

# Waltham Forest - Corporate Peer Challenge

## Action Plan (November 2024)

## Foreword

As a Council, we are committed to continually improving and learning. We have always pioneered and been prepared to work differently, looking to new and innovative ways to tackle some of our most difficult challenges and improve the lives of our residents.

We have a proud history as an organisation that works boldly, creatively, and with curiosity to deliver on the priorities of our residents and they have told us they want to live in a borough that is more equal.

Inequality is the defining challenge of our borough, one that limits potential, is a barrier to opportunity, and is actively harmful, for all of us.

Tackling inequality must be at the heart of everything we do and Mission Waltham Forest outlines our vision and sets our priorities to build a more equal borough, where everyone can make the most of their strengths to live the life they want to lead. We know this will take time and we will all have to work harder and faster to deliver change that people across our borough desperately need.

It is only together that we can take meaningful action to create a more equal future. If we want real change to happen, we need everyone to play their part, to make it their business. This means not only leading by example, but also being open to learn and open to a diversity of experience, expertise, and perspectives.

We invited a Local Government Association Team to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge in June 2024. The Team spent four days with us, sharing their knowledge, skills, and learning. We presented them with a variety of evidence and documents, and they had the chance to meet with members of staff, Councillors, residents, and partners.

The Corporate Peer Challenge is designed to offer robust, strategic, and credible challenge, based on the Council's vision and aims, the approaches we take and our progress in delivery, as well as the capacity of the organisation and the level of our ambitions.

The Team have offered important and insightful feedback and a set of recommendations that reflect their considered impression of the Council. This feedback and the recommendations point to where we are doing well

and more importantly, highlights areas where there are opportunities for us to continually improve and become the very best organisation we can be for our borough and our residents.

The recommendations that the Team have made are the foundations for this Action Plan. We have developed a set of ambitious actions that we are confident will deliver on their recommendations. The recommendations not only provide us with an initial focus, they will also be an ongoing guide for us to support continuous improvement and assurance.

We want to thank the Local Government Association Team for their time, the considered approach they took, the generosity which led every conversation and the impression they left on everyone who was invited to meet them and be a part of this important process. We are extremely grateful to have had the chance to learn from them and for the opportunity to host them and show what we have done when they visit the Council and our borough again.

This Action Plan is aligned with our Transformation Programme and with Mission Waltham Forest and will help us to build a more equal borough. It will be delivered in partnership, together with all staff, Councillors, partners, and our communities.

We look forward to sharing our progress as we put this plan into action.



**CLLR GRACE WILLIAMS**

**Leader of Waltham Forest Council**



**LINZI ROBERTS-EGAN**

**Chief Executive of Waltham Forest Council**

## A guide to this Action Plan

In June 2024, Waltham Forest Council undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge coordinated by the LGA. Our peer team included local government colleagues from Brent, Cornwall, Greenwich, Southwark, and Warwickshire, as well as the LGA. Over the course of four days, the peer team spoke to over 170 people including Council staff, members, and external stakeholders. The full findings and recommendations are captured in the feedback report which is available at [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/peerchallenge](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/peerchallenge).

Work began on developing our Action Plan as soon as the Corporate Peer Challenge Team shared their recommendations with us.

The recommendations have been aligned with our approach to continuous improvement so we can ensure the peer team's thoughtful interventions are acted on and help us put tackling inequality at the heart of everything we do, keep resident experiences at the forefront, and become the best organisation that we can be.

Our Action Plan groups the recommendations by four key action planning themes. These four themes are used as the basis for this action plan:

### **Theme 1 - Investing in our people so they can deliver on our ambitions**

- developing our staff
- supporting frontline practitioners
- reviewing support for councillors

### **Theme 2 - Strengthening partnerships to maximise our impact around shared challenges**

- resetting strategic borough leadership arrangements
- strengthening relationships with schools

### **Theme 3 - Building a strong culture of assurance and measuring impact**

- growing a culture of assurance
- developing an impact framework
- strengthening revenue management

### **Theme 4 - Setting up Mission Waltham Forest for success**

- strengthening sequencing of delivery
- developing a clear narrative that tells the story of our success

In this action plan, we set out the actions which we will deliver under each recommendation, identify a strategic owner, set a timescale, and outline the measures we will use to review our progress and to show how we will know that we have been successful.

## Delivering this Action Plan

Efforts have been made to prioritise and sequence the actions to ensure feasibility and efficient delivery of this Action Plan, in line with our commitment to respond to all of the Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations. Each action has been assigned a timescale to ensure delivery while specific and indicative dates are given where these have been established.

The timescales for delivery of our Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan are:

**Short Term (immediate action)**      November 2024 – March 2025

**Medium Term (full mobilisation)**      April – September 2025

**Long Term (into core delivery)**      October 2025 – May 2026

Monitoring and oversight of the Action Plan will be integrated into our existing, outcomes-based performance framework so we can meaningfully track progress against each action. Governance for the Action Plan has been established in line with existing internal practice, with reporting on our progress to the Council's Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet.

Where existing work is in place that reflects the Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations, including the Council's Transformation Programme and Mission Waltham Forest, plans have been reviewed to ensure these respond fully to the feedback and recommendations of the peer team.

The strategic owner for each recommendation will ensure there are appropriate plans in place across the council to deliver the actions outlined and be accountable for delivering the specific outcomes which relate to them.

We will create space to regularly review progress, iterate, and expand the actions we are taking when we need to based on engagement with our partners and communities. This Action Plan should therefore be considered a live document that will be developed as we engage more widely on implementation, as well as when we receive further feedback from the peer team.

As part of our commitment to the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge process, we look forward to welcoming members of the Team back for a visit in Spring 2025. During this visit, the Council will provide an update on progress in delivering our Action Plan, discuss where we have identified opportunities as well as challenges, and outline next steps in delivering on their recommendations.

# Theme 1 - Investing in our people so they can deliver on our ambitions

<b>Recommendation</b>			
Work with staff (including staff networks) and Trade Unions to bring forward clear organisational development plans which are visible to staff and set out how the council will close the gender and ethnicity pay gaps and ensure that the workforce reflects the community at all levels of the organisation.			
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.1	<p>Establish the Workforce and Culture Transformation Programme, putting codesign with staff and trade unions at the heart of organisational development work planned, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertaking the Staff Survey (<b>September 2024</b>) and acting on findings</li> <li>- Improving inclusivity in the workplace (as part of our <b>ongoing Inclusion Action Plan delivery</b>)</li> <li>- Developing a Leadership Framework (<b>December 2024</b>)</li> <li>- Enhancing the staff appraisal process (embedded for <b>2024-25 appraisal process</b>)</li> <li>- Launching next phase of Inclusive Manager Training (<b>March 2025</b>)</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Short term and ongoing
1.2	Continuing to strengthen and support the role of all Employee Networks, updating and agreeing a shared terms of references to formalise the role of the Employee Networks, and continuing to meet regularly with the Chief Executive and consulting on key initiatives and policies that impact staff with protected characteristics.	Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Short term and ongoing
1.3	Designing and delivering “Growing our Own” approach to create more options for career pathways and opportunities, including apprenticeships, graduate schemes, internships, and work experience opportunities.	Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Medium term
1.4	Continue to ensure improved data collection and analysis, including via surveys and workshops, to inform organisational development initiatives and to improve how the organisation uses data to bring benefits for staff. An all-council staff survey was undertaken in <b>October 2024</b> and our organisational development approach will respond to the survey findings.	Corporate Director of Digital, Data and Technology	Medium term
1.5	<p>Deliver the next phase of the Inclusion Action Plan (<b>April 2024 – March 2025</b>), closely aligned to the Council’s Mission to create an inclusive workforce that reflects our community, targeting key areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talent development programme</li> <li>- Recruitment training programme</li> <li>- Diverse Panel initiative</li> <li>- Introduction of diverse jobs board for all appointments</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Medium term
1.6	Refreshed Service Plans outline how every service in the Council will contribute to creating a truly inclusive organisation that champions equity, with service-level actions in support of the Council’s Inclusion Action Plan. Service plans will be reviewed and refreshed annually from <b>April 2025</b> .	Corporate Director of Strategy and Change	Medium term and ongoing
1.7	Design and deliver a targeted Leadership Development Programme and create comprehensive mentoring and coaching opportunities across the organisation to develop strong leadership skills and foster professional growth.	Corporate Director of Culture	Long term

## Theme 1 - Investing in our people so they can deliver on our ambitions

		and Workforce Development	
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved staff satisfaction through engagement programmes and professional development that positions the Council as a top London employer.</li> <li>Increased conversion rates of apprentices and graduates to full time employment at the Council.</li> <li>Reduced turnover rates and improved staff retention as the Council effectively identifies and nurtures talent for future leadership roles.</li> <li>Improved representation amongst senior leaders, to better reflect the diverse community that we serve.</li> <li>Increase in employee engagement in staff survey and in those feeling they can see a career, learning opportunities and feel appreciated, recognised and valued.</li> <li>Reduce our ethnicity pay gap, reduce our gender pay gap, and have the necessary data to be able to confidently report our disability pay gap.</li> <li>Increase in those reporting they feel they are treated fairly, equally, and with respect and they feel empowered to challenge and make a difference in the organisation.</li> </ul>			

<b>Recommendation</b> Take prompt action to ensure that the office and wider estate, and ways of working are supporting front line practitioners to meet the needs of more vulnerable residents.			
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.8	Review the Council's operational estate for how these spaces fit future needs for civic and administrative purposes and to ensure buildings and facilities keep pace with changing patterns of use and that provision is efficient, effective, and beneficial to residents, customers, and staff.	Corporate Director of Property and Delivery	Short term and ongoing
1.9	Put in place clear 'ways of working' for the organisation, developing greater clarity through a number of consistent workstyles, making working at the Council better for everyone, and ensuring the best outcomes for Waltham Forest's residents. New ways of working model currently in development and to be rolled out from <b>December 2024</b> .	Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Medium term
1.10	Deliver an asset transformation programme that contributes to organisational priorities and that will assess the needs of residents, customers, and staff as a core part of design process.	Corporate Director of Property and Delivery	Long term
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A consistent framework enables all staff to work in different ways effectively and allows the Council to be more efficient through better use of resources.</li> <li>Council has a comprehensive view of assets to ensure assets are contributing to organisational priorities.</li> <li>Staff – particularly frontline staff – feel there is equitable access to meeting rooms and buildings across the estate.</li> </ul>			

## Theme 1 - Investing in our people so they can deliver on our ambitions

<b>Recommendation</b>			
Review support for councillors to ensure they are equipped for the varied roles they hold in the council, e.g. ward councillors, executive, scrutiny, etc.			
Actions		Strategic owner	Timescale
1.11	<b>Annually</b> , deliver core training for all members, encompassing Scrutiny, Chairing, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Performance Monitoring, and deliver <i>how to be a more effective councillor</i> training which includes specifics about roles and responsibilities between <b>June - November 2024</b> .	Corporate Director of Governance and Law and Head of Cllr Services	Short term and ongoing
1.12	Review and codesign the Member Development Programme and Member Induction Programme by <b>April 2025</b> , working with members to identify and capture training and skills development needs to improve delivery of all aspects of support available and provide future learning and development opportunities for all councillors.	Head of Leadership Office and Head of Cllr Services	Medium term
1.13	Following the review, develop and implement a refreshed Member Development Programme, with a clear focus on providing appropriate learning and development opportunities for all councillors depending on their roles and additional responsibilities in preparation for the <b>May 2026</b> local councillor election and induction.	Head of Leadership Office and Head of Cllr Services	Long term
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every member is offered a Personal Development Plan with associated resources.</li> <li>• Member training and development requirements are regularly reviewed and shaped in collaboration with members, ensuring the programme remains responsive to their needs and priorities.</li> <li>• The Member Development Programme and Member Induction Programme better meet the needs of all members.</li> </ul>			

## Theme 2 - Strengthening partnerships to maximise our impact around shared challenges

<b>Recommendation</b>			
Review and reset the strategic borough leadership arrangements in order to oversee and coordinate the delivery of the six outward-facing 'borough missions' of the MWF.			
Actions		Strategic owner	Timescale
2.1	Share findings and recommendations for improvement from recent external reviews and inspections of partnerships, including the Corporate Peer Challenge, through Strategic Partnership governance. Items to be included in partnership meetings held in <b>October-December 2024</b> .	Corporate Director of Strategy and Change	Short term
2.2	Deliberative engagement with key partners on strengthening partnerships and developing new ways of working, using this to shape the review and biennial setting of the shared Strategic Partnership Boards' priorities in <b>Spring 2025</b> .	Chief Executive	Medium term and ongoing
2.3	Develop a Partnership Improvement Plan for <b>2025-26</b> that includes greater assurance of statutory compliance, clear and committed partnership governance, embeds mission-driven principles and ways of working. This will be underpinned by a commitment to learning and continually improving together, while taking shared accountability for impact on the biggest challenges facing our communities.	Chief Executive	Medium term
2.4	Establish check points to assess the state of our partnerships i.e. a partnerships survey which will give us the data to understand where there are still areas to improve. Commence with priority setting in <b>Spring 2025</b> .	Chief Executive	Medium term
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Partnership priorities are aligned with Mission Waltham Forest, providing a long-term strategic focus that articulates a clear and shared vision and ambition.</li> <li>• Closer working relationships between a wide range of partners to respond to the borough's most significant short-term challenges and opportunities, as well as plan for the longer-term.</li> <li>• Partners feel empowered to take a leadership role in delivering on agreed shared priorities.</li> <li>• Strengthened partnership impact and delivery for residents, building on the strengths that were highlighted in the peer challenge findings such as the positive impact of our place-based and regeneration partnerships.</li> </ul>			

<b>Recommendation</b>			
In particular, reset relationships with schools to deliver for the borough, ensuring that there is sufficient leadership capacity to work with local schools.			
Actions		Strategic owner	Timescale
2.5	Create regular opportunities for the Council's leadership to connect and engage with education settings from Early Years to Further Education and provide assurance around commitments to improve outcomes for children and young people together, and use existing events, including the annual conferences for schools and early years.	Corporate Director of Education	Short term and ongoing
2.6	Host workshop with national facilitator in <b>October 2024</b> to review and make recommendations for implementing improvements for local safeguarding arrangements and commitments to strengthen the role of education settings as a key partner in the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, with agreed Multi Agency Safeguarding arrangements to be published by <b>December 2024</b> .	Corporate Director of Education	Short term



## Theme 2 - Strengthening partnerships to maximise our impact around shared challenges

2.7	Set up a Strategic Education Board, with the Council and schools as partners to steer work, develop and agree priorities, and explore the development of new ways of working that are mutually beneficial for schools, partners, and the Council.	Corporate Director of Education	Medium term
2.8	Strengthen robust partnership arrangements to enable the system to support all partners to discharge their statutory duties, promote high standards, ensure fair access and achieve inclusion that result in the best outcomes.	Corporate Director of Education	Medium term
<p><b>How will we know we have been successful?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased attendance and engagement at key forums and strategic events, with positive feedback on their value and impact</li> <li>• Educational settings report more confidence in the system, with less escalations and complaints</li> <li>• Improvements delivered in standards, access and inclusion based on key measures in these areas</li> </ul>			

## Theme 3 - Building a strong culture of assurance and measuring impact

<b>Recommendation</b>				
Ensure that SLT continue to embed, on a quarterly basis, a proactive focus on organisation-wide assurance, covering audit recommendations, risk management, and statutory officers' assurance.				
<b>Actions</b>			<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
3.1	Design and implement a tiered benefits realisation model to apply to the financial and non-financial benefits defined through the Council's Transformation Programme and use this to help the Council focus on achieving its strategic objectives.		Chief Executive	Short term and ongoing
3.2	Implement a quarterly assurance-focussed SLT, to combine audit outcomes and recommendations, risk management, and statutory officers' assurance. Statutory officers, who are the Chief Executive (head of paid service), Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, will provide assurance in line with the LGA's improvement and assurance framework for local government.		Chief Executive	Short term and ongoing
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits Realisation Tracker in place for Transformation Programme with named owners, agreed metrics, and delivery dates, reported on quarterly basis to SLT.</li> <li>Ongoing quarterly assurance-focussed SLT meetings are held, with appropriate reporting by relevant officers.</li> </ul>				

<b>Recommendation</b>				
Develop the impact framework for Mission Waltham Forest to identify shorter-term proxy measures against which to assess longer-term impact, which is reported formally to Cabinet.				
<b>Actions</b>			<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
3.3	Iteratively design the Corporate Performance Monitoring Report dashboard, driven by Mission Waltham Forest, to keep it relevant, improve monitoring, reporting and assurance, and enable data-led decision-making. Commence with six-month review of new framework in <b>November 2024</b> .		Corporate Director of Digital, Data and Technology and Corporate Director of Strategy & Change	Short term and ongoing
3.4	Continue to engage with services and members to identify gaps in the list of core metrics, tackle data challenges, and develop KPIs, to ensure all Missions are sufficiently addressed. For example, focus on identifying additional metrics relating to child health and population health to be incorporated by <b>January 2025</b> .		Corporate Director of Digital, Data and Technology and Corporate Director of Strategy & Change	Short term and ongoing
3.5	Continue to set targets and timescales where it is appropriate to do so, to more effectively monitor performance, and develop drill-through data to benefit organisational priorities.		Corporate Director of Digital, Data and Technology and	Short term and ongoing

## Theme 3 - Building a strong culture of assurance and measuring impact

		Corporate Director of Strategy & Change	
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Corporate Performance Monitoring Report dashboard provides a Council-wide overview of performance towards Mission WF, simplifies reporting procedures, and strengthens decision making processes, ensuring strategic objectives are achieved efficiently and effectively.</li> <li>The Corporate Performance Monitoring Report is robustly monitored and used regularly at all levels of the organisation, including reports to SLT, the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, and Cabinet.</li> </ul>			

<b>Recommendation</b>			
Build on the strength of the capital finance function to support development of a robust approach to revenue management using the CIPFA five-star model.			
<b>Actions</b>		<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
3.6	Following the peer review, a <b>bi-monthly framework has been established</b> for monitoring assurance of MTFS savings proposals and the Council's Transformation programme, providing SLT with oversight of financial risk, reputational risk and statutory risk.	Strategic Director of Resources	Ongoing
3.7	Redesign the Council's monthly budget monitor so that the year-end forecast numbers and narrative are provided by budget managers and challenge to assumptions and required analysis is provided by service accountants.	Strategic Director of Resources	Short term and ongoing
3.8	Work with CIPFA to develop a strategy to enhance financial management capability within the Council, including upskilling budget holders and resetting the finance service so it has greater strategic focus.	Strategic Director of Resources	Medium term
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication and adoption of a financial management strategy aligned to the CIPFA five-star model.</li> <li>Regular reporting of the Council's MTFS savings proposals and the Council's Transformation Programme to SLT.</li> </ul>			

## Theme 4 - Setting up Mission Waltham Forest for success

<b>Recommendation</b>				
Ensure the delivery plan translates MWF and provides clear phasing and sequencing of activity and benefits, and takes account of the capacity, capability and engagement of middle managers as part of a wider organisational development approach.				
<b>Actions</b>			<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
4.1	Refreshed Service Plans outlining how each part of the Council will contribute to delivery of Mission Waltham Forest and to tackling inequality; alongside delivery of core services and statutory responsibilities. To be reviewed and refreshed annually from <b>April 2025</b> .		Corporate Director of Strategy and Change	Short term and ongoing
4.2	Staff engagement to ensure staff at all levels of the organisation have a say in delivering Mission Waltham Forest, are encouraged to put forward ideas and raise concerns, with Middle Managers provided with resources to lead and support colleagues to share the Council's level of ambition, are empowered to create change and become champions of equity. Next phase of staff workshops to be delivered in <b>Winter 24/25</b> .		Corporate Director of Culture and Workforce Development	Short term and ongoing
4.3	A Delivery Plan for Mission Waltham Forest will be developed by <b>March 2025</b> that covers key activities against our Missions and provides the single programme of delivery against Mission Waltham Forest for the next two years, outlining key milestones and measures of success. It identifies activities that support the organisation to address the challenges our Borough and communities face and is built on plans within Directorates. This will ensure clarity of expectations in delivery, outcomes, and ownership.		Chief Executive	Medium term
<b>How will we know we have been successful?</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission Waltham Forest delivery proposals are resourced, prioritised and progress toward agreed outcomes is monitored and reported.</li> <li>• There is a shared sense of responsibility across all Directorates and Services to deliver Mission Waltham Forest.</li> <li>• Our employees feel more connected to their work and the Council, actively participating in decision making processes and initiatives to be part of and lead change.</li> <li>• Staff survey results tell us that staff understand how to deliver Mission Waltham Forest through their work, and are doing so.</li> </ul>				

<b>Recommendation</b>				
Develop a clear narrative which tells the story of the council's success and builds enthusiasm for the future, identifying how MWF will work and a focus on what success looks like for residents, business, young people and employees.				
<b>Actions</b>			<b>Strategic owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
4.4	Deliver a revised, outcome-focused communications plan for Mission Waltham Forest to take effect from <b>January 2025</b> , for staff, members, partners, and residents, ensuring consistent understanding of how they individually and collectively contribute to the priorities and Missions. This will include more detail on the context of Waltham Forest's development journey.		Corporate Director of Communications and Campaigns	Short term and ongoing

## Theme 4 - Setting up Mission Waltham Forest for success

4.5	Engagement and collaboration with partners and residents to ensure they can continue to play a role in the delivery of Mission Waltham Forest, providing challenge and sharing experiences to steer its way, being part of and leading change, and influencing how the Council, partners and communities work together to create a more equal borough.	Corporate Director of Strategy and Change	Short term and ongoing
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<p><b>How will we know we have been successful?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff, members, partners, and residents know about Mission Waltham Forest, are well informed about the priorities, and know their role in its implementation.</li> <li>• The vision and ambition set by Mission Waltham Forest is owned across the borough and directs our collective efforts to deliver a step change in outcomes and experiences across Waltham Forest.</li> </ul>			
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<p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>As part of the council's transformation programme bring forward business cases for the investment in the social infrastructure - notably to promote the effective engagement of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and business community.</p>			
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Actions	Strategic owner	Timescale
<p>4.6</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive understanding of opportunities to make best use of assets to provide the VCS with buildings that are sustainable and fit for purpose and approach to measuring the social value the VCS bring to local communities. Final VCS leasing and rent policy to be confirmed by <b>March 2025</b> formalising a consistent offer of rent and leases across the sector alongside Service Level Agreements establishing social value reporting for VCS tenants.</p>	Strategic Director of Stronger Communities and Strategic Director of Place	Short and medium term
<p>4.7</p> <p>Facilitating the establishment of an independent body that is best suited to serve as a voice and support vehicle for Waltham Forest's VCS. Establishment of the organisation with a fiscal host to begin operations by <b>end of 2024</b> ahead of working towards incorporation as an independent organisation by <b>March 2025</b>.</p>	Strategic Director of Stronger Communities	Short and medium term
<p>4.8</p> <p>Support the VCS into a more strategic commissioning role with the Council including by identifying current levels of internal investment in the VCS across Council services and opportunities to streamline through moving to needs-based commissioning. Alongside the wider corporate strategic commissioning review, delivery of pilot commissioning with greater VCS role alongside comprehensive review to identify additional opportunities to inform development of a VCS Commissioning framework to be embedded from <b>April 2025</b>.</p>	Strategic Director of Stronger Communities	Medium term

<p><b>How will we know we have been successful?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of the VCS Strategy principles (and associated measures of success) to support the sector around four key pillars: Funding, Resilience, Voice, and Space.</li> <li>• The maximum social value is realised from the leasing and renting, and efficient management of community assets.</li> <li>• An independent body is established that provides effective leadership to support a robust and sustainable VCS to provide services communities need and facilitate partnership work.</li> </ul>			
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**OUR  
MISSION  
WALTHAM  
FOREST**

