

North Hertfordshire District Council



Customer Services Directorate



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Hitchin Town Hall & Museum and Cultural Services

Service Plan 2017-18

The service plan is a key component of NHDC's Corporate Business Planning Process. It supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan, and the delivery of the day-to-day business activities of the Council, within agreed budgets.

These plans, specific to each service, cannot be written in isolation. The Senior Management Team works together to identify areas where synergy, cross authority working or additional skills or temporary resource may be required to deliver an individual project. The service plans will provide the detailed actions which ensure delivery of the priorities.

The Council has three new Objectives from 2017/18 which form the basis of the Corporate Business Planning Process. These will be the areas on which the Council will concentrate resources and activities for delivery.

Actions arising from the Corporate Business Planning Process will feed into personal objectives for individual members of staff via appraisals and 1:1 meetings. The clear lines of responsibility, outcomes and target dates will be monitored as part of the Council's project governance and performance management reporting.

As part of the Corporate Business Strategy, this service plan should also outline any service area that Corporate Board has indicated will be subject to review in 2017/18.

The following are descriptions of the Council's priorities:

Objectives

- **Attractive & Thriving**
To work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents, where diversity is welcomed and the disadvantaged are supported.

- **Prosper & Protect**
To promote sustainable growth within our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage.

- **Responsive & Efficient**
To ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints.

Hitchin Town Hall & North Hertfordshire Museum

2016/17 saw significant progress in moving towards full operation of the facility. Hitchin Town Hall opened its doors to the public in June 2016 and work continues to fit out the Museum, with the objective in 2017/18 to see the building in full operation. This year will see significant challenges for the service and an increase in workload for Museum and Town Hall staff as we work towards full operation of the facility.

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1. INTRODUCING THE SERVICE

Head of Service: Steve Crowley

Executive Members: Community Engagement and Rural Affairs Councillor Tony Hunter

Service Managers:

Cultural Services
Hitchin Town Hall

Ros Allwood
Jack Hughes

Number of FTEs: TBC

1.1 The Purpose of the Facility

The purpose of Hitchin Town Hall & North Hertfordshire Museum is:

- To provide a first class events venue and community facility for residents of the District and beyond.
- To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the culture, heritage and environment of North Hertfordshire, using the museum collections to tell the stories of the people who have lived and worked here. Our vision is to create a welcoming new museum that plays an active role in the life of the District.
- To manage the following services:

Hitchin Town Hall

- Corporate Hires of the facility
- Commercial Hires of the facility
- To put on large scale events
- To provide fitness classes
- To provide conferencing facilities for local business
- To provide a venue for the local community to use.

Cultural Services and North Hertfordshire Museum

- Permanent museum displays
- Temporary exhibitions
- Events and activities for all ages
- Outreach work throughout the District
- Education work and Loans Scheme
- Local Studies Centre
- Support for other local museums and cultural activities

Partnerships

Since its opening in June 2016 Hitchin Town Hall has developed partnerships with local community groups and businesses, in order to provide first class events for the community. In 2017/18, the Town Hall will seek to develop these partnerships to obtain mutual benefit and deliver community and commercial oriented events for the local community.

Current partnership arrangements are with the following groups:

- Hitchin Initiative
- Hitchin BID
- Hitchin Festival
- Democratic Services
- David's Bookshop
- Hertfordshire FA

NHDC works with these organisations to provide benefits to our communities and allows these partners to utilise the facility for mutual benefit.

The Museum Service has always worked in partnership with other museums and community groups, to give best value to the Council. Through a partnership with Stevenage Museum and the British Schools Museum, the three museums currently share a full-time Digital Audience Development Officer funded by Arts Council England, in post until April 2018. In 2017/18 the Heritage Lottery Fund is funding six museums to run a £73,000 project on Hertfordshire folklore, of which North Herts Museum is one partner. The Service is reliant on volunteers from the community to help on a wide range of tasks, and will continue to be so.

1.2 How the service links to our Priorities

The service areas link with the Objectives in the following ways:

Service Area	Category*	Priority	Link to Priority
Hitchin Town Hall	Discretionary Core	Prosper & Protect	Hitchin Town Hall seeks to develop a sustainable programme of events including community, commercial and private hires as well as community and commercial events and fitness classes. This seeks to generate a net income for NHDC.
North Hertfordshire Museum	Discretionary Core	Prosper & Protect	NHDC is opening one new museum in Hitchin to replace the two previous museums, making a cost saving while giving a better user experience. The Museum Service is the repository for material relating to the history and development of the District, including its natural history. These unique items are looked after to national Museums Accreditation standards.

*Categories:

Statutory/Mandatory – NHDC has a statutory duty to provide this service

Discretionary Core – NHDC has the power to provide this service. It either supports the delivery of front line services, covers overheads or generates a net income for NHDC.

Discretionary non core – Discretionary services that do not directly support any other front line Council service.

1.3 Budget

The budget for Hitchin Town Hall and Museum and Cultural Service for 2017/18 is attached as Appendix C.

Further financial performance for this service area is discussed in section 2.4 of this Service Plan.

2. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

2.1 Performance Profile

With the Museum being closed and the Town Hall only being in operation since June 2016, no performance indicators were set for 2016/17.

Below are the management information indicators for 2017/18 which the management team will monitor against to ensure the service strives to improve the service that it delivers.

Management Indicators:

PI	Description	Annual 2017/18 Target
	Revenue from Community Hires	£28,000
	Revenue from Private Hires	£28,000
	Revenue from Commercial Hires	£51,000
	Revenue from Fitness Classes	£26,000
	Museum Footfall	TBC once opening date is known
	Number of museum events	
	Café Footfall	
	Events Income	£78,000

2.2 Public Perception

The customer's perception of the service is analysed to ensure the service responds to feedback. This includes analysis of information obtained from the Council's Compliments, Comments and Complaints process.

The following details consultation that has highlighted areas of success or the need for improvement:

Hitchin Town Hall

Customer feedback surveys are sent out electronically following events and hires and responses are collated. This in turn feeds into a Lessons Log and supports a continuous improvement process

North Hertfordshire Museum

The current Service Plan is strongly driven by the Audience Development Report, which was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in support of the successful HLF bid. An external consultant consulted with a wide range of museum users, individuals and special interest groups, as well as non-users. The new museum was designed around this consultation.

The Museum Service has its own consultation forum, the Arts, Museums & Heritage Forum, which has been running since January 2006. Regular meetings are held, and Newsletters sent out to a growing list of 150 interested people. The Museum Service Facebook page allows users to comment on the Service, and posts are regularly seen by between 500 and just over 1000 people.

Once the museum is open, feedback will be collected from all exhibitions and events, to enable a continuous improvement process. The new museum will also be part of a museum 'Mystery Shopper' group, where productive feedback is given to enable improvement.

2.3 Key achievements and outcomes from 2016/17

Successes delivered against the service action plan for Leisure & Environmental Services for 2016/17 include:

Hitchin Town Hall

Action	Output	Outcome
Fit-out of the Kitchen and Café area	Café and Kitchen fitted out in time and under budget	First class café and kitchen facilities which have been utilised by hirers of the facility successfully.
Fit-out works including AV equipment, stage lighting, furniture and office equipment	Works completed in budget	AV equipment in place which enables successful operation as an events venue.
Opening of the facility	Hitchin Town Hall open	The Town Hall opened in June 2016 and is now operational.
Development of an events programme	Events, hires and fitness classes implemented across the financial year	The Town Hall has begun to generate significant income for the Council.

North Hertfordshire Museum and Cultural Services

Action	Output	Outcome
To fit museum showcases, and build the Corian structure around them, as well as related interactive displays.	Museum showcases and setworks completed, however all structures on 14/15 Brand Street footprint had to be removed in August 2016. This means that the reception, shop and part of the Terrace Gallery remain to be completed.	Fit-out of new North Hertfordshire Museum, with high-quality new displays and facilities for use by the community.
Staff to work with the AudioVisual designers on the content for high-quality AV displays throughout the museum	A range of excellent AV and interactive displays has been produced, and the hardware is on site. Most AV installation has taken place, with a current aim to complete all work on NHDC's land by the end of May 2017.	New museum has a wide range of engaging AV elements.
All items for display in the new museum to be moved on site. Items for storage in the new museum to be moved from Letchworth and Hitchin Museums.	All exhibits now on site. Items have been moved across to the new costume and art stores, but other material will remain in store at both old museums until the basement store is completed.	Fit-out of new North Hertfordshire Museum, with range of museum objects in high-quality new displays. Many of the items have not been displayed before.
Staff to complete writing museum labels and text panels, sending them to local groups for fact-checking, then	All labels and graphic panels for first two galleries produced and on site. Graphics for Terrace Gallery to be printed	Easy to read, informative object labels/text panels in new museum.

on to the graphic designer.	shortly; graphics for reception area on hold.	
Museum staff restructure, to suit needs of the new museum	Staff restructure completed, with HR/Union input. Museum staff now work throughout the whole NHM/HTH building, including as Duty Managers for HTH.	More streamlined staffing structure to suit one museum.
Staff to move offices from the previous museums, to the new North Herts. Museum, using office furniture from Town Lodge.	A new office was set up, but staff had to move out in August 2016, and currently use the Terrace Gallery as the office.	Aim is for staff team to return to the open-plan office once the dispute is resolved.
Stock for new museum shop to be sourced and ordered.	Range of shop items based on our collections has been produced in readiness for the opening of the museum shop.	Attractive shop adds to visitor experience, and gives an income.
Work in partnership with Stevenage Museum and British Schools Museum to gain a second Arts Council England grant-aided post.	Grant application successful; Digital Audience Development Officer in post.	Improved digital access; wider pool of volunteers for new museum.
Apply for grant aid towards collections care, training and project work.	Large number of grants gained 2016/2017, from SHARE Museums East, Hertfordshire Association of Museums, Hertfordshire Heritage Fund, HLF and Arts Council England. These include grants for art conservation and re-boxing, art purchase, grants for dementia training, for asbestos awareness in historic object training; for a schools' science project; for Hertfordshire folklore events, and for the Digital Audience Development officer post.	Improved service at no additional cost to NHDC.

The following actions were not delivered in 2016/17 and will be carried forward into the 2017/18 Action Plan:

Action	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date	Reason
Open Museum Reception area, with Museum Shop		TBC once dispute is resolved	Dispute over 14/15 Brand Street
Organise Local Studies Centre		As above	As above
Use Museum Learning Centre for schools, volunteers and groups		As above	As above
Organise Museum staff office		As above	As above

2.4 Finance of service areas

The table below provides the direct expenditure and income for the Hitchin Town Hall and Museums and Cultural Services.

Service Area	2015/16 Working Budget	2015/16 Actual Outturn	2016/17 Working Budget	2016/17 Projected Outturn reported at Quarter 3
Hitchin Town Hall	£76,800	£24,225	£15,000	£55,600
Museums and Cultural Services	£410,800	£403,449	£400,300	£400,300
TOTAL	£487,600	£427,673	£415,300	£455,900

3. WHERE DO WE NEED TO BE?

In order to meet the budget efficiencies required in 2017/18 and beyond the service will need to deliver the following agreed efficiencies:

- Work in Partnership to deliver increased efficiencies and improve services for 2017-18 this will include:-
 - **Hitchin Town Hall** - The Operations Manager for Hitchin Town Hall will seek to utilise the availability of off-peak hours to generate further income. In addition, the Council is seeking to operate the museum, which will in turn means further bookings and hires will take place. Once the dispute over opening the Museum is resolved, Hitchin Town Hall will begin a ramp-up plan to operate the Café and Kitchen facility to generate further income.
 - **North Hertfordshire Museum** The Museum Service will continue to apply for grant-aid towards shared posts, such as the current two year Arts Council funded Digital Audience Development officer post. North Hertfordshire Museum will continue to apply for grant-aid towards community projects, and new acquisitions, and to work together with volunteers to improve the service. Once the museum is open, the Museum Service will generate increased income through its museum shop, and through a range of booked events and activities in the new venue. The museum aims to improve its storage, freeing up both old museums.

The service will have to make the following changes in order to comply with the Localism Act 2011 and other central government policies when guidance becomes available and as their implementation date approaches:

Any changes to service delivery which may be required following the Localism Act or other changes required due to legislation/government policy, for example Housing and Planning Bill.

Our aim throughout delivery of any service is that it should be inclusive. In order to ensure this, and as is required of the Authority and ensuring we fulfil the requirements placed on us through the Equalities Act 2010, officers will be required to:

- Complete an Equality Analysis each time a proposal is made which changes the manner in which a service is delivered, where a project costs in excess of £50,000 (excluding utility contracts) or affects more than two wards.
- Evidence of that assessment and its findings will be referred to and available as a 'background paper' for any report requiring a decision by members, so that the impact and its risks can be fully considered before recommendations for change or adoption are agreed.
- The positive **and** negative impacts of such analysis will be provided *in summary only* within the committee report using the standard report template available from the Committee Services section.
- The report must also be approved by a member of the corporate Policy Team in order to ensure it fulfils the requirements of the Equality Duty, 'that members are fully informed and aware of equality implications at the time they make a decision.'

From January 2013, under Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, local authorities were required to capture the 'social value' of their investment into local projects. Two comparative projects may have the same financial value, but it is the value to the local community, community groups or individuals which needs to be captured and reflected more accurately in order to better inform decision making; this should therefore be built into individual service plans, and the individual

projects reflected within them. The corporate Policy Team will be able to advise further if help is required.

In order to mitigate risks or improve governance arrangements the service needs to:

- Complete agreed internal audit actions
- Ensure all documentation and IT records comply with the retention policy
- Ensure all relevant risks are identified, kept under review and efforts made to mitigate impacts/reduce risks etc.
- Financial risks identified to be included into the corporate business process
- Assist in the development of more robust corporate procurement processes and procedures
- Ensure projects are effectively managed
- Ensure there is effective communication including regular meeting with Executive Members
- Develop and train our staff, regular 1:1s and effective and appropriate team meetings

A SWOT/PESTLE analysis has shown the following weaknesses/threats that the service will address by:

- Assisting in the development of more robust corporate procurement processes and procedures
- Maintaining and Improving communication, skills and knowledge to ensure we are effective in increasing times of change and maintain service delivery and customer satisfaction.
- Develop our staff, partners and relationships, to improve productivity and morale

SWOT Analysis for Hitchin Town Hall & North Hertfordshire Museum and Cultural Services

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing good quality, high valued customer-focused services • Managing Change • Project Management – delivering on time within budget and fit for purpose • Staff – committed, competent, and flexible • Good communication within Authority and externally • Adaptable 	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing customer expectations • Fluctuating/depressed markets for materials sales • Changing market and lifestyles • Limited resources & capacity • Reliance on fossil fuels • Services are expensive due to their large scale and therefore attract greater focus for economies and cost reductions
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a café and catering offer to generate further income for the Town Hall • Review contracts prior to renewal • External funding for capital programme – Green Space • New working practices – work-from-home & remote working 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic recession • Provision of non-statutory services • Staff recruitment and retention • Withdrawal of external funding • Contract renewal costs and resource requirements • Increasing Government targets for waste

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing cost of fossil fuels and limited availability – fuel shortages • Lack of political focus and clear direction
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PESTLE Analysis for Hitchin Town Hall & North Hertfordshire Museum and Cultural Services

<p align="center">Political</p> <p>Government trends and the impact on service delivery Changing local political priorities Need for longer term planning</p>	<p align="center">Economic</p> <p>The impact of the recession on the service (decrease/increase in demand). This may have an adverse impact on our Town Hall, which relies on high levels of demand and income.</p>	<p align="center">Social</p> <p>Cultural and demographic trends, for example an ageing population, may increase or decrease demand or take-up of a particular service. If the profile of the local population is changing this may affect the need for translation services or other equal access considerations.</p>
<p align="center">Technical</p> <p>Technological improvements may have an impact on services.</p>	<p align="center">Legislative</p> <p>Changes in legislation may impact on services.</p>	<p align="center">Environmental</p> <p>The environment is unlikely to impact on the services in this department.</p>

4. HOW DO WE GET THERE?

This is the framework for action, with clear indications of what needs to be done, by when and who is responsible for doing them.

4.1 Detailed action plans

The main actions and planned outcomes are outlined in the Service Action Plan. This includes the improvements required to service delivery identified by external reviews, internal audits, risk management and assurance actions, legislative changes as well as key projects. It has been colour coded to show why the action is required.

This service plan predominantly focuses on actions to be delivered in 2017/18 but certain actions that impact on the service beyond this timeframe have been included with milestones to indicate the anticipated delivery date.

These need to be living plans, with performance, milestones and targets updated regularly, in the context of team meetings as well as during appraisals and 1:1s.

The Service Action Plan is attached as Appendix A.

4.2 Risk & Opportunities

Actions to mitigate risk, thereby ensuring the delivery of projects by reducing threats to service delivery, are included within the Service Action Plan. The threats that will prevent the service from achieving targets have been identified and recorded.

Opportunities which may present themselves could include existing or emerging service sharing arrangements, or sharing parts of a service, especially going forward; how will the benefits of those opportunities be measured?

5. HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE THERE?

Accurate and reliable information is important to ensure the Council can measure how well it is achieving its goals. The information held by the Service is accurate, reliable, timely, consistent, relevant, secure and of high quality to meet the needs of our partners and residents and fulfil audit and inspection requirements.

Progress against the Corporate Plan is reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Budget monitoring reports are submitted to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and include information on our key financial health indicators.

In preparing the Service Plan local performance indicators have been considered and their continuing use reviewed and/or new indicators have been introduced with details shown in Section 2.

The performance measures for each of the Service indicators have been reviewed. These will be finalised, via the target setting workshop that includes consultation with members. The risks to the achievement of the targets are evaluated and where necessary entered onto the Risk Register held on Covalent.

Performance against indicators is reported quarterly to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Where performance is below target Heads of Service/Corporate Managers are required to provide information as to what action is being taken to remedy the situation in order that members can review proposals for improving performance levels.

Every member of staff has an annual appraisal when individual performance is reviewed against individual objectives linked to the service plan. In addition managers are required to have a formal appraisal review every 6 months. This ensures delivery against the service plan is kept on track.

The Council's Top Risks are reported to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to ensure that key risks are being identified and managed.

6. ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The Council has an assurance framework to map the Council's priorities to risks, controls and assurances. An essential part of this framework is a Management Assurance Statement that is completed by all Heads of Service and Corporate Managers.

This Assurance Statement is a critical review of the service area against the Council's Local Code of Corporate governance and provides evidence for the Annual Governance Statement published with the Council's Annual Accounts.

The Head of Service/Corporate Manager's Assurance Statement is attached as Appendix B.

Appendix A- 2017/18 Service Action Plan - Cultural Services & Hitchin Town Hall

KEY - Colour code each action to show the main driver for change (optional)

Corporate Plan Commitment	Implementation of Audit Report Recommendation	Agreed Efficiency	Action Arising from PESTLE/SWOT Analysis
Climate Change Strategy Commitment	Legislation	Assurance Statement Action	Action Arising from an Equality Impact Assessment

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Planned Start Date	Due Date	Assigned To	Managed By	What Learning & Development is Required?
Cultural Services										
Provide first-class access to heritage of District in one museum	Prosper & Protect	Work with designers and contractors to complete fit-out and object installation	Museum displays completed and museum open to public		Public opening later 2017	Started	31/10/17	Ros Allwood	Ros Allwood	
Ensure sound operational procedures	Responsive & Efficient	Ensure all staff fully trained in NOP and EAP	Staff able to cope with any emergency		Public opening of museum	Started	Ongoing	Ros Allwood, David Hodges	Ros Allwood	
Market new museum	Attractive & Thriving	Market museum to wide range of visitors, through range of exhibitions and events, and excellent displays	Successful museum attracting visitors from District and further afield		Museum opening, first six months	Started	Not yet known	Curatorial team	Ros Allwood	
Develop web-based content	Responsive & Efficient	Develop collection records on eHive, for use on website plus social media sites	Collection available on web		All objects in museum on eHive by museum opening date	Started	31/04/17	Lauren Hague	Ros Allwood	
Improve partnership working with other museums and linked organisations	Prosper & Protect	Continue partnership projects and grant applications	Successful joint projects and grants eg Arts Council England grant to N Herts, Stevenage and British Schools Museum		Arts Council England grant ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ros Allwood, Dorcas Sanders	Ros Allwood	
Develop heritage outreach offer	Prosper & Protect	Develop role of community heritage outreach	Provision of history to interest groups and villages throughout District		Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews	Ros Allwood	
Offer Learning programme	Responsive & Efficient	Provide efficient schools and loan service, learning activities for families and individuals	Schools, families, groups and individuals visit new museum for learning activities; more items loaned out		Ongoing	Started	Ongoing	Dorcas Sanders	Ros Allwood	

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Planned Start Date	Due Date	Assigned To	Managed By	What Learning & Development is Required?
Gain Museums Accreditation	Responsive & Efficient	Maintain professional standards in collections management, collections care, visitor services, with the relevant museum policies	New museum gains Accreditation		Public opening of museum	01/04/17	15/01/18	Ros Allwood, Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews	Ros Allwood	
Update Arts, Museum & Heritage Strategy	Responsive & Efficient	Update strategy to reflect current NHDC commitments	New Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy		Production of new strategy	Started	end 2017	Ros Allwood	Ros Allwood	
Hitchin Town Hall										
Ongoing Development and Execution of Marketing and Communications Plan	Attractive & Thriving	Communications plan to be signed off at Project Team Meeting January 2017. Communications & Marketing plan provides a timeline of activity to support and develop the programme of use for Hitchin Town Hall	Increase awareness of the venue for prospective hirers, with an emphasis on off-peak bookings	Execute tasks assigned by plan including mailing lists, advertisements and promotion of the venue through social media	Pre and post events and measured by response rates, commercial and community success of the facility	01/01/2017	01/12/2017	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	
Execute Events Programme 2017	Prosper & Protect	As per the agreed events programme, resource, promote and utilise the venue to generate the income, through events, hires and regular fitness programme.	Commercially successful events programme which generates significant revenue for the Council, whilst providing a first class events venue in North Hertfordshire	Each individual event will have its respective tasks, with the overall events programme being promoted and marketed as per the Marketing & Comms plan	Programme to be reviewed at monthly intervals, with management information, forecasts and financial updates provided monthly	01/01/2017	31/03/2018	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	
Recommissioning of Sprung Floor	Attractive & Thriving	Conduct survey of the sprung floor in the Mountford Hall, identify any reparation works required and recommission the floor	A fully functioning sprung floor that can be adjusted, tensioned and detensioned	Appoint a contractor to carry out the work Identify work required and any potential measures required to be undertaken	Contractor appointed for ongoing maintenance and the sprung floor recommissioned	01/01/17	01/06/17	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	
Develop maintenance schedule	Attractive & Thriving	Identify mechanical, electrical, operational and plant items that require ongoing maintenance	Ensure that all plant is maintained and the relevant service contracts are in place	Identify plant, Liaise with Property Services and collate information	Maintenance contracts in place and operational	01/04/17	01/09/17	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	
Ongoing Policy & Process review	Attractive & Thriving	Review hire policy, NOP, EAP and other documents to ensure they reflect the current operating conditions of the building	Ensure that policies and processes are efficient, fit for purpose and applicable to the current operation of the facility	Update NOP Update EAP Update Hire Policy Implement version control	NOP, EAP and Hire Policy review	Ongoing	Ongoing	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	
Development of a café & catering offer	Prosper & Protect	Mobilisation of the café and catering operation	A successful café and catering offer, with a catering supplier in place for conferencing and large scale events which require catering	Recruitment and selection of Catering staff Development of a suppliers list through procurement	Café up and running and procurement process completed with catering suppliers in place	01/01/17	TBC	Jack Hughes	Steve Crowley	

Appendix B: Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services: Corporate Governance Service Assurance Statement

Service Area:	Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services	Date:	31-03-17
Head of Service / Corporate Manager:	Steven Crowley		

The following Service Assurance Statement has been completed for the period 2016-17. Retrospective for the past financial year, it represents an assessment of the level of assurance provided by controls within Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services. These controls have been in place / were implemented during the financial year and remain in place at the date of preparation of this statement.

Overall Assessment

For Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services, I am satisfied that with the exception of those matters detailed in the Action column below, adequate systems of internal control were in place / implemented during the financial year and are on-going. I consider the overall level of assurance for Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services based on the areas covered by this assessment to be effective

Action Areas

Governance Area	Action	Priority	Due date	Responsible officer
Project	Complete the fit-out of North Hertfordshire Museum (land under NHDC ownership)	High	June 2017	Contracts and Projects Manager

I have prioritised the actions identified above as follows:

High:	Action requiring implementation as soon as possible
Medium:	Action requiring implementation within 6 months
Low:	Action requiring implementation within 6 to 12 months

I take responsibility for ensuring that the above outlined actions are implemented and will, if requested, provide progress monitoring information to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

**Appendix B: Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services: Corporate Governance
Service Assurance Statement**

Signed:		Date:	31-03-17
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Appendix B: Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services: Corporate Governance Service Assurance Statement

Governance Area		Governance Assessment Question	Overall Assessment of the effectiveness of current arrangements	Brief details of evidence / sources / link	Remedial Action Required (link to Action Areas page 1)
Legislation and Regulations	1	How effective are arrangements to ensure that services are provided in order to adequately discharge statutory duties placed on the Council, or the exercise of powers as supported by Council policy?	Effective	I have suitably qualified and experienced employees, regulated by professional institutes where relevant, who are able to interpret and implement changes to services as a result of changed or new legislation.	No
Staffing	2	How effective is learning needs analysis, to ensure that any gaps in required skills and knowledge are identified? Are all staff provided with the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they need to perform their role effectively and to meet agreed targets? Are methods of evaluation of training considered prior to and following any learning and development activities?	Effective	Learning and development of our staff is paramount to maintain and continuously improve our customer services This is achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering L&D in 1:1's and planning them in appraisals • Consideration is given in appraisals of learning needs 1:1 discussions include reviews of training that has been undertaken	No
Risk Management	3	How effective are the risk management arrangements you have in place (identification, control, monitoring, review and update) for mitigating against all significant risks including those relating to partnership arrangements?	Effective	My managers are responsible for updating the risks recorded on Covalent. I am satisfied that the risks to my service area have been identified, recorded and are being managed.	

Appendix B: Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services: Corporate Governance Service Assurance Statement

Governance Area		Governance Assessment Question	Overall Assessment of the effectiveness of current arrangements	Brief details of evidence / sources / link	Remedial Action Required (link to Action Areas page 1)
				There is one two risk items that is currently recorded and monitored on Covalent (RR164) - Failure to care for collections and deposits of archaeological finds, through lack of accurate temperature control system at Burymead store. - Loss of archaeological finds due to a break-in or theft from the Burymead site.	
Partnerships	4	How effective are the corporate governance arrangements which support significant service delivery partnerships? How effective is the monitoring activity of each significant partnership in terms of ensuring that both the Council's priorities and the partnership's overall objectives are met?	N/A	There are no formal Partnerships within this service area.	
Internal Control	5	How effective are processes in place for ensuring that appropriate action is taken to implement recommendations made by internal / external audit or other review bodies and hence ensure that existence of an effective system of internal control?	Effective	The service has not been audited this year; however, an audit will take place during 2017/18 for the Hitchin Town Hall Operation.	
Procurement	6	How effective are arrangements within the service area for identifying contracts and projects and ensuring that contracts are procured in line with Contract Procurement Rules?	Effective	Service managers are trained and aware of the Council Contract and Procurement Rules, which are adhered to.	

Appendix B: Hitchin Town Hall and Cultural Services: Corporate Governance Service Assurance Statement

Governance Area		Governance Assessment Question	Overall Assessment of the effectiveness of current arrangements	Brief details of evidence / sources / link	Remedial Action Required (link to Action Areas page 1)
Financial Management	7	How effective are arrangements for ensuring that all financial activity relating to income, expenditure and asset management is undertaken in compliance with Financial Regulations and ensures effective budget management and reporting?	Effective	Staff are adequately trained and there are appropriate systems and procedure in place to mitigate risk	
Business Continuity	8	How effective and appropriate are the business continuity arrangements in place for key service elements including those provided under contract?	Partially effective	Service areas have a business continuity plans in place and the Council	
Project Management	9	How effective are arrangements for ensuring that all new developments are supported by a robust business case and if agreed, are implemented following corporate project management procedures?	Effective	Projects are managed in accordance with Prince2/NHDC project management methodology. For example the Fit-Out of the Museum	
Governance	10	How effective are arrangements for ensuring that there are no breaches of corporate policy in the service areas e.g. Officer Code of Conduct including Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Hospitality, HR policies, Health and Safety, Equalities, Anti-fraud and corruption?	Effective	There are corporate procedures and training in place to mitigate any risks	
Decision Making	11	Is there an effective scheme of delegation relating to the service areas which has been formally agreed, communicated to all relevant staff and Members and monitored for compliance?	Effective	Cabinet make strategic decisions for major projects, Project Board is responsible for tactical decisions. Day to day operations are delegated to these officers (budget holders).	

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Governance Area	Governance Assessment Question	Overall Assessment of the effectiveness of current arrangements	Brief details of evidence / sources / link	Remedial Action Required (link to Action Areas page 1)
Community engagement	12 How effective are complaints and comments monitoring procedures, including those relating to MPs correspondence and Local Government, in ensuring that an appropriate response is provided and where appropriate, corrective action is taken to strengthen the system of internal control?	Effective	My Service follows the Council's 3C's procedures. All complaints are monitored at contract meetings and at DMT's.	
Performance	13 How effective are current systems for monitoring and regularly reporting the performance of the service against its planned outcomes? How effective are systems established to rectify poor service performance?	Effective	The Executive Member is kept informed of the service performance and KPI at monthly briefings. Performance is discussed and monitored at Service Managers 1-1's. Work programmes are produced from high level (Corporate Plan) through to low level (individual appraisals), these are periodically reviewed and any amber or red tasks are escalated and managed	
Data quality	14 Are effective arrangements in place to ensure that data to support decision making is accurate and produced in a timely manner?	Effective	Service manager are aware of the importance to ensuring data provided for the use of decision making is accurate and produced in a timely manner.	
DPA and FOI	15 Are effective arrangements in place to ensure that staff are aware of the requirements of and adhere to;	Effective	There is a wide range of corporate procedure and systems with specialist officers in the Council that provide	

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Governance Area		Governance Assessment Question	Overall Assessment of the effectiveness of current arrangements	Brief details of evidence / sources / link	Remedial Action Required (link to Action Areas page 1)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Data Protection Act • the Freedom of Information Act • the Council's Document Retention Schedule; and • Data sharing protocols As they relate to their roles.		support and advice	
Conduct	16	How effective are arrangements for communicating to both Members and officers within the service area the requirements of the Officer / Member Protocol and for ensuring that both parties have a constructive working relationship?	Effective	Monthly meetings are held with the Executive Member for Community Engagement and Rural Affairs	
Conflicts	17	Have there been any conflicts/potential conflicts in Council roles and duties identified if so, how have these been managed?	Effective	Members of the team are aware of managing conflicts of interest and recording them on the register as required and discussing any matters with the line manager.	

