

WARRINGTON  
Borough Council



# Annual Report

2012 - 2013

We pledge to  
protect the most  
vulnerable

We pledge to  
support the  
local economy

We pledge to help  
build strong and  
active communities





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# 1. Foreword

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When we set out our three year Corporate Strategy in 2012 we were ambitious for the people of Warrington and we wanted to bring about significant improvements in their quality of life and enable them to thrive.

We were conscious of the significant inequalities in Warrington, with some areas of the borough being amongst the most deprived in the country with higher rates of unemployment, child poverty and lower life expectancy than the rest of the borough. We wanted to bring about changes that would narrow the gap between the most deprived areas of the borough and the rest of Warrington. We wanted to create a thriving borough, with a strong economy, cohesive communities and healthy people with good quality of life.

This was despite the gloomy economic picture and substantial financial challenges faced by the council and its partners due to reductions in public sector spending. The challenge has been to achieve more with less money as we have seen the council's income and therefore spend reduced by £52 million since 2010. This is against a backdrop of increasing cost pressures such as increasing demand for some of our services and rising costs.

I believe that this report demonstrates that we have made significant inroads and are well placed to continue this progress into year two of our three year strategy. There are still many difficult issues to tackle but I am confident that by working together we can rise to this challenge. There are many successes to celebrate – none of which could be achieved without the determination, hard work of commitment of our elected members, staff, partners and residents themselves. I would like to thank them for this and look forward to working with them over the next year to continue this progress.



Cllr Terry O'Neill  
Leader of the Council

## 2. A year in Warrington

April 2012

- Residents were able to view the wide range of equipment that is available to help people to remain as independent as possible both within their own homes and whilst out and about in their local community. This event at Warrington's Centre for Independent Living, was led by the Council and Warrington Disability Partnership. The gadgets on display included fall detectors, flood detectors, smoke detectors, carer alerts and epilepsy sensors.



- Golden Square Shopping Centre welcomed spring with a series of family friendly events including the Little Buds Club House and spring fun workshops.
- As part of Inspirational Women's month Warrington Museum and Art Gallery held an exhibition of the work of 15 female artists from 10 different countries.
- Warrington was awarded pathfinder status for development of its Health and Wellbeing Board and also led the national learning set on bringing collaborative leadership to major service reconfiguration which published its findings at the end of 2012.
- Brighter Futures Team launched the 'Mentor Me' project which recruited adult volunteers to mentor young people aged 16 to 19 years and provide them with additional support to get them back into education, employment and training.

May 2012

- Thousands of people lined the streets to cheer on 13 runners who carried the Olympic Torch through Warrington. A host of giant queens welcomed the runners outside the Town Hall



and local primary schools enjoyed a mini Olympics event in Bank Park. The Warrington Male Voice Choir performed at Marketgate and there was a huge dance performance at Orford Park by 500 primary and secondary school pupils from across the borough.

- HM the Queen accompanied by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh officially opened the Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub. This is a unique project, which transformed a former landfill site into a £30million state of the art community facility providing a wide range of leisure, health and cultural services all under one roof. The community celebrated with dance and sport displays by local schools and community as well as performances from three choirs, a military cadet showcase and dog agility demonstration. A Jubilee street party was in full swing at the new community cabin and there were special art and history displays within the main building.



- Warrington and Halton were successful in their joint bid for government funding to create a brand new music hub for 5 to 19 year olds. Along with other musical organisations, they will plan and provide a variety of opportunities including learning to sing and play instruments.
- A new foster care charter and recruitment campaign were launched in Warrington as part of the national campaign 'Foster Care Fortnight'. The charter was produced in consultation with foster carers and children in care and is a pledge and commitment from the service to the carers and children in care going forward.

- The 2nd Warrington Mela took place. This celebration of different cultures and communities in Warrington was a hugely successful event. Over 3,000 people watched and participated in showcases of dance, music, fashion and food from across the world representing the mix of cultures in Warrington.

## June 2012

- The borough celebrated the Jubilee with many street parties including a Town Centre street party with a parade of giant queens.



- The Children and Young People's Partnership launched the annual Youth Survey, consulting with young people aged 13 to 19 years about the support and services they receive from the council and their partners. More than 500 young people responded to the survey and informed the development of a new Integrated Youth Strategy.
- Children's residential services were redesigned. Four two bedded children's homes were opened as well as two short break centres.

## July 2012

- The Warrington Play and Sensory Centre based in Woolston Neighbourhood Hub was opened by the Mayor of Warrington, Cllr Steve Wright. This is the first of its kind in Cheshire. It provides sensory and play facilities for disabled children, young people and adults. There are a range of purpose-built areas for play or relaxation including a 'sensory room' with video projection bubble tubes and a water bed, and an 'active zone' complete with a ball pool and a large soft slide. Disabled children, young people and adults were extensively involved in the design and development of the new centre.

- Over 200 young people celebrated the re-launch of Orford Youth Base. The local community came out to see the brand new programme and range of services offered by the youth base, which showcases the work of the Warrington Youth Service. The Mayor of Warrington, Cllr Steve Wright, and members from the youth parliament were amongst those enjoying the celebrations.

## August 2012



- Warrington & Co launched a major inward investment campaign in London timed to coincide with Warrington Wolves appearance in the Carnegie Challenge Cup Final at Wembley on Saturday 25 August. Co-ordinated by Marketing Cheshire, and backed by Warrington Wolves, Warrington Borough Council and leading business brands in the town, the campaign

consisted of high profile poster adverts appearing in London Euston station. The campaign also had a local dimension, with similar high profile posters being positioned at Warrington Bank Quay Station.

- Orford Community Hub opened its doors to the public on Saturday 18 August. Local people celebrated with a range of family activities including community stalls, arts and crafts activities, a drum workshop, karate demonstration and a car boot sale. The community hub provides a wide range of facilities for residents including a community café, mums and tots groups, sports activities and bases for the Residents' Association, Central Neighbourhoods Team, Mid Orford Residents Association and the Neighbourhood Wardens.
- The council's new customer contact centre in Time Square opened for business. This was the latest addition to the hub of community-focused facilities at Time Square including the Market and the Youth Café. The centre opened in order to meet the demand of residents after Contact Warrington, on Horsemarket Street, saw a 20 per cent increase in walk-ins over the last 12 months. Now both centres provide a point of call for residents who wish to contact the council.



- Results from Warrington schools and sixth form colleges showed that the town was bucking the national trend and A\* to C pass grades for A Levels were significantly up from 70 percent last year to 75 percent this year.

## September 2012

- Warrington Borough Council was delighted to support the town's first Pride event which was organised by LGBT Warrington (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) in partnership with the LGF (Lesbian Gay Foundation), and other local

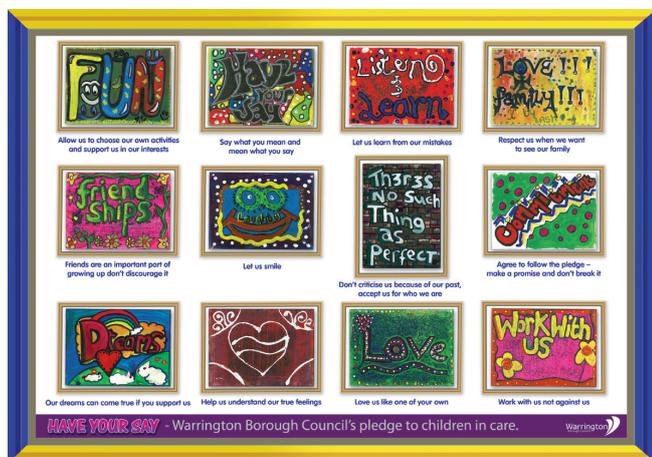


partners. The event took place in Queen's Gardens with a parade led by the Mayor, Cllr Steve Wright, family entertainment, a main stage with singers and dancers and local information stalls. Over 2250 people attended the event.

- The annual Farmers' Market organised by Warrington market was the most successful yet. This event has become established as a major tourist attraction for the town. With over 60 stall holders all meeting the strict criteria for a farmers' market they attracted coach parties from as far away as Newton Abbot in Devon. All produce on sale was brewed, pickled, processed, grown or crafted within a 30 mile radius of the town centre. Footfall for the town centre saw a dramatic increase for the one day event, with the number of people visiting the indoor market almost double that of the previous Saturday.
- Visitors came from near and far to take part in the Medieval Market. There has been a market in Warrington since the year 1255 and this event was arranged to celebrate the market's history from early years to modern day. The event attracted large crowds of people into the town centre. Market customers had the opportunity to shoot a real bow and arrow at a medieval knight, or make a medieval coin, plus there were many attractions and interactive activities to entertain the shoppers including birds of prey, Viking ships, swing boats, medieval craft stalls and an historic cannon exhibited at the market entrance.
- A new Careers Centre for young people opened in September based in Time Square and within close proximity of the Youth Café. The service offers information, advice and guidance from friendly careers advisers who are experienced in supporting young people to engage in education, employment, training and apprenticeships.

## October 2012

- The Safe Places scheme was introduced by Warrington Borough Council's Hate Crime Partnership in conjunction with Warrington Speak Up. This is an innovative town centre initiative to help disabled people enjoy their local communities without the threat of abuse. People with learning difficulties and other vulnerable residents now have places identified in the town centre where they can go for help if they feel intimidated, bullied or worried. Local businesses, such as pubs and cafes, as well as public buildings, such as libraries are registered with the scheme and display the Safe Places sticker. Individuals carry a special ID card; containing details of people known to them, safe in the knowledge that staff working in registered premises know how to offer appropriate support should they need help of any kind. 60 venues are now participating in the scheme.
- The council and their partners renewed their commitment as corporate parents when the Children in Care Council relaunched the pledge. The pledge sets out 12 commitments and what they mean to children in care and why they should be followed.



- A new independent Chair was appointed for the Warrington Safeguarding Children Board. The Chair has considerable experience of both children and adult social care services having worked previously in various local authorities in the North West over the past 30 years.

## November 2012

- The council launched the Warrington Means Business programme. Aimed at boosting economic growth and unleashing the potential of Warrington's people, its businesses and its

place are the driving forces behind the pioneering programme. The programme will promote Warrington's status as an economic powerhouse and attract a multitude of further investment and business developments while creating and nurturing new opportunities within the town. It brings together all the regeneration and development master plans for the town including: Omega, Bridge Street Quarter, The Atlantic Gateway, Bank Quay Gateway, It's all going on in Warrington and Warrington Waterfront development.

National Adoption Week 5 - 11 November 2012



See us in Golden Square on Saturday 10 November

- WISH adoption service held information sessions across Warrington, Wigan and St Helens to try and find loving homes for 66 local children in care as part of National Adoption Week. Almost 100 people expressed an interest in providing a 'forever family' for a child in care.
- Warrington was well and truly 'taken over' by young people for this year's National Takeover Day. 25 young people enjoyed working in various roles for the day, including shadowing the Mayor and the Director of Children and Young People's Services. Two members of Warrington Youth Parliament also got involved and went to London for the day to debate young people's issues.
- Sunshine and Woodlands Children's Centres were inspected by Ofsted and judged as 'good'. Ofsted reported that the management team was good at every level and highlighted that the process of evaluation, reflection and challenge was robust. They also highlighted that the care, guidance and support available for families, especially when they most need it are good.
- All of the residential children's homes were inspected by Ofsted and they have all been judged to be good. Ofsted noted that three of the homes have outstanding features in respect of safeguarding and outcomes for children and young people.

## December 2012

- The lights switch on provided a great start to the Christmas festivities for Warrington. This heralded a range of activities for local residents and visitors including workshops, street entertainment and a Christmas craft fair. There was also a magical lantern parade and the town hall was illuminated. The activities were designed to bring people into the town centre and showcase Warrington town centre as a great place to visit and shop.



- A group of twenty delegates from the Development and Reform Commission of Jiangxi Province, China visited Warrington to look at how the council is working with partners to tackle health inequalities in the town.
- Councillors, senior managers and officers welcomed the newly appointed apprentices to an event at the Town Hall. In the new year the candidates will begin new roles in a variety of council services, including business administration, childcare, catering and youth work.
- The Brighter Futures Team held the first evening of achievement at the new Orford Jubilee Hub supported by the Mayor. The event celebrated the hard work and success that all mentors, learners and volunteers had achieved over the past 12 months. More than 100 people attended the event.

## January 2013

- Warrington's Public Health team and partners launched the borough's Health and Wellbeing Survey. The survey, which was last conducted in 2006, asked questions on a range of topics which are known to affect a person's health and wellbeing such as lifestyle, living environment

and social circumstances. The Survey is crucial to informing the effective targeting of services to meet local needs and address inequalities in Warrington. The survey will report in Summer 2013.

- The council announced that it has appointed Langtree as its partner for the Southern Gateway regeneration scheme. This scheme takes in a significant area around Bridge Foot, including the approaches from Wilderspool Causeway, Chester Road and Knutsford Road. It will provide new homes, offices, retail outlets and includes plans to create riverside promenades in a number of areas including Wilderspool Causeway, Wharf Industrial Estate and Marshall Gardens. Councillors also agreed the contract for the total regeneration of Bridge Street and Time Square with its partner Muse. This will include cinemas, a relocated market hall, leisure facilities, shops and cafes. These major projects are part of the council and Warrington & Co's 'Warrington Means Business' programme.
- An Ofsted pilot inspection of multi-agency child protection arrangements found that Warrington has 'good' services to protect vulnerable children. The report highlighted that there has been sustained improvement in working with partners and child protection arrangements.
- Warrington Skills Commission reported their findings from the Recommendations Report in Birchwood. The Commission had been investigating current economic, learning and skills landscape to establish key areas of change and future skills development with the aim of producing an innovative and deliverable action plan for growth to encourage economic prosperity in the borough.

## February 2013

- The council supported Dignity Action Day, a national awareness day aiming to ensure that people in care are treated as individuals with choice and control over their lives. Local health and social care workers organised events to promote dignity in their place of work and provide a memorable day for people receiving care. Councillor Pat Wright, the council's Executive Board member for health and wellbeing, helped out at Woodleigh Care Home and members of the Warrington Older People's Engagement Group visited Padgate House. This important day serves as a reminder that we all have a role to play in ensuring the dignity of vulnerable adults in our community.

- The council's Executive Board approved a major programme of street lighting renewals in the borough. The £34 million investment will see the replacement of over 22 000 lighting columns and lanterns over three years with energy-efficient LED's. This extensive replacement programme will reduce ongoing maintenance costs in the future whilst paying dividends in terms of reducing the carbon footprint, contributing strongly to road safety, community safety and the prevention of crime.



- The Services for Schools fair was held at Orford Jubilee Hub to promote all the services the council can offer to schools. The fair was well attended and more schools were represented than ever before.

## March 2013

- WIRED adult and young carers services opened the doors of their new premises on Sankey Street on Friday 1 March. They welcomed unpaid carers from across the borough to call in and take a look at the range of services offered there including a new programme of drop-in sessions.

- As part of World Autism Awareness Day, the Play and Sensory Centre launched the 'Light it up Blue' initiative and facilitated fun sessions and activities such as eating blue food, wearing blue and enjoying arts and crafts activities with a blue theme.
- Thousands of people came together to remember and reflect on the 20th anniversary of the IRA bombing in Warrington's Town Centre. A civic event including speeches, readings and choir performances took place in Bridge Street and there was a commemorative event at the Peace Centre. A special exhibition commissioned as part of the council and the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Foundation's plans to mark the 20th anniversary of the IRA bombing of Warrington was held at the Pyramid Arts Centre. The borough also came together to mark the 20th anniversary of the Warrington bombing by the IRA with a minute's silence.



# 3. Warrington Borough Council's Strategy

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'Putting the people of Warrington first - enabling them to thrive now and in the future'

## Our values

### Closing the gap

- We have committed to closing the inequalities gap that exists in Warrington between the most deprived communities and other areas
- We recognise that some areas and some individuals and families need more help than others
- In tackling this we will put residents at the heart of decision making
- We will work with partners to redesign services that are comprehensive and responsive to residents needs
- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and respect for the diversity of everyone; in relation to the services we provide, our employment practices and the arrangements we enter into with our partners

### Making the council more open and transparent

- Being more proactive in telling you whats going on in your area
- Making the council more open and accessible
- Make councillors more accountable to the people of Warrington all year round
- Learning from complaints, compliments and feedback
- Giving the people of Warrington more say about services and spend; and greater opportunity to influence council plans, policies and decisions
- Encouraging local businesses, smaller enterprises and the third sector to engage with us and compete for council contracts
- Supporting people and communities to become more actively involved in the work of the council

## Living within our means

- Providing value for money and business like services
- Setting sustainable budgets
- Making tough but necessary budget decisions
- Spending money where need is greatest: improving outcomes for the most vulnerable
- Working with partners to understand the total cost of the services we provide to the people and communities of Warrington and reviewing the way we work to improve outcomes and deliver efficiencies
- Actively pursuing opportunities to work with our partners, existing and new, to deliver the most cost effective, value for money quality services and where we cannot do so to look for alternative means of provision

We set out three pledges to the people of Warrington:

To protect the most vulnerable

To support the local economy

To help build strong and active communities

During 2012-13 we have targeted our efforts and resources towards delivering these pledges and section 3 provides an overview of how we are doing.



# 4. Delivering our pledges

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Safeguarding the most vulnerable adults, children and young people is one of our most important jobs. We want vulnerable people to enjoy the protection, care and support they need so that they can have choices, determine their own future, achieve their ambitions and play a part in their communities.



We pledge to protect the most vulnerable

## Achievements

- **Warrington's Child Protection Services were rated 'Good' by OFSTED**

An OFSTED pilot inspection of multi-agency child protection arrangements found that Warrington has 'good' services to protect vulnerable children. The report highlighted that there has been sustained improvement in working with our partners and found that the majority of children's social work assessments are of good quality. It said that children continue to be well supported through children in need meetings and children receive a timely and effective response when they are missing from home or at risk of sexual exploitation

The inspection report noted that there is a good level of early help with services that are increasingly integrated and focused on a whole family approach. It found that the family support service provides a timely and coordinated holistic response to families' needs which makes a demonstrable difference to families preventing the need for statutory involvement in the large majority of cases. It reported that parents who have suffered domestic abuse were extremely positive about the help provided by the family support team and parents felt that help and support from children's centres is making a positive difference in their lives. The inspection also found that the majority of children's social work assessments include the views of children and children and young people are routinely involved in their assessments. Advocacy services are provided promptly to an increasing number of children in need and those on care plans.

- **Joint adoption services**

It is one year on since Warrington joined forces with Wigan and St Helens to create the WWiSH adoption service. The aim of merging the services was to try and speed up that process and to give children needing to be adopted more opportunities. So far, it seems to be working. The service has worked with a large number of children and has attracted a significant number of new adopters in its first year. There is still a shortfall in the amount of people coming forward offering to give a child a home and the number of children waiting to be adopted. This is a national problem. The service are urging anyone who thinks they can offer a new home to a child to contact them ([www.wwish.org.uk](http://www.wwish.org.uk)).

- **More choice and control for adults**

Self directed support packages enable people who need social care to have choice and control over their care services and the council is working towards providing all eligible users with this facility. 65% of eligible adults were provided with self directed support during 2012-13. This means that 2,478 people who use social care had a self directed support package during the year.

The integrated intermediate care service continues to achieve positive outcomes for service users and avoid admissions to hospital. Everyone who is discharged from hospital needing social care and has never had a care package before receives an intermediate care service, which aims help them regain some or all of their independence and reduce the need for on-going services. 87.8% of people who used this service during the year were independent 91 days after their discharge from hospital. This is higher than the national trend and indicates that the service is achieving its aim of supporting people to retain independence and control over their lives.

# Improving life for Warrington residents

## • Tackling hate crime

In May 2012 Warrington residents attended an event to raise awareness about hate crime. The Warrington Hate Crime and Incidents Partnership organised the event to coincide with World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (United Nations Observance). The event raised awareness of the nature of hate crime and encouraged people to come forward and share their experiences. Hate crime is harassing, victimising, intimidating or abusing someone because of their race, faith, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. It also promoted the help and advice that is available. The draft hate crime strategic priorities for Warrington were shared at the event and feedback was sought. The Hate Crime Reduction Strategy has now been endorsed by the Local Strategic Partnership and will be publicly launched as part of Disability Awareness Week.

## • Protecting people from the adverse affects of alcohol, tobacco and illegal lending

The rate of hospital admissions for alcohol related harm is reducing and there has been a significant increase in the number of people ending treatment alcohol free. This can be attributed to new initiatives including the joint recovery hub, satellite clinics and intensive key work targeted at those with high levels of attendance at Accident and Emergency.

The Council's Public Protection Service undertakes enforcement and prevention work to tackle sales of illicit tobacco. The service has seized significant quantities of cash associated with this criminality which acts as a strong disincentive to offending. The service has also undertaken assessments of alcohol sales premises using a new compliance scoring and assessment system. Initial findings are very positive as this system allows non-compliance issues to be better identified and tackled by businesses thus enabling systematic improvement.

Warrington Borough Council's public protection team joined forces with the England Illegal Money Lending Team and national affordable housing provider Affinity Sutton Housing to warn local people to turn away from illegal money lenders and to encourage anyone who has fallen into a

loan shark's trap to speak out. Banners, posters and other publicity material were displayed throughout the community with the 0300 555 2222 hotline number for reporting loan sharks.

## • Preventing ill health

All of the prevention projects across Warrington work closely together and their aim is prevent ill health and disability and keep people independent and at home. The Red Cross home from hospital scheme facilitates early discharge from hospital by offering short term assistance to service users which increase their independence and ability to manage within their own homes.

The Public Health team has produced and promoted a Healthy Ageing guide that provides 11 top tips and signposts people to local services. The provision and marketing of smoking cessation services has been reviewed and this has resulted in a notable increase in the number of smoking cessation referrals received and number of people successfully quitting smoking.

The Health Inequalities Team have facilitated services being delivered in the most vulnerable communities where health inequalities are greatest. This has included working with the Change4life team on promoting healthy eating with the Snack Swapper and arranging cooking on a budget courses. Additional visits from the Ivan cancer information and support vehicle have been arranged and delivered in the inner wards where cancer rates are highest.



## Case study

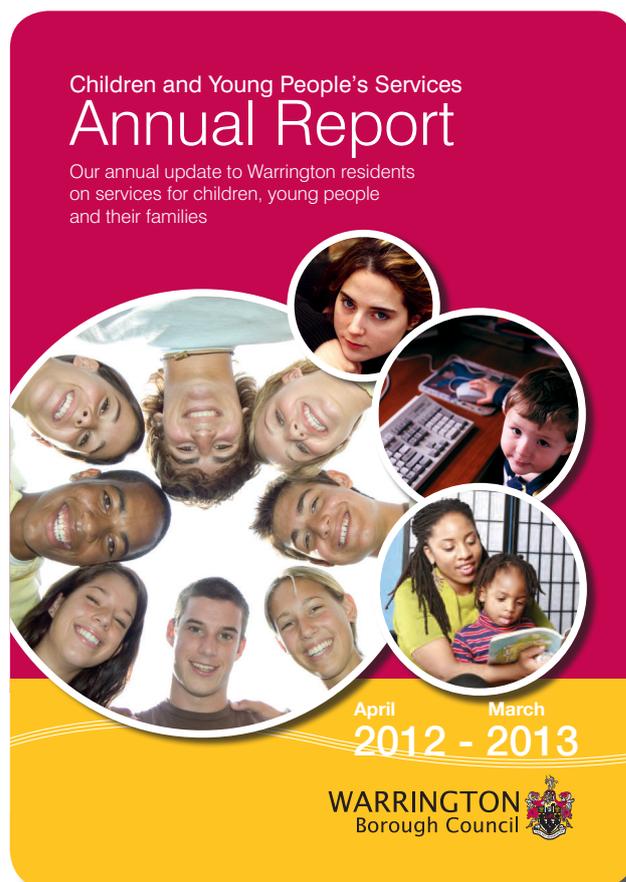
The Warrington Sensory and Telecare Services are successfully supporting deaf and disabled people to retain their independence. It provides specialist services to promote independent living through the use of technology. The service provides full assessments aimed at maximising independence and offers a full range of telecare solutions. These offer continuous, automatic and remote monitoring of real time emergencies and lifestyle changes over time, in order to manage the risks associated with independent living. Installations can include fall management systems and technology to alert others if a person has left their home at times when they may be at increased risk. These play a vital role in supporting people to live at home and providing peace of mind to carers.

The service also supports people who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as providing rehabilitation services for people who are blind or partially sighted. This can include planned 'mobility/travel' training outside of the person's home environment and the provision of equipment to support a person's independence within the home. Referrals to the service have increased threefold since the service was set up in April 2011 and users report high levels of satisfaction with the service. It is estimated that the service saved over half a million pound last year by increasing people's independence.

## During 2012-13:

- 7643 adult clients received an adult social care service in 2012/13
- There were 1604 referrals to Children's Social Work Services
- 513 residents were seen by the Wellbeing Service and 78% completed their wellbeing action plan

The Children and Young People's Annual Report and Adults' Services Local Account provide more detail on our services for children and adults. These are available on the council's website.



The council is committed to the growth of the local economy and that of the North West: we want to have strong working relationships with private business in the borough and will prioritise activity to help safeguard existing and create more local jobs.



## Achievements

- **Warrington Means Business went from strength to strength**

Warrington & Co was established in 2008 to act as a strategic partnership between Warrington Borough Council, business leaders and key organisations involved in delivering regeneration strategies and growing Warrington's local economy. The partnership has developed Warrington Means Business - a business growth and regeneration programme for Warrington. This programme is designed to drive economic growth in the borough and release the true potential of the place and its people. It includes plans to regenerate parts of the borough including the Bridge Street area, the Stadium Quarter and Omega North and South.

- **Warrington was featured in the top five for business investment in the Centre for Cities report**

The Centre for Cities report for 2013, which evaluates the economic performance of the UK's 64 main cities, showed that Warrington had further enhanced its position as a major player in terms of business and investment. This report highlights the town's strong economic position and boosts our reputation as a premier place to do business in the UK. The report predicts that the outlook for Warrington is positive and places the town in the top five for business investment and the top ten for business and enterprise. It highlights that Warrington has the 7th highest employment rate and 7th highest private sector jobs growth rate. It notes a recovery in house prices is a major factor in the overall performance of the town and predicts that the Council's multi-million pound Bridge Street Quarter regeneration project will have a positive impact.

## Improving life for Warrington residents

- **Providing local jobs**

We set up a Skills Commission to work with local employers and training agencies to look at how we could match local skills to employment needs. The final report and recommendations of the Skills Commission was published in January. A partnership steering group and delivery team is taking forward these recommendations.

- **Promoting the town centre**

The council and its partners have delivered a range of successful events that have promoted the town centre as a place to visit including the Christmas lights switch on, Christmas craft village, the Jubilee celebrations, the torch relay, the food fayre, a medieval market and a lantern parade. Such events have had a positive impact on town centre footfall which has increased over the last year and compares favourably to the national picture.

## • Supporting local businesses to tender for council services

The council aims to place as much as possible of its procurement spend with local businesses. It currently spends 36% with local businesses. Local business have been provided with training on the council's e-tendering system ('The Chest') and the tender evaluation process with the aim of supporting them to do business with the council. There has been a 12% increase in local businesses registering with 'The Chest' since the training sessions began and we continue to promote the use of local suppliers.

## • High speed broadband is on its way

A contract which will deliver high speed broadband across Warrington and Cheshire has been secured by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Authorities.

## Case study

### OMEGA site development is underway

Omega is 575 acre mixed-use development opportunity which is being delivered over the next 25 years which will create thousands of jobs across the North West. Warrington Council is supporting the developers to attract investment to the area and maximise local employment at the site, as well as ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to support businesses to grow. This opportunity is now on its way to being realised with almost 1.5 million square feet of development which will have been built or have construction well underway by the end of 2013. Brakes Group will have completed and be operating from their 200,000sq ft logistics centre at Omega North in August with Hermes quickly following with their 154,000sq ft logistics hub open in September. They will quickly be joined by Travis Perkins who plan to start construction on their 700,000sq ft unit in September.

As for Omega South, Bericote have submitted a planning application to construct a 400,000sq ft state-of-the-art logistics centre on the site and plan to start construction in August. The occupier, who is as yet unnamed, is investing £100 million in this new regional facility which represents the company's largest European single investment to date. Consultation on the Omega South master plan will also take place later this summer in order to ensure that the site meets the needs of business, now and in the future to maximise its full job growth potential.

Infrastructure works on site are well underway which include the construction of an access road for Omega North. Investment planned and underway to date totals £235 million not including the infrastructure works.

## During 2012-13:

- 19,990,534 people visited and used the town centre.
- The Skills Commission presented 6 recommendations to support continued economic prosperity in Warrington; focussing on skills development meeting the growth needs of key business sectors and where there are real opportunities for residents and local workforce to develop the skills required for them to participate in, and benefit fully from, the town's economic opportunities.
- Centre for Cities reported Warrington to have the 7th highest rate of employment and private sector jobs growth in the UK; 4th highest proportion of private sector employment.
- A total of 2,356 companies were formed in Warrington in 2012\13. This total is 24.1% higher than in 2011/12 and compares favourably to the UK figure of 8.6%.

The council wants to help support people to live successful healthy lives as independently as possible. Engagement is important to us and we want communities to feel that they are able to influence our service delivery and inform our decision making and governance.

## Achievements

### • Closing the gap

The council and its partners have worked together to focus on the most deprived areas in the borough and put in place services and support to improve outcomes for local people. These include improvements to the local environments, providing support to get people into employment, supporting families and providing preventative services, such as smoking cessation. There has been some positive impact with gaps in many areas showing signs of closing in relation to crime, early years' service uptake, smoking cessation and alcohol related admissions.

The council and its partners also focused on reducing the impact of the recent changes to the benefits system. This included raising awareness of the changes and targeting information and support to those who are most affected.

### • Residents' survey

The council recently completed its Residents' Survey. Residents provided their opinions on how well the council is delivering services, which services they think are most important to quality of life and where they think improvements are needed. This information is currently being used to inform service planning.

### • Educational achievement

The recent publication of national league tables by the Department for Education (DfE) shows that GCSE results in Warrington schools continue to outstrip national averages. The main measure of attainment used by the DfE is five or more A\*-C GCSEs including English and Mathematics. In this respect Warrington scored 62.9% which is above the national average of 59.4%. Warrington is ranked 29th nationally and sixth in the North West. The DfE have also released information about the progress children have made from the end of primary school to GCSE stage. The expectation is that children make three levels of progress. In



We pledge to help  
build strong and  
active communities

English nationally 69.2% of children made this progress. In Warrington the figure is 72.7%. In mathematics, progress in Warrington was 73.0% compared to the national result of 69.8%. The achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at Key stage 2 (primary school) has significantly reduced with an improvement of 10 percentage points since 2011. The achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at Key Stage 4 (secondary school) has widened from 38% to 40%. A narrowing the gap action plan has been developed and sessions have taken place with all high schools to consider and share successful strategies for narrowing the gap.

The elective home education service has been held up as an example of outstanding good practice and has provided evidence to the government select committee reviewing support for home education.

Figures released by the Department for Education show that for post 16 qualifications the rate of improvement amongst Warrington learners is faster and higher than national and regional averages. Additional funding of £741K has also been secured from the Department for Education for post 16 education for young people with Special Educational Needs.

99% of year 6 pupils moving from primary to secondary school in September 2013 were offered one of their three preferred schools. 95% were offered their first choice.

National data published on Children in Care for 2012 shows that our children had an outstanding year with their results - the best in the country. The report highlighted their outstanding GCSE results with 40% of children in care achieving 5A\*-Cs including English and Maths, the highest in England. At Key Stage 2, 50% achieved Level 4+ in English and Maths, above England averages. Exclusion and attendance rates for children in care are all better than England averages. CYPs

introduced a Virtual School two years ago, which monitors and tracks the educational attainment of children in care, and other groups of young people who likely to not achieve as well as their peers, to ensure they receive the support they need to help them achieve their expected grades.

- **Reduced anti-social behaviour**

The council and its partners have focussed on reducing anti-social behaviour. Problem solving training was arranged for front line police staff in the central neighbourhood (the area of highest risk) and neighbourhood action teams were re-configured to assist in the earlier identification of offenders and repeat locations. Anti-social behaviour incidents reported to the police per 1,000 population is lower than those reported this time last year.

- **Creating an inclusive society**

Neighbourhood wardens continue to provide reassurance to residents in our local communities, supporting activities for older people and working with partners to deliver a junior warden scheme that includes intergenerational work, understanding the work of partners such as the fire and rescue service and the importance of recycling

- **Improving the Local Environment**

Warrington has been presented with ten national Green Flag awards for its parks and green spaces. Members of the Council's Parks and Woodland Services team have worked closely with 'Friends of Parks' groups to improve the appearance of these parks, cemeteries and a nature reserve. They have also produced a management plan to further improve the amenities over a three year period. The Green Flag Award scheme is organised by the Keep Britain Tidy consortium and is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The scheme, which has been running for 16 years, recognises well-managed, high quality green spaces across England and Wales.



## Improving life for Warrington residents

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- **Supporting local people into employment**

We have been working with partner agencies to reduce unemployment in Warrington and to close the gap between the most deprived areas and the rest of Warrington. The Education, Learning and Skills service have worked with local providers to get people into employment and apprenticeships and has supported over 70 people into apprenticeships.

The number of young people not in employment, education and training (NEETs) is lower than it has been for two years and better than national and regional comparators. Warrington's Careers Centre for young people opened in September 2012 and provides information and support to young people about education, training, apprenticeships and jobs from friendly education and employment advisers.

Can Do Clubs funded by the Coafields Community Trust delivered a range of work readiness training courses and support to 245 people across the borough. Three of these clubs continued to operate sustained by volunteers with support from the community organisations, Neighbourhood Teams, Job Centre Plus and Warrington Disability Partnership.

## • More affordable homes

The council encourages developers to build affordable homes through its planning and development control. 210 new affordable homes were built in 2012-13 in Warrington, exceeding our target of 172. The council also introduced one of the first Local Authority Mortgage Schemes in the country which enables first time buyers to purchase their own home with a much smaller deposit than would be required. 130 people have been helped to purchase their own homes through this scheme.

## • Leisure and culture

In May 2012, the way leisure and cultural services in Warrington were delivered underwent a radical change. Local leisure, libraries and lifestyle services transferred out of Warrington Borough Council into two Community Interest Companies (CICs). These are not-for-profit organisations which mean they will be able to apply for grant funding to improve buildings and facilities where the council can't and any profit generated can be reinvested back into developing and improving their facilities and services in the future.

Culture Warrington manages the Pyramid, Parr Hall and Warrington Museum and Art Gallery, whilst LiveWire runs the council's leisure centres and libraries and provides wellbeing services. This move gives residents more say in how these services are delivered in their local area and operating profits can be reinvested straight back into improving and growing leisure and cultural facilities and services in the town.



## • Improving health and reducing health inequalities

A joint Strategy for Wellbeing has been developed by Warrington's Health and Wellbeing Board and the Warrington Partnership Board. This sets out five key priorities that partners across Warrington will work together to achieve over the next 3 years;

- Closing the gap
- Building safe sustainable communities
- Ensuring the best start in life and transition into adulthood
- Living and working well
- Promoting wellbeing for older people.

Health outcomes in Warrington are slightly better than national averages but the relative gap between most deprived areas and other areas continues to persist. The transition of Public Health from the NHS to the council has been successfully completed. A health checks programme for those aged 40 -74 has been developed and all 26 GP practices in Warrington have now signed up to deliver these.

The cancer campaign in the central neighbourhood involved a number of partners from LiveWire, Golden Gates Housing Trust, the Central Neighbourhood team including the Health Inequalities Team, Wellbeing Service, Wolves Foundation, Public Health, the neighbourhood wardens, Creative Remedies team and Pathways Warrington. During four days of intense intervention the team were able to engage with over 700 people. This was done through a range of interventions from packs containing information on local services and early signs and symptoms of cancer, through to consultations with the nursing staff on board the van.

## • Waste collection

36% of household waste is currently recycled. Waste collection services have been reviewed during the year and new fortnightly collections are being introduced which should improve the amount of household waste that is recycled. Street and environmental cleanliness has remained consistently high throughout the year.

# Case study

## Timebanking

Funding and support was provided by the council and the south and east Neighbourhood Boards to Warrington Voluntary Action to set up a timebanking scheme. This scheme enables people to give or receive help in their local community by donating their time and skills and receiving others in exchange. This includes help with household chores such as gardening or ironing, writing letters, being a companion or writing Christmas cards. The scheme also has a specific focus on carers of people with dementia and aims to support them in their role as a carer. The carer will automatically have time credits from the amount of hours they spend caring. Carers can use these time credits to receive support from other timebank members.

## During 2012-13:

- 171,243 residents actively took part in community events
- 138 voluntary groups were supported by the Neighbourhoods Service to deliver local projects.



## 5. Our finances

Like all local authorities Warrington is facing unprecedented cuts. Due to the drop in government funding, Council Tax being frozen and the rising costs of supplying our services, we had to deliver over £14m of savings in 2012/13.

These savings have meant that Warrington have had to strip back the services we provide, reduce back-office support to a minimum and focus spending on the council's priorities and the statutory functions we provide.

Although this has given Warrington a number of financial pressures in the 2012/13 financial year, we have managed to deliver our services with a slight underspend, while still providing the services expected by the residents of Warrington.

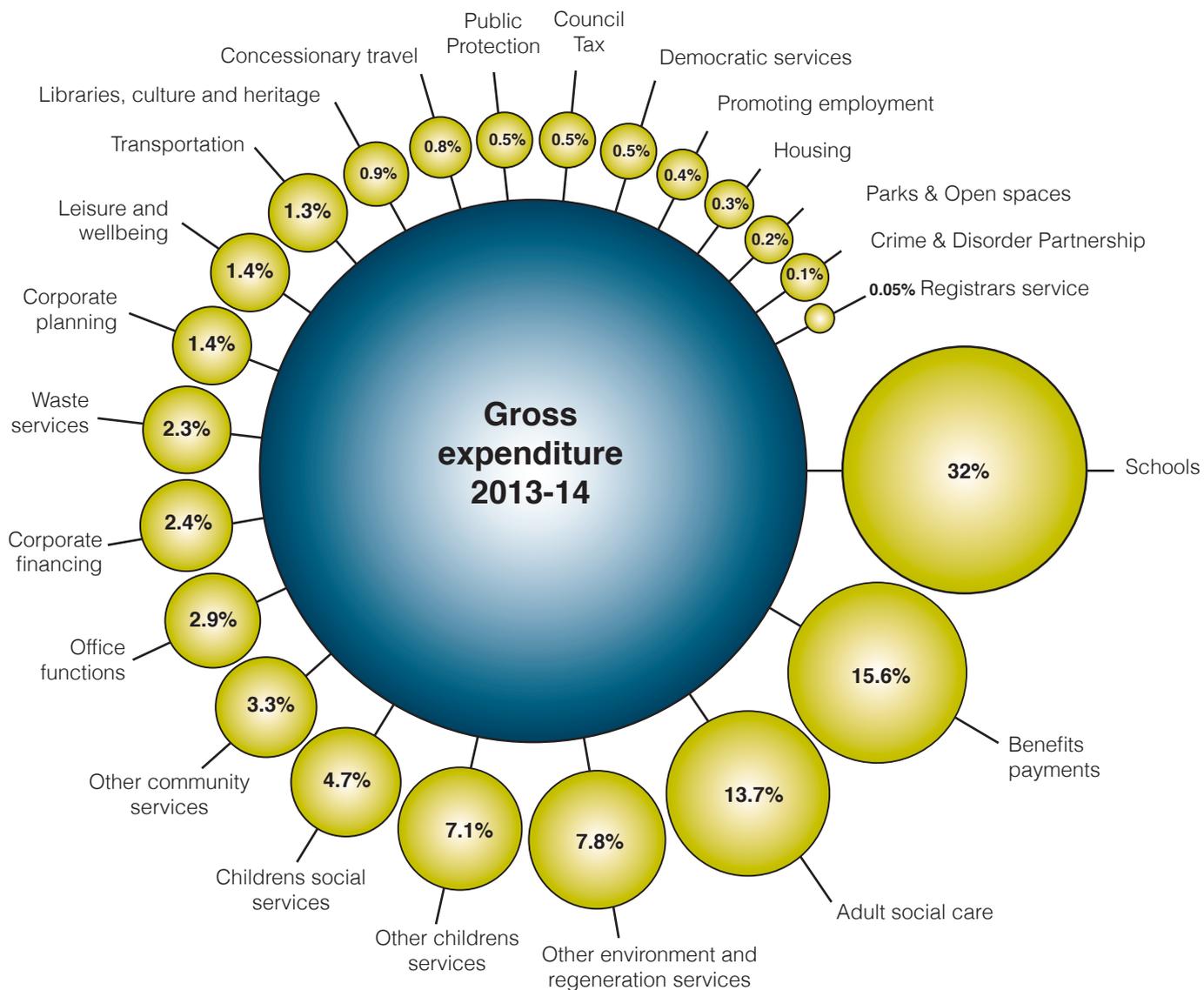
### Revenue budget and spending 2012-13

Directorate	Original Budget £m	Movement £m	Revised Budget £m	Actual Spend £m	Variance £m	Variance
Environment & Regeneration	26.932	5.326	32.258	32.250	-0.008	-0.02%
Neighbourhood & Community	64.602	11.634	76.236	76.224	-0.012	-0.02%
Assistant Chief Executive	8.474	-0.325	8.149	8.295	0.146	1.79%
Children & Young People	40.038	5.058	45.096	44.938	-0.158	-0.35%
Corporate Financing	12.947	-22.313	-9.366	-9.345	0.021	0.22%
	<b>152.993</b>	<b>-0.620</b>	<b>152.373</b>	<b>152.362</b>	<b>-0.011</b>	

### Capital budget and spending 2012-13

Capital Programme	Original Budget £m	Movement £m	Revised Budget £m	Actual Spend £m	Variance £m	Variance
Children & Young People	11.867	1.786	13.653	13.873	-0.220	-0.02%
Neighbourhood & Community	1.835	-1.177	0.658	0.782	-0.124	-0.19%
Environment & Regeneration	19.085	3.803	22.888	17.639	5.249	23%
Assistant Chief Executive	5.780	0.144	5.924	0.138	5.786	98%
Invest to Save programme	43.050	-9.145	33.905	5.792	28.113	83%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.617</b>	<b>-4.589</b>	<b>77.028</b>	<b>38.224</b>	<b>38.804</b>	

## Service expenditure as and overall percentage for 2012/13



## 6. Plans for 2013-14

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We pledge to protect the most vulnerable

- Improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families
- Ensuring that adults and children are protected from abuse and harm
- Supporting people to remain independent and have choice and control over their service
- Providing high quality care services and promoting dignity and respect

Deliver 'Warrington Means Business' – the business growth and regeneration programme for Warrington:

- Reinforcing the heart of the town
- Places for business growth
- Priority infrastructure to facilitate growth
- Providing aspirational and affordable homes
- Ensuring a skilled workforce for the future
- Encouraging enterprise
- Supporting local business
- Attracting and supporting business investment

We pledge to support the local economy

We pledge to help build strong and active communities

- Enabling communities to directly influence services in their neighbourhood
- Working with the most deprived neighbourhoods to improve residents health and quality of life
- Improving the overall health and wellbeing of the people of Warrington
- Improving the quality of the local environment
- To further develop our targeted youth provision
- Develop the role of schools and children's centres as hubs in their communities

Further details of the council's plans for 2013-14 can be found at [www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200361/council\\_publications](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200361/council_publications)

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WARRINGTON  
Borough Council

