

**Five Year Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24**

**‘Growing a place of opportunity and ambition’**

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## 1. Leader's Foreword

The 5 Year Plan sets out the Council Leadership Team's vision for Slough – growing a place of opportunity and ambition – and how we will deliver this by **putting people first**.

As Leader of the Council, my priority is to ensure that the ambitions we have for our town enable Slough residents to access enhanced opportunities, good services and flagship leisure facilities – to help them build good lives for themselves and their families. My colleagues and I are working to grow our town in a sustainable way that delivers quality development and helps our communities to thrive.

This Five Year Plan sets out more detail around our priorities and how we will:

- Increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable quality homes.
- Improve public transport infrastructure, not only will this relieve congestion by encouraging people to use their cars less, it will support our clean air strategy and prevent traffic gridlock from threatening our successful economy.
- Move forward with our 'place-shaping' agenda. This means joining up services, not just within the Council but with our partners too, bringing them closer to people's localities and delivering major regeneration of our neighbourhoods, like Chalvey. In addition we are reshaping our town centre to renew it for another generation.
- Maximise commercial opportunities afforded us by the strength of our local economy – both to protect frontline services and to ensure the Council is dynamic, ambitious and entrepreneurial (like our residents) but also to drive service transformation and improvement including IT and new contact channels for the digital age.
- Deliver an improving public realm and a world-class leisure offer with new state of the art buildings, outdoor gyms and safe public spaces.

Our challenge is to maintain investment in the town, despite the backdrop of funding reductions from central government and uncertainties about political direction nationally and globally. Our strength is that locally our political direction is clear, our commitment unquestionable, our focus on key priorities is relentless, and we have been building the organisational capacity to deliver on our ambitions.

The expansion of Heathrow, the arrival of Crossrail, together with our international reputation as a place for business to invest, mean I am confident in Slough's future and the town as a destination for people from all walks of life to come to live, work, play and stay.

**Councillor Cllr James Swindlehurst**  
**Leader, Slough Borough Council**

## **2. Introduction**

Since joining the Council on 1 October 2018 I have been continually impressed by the hard work and dedication of our staff to improve outcomes for people in Slough.

The Five Year Plan is important in defining the council's vision and ambition; the opportunities and challenges we face; the role of the council in meeting these and the priority outcomes against which resources will be allocated.

The Five Year Plan is also important in explaining how and why the council is changing. To ensure it is always up to date the Five Year Plan is refreshed every year and we also produce an Annual Report so we can check progress.

### **Opportunities and challenges**

The Leader has been clear in his Foreword about our ambitious plans to deliver the best outcomes for the town and its people. By continuing to attract growth and shape and manage Slough the place effectively we can ensure we deliver benefits for local residents.

Our population of around 145,000 is young, growing and dynamic. We need to ensure their future from an early age and education, to local employment opportunities and the availability of housing to meet their needs. People are living longer today than ever before but this adds pressure on local services such as adult social care to meet more complex needs while enabling people to live independently for as long as possible. There are inequalities across our population including household income, living conditions, wellbeing and health. Not all of these issues are within our power to address directly which is why it is important that we make the most of our network of communities and local partners.

Maintaining a strong local economy to generate income from business rates is essential for our budget, particularly as our funding from Government disappears. The success of our economy, with a turnover of around £9 billion, together with our reputation as a place to invest means growth provides a number of opportunities. Inward investment, regeneration and infrastructure improvements will bring real benefits to Slough, from housing and jobs, to better transport, shopping and leisure facilities – and we need to make sure that all of our residents benefit from this.

By the time our grant from Government disappears we will be almost entirely reliant on income from business rates and Council Tax. Developing these twin sources of income and other opportunities is essential to our finances and paying for services.

In this context, being focussed on clear priorities is essential. This is why the Five Year Plan is so important as we will use it to:

- drive the decisions made in the medium and long term financial strategy
- focus on delivery of outcomes by prioritising resources
- provide a basis for discussions with partners about the services they provide
- develop a performance framework to which services and staff will be held accountable

### **The role of the Council**

We will meet the challenges and opportunities we face by:

- demonstrating community leadership

- enabling people to help themselves
- supporting the most vulnerable
- shaping and managing the changing place

Our capacity to provide people with support is under growing pressure as a result of cuts to our funding from central Government together with an increase in demand. 70% of our budget is spent on social care and supporting those members of our community who are most vulnerable.

Our challenge is that we know that we can no longer provide services in the way that we have in the past – we will not be able to provide everyone with everything. We need to rethink and change not only what we do but how we do it. It is brave decisions that we make now that will sustain our ability to provide services in the future.

We believe we can do more to close gaps and reduce inequalities by enabling people to take more responsibility for their own lives, for example, by living healthier lifestyles. We will build on the strengths of our communities and partnerships to work as 'One Slough'. Wherever possible we will also look to manage future demand for services through targeted intervention and prevention. We will always ensure the most vulnerable in our community know how to get the support they need.

## **Transformation**

The Council has begun to develop and define a transformation programme which will guide our future ways of working as a Council and support the provision of our services. We want to enable independent sustainable communities and support people to prevent demand pressure on the council. We will maximise the use of our assets to maximise our localities offer.

The Transformation Programme will be rolled out at pace over the coming year so that:

- We will be a modern and efficient council that optimises customer service.
- We will have a new culture which embraces change and is fast-paced and dynamic.
- We will use technology to drive improvements to services and our ways of working.
- We will work as One Council and with our partners as One Slough to deliver better outcomes.
- We will pursue commercial and other funding opportunities to maximise benefits for Slough

## **Our values**

We will recruit, retain and develop high quality people who are committed to Slough and supported to do their job. Being clear about our values and behaviours means we can support our staff who want to continue to make a positive difference in their services to improve the lives of people in Slough. Our five **values** are:

- Responsive
- Accountable
- Innovative
- Ambitious
- Empowering

We will use these to drive our behaviours and how we work. We will recruit and manage people by checking how they are performing against these. In addition, and importantly, we have set a series of equality objectives to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for local people in specific service areas. This is in line with our focus on putting people first as well as ensuring we meet our requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010). It is important that organisationally these outcomes are owned and are integral to our own work programmes. We must all know the part we play in striving towards achieving these outcomes.

**Josie Wragg**  
**Chief Executive**

### 3. Our priority outcomes – putting people first

Our communities are at the heart of everything we do. It is our responsibility to ensure that as we change the way we do things, we communicate and engage with people so that they understand what is happening around them and why – and that they are empowered to help us shape and implement our vision for Slough.

Our response to the opportunities and challenges we face is to focus on five priority outcomes to improve the lives of people in Slough. **Resources will primarily be allocated to achieve these outcomes.** Resource allocation will be evidence based – there will need to be a demonstrable, evidenced link between the outcome and the key action.

#### ***Our priority outcomes – putting people first***

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Our residents will live in good quality homes
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

These cross cutting outcomes are important in ensuring that we are joining up resources to focus on shared priorities – this approach means we will increasingly be seen to be working as ‘One Council’.

Our partners are facing the same twin challenges as the Council – rising demand at a time when resources are diminishing. Like us, they cannot deliver their outcomes without additional support. We will work through the Slough Wellbeing Board to facilitate a wider partnership network across the public, private and voluntary sectors to coordinate action and resources to achieve the best results for Slough.

Many of our priorities cannot be achieved by us as a Council without the support of others. As well as working in partnership with the public and voluntary sectors we will continue to build partnerships with the private sector to attract investment and support delivery. We will work with residents and community groups to build confidence and skills to improve their own lives and communities.

#### Just a few of the things we have done over the last year:

- Refurbished and expanded our nurseries, creating new early years places.
- Collaborated with Slough Youth Parliament on the Slough Youth Awards, highlighting the success of our young people, and the Women Leading Women event promoting equality for all, celebrating the achievements of Slough women and inspiring future generations.
- Worked closely with local schools to raise awareness about tooth decay, improve oral health education and facilitate supervised brushing.
- Collaborated with Slough Wellbeing Board to encourage small positive changes in lifestyle, tackle social isolation, and promote good mental health through our #BeRealistic, #ReachOut and #NotAlone campaigns.
- Increased the number of people managing their care and support
- Founded a new Town Team to deliver rapid improvements to our town centre.

- Celebrated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Slough receiving a Royal Charter and held the successful Slough Half Marathon, Canal Festival, Bonfire night and Festive Fun events.
- Campaigned with the Safer Slough Partnership to combat Modern Slavery and other Hidden Harms.
- Invested in improvements to our existing council stock and developed a new app to help council tenants report and track repairs.
- Prepared to relocate our headquarters, which will bring greater footfall to the town centre and help to support local businesses.
- Become the first town in the country to trial revolutionary green technology which generates electricity from microbes which form around plant roots.
- Continued to make improvements to our highway network and trialled the use of electric buses along the Green Line.

As the council leads the regeneration of our town over the next five years - improving Slough's buildings, spaces and infrastructure - we are determined to maximise the benefits for residents and exploit opportunities to enhance the services we provide.

### **Case studies:**

#### *Wexham School:*

Students at Wexham School have now moved in to brand new facilities, created as part of the council's ambitious school places programme - a multi-million pound investment in primary and secondary school buildings, extensions and new schools.

The expansion includes a new 3,000 square metre three storey Woodside Building that houses 29 new classrooms for English, Special Educational Needs (SEN), Humanities and Languages, three of which have dedicated ICT facilities.

The Woodside Building also provides staff workrooms, group rooms, a new student reception and welfare facilities, a new library and a sixth form study centre. The existing library has been converted into two new science laboratories and external landscaped areas will be provided, along with a new staff car park, and improvements to the local highway to complete the site.

Lawrence Smith, headteacher at Wexham School: "We couldn't be happier with our school's new facilities. Feedback from students and teaching staff now using the Woodside Building has been extremely positive. Our new state-of-the-art teaching spaces will be instrumental in helping us build on this year's 'Good' Ofsted report, which stated the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding."

#### *Salt Hill Activity Centre:*

In June, Salt Hill Activity Centre opened its doors after undergoing a 12 month renovation that has seen the building transformed from a ten-pin bowling alley into a state-of-the-art indoor activity centre.

The new facilities include a six-lane ten-pin bowling alley, trampoline park, soft play, indoor high ropes and caving.

The centre will help the council to achieve our priority outcomes by bringing people together and encouraging greater levels of physical activity amongst our children and young people.

*Slough Horticultural Show:*

In August, we held Slough's first horticultural show in thirty years in Lascelles Park.

There were competitions for the best home grown produce including vegetables and flowers, and best home made items, including cakes, knitted items and clothing.

There was also a photography competition and classes for children to enter their home grown produce and home made wares.

The event sought to bring residents together, encourage people to get active in their gardens and promote healthier foods.

Holding events such as these will also help us to challenge negative perceptions of Slough, showcase our excellent parks and open spaces, and build a town where families choose to live, work and stay.



## **Outcome 1: Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful**

### Why this is important

- Demand for children's services is increasing in scale and complexity.
- As school populations rise in Slough, there is increased competition for school places.
- Some families remain under pressure with less disposable income, increased use of food banks and overcrowded accommodation which impacts their children.
- While some progress has been made, Slough has high rates of preventable ill health amongst children including obesity, tooth decay and higher levels of hospital admissions for some long-term conditions such as asthma.
- Slough has a higher than average infant mortality rate and an increasing incidence of premature births and low birthweight births.
- The Safer Slough Partnership has identified Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Exploitation (CE), Gangs and Serious Youth Violence as priority issues for Slough.
- Young people in Slough have also raised concerns around knife crime, mental health and homelessness, as well as a desire for equal pay and a curriculum that prepares them better for life.

### Our response

We are committed to ensuring Slough is a great place for children to grow up and live happy, healthy and successful lives.

Levels of attainment have continued to improve across all ages, and are above national averages:

- 74% of children achieved a good level of development at Early Years, Foundation Stage.
- At Key Stage 2, 68% of pupils achieved the expected level in reading, writing and maths at key stage 2.
- 56.6% of pupils achieved Grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs.

The council has also worked to support more 16 and 17 year olds in education, employment or training, and the borough has seen a substantial improvement over recent years and been recognised as a hotspot by the Social Mobility Commission.

We are determined to continue to build on this progress to ensure that all our young people secure the best outcomes for them.

We are committed to working closely with Slough Youth Parliament to address key areas of concern, and are excited for the role young will play in shaping the future of Slough, as we continue to regenerate our town.

Alongside Slough Children's Services Trust and other partners, we will ensure that vulnerable young people are protected and supported, and we will step up our efforts to improve children and infants' health through early intervention, tackling the root cause of issues.

### Our long-term priorities are to:

- Work with our partners to ensure excellent *educational, health and wellbeing* outcomes for children and young people in Slough.

- Reduce the numbers of children looked after and care leavers and young people with *an Education Health and Care Plan* who are not in education, employment or training.
- Support the creation and promotion of pathways to high quality employment, including apprenticeships.
- *Work with partners to further develop our early help and early intervention offer for children and families.*

## **Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs**

### Why this is important

- We are experiencing increasing demand for health and social care services, at a time when resources are limited.
- Levels of physical activity are poor and Slough has particular challenges around cardiovascular health, obesity, diabetes and other preventable diseases, which cause both premature ill health and shorter lives.
- Though we have made progress over the last year, Slough still has lower than average rates of immunisations and screening.
- Our residents have less overall life satisfaction than in nearby boroughs and higher levels of depression and anxiety, and we know there are also challenges around social isolation.
- There are also inequalities in health, primarily between different areas of the borough and between different ethnic groups, which need to be addressed.

### Our response

Central to the council's work over the next five years will be developing an effective, evidence-based, outcome-focussed, preventative approach - this will include understanding what residents think about their health, working with the evidence of what works, and supporting residents and their communities to help themselves and keep as well as possible.

Recognising the strengths of our residents, the power of community and the interdependence between Outcomes to build stronger, healthier and attractive neighbourhoods, we will work together to pilot the right approach for Slough.

Our new co-production group will bring the council together with carers, people who use adult social care and support services, and health and social care staff, to ensure diverse views and ideas are represented in the design and delivery of services, and to make positive changes in the community.

Together with our partners in the public and voluntary sectors, we will continue to enhance our shared Health and Wellbeing Strategy, targeting health inequalities by focussing on the wider determinants of health - such as low household income, poor housing, employment and air quality.

We will also seek to make best use our new state-of-the-art leisure facilities to bring people together and get more people, more active, more often.

### Our long-term priorities are to:

- *Enhance our strategic approach to improving the health and wellbeing of our residents through improved prevention and early intervention.*
- *Make best use of our new leisure facilities and get more people - more active - more often.*
- *Improve mental wellbeing and reduce loneliness and isolation - more people - more connected - and happy.*
- *Reduce the need for long term social care through improved early help and **effective partnership work.***

### **Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay**

#### Why this is important

- Though we have made substantial progress, more needs to be done to enhance the visual appeal of our public realm and challenge stereotypes about Slough.
- We also know that we can do more to improve perceptions around levels of community safety, and Slough has particular challenges around 'hidden harms', such as modern slavery and domestic abuse.
- Slough has pockets of severe, multi-faceted deprivation, with some areas requiring greater levels of intervention and integration.
- Several areas of the borough have poor air quality with a lack of public awareness and understanding of air pollution being identified as a significant barrier to change.
- Recycling rates are also substantially below the national average.

#### Our response

Slough's greatest strength is its people, a strength which can be seen in our diversity, our community spirit, and our shared determination to create a town that more people are proud to call their home.

Over the next five years, the Safer Slough Partnership will continue to develop our work in tackling key local issues and ensuring that Slough is a safe place, where people feel they have the security to prosper.

We have plans in place to ensure our town centre reflects our ambitions to create a vibrant and attractive location and our parks have been recognised as some of the best in the country.

The implementation of our new Low Emissions Strategy will enhance air quality and we will look to promote greater awareness of the importance of recycling.

We will continue to host our successful programme of events bringing together our different communities, fostering civic pride and welcoming visitors to our town.

2019 will also see work begin on our locality offer - using council facilities to deliver joined-up services in the community alongside our partners.

#### Our long-term priorities are to:

- Actively manage the impact of new developments and infrastructure so the town centre is a place where people can live, work, shop and enjoy.
- Improve the Slough brand and develop our identity as a *safe* place of opportunity and ambition, co-produced with our communities and partners.
- Improve air quality in the borough with innovative solutions.
- *Encourage greater levels of recycling by raising awareness.*

## **Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes**

### Why this is important

- Space for new housing developments in Slough is severely limited.
- Levels of homelessness and rough sleeping have increased substantially, raising demand for temporary accommodation and social housing, which also impacts the health and the educational attainment of children.
- House prices are comparatively high when compared to average wages in Slough, and median rents are above average for the South East.
- The condition of our housing stock is generally better than national and regional averages, but more needs to be done to improve conditions in the private sector.

### Our response

Slough is one of the smallest unitary authorities in the UK, and our growing population and attractive location have led to a significant demand for more housing in the borough.

To meet this challenge we will continue to build new, high quality and affordable homes, enhancing our partnership with Slough Urban Renewal.

In particular the council is committed to increasing the availability of council housing for our residents and we have identified sites to build approximately 500 more council homes over the next 3 years, subject to feasibility and funding.

We will continue to work closely with our partners to take preventative action to support those individuals most at risk of becoming homeless and improve the availability of accommodation through our subsidiary housing company James Elliman Homes.

The council will also look to improve the regulation of private sector housing and develop more effective relationships with landlords.

### Our long-term priorities are to:

- Maintain our council housing to a high standard.
- *Deliver new affordable homes for our residents.*
- *Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation.*
- Drive up standards in the private rented sector.

## **Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.**

### Why this is important

- Slough has high levels of personal car use, leading to congestion and exacerbating issues around air quality.
- The use of public transport is low compared to similar areas, such as Reading.
- Slough's business start up rate is positive, but survival rates beyond five years are low.
- Slough's retail offer is limited, but there is the opportunity to establish alternative uses for the centre of town to accommodate our rising population and create the business vibrancy that Crossrail has potential to bring.
- Though progress has been made in recent years, a comparatively small proportion of Slough's population hold NVQ-recognised qualifications.
- As of 2018, the average gross weekly pay for residents of Slough working full time was £74.60 lower than the average for all those working here, which implies that those commuting in to the borough are generally in higher paid work.
- Although employment levels are good overall, some groups, such as women, remain under-represented in the labour market.

### Our response

As a council, we are committed to promoting inclusive economic growth, ensuring that the benefits from the regeneration of our town are shared by all of our residents.

We are well-placed to exploit new transport links and strengthen our growing reputation as a regional economic centre, but know there is more for us to do attract investment and bring more high-quality, well-paid jobs to Slough.

Work on the old library site is now underway and we will soon begin our regeneration of the former Thames Valley University campus, which will provide more retail, office and leisure space, as well as housing.

We will also continue plans to improve our infrastructure - supporting digital development, unshackling the town from congestion, and encouraging a shift towards more sustainable forms of transport.

This approach will enable us to present a comprehensive vision and masterplanning of opportunities, and to encourage and influence high quality design and development throughout the town centre.

### Our long-term priorities are to:

- Collaborate on the Heathrow expansion.
- *Have a clear vision and masterplan for the centre of town, regenerating major sites and attracting investors and occupiers.*
- *Encourage modal shift to sustainable forms of transport - including walking, cycling and public transport - reducing traffic congestion and emissions.*
- *Provide residents with opportunities to improve their skills and secure quality jobs.*

4. The budget *–to be inserted following Budget Cabinet*

## 5. Keeping track of progress – balanced scorecard

It is important that we are able to provide evidence of progress towards achieving better outcomes to improve people's lives.

We have identified a high level set of key performance indicators in the table below. These will form part of our Annual Report of progress against the outcomes. They will also be included in future annual refreshes of the Five Year Plan so that we have a consistent set of key performance measures to report against – whether performance is good or bad - so we can spot trends and tackle issues to get us back on track where needed.

This set of key performance indicators will therefore remain largely constant although there will be minor changes as performance requirements change. For example some of the detailed priorities under outcomes will change as specific actions are delivered and new ones identified. In addition we have a series of statutory returns we provide to Government as well as indicators to measure council tax and business rates collection.

Five Year Plan outcome		Performance measure
Outcome 1	Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful	The percentage attainment gap between all children and bottom 20% at Early Years Foundation Stage
		The percentage gap between disadvantaged pupils and all others at Key Stage 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths
		The gap between disadvantaged children and all others at Key Stage 4 percentage achieving grades 9-5 in English & maths
		Percentage of Child Protection Plans started in the past year that were repeat plans within 2 years
		Percentage of 16 to 17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs)
Outcome 2	Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs	Number of adults managing their care and support via a direct payment
		Uptake of targeted health checks The percentage of the eligible population aged 40-74 who received a NHS Health Check
		Number of people inactive The percentage of people aged 16 and over who do not participate in at least 30 minutes of sport at moderate intensity at least once a week
Outcome 3	Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay	Level of street cleanliness: Average score for graded inspections of Gateway sites (Grade options from best to worst are: A, A-, B, B-, C, C-, D)
		Crime rates per 1,000 population: All crime (cumulative from April)
		Residents' perception survey



Outcome 4	Our residents will live in good quality homes	Number of homeless households accommodated by SBC in temporary accommodation
		Number of permanent dwellings completed in the borough during the year
		Number of licenced mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
		Number of empty properties brought back into use (by Council intervention)
Outcome 5	Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents	Business rate income: Business rate in year collection (amount & percentage rate accrued)
		Access to employment Proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 claiming JSA and NI or Universal credits
		Journey times Average journey time from Heart of Slough to M4 J6 (M-F 16:30-18:30)
Corporate health		Council tax in year collection (amount & percentage rate accrued)
		Percentage of council tax payments made by online payments
		Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting
		Percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill
		Channel shift
		Percentage of staff proud to work for the council (staff survey)
		Percentage of staff that go the extra mile to help SBC succeed (staff survey)