

Gedling Plan

2014/15



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Papplewick Play Day 2013
(Cover - Gedling places)

Introduction

Welcome to the 2014/15 Gedling Plan, covering the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The Plan sets out what we hope to achieve over the next twelve months:-

- to improve the lives of people who live in Gedling or come here to visit, work or shop, and
- to ensure that the Council is as effective and efficient as possible.

The Plan contains the things that matter most to local people and the things that the Council needs to improve upon. These have been identified in a number of ways, for example, through talking to people as part of the Gedling Conversation, by analysing customer feedback about our services and by regularly assessing our performance. In this year's Plan, we've also taken into account the findings of our recent Peer Challenge – an external appraisal that we commissioned to help us progress.

Our future planning continues to be dominated by the unprecedented financial challenge that we're faced with. By the end of the current Parliament, local government funding will have fallen by £20 billion or 43%. For Gedling, this means reducing the amount we spend by £3.4 million over the next five years. This is a huge task for us but we remain ambitious to achieve the very best for the people and businesses of the borough. We also realise that it's not just the Council that is feeling the squeeze of these tough economic times as many people are struggling to pay their bills, find a home, get a job or even buy their food. It is for these reasons that our top priorities include a focus on helping the local economy to recover and supporting those most affected by the recession.

While the Plan sets out the priorities and objectives for the Council, we won't achieve these without the continued support of our partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors. That's why we've called our Plan the Gedling Plan, in recognition of the fact that its delivery will involve so many more organisations than just the Council. It's also a plan that is more about the place and the people we serve than about the Council.

We hope that you find the plan of interest and if you have any comments, we'd love to hear from you.



Cllr John Clarke
Council Leader



John Robinson
Chief Executive



Planting in Woodthorpe

Gedling the place

Gedling Borough is located in the heart of Nottinghamshire and includes a substantial part of the Greater Nottingham conurbation. It borders Sherwood Forest to the north, the River Trent to the south east and the City of Nottingham to the south-west.

The name Gedling is taken from the present day suburban village of Gedling, which was mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 as Ghellinge.

The Borough has a distinctive mix of urban and rural areas. It is made up of Greater Nottingham's north and eastern suburbs along with some of Nottinghamshire's most picturesque villages.

The majority of Gedling's 113,500 population live in the main suburban areas of Arnold, Carlton, Gedling, Mapperley and Netherfield. The remainder live in the ten rural parishes of Bestwood Village, Burton Joyce, Calverton, Lambley, Linby, Newstead, Papplewick, Ravenshead, Stoke Bardolph and Woodborough. The Borough's eleventh parish, Colwick, forms part of the suburban area.

The Borough's industrial heritage is based on textiles and coal, but both industries have now all but disappeared. The entire Borough falls within the principal economic area of Greater Nottingham and the majority of the Borough's residents travel into Nottingham for work – Gedling itself has a small employment base of around 2,400 businesses. The resident population is mainly white (93%) and comparatively stable, not having experienced the growth of other parts of Nottinghamshire.

Gedling schools perform well and housing is affordable and generally of a high standard. Crime levels have fallen significantly in recent years, health outcomes are positive and there's generally easy access to the countryside and core city, all of which combine to make Gedling a popular place to live.



Gedling Village



Lambley Village

Gedling the place

The map below shows the urban and rural make up of Gedling borough and its proximity to Greater Nottingham.



Gedling Borough Council—What we're here for

A strapline that we use is 'Serving People, Improving Lives'. This encapsulates what we believe to be our core purpose, what we think we're here for – to represent the interests of local residents and local businesses and to make a difference to the quality of their lives.

Set out below is our vision for Gedling—the place and the Council. Also shown are our values, which try to capture the kind of organisation we aspire to be and want people to experience.

Our vision

What we're aiming to create

To be the best place to live and work, and the best council around - best through the eyes of residents and staff.



Our values

The way we go about our work

A caring and fair Council that treats customers, residents, partners and staff well.

A listening Council that listens to and involves the people it serves.

An ambitious Council that is never satisfied and is constantly hungry for improvement.

A responsive Council that is sensitive to different needs and acts accordingly.

An efficient Council that is responsible with its resources, avoids waste and makes the most of what it has.



Gedling Borough Council—What we do

The chart below sets out the range of local services that we provide, (or in some cases that are provided by Parish Councils) either directly using our own staff or in partnership with others. Also shown are the services provided within Gedling by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Gedling Borough Council	Nottinghamshire County Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rubbish collection and recycling• Street cleaning and graffiti removal• Parks and playgrounds• Leisure and community centres• Car parks• Sports and arts development• Planning• Environmental health• Public protection and licensing• Housing and homelessness (with Gedling Homes)• Processing benefit claims• Community events such as the Arnold Carnival	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road and highway repairs• Transport (including public transport and residents' parking)• Waste disposal (recycling and landfill sites)• Libraries and museums• Schools• Caring for children and adults (for example, fostering and adoption, living at home)• Trading Standards• Country parks and tourism• Registration of births and deaths

Leadership of place

Providing services such as those shown above remains a fundamental part of what we do, however, we increasingly see our role as much broader than the services we provide and take an active interest in everything that impacts on the lives of local residents. This prompts us to get involved in things that go beyond the 'traditional' role of a district council - like tackling loneliness and isolation, helping to reduce people's energy bills and supporting private businesses to take on apprentices.

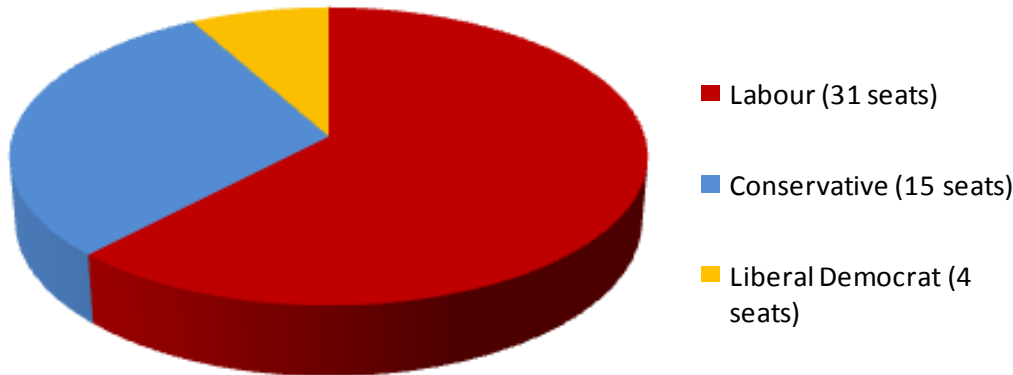
For a place to prosper, it needs direction and someone to champion it and to fight its corner. What's also needed is someone to bring people and organisations together around local priorities and someone to tackle problems that cut across different organisations. These types of activities are what we describe as leadership of place which is at the heart of what we do.



Gedling Borough Council—How we're organised

We have 50 councillors representing 22 local areas, or wards.

The current party split is:



We hold elections for the full Council every four years. We held the most recent election in May 2011.

The Cabinet

Our Cabinet has a Leader and five cabinet members. They are all members of the majority Labour Group. Each cabinet member has responsibility for a portfolio of services and activities and has the authority to make decisions within their area of responsibility. The Group Leaders of the opposition groups attend Cabinet meetings. They can participate in discussions, but can't vote.



Council Leader Cllr John Clarke and Deputy Leader Cllr Michael Payne

Scrutiny and other committees

In addition to the Cabinet, a number of committees deal with specific business areas of the Council such as Planning and Licensing. Scrutiny bodies hold the Cabinet to account, and a separate Standards Committee ensures that councillors comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. There is also an Audit Committee that oversees financial propriety.

Council, Cabinet and most committee meetings are held at the Civic Centre and almost all are open to the public. You can find the dates of all the meetings at www.gedling.gov.uk/councillorsmeetings

Gedling Borough Council—How we're organised

Management of the Council

Day-to-day management and operations are handled by our staff. The Chief Executive is responsible for the overall performance of the Council and for its use of resources. He is supported at a senior level by four Corporate Directors and the Council's Solicitor.

Day-to-day management of our services rests with our Service Managers and their teams.



Gedling's Senior Leadership Team

Partnerships

We want the best for our residents but it can't achieve this on our own. The things that make for a good quality of life - like decent housing, good schools, a safe environment and healthy lifestyles - are things the Council looks to secure in partnership with others such as Parish Councils, Nottinghamshire Police, Gedling Homes and Nottingham North and East Clinical Commissioning Group.

Key partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors come together at the Gedling Leader's Forum and a number of other partnerships exist to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the provision of services. These include the Employment and Skills group, South Nottinghamshire Crime and Disorder Partnership and the Developers and Landlords Forums.

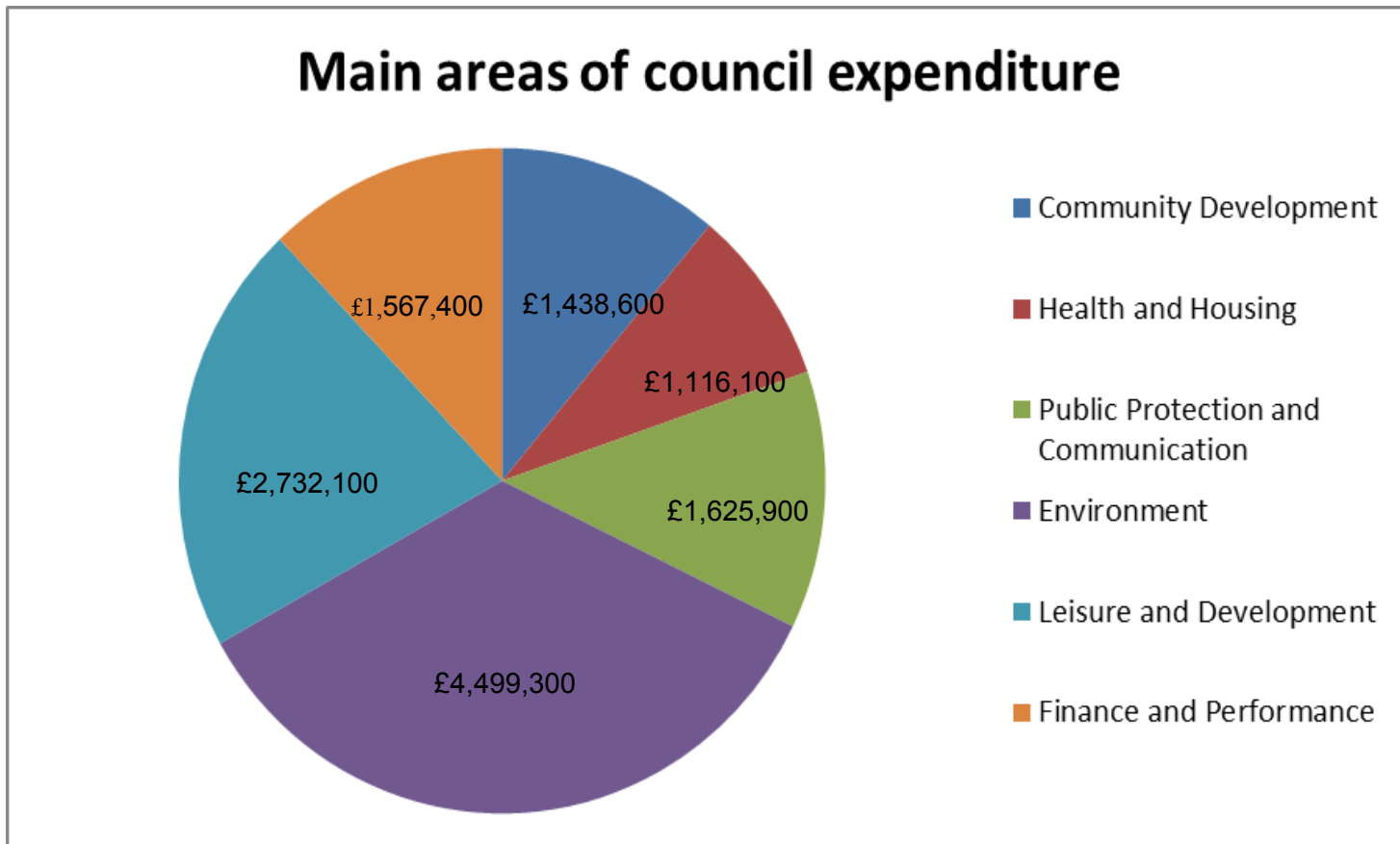


Arnot Hill Park

Gedling Borough Council—How we spend your money

We are a large organisation serving 113,600 people, 49,400 households and around 2,400 businesses.

We employ 535 people and spend around £13 million a year on a wide range of services. We also administer around £28m in rent benefit payments for national government. Apart from benefits, the main areas that we spend our money on are shown in the diagram below:



Gedling has a long track record of delivering low cost, high quality services and our council tax charge remains lower than 80% of other councils.

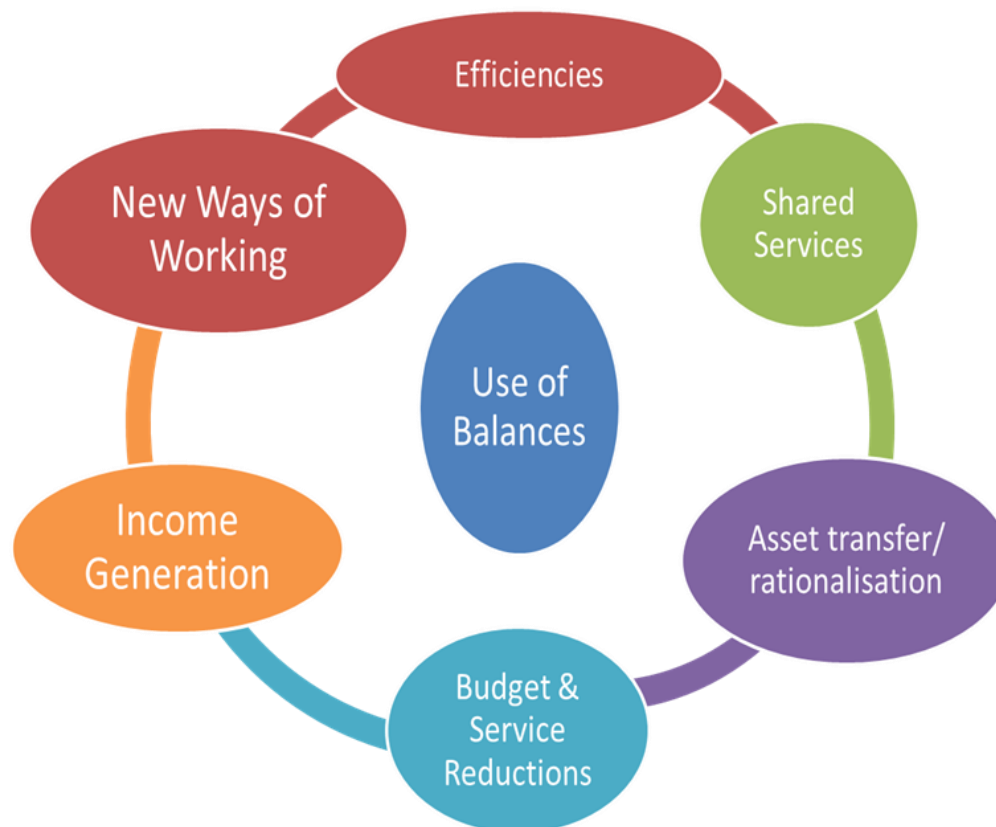
In recent years, we have faced the largest reductions in our funding from central government in living memory. Over the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 we have had government grant settlement reductions of £3.037m equivalent to a 34% cash reduction. In addition, over the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 we expect settlement funding to reduce by a further £2m. We have had to significantly reduce our planned expenditure and increase our delivery of efficiency savings in order to maintain service levels.

Gedling Borough Council—How we spend your money

The scale of the reductions in expenditure is such that we have had to make some difficult choices about what to spend our (council tax payers) money on but we've sought to:

- Maintain our best performance in the services that residents consider most important
- Protect services and activities that support the most vulnerable
- Prioritise activities that help to get the local economy back on its feet
- Invest in activity that influences services that are not our direct responsibility but that have a positive impact on residents' quality of life.

Despite a long and continuing period of year on year budget reductions, we have been able to avoid major cuts in services through effective long-term financial planning. Looking forward, we are well placed to steer our way through the remaining period of austerity, through a combination of the following:





Armed Forces Day 2013

Looking backwards—what we've achieved

In our last Plan, we set out a range of objectives and targets we aimed to deliver during 2013/14. Here's a snapshot of how we're doing.

We said we would:

Reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and fear of crime

Recorded crime continues to fall in the Borough – it's down by 2.1% from April 2013 to January 2014 which is 84 fewer crimes over this period. There have also been significant reductions in recorded anti-social behaviour, down by 17.8% so far this year or 391 fewer incidents. Our latest satisfaction survey shows that 90% of people feel safe when out in their local area in the daytime and 66% feel safe when out after dark.

Reduce poverty and disadvantage

We now host Citizen's Advice Bureau sessions at the Civic Centre on an extra day a week. We've introduced plans to tackle disadvantage in Netherfield and Newstead and extended the programme to include Killisick. Our new Council Tax Reduction Scheme targets benefits to those most in need. We've led the taking forward of the National Troubled Families programme in the borough and supported food banks, donating over a tonne of food for local people in need.

Improve health and well-being

We've signed up to be a Dementia friendly council, which will help us support customers suffering with dementia and their families in their dealings with us. We've supported and promoted Age UK's campaign to end loneliness across the borough.

Provide more homes of the right type in the right places

We've brought over 80 empty homes back into use, and we're working with our partners to secure another 15. We've agreed plans for 830 new homes to be built at Teal Close, Netherfield, and we've negotiated with developers to bring forward a number of sites where planning permission had been agreed but building work hadn't been started. We invested further in our innovative local mortgage scheme, helping 78 first time buyers take their first step on the property ladder.

Looking backwards—what we've achieved

Ensure local people are well prepared and able to compete for jobs

We've supported 14 small businesses to provide apprenticeships and provided 10 apprenticeships ourselves. We're working with Central College to help local young people get ready for work and have brought key partners together in an Employment and Skills Group to progress this agenda in future. We've supported the Gedling Business Forum who are making excellent progress in bringing local businesses together. The number of young people on Job Seekers Allowance is falling.

Create more access to jobs and better access to jobs

We secured over £10.8 million towards the cost of building the Gedling Access Road, which will open up land for over 1,000 new homes and new employment sites. We're pushing for funding for a new bridge over the River Trent at Colwick which could bring over 2,500 new jobs. We're well on the way to delivering £1.1 million investment in Arnold Town Centre, including the fully refurbished Bonington Theatre and a new car park on the site of the former Druids Tavern. We agreed plans for a new Sainsbury's store at Colwick, which will create 600 new jobs, and we're working with Sainsbury's to ensure that local residents are adequately skilled to be able to apply for these roles.

Reduce the volume of waste generated

We're currently recycling over 38% of waste generated, just short of our target. We're exploring new ways to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and increase the percentage recycled.

Reduce the council and borough's energy usage

78 borough householders benefitted from new boilers and heating systems through our Gedling Boiler giveaway scheme, reducing energy usage and carbon emissions, as well as saving money. We've supported the development of a solar farm on the former Gedling Colliery site, we're installing electric car charging points in one of our car parks, we've trained our drivers in environment friendly driving techniques and we're set to install new equipment in our offices that will reduce the amount of electricity we use.

Looking backwards—what we've achieved

Provide an attractive local environment that people can enjoy and appreciate

We've secured a 25-year lease of 250 acres of land for just £1 to develop the Gedling Country Park and are now on site preparing for public opening later in 2014. Satisfaction with cleanliness in the borough is at its highest ever level, at 72%, and our Street Cleaning team won the national award for Best Service Team (Street Cleansing and Streetscene) at the annual Association of Public Service Excellence awards.

Mitigate the impact of budget reductions by maximising efficiency and effectiveness

We've delivered efficiency savings worth £496,800, meeting our targets, and have identified further potential savings from efficiencies and new ways of working worth over £1.2 million, which will allow us to balance our budgets in spite of significant reductions in government grants.

Improve the customer experience of dealing with the council

We've made more services available online and increased our social media followers to over 5,000. Following our agreement to bring NHS staff working for Nottingham North and East Clinical Commission Group to the Civic Centre last year, we've agreed to enter into a lease that will bring the Job Centre to our Civic Centre in 2014, bringing even more public services together in one place. We've signed up to a Collaboration Agreement with Rushcliffe and Newark & Sherwood District Councils to take forward more opportunities to share services, improving efficiency and increasing resilience of our services for the future.

Maintain a positive and productive working environment and strong relationships with staff

We've continued to deliver our 'Well at Work' programme of activities to improve staff health, including exercise programmes, healthy eating advice and a staff Health Fayre. We've made a commitment to pay the living wage to all staff employees from 1 April 2014.

For more information, visit the performance pages of our website

<http://www.gedling.gov.uk/aboutus/howwework/prioritiesplansperformance/performance/>



Arnold Carnival 2013

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

Set out below are our top 15 objectives—the things we are planning to achieve over the coming year. Shown against each objective is the practical action that will be taken—by the Council and often in partnership with others.

Homes

Provide more homes of the right type and in the right places

Progress implementation of housing sites identified within the Core Strategy

Progress the ‘Get Gedling Building’ project for stalled sites

Enable the provision of more affordable homes

Secure adoption of the Core Strategy

Improve the quality of private rented accommodation

Bring empty properties back into use

Implement the Home Energy Conservation Act Delivery Plan

Ensure effective use of the Housing Benefit System to support people to remain in suitable accommodation

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

People

Reduce poverty and disadvantage

Improve access to the Nottingham Credit Union for Gedling residents

Continue to provide support to local food banks

Encourage take-up of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and other welfare benefits

Pay Council employees at or above the living wage

Put in place practical initiatives to address loneliness and isolation

Reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime

Provide diversionary activities for young people with an emphasis on our three locality neighbourhoods

Deliver Gedling Borough Council's contribution to the activities and plans co-ordinated through South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership

Implement a range of activities to embed the Council's new Public Protection Policy

Improve health and wellbeing

Implement Gedling Health and Wellbeing delivery plan

Implement the Obesity and Weight Management Framework and Delivery Plan

Identify and deliver a range of actions to support older people

Identify a range of actions to make Gedling Borough Council a dementia friendly organisation

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

Jobs

Ensure local people are well prepared and able to compete for jobs

Build on the partnership with Central College to get young people ready and into work

Support local businesses to provide apprenticeship and work experience placements in the private sector

Work with partners to improve engagement with local schools to reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training

Develop an ongoing programme of apprenticeship and work placement opportunities for the Council and its partners

Implement the Employment and Skills Delivery Plan

Pilot mentoring programme for young unemployed people in Killisick

Create more jobs through inward investment and business support

Press for the early development of employment sites in the Borough, e.g Teal Close

Support expansion of existing Gedling businesses through assistance with securing growth investment funds

Work with Gedling Business Forum to promote business start-ups and self-employment

Maximise job opportunities for Gedling residents arising from new developments, for example, through local employment agreements

Assess the allocation and location of employment land with a view to stimulating inward investment

Pursue development of part of High Street car park to enhance Arnold Town Centre

Create a package of incentives to encourage businesses to move to or expand in Gedling

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

Jobs — continued

Improve access to jobs through improved transport connectivity

Continue to press for delivery of the first phase of Gedling Access Road

Champion the development of a fourth Trent crossing and secure support from key stakeholders

Support delivery of Local Sustainable Transport Fund delivery plan

Identify and explore further transport infrastructure improvements to facilitate growth and access to jobs

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

Place

Generate less waste; recycle more waste

Investigate and implement a planned programme of activities and initiatives to further minimise the amount of waste disposed of either at landfill or by incineration

Reduce the Council's and the Borough's energy usage

Review and update the Sustainability Strategy/ Action Plan

Provide an attractive local environment that local people can enjoy and appreciate

Develop and implement Green Gateways initiative

Implement Parks and Green Spaces Strategy

Deliver Gedling Country Park

Promote and encourage pride and participation in the local area

Maximise electoral registration through Individual Electoral Registration

Establish a Gedling Youth Council and encourage young people to participate

Continue the 'Love Where You Live' Campaign to educate residents and reduce incidents of environmental crime

Identify and implement practical ways for local residents to inform and influence decisions that affect them

Looking ahead—what we plan to achieve

Performance

Mitigate the impact of budget reductions by maximising efficiency and effectiveness

Achieve efficiency commitments incorporated in the 2014/15 Annual Budget

Promote a more entrepreneurial and commercially focussed culture within the Council

Develop and implement agreed strategy for future provision of leisure and community centres

Identify and implement opportunities to collaborate with partners, including through the tri-Borough Collaboration Agreement

Deliver priority actions arising from Peer Challenge

Facilitate cultural change to enable changing role of the Council and implementation of budget reduction programme

Improve the customer experience of dealing with the Council

Increase the number, range and take up of services available online

Implement and embed an updated Customer Services Charter

Secure improved access to services arising from re-location of Arnold Job Centre to the Civic Centre

Maintain a positive and productive working environment

Implement Internal Communications strategy

Deliver a range of activities to improve staff health, morale and engagement

Review effectiveness of new sickness absence management scheme and make changes as required

Implement and keep under review actions arising from staff survey



Winter in Arnot Hill Park

Making sure we deliver

Our Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees track the progress of the Gedling Plan on a quarterly basis.

We also publish details of our performance on our website, www.gedling.gov.uk. If you follow us on Twitter @gedlingbc or like us on Facebook (Gedling Borough), you'll receive a notification when the information is published online.

Performance targets are set for each objective, and relevant managers are held to account for delivery of these targets.

What do you think?

We're always keen to hear from local residents, businesses and our staff. We believe that their feedback helps us to improve.

If you think we're focusing on the wrong things, let us know.

If you think we could do things in a better or more cost effective way, please get in touch.

Further Information

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