

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL PORTFOLIO STATEMENT 2014-15

Leader of the Council – Cllr Jukes



1. Portfolio responsibilities

As the Leader of the Council, I have overall responsibility for allocating Cabinet portfolios and overseeing the delivery of the Council's long term plans within the parameters of the Council's Budget and Constitution.

I also lead on driving progress on our major projects which are articulated in our Five Year Plan which has been adopted by the Council. I have made it clear that I want to run the Council as a business by both increasing our income streams and making it as efficient as possible – in particular by making the best use of our land and property assets.

2. Functions and services

As Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Major Projects, I am responsible for the following service areas, with oversight on the Council's turnover of £70 million budget of and medium term financial strategy.

- Policy & Performance
- Strategic Partnerships;
- Democratic & Community Engagement;
- Human Resources and Learning & Development
- Facilities;
- Regeneration; and
- Property

I lead on a range of key issues and projects including:

- Strategic and business planning
- The Council's maintenance programme
- Encouraging business/employment opportunities
- Property and Asset Management
- Regeneration

3. Our achievements in 2013-14

Over the past year, we have delivered a number of achievements and laid the foundations for many more over the coming year. To mention but a few:

- First and foremost, I developed and communicated my Five Year Plan for the Borough; setting out realistic actions up to 2019 that will involve working with our key stakeholders and modern technologies to secure the borough for the future and place the authority in a strong position.
- We made excellent progress against our 24 political priorities (community projects) seeing progress made in delivering the Kent Troubled Families programme, supporting the rehousing of tenants affected by residential regeneration and planning for the development of business start up units.
- We worked with the owners of the cinema site to agree a programme of demolition.
- We sold 16 of the Council's non-operational property assets for a total value of £4.16m. Eight sites were transferred to Parish/Town Councils and nine to Town and Country Housing Group.
- We worked with over 30 local organisations to promote opportunities for apprenticeships, new graduates and the unemployed.
- Worked with Kent County Council to agree an infrastructure plan at North Farm. An urban traffic control scheme was introduced and Kent County Council have since secured funding for an approved project to be delivered by 2015.

4. Key plans and strategies

Specific plans for which I have responsibility:

- The Council's Five Year Plan
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Asset Property Management Plan
- Annual programme of community projects
- Communication & Engagement Strategy
- West Kent Equalities Aims & Commitments

5. Our priorities for 2014-15

This year, there are several areas that we intend to focus on:

- To deliver against the 14 community projects agreed for delivery in 2014-15 – in particular, to finish the 'shared space' in the Town Centre, to complete the road improvements at North Farm and to see work starting on the A21
- Develop the concept of a 'cultural and learning hub' in the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells. To continue to make the best use of land and property assets for the benefit of all residents
- To develop business space to encourage business start-ups
- To continue to work with local organisations to promote opportunities for apprenticeships, new graduates and create employment
- To encourage future growth and investment in Royal Tunbridge Wells through holding an investment conference

6. Contact

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