

# THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL



## CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2018



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## **AN OVERVIEW OF THETFORD**

Thetford is situated at the heart of East Anglia at the centre of the Brecks natural area. Thetford's beginnings can be traced to the Neolithic flint miners who extracted the prized black flint from an area known as Grimes Graves north of the town some 5,000 years ago and the ancient trackway known as the Icknield Way that crossed the rivers here. The local Iceni tribe built an important defensive fort to guard this crossing and during Boudica's time an important ceremonial site was constructed. Thetford was the principal settlement in East Anglia during the Viking period and was the sixth largest town in the country at the time of the Norman Conquest. The town was an important ecclesiastical centre during the medieval period and has a claim to being one of the oldest mayoralties in the country. Thetford's most famous son, Thomas Paine, turned the world upside down in the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century Burrell Traction Engines were exported around the globe.



During the twentieth century, the area had many important military links many of which continue today. Following the town's expansion during the 1960's and 70's Thetford is now home to businesses producing many well-known household products. Today, the town is known for being the headquarters of the British Trust for Ornithology and for Thetford Forest which attracts an ever increasing number of visitors each year, as does the Dad's Army Museum which celebrates Thetford's role as Walmington-in-Sea! The pleasant riverside walks, the romantic Priory and Castle ruins, coupled with the town's three museums, make it a growing tourist destination.

As Thetford's population approaches 30,000 it continues to evolve. The Sustainable Urban Extension to the north of the town will see a further 5,000 new homes and new employment areas developed. The town is already a major employment centre with a wide range of manufacturing, distribution and service businesses many of which are situated on the modern industrial estates alongside the A11. Its geographical location at the centre of East Anglia makes it an ideal regional centre for businesses.



**Thetford has a good rail service to Norwich, Cambridge and beyond, with 60 trains a day stopping in the town; including direct links to the newly opened Cambridge North Station. National Express coaches offer services to Norwich, London and its airports, including nearby Stansted. Norwich International Airport is only 35 miles away.**

**The regeneration of the town centre has recently seen the opening of a new three screen cinema and hotel. The pedestrianised town centre contains many familiar high street names one might expect for a town of its size along with a number of independent retail outlets. Larger supermarkets and other retail stores are situated on the outskirts of the town. A twice weekly market on Tuesdays and Saturdays gives an added dimension to the retail offer.**



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**This document has been prepared in order to clearly set out the key priorities and objectives for Town Council over the next three years (2017, 2018 and 2019).**

**The document sets out a vision for the Council and the Council's 8 corporate priorities, which are:**

- 1.To further improve and develop the open public spaces within the town**
- 2.To ensure all our venues and open spaces are safe, secure and promoting best value for the benefit of Thetford residents.**
- 3.To ensure continuity of providing a burial service to the parishioners of Thetford**
- 4.To promote Civic leadership through local and international events.**
- 5. Continually review budgets to justify need, increase efficiency and to provide services as economically as possible, review the effective use  
of assets and forward planning.**
- 6. To promote Thetford Town Council as a quality Council with quality staff**
- 7. To develop a robust maintenance plan for allotment sites, formulating risk assessments and safe working practices for allotment users.**
- 8. To progress the neighbourhood plan and governance review.**



The aim of the document is to give Thetford's residents a clear understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to deliver. It sets out what the Council intends to focus on over the next three years and in doing this the document also defines what the Council will not necessarily focus on as it may be that other public sector bodies are better placed for other areas of service provision. It is a document that aims to set out what the Council can achieve rather than a document that seeks to influence others on issues that are not directly under the control of the Council. The document will be reviewed on an annual basis and updates on achievements will be reported through the Council's annual reporting process.

Thetford Council comprises of 16 elected representatives that are democratically elected (typically) every four years. The town is divided into 6 political wards that have the following number of elected representatives:

Boudicca Ward	3 Council Members
Burrell Ward	4 Council Members
Castle Ward	4 Council Members
Priory Ward	3 Council Members
Vicarage Road Ward	1 Council Member
Anne Bartholomew	1 Council Member

The Council is the body that makes decisions and this is achieved through Committees and Sub-Committees that have delegated authority

laid out within the Council's Standing Orders and Delegation of Authority to Members and Officers. The Council itself is chaired by the Town Mayor who typically serves one year of office and is selected from the Council itself. The Council then has eight main Committees that govern the strategic direction and operations of the Council.



The Council is funded by the residents of Thetford through what is known as a precept on the council tax charge and by generating income through services delivered.

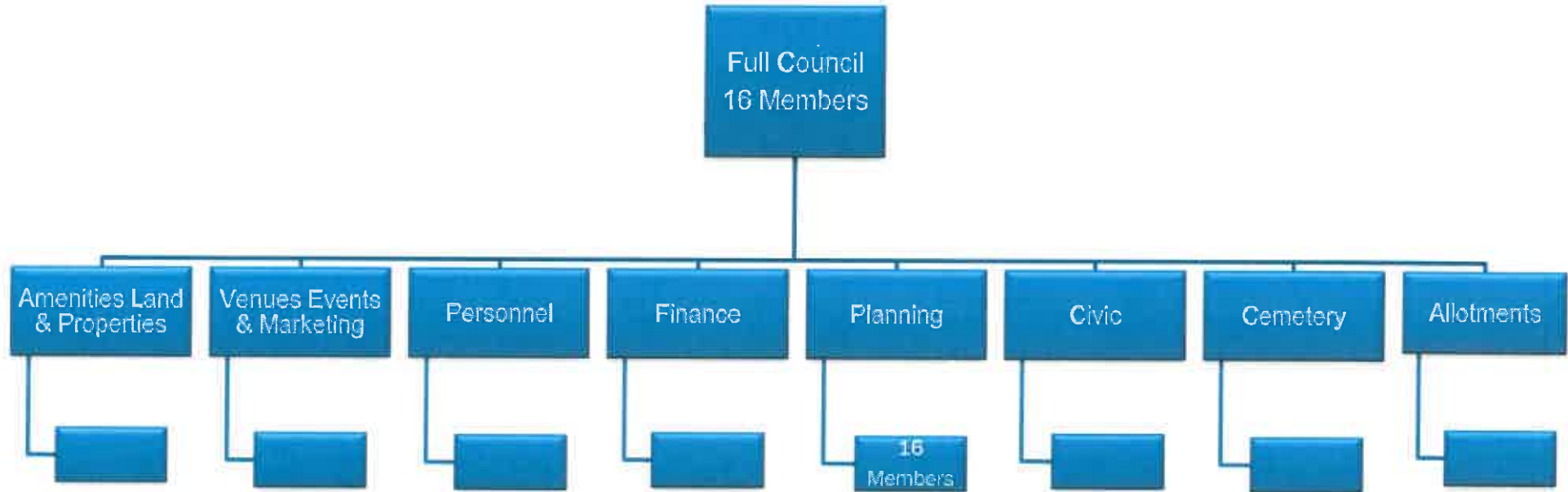
The 2017/18 budget set a total precept target of £724,766 which equates to a council tax charge of £116.10 per council tax band D household.

The Council's total net expenditure for 2017/18 is budgeted to be £781,674 and the gross budget is in excess of £1,249,700. In addition the Council had an allocated capital reserve of £173,048, earmarked revenue reserves of £981,166 and general reserves of £114,771 (as at 1 April 2017)

Supporting the Council is an officer structure that the Council employs to deliver services and ensure that all decisions are made lawfully. The Council officer structure is headed by the Town Clerk who is also the statutory head of the officers. He in turn is supported by three Senior Officers who are responsible for the Council's Finance, ALP (Amenities, Land and Properties) and VEM (Venues, events and Marketing) committees. The Finance Officer is also the Deputy Town Clerk with the Town Clerk being the Council's statutory Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The Council also employs a range of external support services including legal, HR and property support. A copy of the Council's Committee and staffing structures are set out overleaf.



## COMMITTEE STRUCTURE





# Thetford Town Councillors

Francesca Robinson  
Anne Bartholomew Ward

Jenny Hollis  
Boudicca Ward

Robert Kybird  
Boudicca Ward

Mark Robinson  
Boudicca Ward

Sylvia Armes  
Burrell Ward

Denis Crawford  
Burrell Ward

Chris Harvey  
Burrell Ward

Terry Jermy  
Burrell Ward

Roy Brame  
Castle Ward

Jane James  
Castle Ward

John Newton  
Castle Ward

Stuart Wright  
Castle Ward

Mike Brindle  
Priory Ward

Brenda Canham  
Priory Ward

Mark Taylor  
Priory Ward

Colin Burnett  
Vicarage Road Ward



**Thetford Town Council is responsible for the following:**

**Allotments**

**Cemetery**

**Guildhall/Carnegie/St PetersBarnahm Cross Common**

**Melford Common**

**New Litter and dog fouling bins**

**The council makes comment on all planning napplicatins, although Breckland district Council make the final decision.**

**Thetford Town Council is not responsible for:**

**Litter/dog fouling**

**Paths**

**Waste**

**Underpasses**

**Abandoned vehicles**

**Gritting**

**Street lighting**

**Council Tax**

**Noise/nuisance**

**Housing**

**Highways**

**Electoral Role**

**Potholes**

**Housing**



## COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLANS

### Amenities Land & Properties Committee

<b>PRIORITY 1</b>	
<b>To Further improve and develop the open spaces in the town</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
<b>1</b>	To complete a management and maintenance plans for wooded and key open spaces within the Town.
<b>2</b>	To maximise external funding for open spaces by working in partnerships with other agencies.
<b>3</b>	To establish grazing on Barnham Cross Common and Ford Meadow.
<b>4</b>	To work with Croxton Rd Residents Association to raise funds and introduce a £40,000 under 8's play area at Harriet Martineau Close.
<b>5</b>	To work with local residents involving them in maintenance of open spaces by recruiting tree wardens, play park monitors and organised work parties/litter picks.
<b>PRIORITY 2</b>	
<b>To improve the maintenance and management of council owned properties</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
<b>1</b>	To complete a management/maintenance and plan for Thetford Town Council premises.
<b>2</b>	To refurbish the Cage Lane and Castle Park Toilets.
<b>3</b>	To undertake essential external maintenance at the Guildhall including repairs to the British Legion windows.



**PRIORITY 3 –****To contribute to the regeneration of the town centre and development of neighbourhoods in the town****AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | To provide small and medium grants to voluntary organisations that improve services/facilities in the town.  |
| 2 | To improve the market place by repainting the exteriors of council properties, greening the area and installing LED building mounted lighting.   |
| 3 | To work with partnership with others to resolve the ongoing maintenance and dilapidation issue associated with the town centre as well as using earmarked funds to address King's Square outstanding problems. |
| 4 | To work with partners to improve community safety, address anti-social behaviour issues and address litter/fly tipping.  |
| 5 | To continue to improve the floral displays throughout the Town.  |
| 6 | To continue to improve the Xmas lights display within the Town.  |

**PRIORITY 4****To continue to improve services targeted to all sectors in the town****AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | To develop a youth Council to build knowledge around local democracy and decision making |
|---|--|



## Venues, Events & Marketing Committee

### **PRIORITY 1 – VENUES**

**To ensure all our venues and open spaces are safe, secure and promoting best value for the benefit of Thetford residents.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Work within an agreed venues maintenance and health & safety budgeted plan.                        |
| <b>2</b> | VEM Committee to annually assess the venues hire fees.   |
| <b>3</b> | Investigate and introduce stricter security measures for all TTC venues, staff and attendees.      |
| <b>4</b> | To actively source funding opportunities to improve all TTC venues, namely St. Peters & Guildhall. |

### **PRIORITY 2 – EVENTS**

**To develop and deliver an annual programme of events that is inclusive, exciting and engaging.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | To deliver a programme of mini-festivals and event within 2017.                   |
| <b>2</b> | To develop partnerships to enhance the events programme.                          |
| <b>3</b> | To actively seek corporate sponsorship to underpin and enhance the events budget. |

### **PRIORITY 3 – MARKETS**

**To value and promote our weekly Chartered Markets and introduce a programme of specialist markets.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | To assess option of moving the weekly Market into the High Street environs, and if beneficial create an action plan. |
| <b>2</b> | VEM committee to annually review the stall fees.   |



3	To create and implement a Markets web page within TTC Website.
4	Develop a number of specialist markets throughout 2017/2018 whether as TTC or in partnership.

### Personnel Committee

<b>PRIORITY 1 –</b>	
<b>Promote TTC as a quality town council with quality staff</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
1	Carry out a complete HR review to ensure all contracts, job descriptions and standard operating instructions are in place for all staff
2	Create and implement an appraisal system
3	
<b>PRIORITY 2</b>	
<b>Source appropriate training for Councillors and staff</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
1	Ensure all statutory training is completed
2	Staff to have specific training as part of their objectives
3	Councillors to be advised of all relevant courses for their committee membership



## Finance Committee

<b>PRIORITY 1 –</b>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO COMMITTEES:</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
1	Provide financial support to committees in the form of grant application, loan applications and liaising with other local authorities/government bodies
<b>PRIORITY 2</b>	
<b>BUDGET PLANNING AND REVIEW</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
1	Continually review budgets to justify need, increase efficiency and to provide services as economically as possible
2	Review the effective use of assets
3	Costing of maintenance plans to enable forecasting of future costs.
<b>PRIORITY 3 –</b>	
<b>GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	
<b>AIMS/ACTIONS</b>	
1	To review governance and accountability and maintain effective communication with the public in the interests of openness and transparency
2	To ensure all relevant transparency documents are available on the website for public access



## Civic Committee

### **PRIORITY 1 – Twinning**

**To work more closely with our twin towns to strengthen the bond between us.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- 1** Host one high profile twinning event each year.
- 2** Involve the community more in our twinning events.
- 3** Promote twinning in partnership with the Twinning Association.

### **PRIORITY 2 - Mayoral**

**To promote the Mayor and Mayoralty as much as possible.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- 1** Check all our Mayoral information is up-to-date.
- 2** Promote our Mayoralty more.
- 3** Hold regular Civic meetings.
- 4** Become more knowledgeable on our civic regalia.

### **PRIORITY 3 – Marketing**

**To successfully deliver and market all civic events (including making sure our events are the best possible value for money) and make sure all civic events are publicised as much as possible.**

#### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- 1** To be responsible for marketing all civic events.
- 2** Develop a marketing strategy for all civic events.
- 3** To gain as much publicity and support for civic events as possible.





## Cemetery Committee

### **PRIORITY 1 –**

To ensure continuity of providing a burial service to the parishioners of Thetford

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Review of grave spaces to free up unused previously purchased plots |
| 2 | Investigate new cemetery provision                                  |
| 3 | Liaising with Environment Agency on current ground water issues     |

### **PRIORITY 2**

Ensure buildings within the cemetery are properly maintained and that revenue earned from them is maximised

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Refurbish and let cemetery cottage for market rental value |
| 2 | Use Chapel for marriages and services.                     |

### **PRIORITY 3 –**

To enhance amenities and aesthetics of cemetery to enhance visitor experience.

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | More planting of area around chapel and memorial trees  |
| 2 | Improve toilet facilities                               |
| 3 | Research provision of a visitor centre and refreshments |



## Allotments Committee

### **PRIORITY 1 –**

**To develop a robust maintenance plan for the sites**

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- 1 Weekly inspections of sites to be carried out
- 2 Calendar of seasonal tasks to be produced and implemented
- 3 Write Risk Assessments and safe working practices for allotment users.

### **PRIORITY 2**

**To achieve and maintain 90% tenancy of allotments**

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

- 1 Publicise available plots
- 2 Monthly review of tenancies

## Planning Committee

### **PRIORITY 1 –**

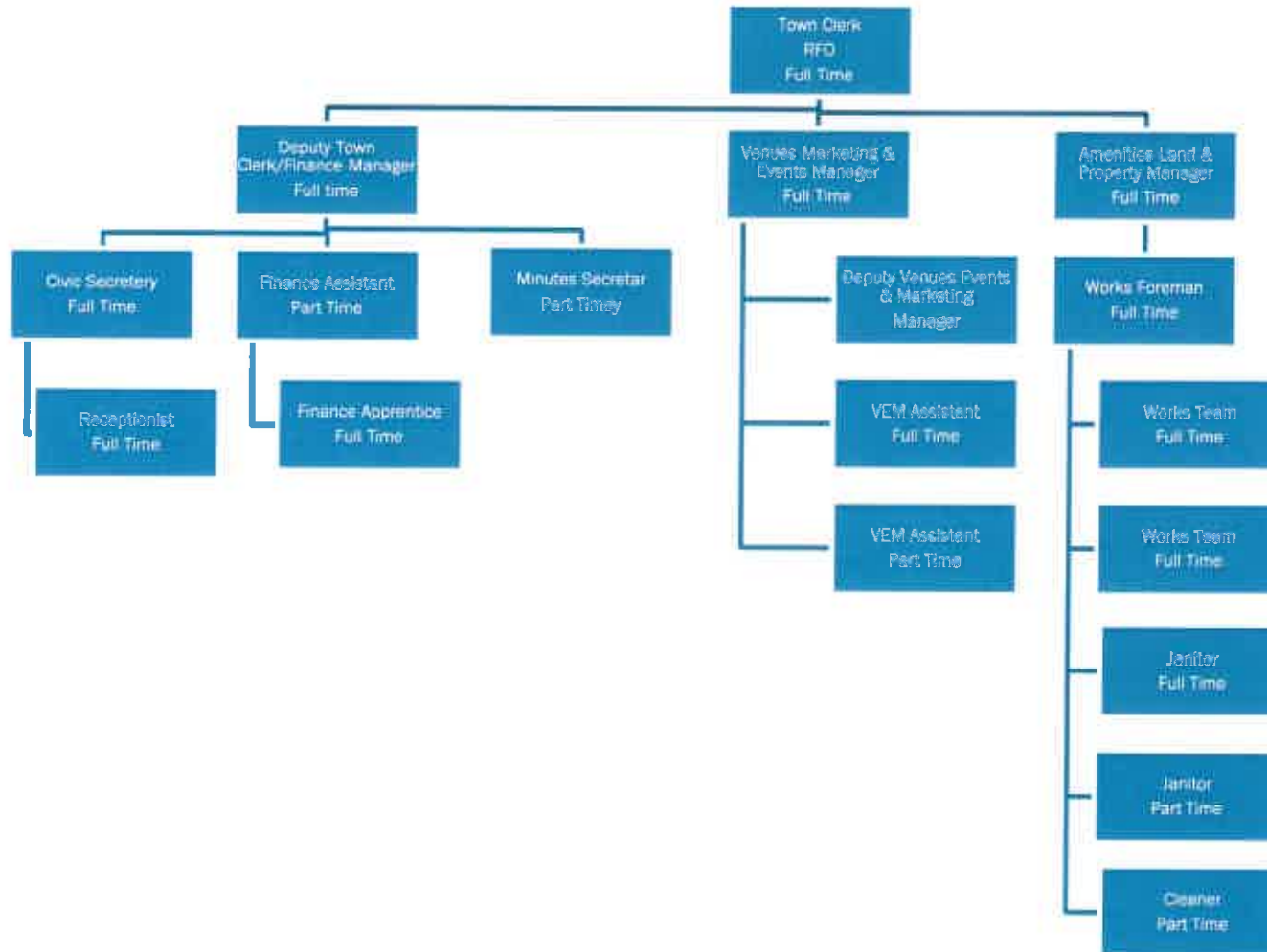
**To progress neighbourhood plan and governance review**

### **AIMS/ACTIONS**

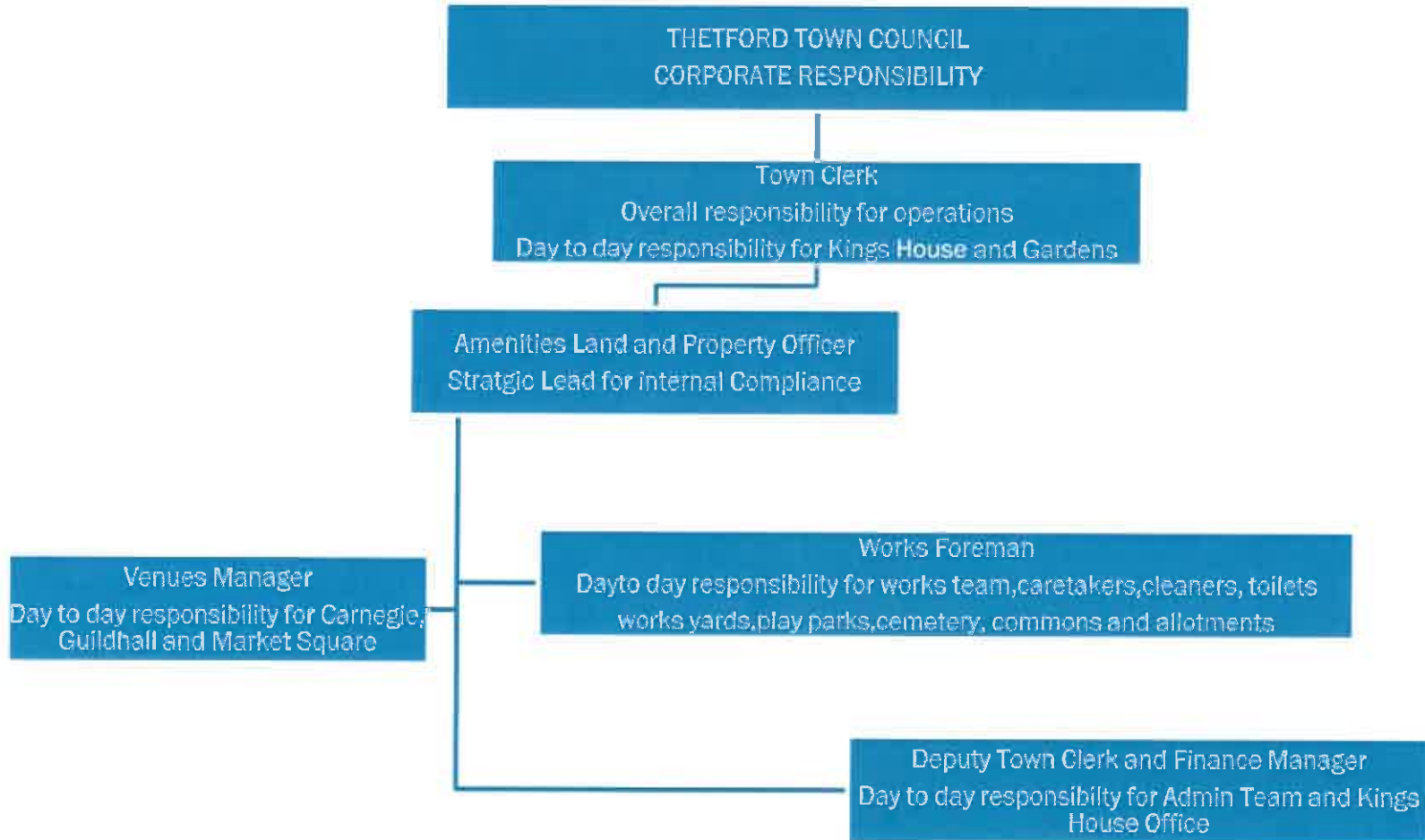
- 1 Engage in Governance Review consultation
- 2 Review Town Centre Policy of Thetford Area Action Plan and amend as necessary
- 3 Develop Partnerships with external bodies on shared projects.



# Thetford Town Council Staff



## HEALTH & SAFETY STRUCTURE



## TOWN EVENTS 2017

<b>23 APRIL</b>	<b>SOAPBOX CHALLENGE ON KING STREET</b>
<b>9 MAY</b>	<b>MAYOR MAKING/ANNUAL TOWN MEETING</b>
<b>28/29 MAY</b>	<b>SPRING FAIR</b>
<b>9 JUNE</b>	<b>CIVIC RECEPTION</b>
<b>11 JUNE</b>	<b>CIVIC SERVICE</b>
<b>23/24 JULY</b>	<b>RIVER FESTIVAL</b>
<b>17-19 AUGUST</b>	<b>MUSIC &amp; ARTS FESTIVAL</b>
<b>7-10 SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>HERITAGE FESTIVAL INCLUDING HERITAGE OPEN DAYS</b>
<b>17 SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>BATTLE OF BRITAIN SERVICE</b>
<b>27-31 OCTOBER</b>	<b>OCTOBER FESTIVAL INCLUDING HALLOWEEN</b>
<b>12 NOVEMBER</b>	<b>REMEMBRANCE PARADE</b>
<b>30 NOV-DEC03</b>	<b>WINTER WONDERLAND INCLUDING CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON</b>
<b>15 DECEMBER</b>	<b>MAYORS CAROL SERVICE</b>



## **CONTACT US**

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