

# Spotlight Presentation: The Enterprise Programme Management Office

*A Step Change in Programme and Project Management*

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**WATFORD**  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL

LGA Transformation Roundtable: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

# WATFORD

Our Town

## POPULATION

**102,200** over an area of **8.5** square miles



Population increase of **13.2%** between 2011 and 2021

Serves wider sub-region of **500,000**

**Young population:** average age **36** years

**Diverse population: 54%** minority ethnic communities

**43,700** households

**Average household size: 2.6** people

High proportion of **single person households: 28%**

High proportion of **5+ households: 9.5%**

Living in **social rented property: 16%**

High number of **households in rental accommodation: 28.5%**



**1st** place in **Lambert Smith Hampton's 2024 Vitality Index**

## MOSAIC GROUPS



**Career Builders:** Singles and couples in their 20s and 30s progressing in their field of work from commutable properties. Watford's most common MOSAIC group: **13%**

**Cafés and Catchments:** Affluent families with growing children living in upmarket housing in city environs: **9%**

**Culture and Comfort:** Thriving families with good incomes in diverse suburbs: **9%**

## BUSINESS



**5,940** active businesses

**83,000** jobs

Low unemployment / high level of qualifications

**12%** self-employment rate

**£648** resident full-time weekly wage

**£617** workplace weekly wage

# WATFORD

Our Town And Our Council



## OUR STAFF

**240** members of staff

Our Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 includes a three year forecast that sets out our budget and looks at factors likely to impact on our expenditure.

**For 2023/24 our budget is:**

Gross budget: **£76.286m**

Net budget: **£14.962m**



## SHARED SERVICES



**Watford lead**

ICT  
Human Resources  
Procurement  
Environmental Services

**Three Rivers lead**

Finance  
Revenues and Benefits  
Pest Control



**Watford lead**

Planning  
Enforcement  
Building Control

**St Albans lead**

Legal Services



**HCC lead**

Corporate Health & Safety  
Internal Audit  
Emergency Planning  
Data Protection



**Joint Enforcement Team**

**South West Herts Councils**

**West Herts Crematorium**

**Wider Hertfordshire  
Collaboration**

**Herts Home Improvement  
Agency**

# Background

- Elected Mayor with an ambitious capital and transformation programme
- No designated internal project management resource or corporate centre
- 2017 Peer Review recognised that the project management capacity did not align with the future plans for the organisation

*'It is important that the council assesses whether it has the right skills and capacity in place currently to deliver these projects to time and specification, and to recognise the demand that they place on the senior leaderships' time. The peer team suggests that some further thought is given to whether there is sufficient resilience within the organisation given the number and variety of projects being undertaken both internally and externally by the council'*

**LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: Feedback Report 2017**

# Challenges

- Lack of in-house skill and capacity with an over-reliance on external consultants
- No consistent framework for programme and project delivery
- Project management undertaken by BAU Officers alongside existing work impacting delivery
- Limited oversight of project progress, risks and issues and similar lack of scrutiny
- Resource and time not always aligned to the strategic direction and delivery ambitions of the organisation
- Lack of appreciation of programme and project management as a skillset key to delivery
- No internal expertise to provide advice and guidance to officers

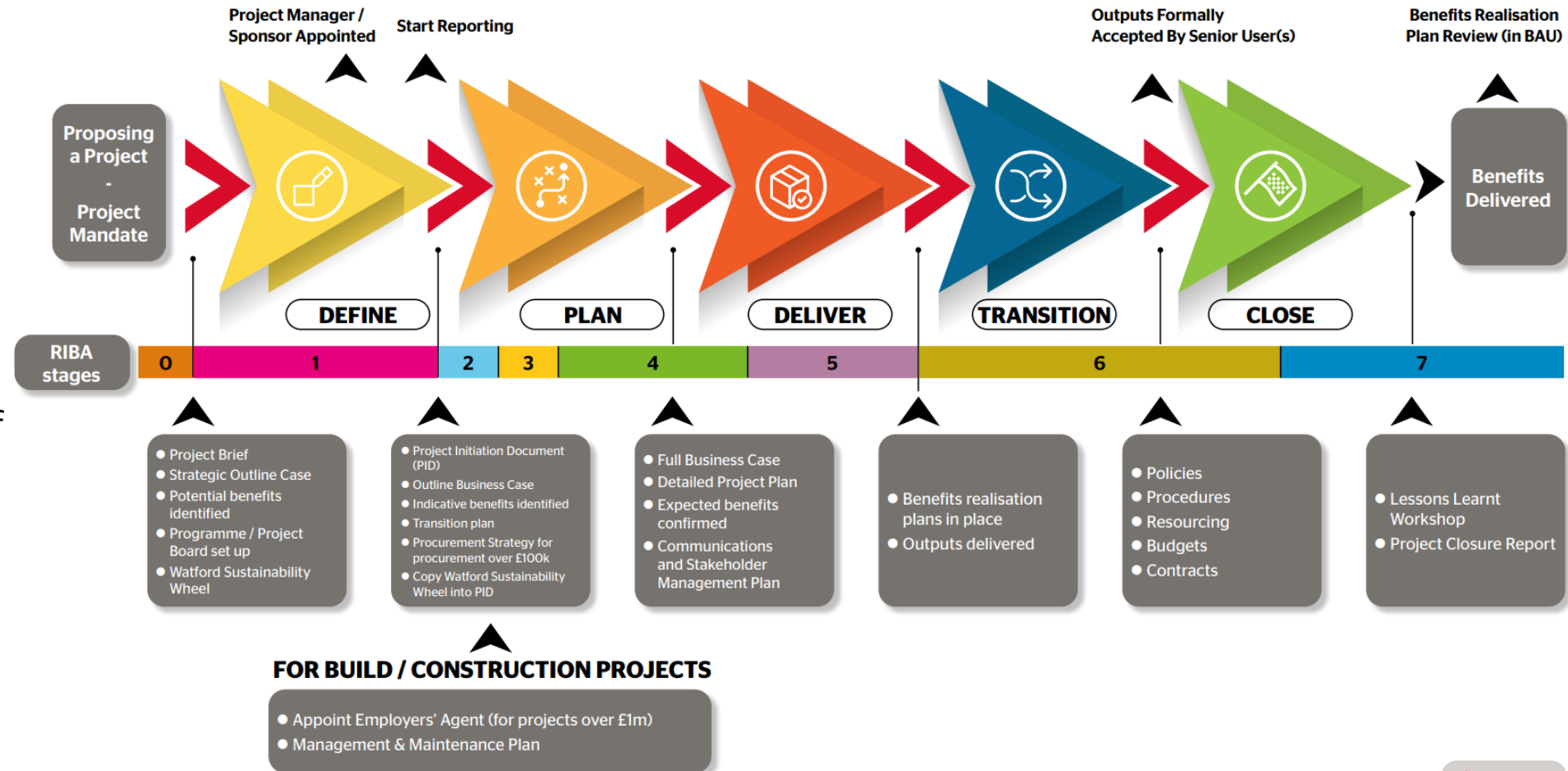
# The “Journey”

# First Steps

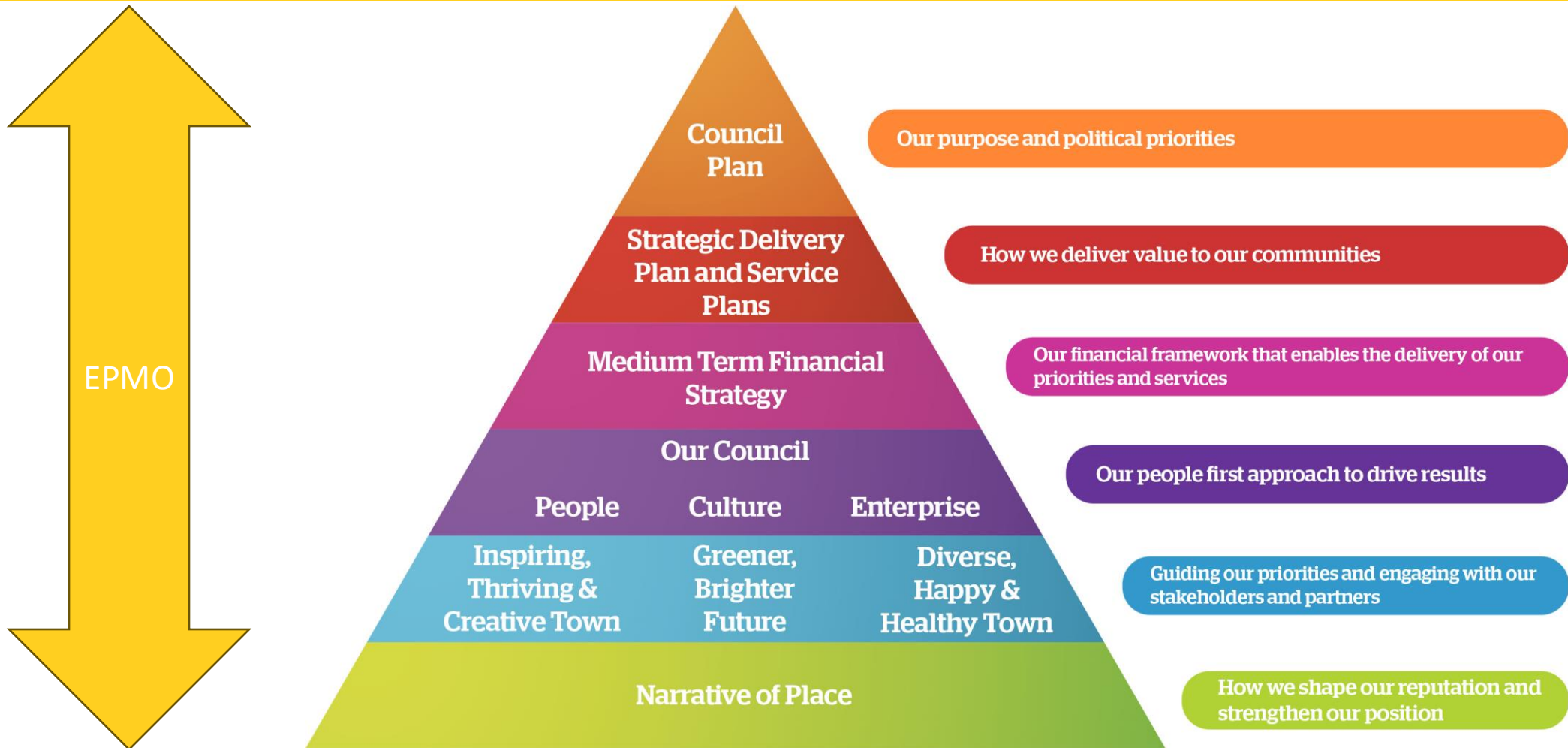
- Peer Challenge provided the impetus to invest
- Identified the opportunities of anchoring the EPMO at the strategic centre of the organisation, with the team's objectives intrinsically linked to the Council's 2-year delivery plan and Elected Mayor's manifesto commitments.
- Aligned our Council Plan to the additional resource and timelines needed to really deliver
- Resourced up into a single team reporting into an EPMO Lead
- Reviewed the role of our PMO Coordinator
- Set up a Project Assurance Group
- Clarified the roles and responsibilities for our Members

# Collaborative Design

- Launch of a PM Forum
- Robust and collaboratively designed Project Management Framework and templates, tailorable to the size and scale of the project
- Reporting that worked for PMs and the organisation



# Positioning the EPMO



# Shifting the Model



- Shifted the delivery model for programmes and projects across the organisation
- Aligned responsibility for delivery with responsibility for strategic direction
- Embedded a continuous improvement approach with project learnings are consistently sought and tracked from every project so that we do it better next time.

# Our People

- **Resource** - Internal programme and project resource of 11 FTE, including an EPMO Lead, Programme Managers, Senior Project Managers, Project Managers and Project Support Officers
- **In-house**- No project consultants
- **Investment** - Five officers who have benefited from formal training and additional qualifications
- **Promotion** - Five officers who have been promoted within the structure
- **Development** – CMB members, Service Delivery Leads and Project Managers attend the Project Assurance Group on a rolling basis

**Deliver  
Deliver  
Deliver**



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**



Riverwell



The Colosseum



Watford Town Hall



Watford Business Park

Clarendon Road



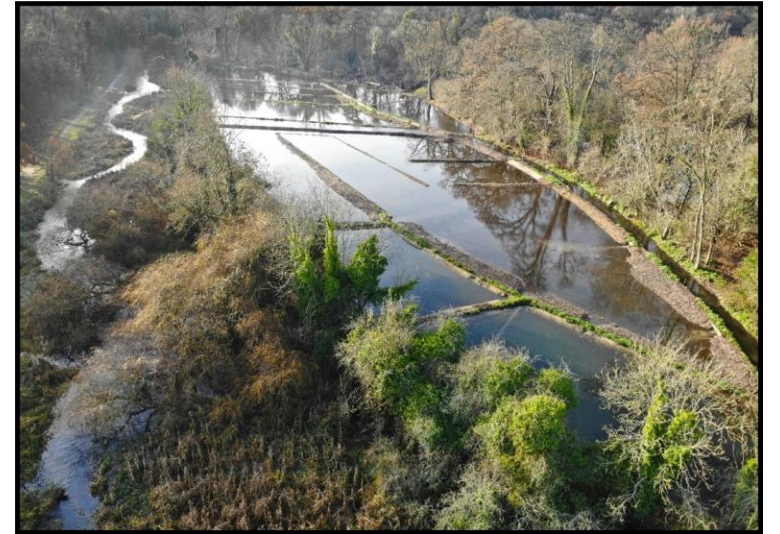


**Hemel Hempstead  
Crematorium**



**Oxhey  
Activity  
Park**

**Cassiobury  
Wetlands**



# Redesign Sprints



# HOUSING TRANSFORMATION



# A Flexible Resource

- Watford Community Lottery
- Implementation of three new shared services in Legal, Planning Enforcement and Building Control
- Expansion of our bike hire scheme
- Paddock Road Depot Refurbishment
- Housing Services transformation
- Design and roll out of new values and behaviours
- Park improvements
- Introduction of e-car club
- Roll out and expansion of electric charging regime
- CCTV Control Room relocation
- Afghan and Ukrainian Resettlement

# Next Steps

# Key Takeaways



- Invest to succeed
- A corporate centre can drive successful delivery
- A collaborative approach to development improves the changes of success
- A flexible, centralised resources ensure that all capacity is utilised
- Alignment of the strategic and the delivery ensures that resource is available and, crucially, that resource is working on the key priorities
- Robust reporting and oversight regime doesn't need to be resource-heavy if it is set up right
- Prove the concept to build confidence

*“There is strong evidence and recognition that WBC’s journey since the last peer challenge has been transformational. WBC is delivering hugely ambitious plans for Watford, with an unwavering focus on the outcomes for its residents.*

*The Enterprise Programme Management Office is the driver of so much that is good at Watford Borough Council. It consistently delivers high quality projects....[and] this investment in resources, clear project methodology and processes has clearly driven delivery. Many partners and external stakeholders referred to Watford as a council that gets things done*

*There is a thorough understanding at all levels of the council including members on the links between the council plan and council delivery plan. Peers heard how the council delivery plan is providing a clear focus around priority work areas and an established basis for allocating resources. This link was seen as strong by the peer team, ensuring resources are targeted to agreed priority areas.*

# Questions



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