective and efficient services that customers value
✓ Empower and motivate our staff to influence and improve the services we provide
✓ Deliver a balanced budget for the Council and meet future budget challenges
✓ Work effectively with our partners to the benefit of our customers
✓ Use our resources flexibly and to the maximum effect
✓ We will provide excellent political and managerial leadership

7 Further information

Fit for the Future was approved by the Council on 20 October 2010. A detailed report and further documents can be found in the Committee section of our website.

[Link to Fit for the Future documents](#)