

# BUILDING A BETTER IPSWICH THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN



FEBRUARY 2012



## Introduction

2012 is a big year for Britain and a big year for Ipswich. We have many challenges ahead but also many opportunities to make life better for people who live and work in our town.

Since Labour took control of the Council in May 2011 we have been working closely with staff and our partners to ensure we deliver quality services to the people of Ipswich. We have introduced new ways of working - opening up decision-making and devolving powers to new Area Committees.

It is clear that a new administration will have new goals. This is why we have produced a new Corporate Plan - a road map for the Council. I am grateful to the people who sent us their opinions on the draft of the Plan and consequently we have now revised the Plan to take account of a number of the comments we received. However, I was pleased that people generally supported the aspirations and priorities included in our draft.

Councils continue to have their funding cut by the Government. The Plan shows our commitment to protecting frontline services and keeping council tax as low as possible during these difficult times.

We know that many people in Ipswich are struggling financially and fearful for their jobs. The Plan shows that our priority is to attract new investment and jobs to Ipswich. We aim to do this by helping to boost private sector jobs and by supporting the construction industry by building much-needed new affordable housing.

Our 2012/13 budget includes investment in all six themes in the Plan. However, as a consequence of the challenging national and local economic position, we have deliberately focussed the bulk of our investments on two of the themes: A Stronger Ipswich Economy and Quality Housing For All.

We now need to get on with the delivery of the Plan. We will publish a series of performance indicators that will enable us to keep track of progress and to enable you to keep track of how we are doing. Together we can Build a Better Ipswich.

**Councillor David Ellesmere**  
**Leader of Ipswich Borough Council**

## Underlying Principle 1: A Fairer Ipswich

### GOAL:

Everything we do will be based on the principles of fairness and participation. We will work to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations amongst all the people of Ipswich.

### AIMS

1. We will provide fair and easy access to our services to all whatever their age, gender, physical or financial ability, ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or location within the Borough.
2. We will work to reduce deprivation and inequality and enable all Ipswich residents to take a constructive part in our society.
3. We will ensure, as an employer and as a contractor, that fair employment practices are followed and that staff are supported to deliver the Council's visions and priorities.
4. We will focus on improving services to areas where they are most needed.
5. We will consult properly with residents and affected groups on all major Council decisions, and keep them better informed about what we are doing.
6. We will encourage a strong and diverse voluntary sector that can support new communities, vulnerable and marginalised groups, and all who need a voice.

### KEY ACTIVITIES

- a. identify and strengthen those services that will be in greater need as a result of government cuts;
- b. introduce longer-term funding to give more stable support to community and voluntary groups;
- c. use the buying power of the Council to ensure that suppliers and contractors follow good employment practice, and encourage Fairtrade;
- d. set up Area Committees across Ipswich to give local residents the ability to influence their areas;
- e. enable local residents to develop their communities where the need is greatest, and seek to remove unhelpful blocks on community activities.
- f. develop more effective means of consultation in order to take proper account of the views and aspirations of Ipswich

## Underlying Principle 2: Value for Money

### GOAL:

We will constantly seek to improve the efficiency of the Council, with savings used to protect and improve services and to keep down council tax.

### AIMS

1. We will work with Council staff and residents to identify ways to save money and improve our services.
2. We will reduce Council waste in energy and materials.
3. We will work with other organisations, where this will improve the service or reduce the cost to Ipswich residents.
4. We will increase the amount of information the Council makes available to let public scrutiny drive up service standards.
5. We will cut waste from duplicated effort by "Getting It Right First Time".
6. We will provide our customers and staff with clear standards and expectations that reflect what they tell us is important to them.
7. We will enable our customers to provide feedback easily through comments, complaints and surveys and use this to improve our services.
8. We will shift resources to target the root causes of concerns that have been raised by communities.

### KEY ACTIVITIES

- a. positively encourage customers to use cheaper and convenient methods of bill payment;
- b. improve the physical layout of the Customer Services Centre and ensure ease of access to free internet PCs to access our services;
- c. comprehensively review opening hours in line with demand;
- d. introduce improved performance measures;
- e. simplify and improve access to services via the telephone;
- f. improve on-line access and communication;
- g. measure customer satisfaction with our services and use this to prioritise improvements.

## Theme 1: A Stronger Ipswich Economy

### GOAL:

We will work with business to encourage new investment, innovation, learning and sustainable growth and employment.

### AIMS:

1. We will make every effort to bring new investment and jobs to Ipswich.
2. We will provide incentives to bring empty shops and run-down areas back into use.
3. We will do more to ensure local businesses are claiming the reliefs and grants they are entitled to.
4. We will improve the skills and employment prospects of people who are out of work by increasing the number of apprentices, volunteering opportunities and work experience placements.
5. We will seek to use local suppliers and workers wherever possible.
6. We will ensure that the Council has a properly staffed economic development unit working to attract businesses to Ipswich.
7. We will encourage more people to volunteer and will support them to develop the skills necessary for sustainable community-led activities.
8. We will help provide the necessary infrastructure to enable Ipswich to develop and expand.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. encourage growth and development by working with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other agencies;
- b. develop the Town Centre Master Plan to provide direction for continued regeneration of the town centre and the Waterfront;
- c. develop an Economic Development Strategy with a focus on job retention and creation and to promote and attract investment into Ipswich;
- d. increase both the number and profile of apprenticeships within the business community of Ipswich;
- e. assist small and medium enterprises to deliver training and business support
- f. support skills development and promote educational, business and community engagement.
- g. we will support local people and the local economy via initiatives in the Council's Jobs and Skills Investment Fund

## Theme 2: A Safer and Healthier Ipswich

### GOAL:

We will work to reduce crime, the fear of crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. We will work to improve the health and well-being of people in Ipswich.

### AIMS:

1. We will improve the resolution of anti-social behaviour problems.
2. We will give greater priority to tackling alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour, especially street drinking.
3. We will make the town centre more welcoming for people of all ages.
4. We will ensure the effective implementation of the prostitution, alcohol and drug strategies.
5. We will ensure the health and well-being needs of Ipswich are adopted by our partners on the Suffolk Health and Well-Being Board.
6. We will support the people of Ipswich to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
7. We will fulfil our responsibilities towards safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and will maintain effective practices and procedures to ensure this happens.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. tackle crime, the fear of crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour by partnership working through the Ipswich Community Safety Partnership;
- b. improve the speed and co-ordination of response to anti-social behaviour incidents;
- c. adopt firmer policies to control premises selling alcohol;
- d. improve enforcement of littering, dog fouling and fly tipping;
- e. achieve Purple Flag status for Ipswich town centre;
- f. create a process to allow residents more say in the placing of CCTV cameras;
- g. maintain and enhance the HEARS service;
- h. work with partners to develop and deliver a Health and Well-Being Strategy for Ipswich.

## Theme 3: Keeping Ipswich Moving

### GOAL:

We will develop and encourage the provision of an integrated and effective transport system which maximises the use of public transport and reduces its overall environmental impact.

### AIMS:

1. We will keep Ipswich Buses in the ownership of the people of Ipswich and run as a public service providing frequent, reliable and affordable services - not maximising the payment of dividends.
2. We will fight to get a fairer road maintenance budget from Suffolk County Council.
3. We will ensure there is sufficient quality car parking in Ipswich to support a thriving town centre.
4. We will ensure Ipswich gets worthwhile improvements from the Ipswich: Transport Fit for the 21st Century scheme.
5. We will work to make the transport network safe for all users
6. We will speed up the introduction of residents' parking areas where residents want it.
7. We will work with local cycling groups to extend and link up the current piecemeal cycle network.
8. We will work to improve sustainable transport links between Ipswich and other places.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. maintain existing roads and footways in a good condition;
- b. support and encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel into the town centre, through improvements to public transport, cycle and walking facilities;
- c. improve pedestrian access within the town centre and between key areas such as the Waterfront, Education Quarter, Ipswich Village and major transport modes;
- d. implement the Ipswich: Transport Fit for the 21st Century major scheme for sustainable transport with Suffolk County Council;
- e. work with Network Rail, train operating companies, the Department for Transport and other relevant organisations to bring about improvements to rail services for the benefit of Ipswich people;
- f. introduce 20mph speed limits on all estates where residents want it;
- g. work with local bus operators, including Ipswich Buses, to enhance the range and attractiveness of bus services in the town.

## Theme 4: Quality Housing for all

### GOAL:

We will help individuals and groups in the local community who experience disadvantage and will work towards everyone having the opportunity of a decent home.

### AIMS:

1. We will speed up plans to build affordable homes for rent and help to kick-start stalled housing developments, providing a boost to the local economy.
2. We will prioritise the building of family homes over flats.
3. We will give all tenants (Council, housing association or private rented) a voice.
4. We will make it a priority to get empty properties back into use.
5. We will develop an Ipswich Standard for private rented property to tackle safety, heating efficiency, insulation and damp problems and seek to have this adopted by private sector landlords.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. continue investment to maintain the Decent Homes Standard and achieve the Ipswich Standard by 2014;
- b. increase the delivery of affordable housing by aiming for 35% of all new homes delivered to be affordable, and by keeping our affordable housing policies under review;
- c. work in partnership with Homes and Communities Agency to deliver affordable housing and employment;
- d. work with and support residents living in all types of accommodation to set up residents' associations or tenants' groups;
- e. subject to the outcome of the Local Development Framework Examination we will produce a Masterplan for the northern fringe development in collaboration with partners and local communities;
- f. work to minimise the impact to local residents of the reduction in the County Council's Supporting People funding to Ipswich Borough Council (e.g. to sheltered housing tenants and homeless people);
- g. we will develop a Council House building programme.

## Theme 5: A Greener Ipswich

### GOAL:

We will make Ipswich a cleaner, more attractive and more sustainable place to live, work and visit.

### AIMS:

1. We will reduce the Council's carbon emissions.
2. We will seek to improve energy efficiency in all of Ipswich's buildings.
3. We will improve our recycling and reduce our levels of waste.
4. We will encourage the take-up of allotments to provide cheap and healthy food.
5. We will improve the cleanliness of our town.
6. We will use the planning system to protect green areas and historic buildings in Ipswich.
7. We will seek to reduce the levels of pollution from traffic and other sources.
8. We will preserve and enhance the wildlife areas of Ipswich and encourage greater understanding of nature.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. identify and undertake actions which will reduce the Council's carbon emissions and save money;
- b. work with the business community, landlords and other stakeholders to help them improve their environmental performance;
- c. develop schemes for generating renewable energy;
- d. investigate options for improved glass recycling, food waste and other waste collection streams;
- e. improve levels of recycling from commercial premises;
- f. improve public information to increase the take-up of recycling;
- g. improve the council's response to fly-tipping, including on private land;
- h. monitor air, land, water and noise pollution within the Borough and take measures to minimise local pollution;
- i. identify areas which are important for wildlife and investigate sympathetic management in order to increase biodiversity.

## Theme 6: A more Enjoyable Ipswich

### GOAL:

We will ensure that there is a comprehensive range of leisure and cultural opportunities for all people who live in and visit Ipswich.

### AIMS:

1. We will work with the Broomhill Trust and interested parties to re-open Broomhill Pool.
2. We will provide more activities for young people.
3. We will introduce a fair charging policy to encourage greater use of our sport and leisure facilities.
4. We will actively support groups who wish to run events and services from council facilities.
5. We will ensure Ipswich continues to benefit from the Olympics after 2012.
6. We will ensure that our sports and leisure facilities are properly maintained and developed.
7. We will increase the number of events in Ipswich both for the benefit of residents and to increase the number of visitors to our town.
8. We will promote use of sports facilities, parks and events to encourage healthier lifestyles.

### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- a. improve the town's major sporting facilities;
- b. retain Green Flag status for Christchurch and Holywells Parks and gain Green Flag status in 2013 for Chantry Park;
- c. promote an established Ipswich festival season, building on the success of Ip-art and the new Maritime Festival and welcoming new creative and imaginative opportunities;
- d. we will work with the community and interested parties to promote a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the development of the Ipswich Art School and Museum project;
- e. bring together and develop the Corn Exchange and Town Hall as an integrated and coherent arts, entertainment and events venue;
- f. we will work to secure funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund's "Parks for People" programme to support £3.5m improvements to Holywells Park.

## IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Customer Services Centre  
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The Customer Services Centre is situated within the Town Hall on the Cornhill in Ipswich town centre. The entrance is from the Princes Street side of the Town Hall, opposite The Walk and Barclays Bank main entrance.