

Meeting/Date:	Council Thursday 2nd March 2023
Report Title:	15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework
Directorate:	Deputy Chief Executive
Contact Details	Shazia Hussain, Deputy Chief Executive Shazia.Hussain@walthamforest.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All
Public access	Open
Appendices	Appendix A. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework Appendix B: Research and engagement to develop 15-Minute Neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Council and borough are facing significant challenges in a time of ongoing instability, including the increase in cost of living, uncertainty about local government finances, community safety concerns, widening inequalities, and the climate emergency. Often, these issues are interconnected, as typified by the Marmot Report on health inequalities that powerfully illustrates the need to improve the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, or the ways extreme climate effects in the borough are amplified by inequalities. These, and other challenges residents face, point to the critical need for more early, carefully targeted interventions and focused work on tackling the root causes of problems. This requires transformation in the way we work as an organisation with residents, communities, and our partners, to deliver the best outcomes for Waltham Forest.
- 1.2. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods is our response. It provides a new approach to delivering more inclusive, fair, accessible, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest.
- 1.3. Residents are enthusiastic about 15-Minute Neighbourhoods and have put forward ideas and aspirations, and co-designed this work. Residents have told us how they experience their neighbourhoods and what is important for them to have within easy reach of home. They were unanimous that feeling safe is critical to enjoying where they live, work and spend their leisure time. They also said that places must have a variety of offers that suit all ages and welcome everyone.

- 1.4. Our approach to 15-Minute Neighbourhoods adopts a multi-dimensional view of place. This means not just looking at physical aspects of neighbourhoods but also the outcomes residents should experience and how the Council can transform our ways of working and partnerships to deliver change across the borough. It can enable us to identify and deliver interventions to meet resident need, instil greater resilience and confidence in communities, and instigate sustainable improvement, shaping the future of Waltham Forest.
- 1.5. This report introduces Council to the proposed new Corporate Framework, 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework, and Research engagement to develop 15-Minute Neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest, that informs it.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Subject to approval by Cabinet (23rd February 2023), Council is recommended to:
- 2.2. Agree 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework, attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3. Note Research and engagement to develop 15-Minute Neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest, attached at Appendix B.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. On 15th October 2020 the Council approved and adopted the Public Service Strategy as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The concept of '15-Minute Neighbourhoods' formed part of the priorities set out in that strategy, as a model where residents can meet most, or all, of their daily needs within a short walk, wheel or cycle from their home.
- 3.2. The Public Service Strategy has now been in place for over two years and no longer reflects the intensity of the challenges in what is an extended period of instability. The proposed new Corporate Framework, 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework, at Appendix A, is supported and shaped by an extensive programme of research and engagement as set out in Appendix B.
- 3.3. If we are to address the challenges the borough faces in the short and long term, then we will need to improve neighbourhoods, but also change the way we work with people. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods provides the Council with a way of understanding what people need in their neighbourhoods and how we need to work together to make that happen. We know that many complex issues are connected, such as health inequalities, the climate emergency, the cost of living crisis, so our actions need to be joined up and local, whether this is local energy advice, cross cutting support for families, or partnership led pop up police stations. As an approach, it will support borough wide programmes and evidence led interventions specific to challenges and opportunities in local areas, all of which will help realise the Council's ambitions to ensure everyone can enjoy life within easy reach.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework develops a distinct approach to 15-Minute Neighbourhoods. Whereas other similar models focus almost exclusively on planning, growth, new buildings, facilities, and travel infrastructure, we believe 15-Minute Neighbourhoods for Waltham Forest need to be more than simply accessing amenities. We are incorporating the physical 'things' in neighbourhoods, with experiences, opportunities and activities that enable everyone to enjoy the benefits of 15-Minute Neighbourhoods, to improve the quality of life for all.
- 4.2. Through 15-Minute Neighbourhoods we are ensuring the needs and aspirations of residents drive our understanding of and response to the huge challenges we face. It creates a common vision across the Council and borough relevant to everyone and all areas of work. This will help improve the experiences and opportunities available to residents now and in the future, and ensure we tackle deep-rooted inequalities.
- 4.3. Residents are enthusiastic about 15-Minute Neighbourhoods and through extensive engagement and participatory research have shared ideas and ambitions to co-create a Vision and co-design this work. This harnesses the knowledge of communities and has enabled residents to actively participate in this process, showing what they want and need in Waltham Forest and from the Council.
- 4.4. Research has included data mapping and the development of a new data driven view to explore 15-Minute Neighbourhoods. It brings together a range of data, analyses the strengths and weaknesses of different parts of the borough, and identifies opportunities for projects and connected interventions that will support the realisation of 15-Minute Neighbourhoods.
- 4.5. Our 15-Minute Neighbourhood Vision, co-designed with residents, helps understand the neighbourhoods in which we live and shows priorities for change. It includes the physical elements of a place, such as buildings, spaces and transport infrastructure, the experiences and social dimensions, like feeling safe or having a say, and ways we can collaborate as Council, residents, and partners. The Vision presents the three elements together to support strategic decisions.
- 4.6. Research and engagement to support this Corporate Framework has shaped the immediate priorities, organised around three pillars, that help ensure it is aligned to the requirements of local communities:
- 4.7. **15-Minute Neighbourhoods is everyone taking part and fulfilling their potential:** We want to make sure everyone feels part of their community, can get involved in what's on offer in their neighbourhood and can reach their potential. For people to develop and achieve their potential, they need essentials, like warm homes, affordable food, and good health. They need to live in fairer more equal communities where they feel safe, welcome, with freedom to be themselves. They also need access to culture and to participate in ways that mean their voices are heard and they are part of decisions that affect them.
- 4.8. **15-Minute Neighbourhoods is everyone benefitting from shared prosperity:** We will create places that benefit everyone, with accessible

and inclusive neighbourhoods where residents can live a full and enriching lives. This means building and developing safe and welcoming local services, facilities and spaces that reflect our diverse communities and that everyone can access. This will help transform the look and feel of our borough, making it an enjoyable place for everyone to work, live and spend their free time.

- 4.9. **15-Minute Neighbourhoods is improving the borough together:** We will make sure 15-Minute Neighbourhoods are built into how we think and what we do. This means improving how we work together with partners and residents to deliver our shared vision. The challenges that our borough faces are connected, and our actions to solve them should reflect this. We will transform services and how we work together to create bold local actions which recognise existing strengths in residents and their communities.
- 4.10. Further details of the three pillars can be found within 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework, attached at Appendix A.
- 4.11. Actions committed to and embedded within the Corporate Framework include supporting the new Community Safety Strategy, realising the aims of the Climate Action Plan, convening a new Affordable Housing Commission, and delivering the new Customer Service Strategy. Central to the Corporate Framework is our response to the recommendations of the Marmot Report on health inequalities, building on the learning and evidence, addressing the social determinants of health, and tackling health inequalities to make Waltham Forest a fairer place for all.
- 4.12. Prevention and early intervention are at the heart of the Corporate Framework, ensuring services are available at the right time and in the right place so people are supported and empowered to reach their potential and when necessary, stop escalation to crisis.
- 4.13. The Corporate Framework recognises the Council must maximise the impact of 15-Minute Neighbourhoods, identify efficiencies and prioritise in the context of continued financial pressure.
- 4.14. To deliver this Corporate Framework, we will publish a detailed delivery roadmap in spring 2023, alongside regular updates and performance measures. This will include key interventions that can be universally implemented across the borough to ensure all areas and residents benefit from 15-Minute Neighbourhoods and targeted projects in areas highlighted by engagement, data, and insight.
- 4.15. Achieving the ambitions of the Corporate Framework requires a shared effort across the borough. It necessitates leadership from the Council and reviewing how we work with, facilitate, and enable others. Partnership working, consultation, engagement and participatory research will continue as programmes and projects are developed.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework is supported and shaped by an extensive programme of research and engagement.
- 5.2 The Council commissioned The Young Foundation, experts in involving communities in research and delivering programmes that shape a

stronger, fairer society, to undertake research and engagement with residents and local partners. This supported and guided our approach to 15-Minute Neighbourhoods. A report has been compiled, including the full range of research and engagement activities, and insight into the priorities of residents around Waltham Forest, attached at Appendix B. This research and engagement built on and considered a borough wide 15-Minute Neighbourhood Survey which received 1,287 responses.

- 5.3 Consultation, engagement and participatory research will continue as programmes, projects and interventions are developed.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

- 6.1.2 15-Minute Neighbourhoods is a transformational approach for the Council. It is expected to result in a realignment of resources both in how the Council works and ways resources are used. The benefits to residents and communities should see improved outcomes and pressures reduced for services, and efficiencies that can be considered for further investment in services and better outcomes for residents.
- 6.1.3 The MTFS is the Council's strategy represented in monetary terms. Many of initiatives in the Corporate Framework are addressed in the planned MTFS going to Cabinet February 2023. A further tranche of proposals will require some reprioritisation of resource in services and some initiatives may require one-off or on-going investment. The business cases for these will need to be produced and considered for funding against competing priorities, the cases for which will be enhanced where impact can improve cross cutting outcomes using the 15-Minute Neighbourhoods approach. Those not contained within the planned MTFS will require separate and subsequent approval.
- 6.1.4 The Corporate Framework is expected to have benefits in reducing spending pressures on the Council. For example, through better supporting the health and wellbeing of residents, reduced spending pressures in Adult Social Care is anticipated. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods allows this important link to be made and opportunities, such as this, captured in the plans and benefits realised.
- 6.1.5 15-Minute Neighbourhoods will give the Council the information to support the reallocation and targeting of resources. This will ensure the planned MTFS is optimised to get the best outcomes from investment whilst allowing planned deprioritisation of services with poor outcomes. The approach will allow the Council to work better with partners, such as NHS, police, resident groups, and the private sector, in shaping communities and services provided to them.
- 6.1.6 Many of the proposals which come from 15-Minute Neighbourhoods are focussed on early intervention. As such, seed funding can yield financial and social returns for residents and any reprioritisation or new business cases should be considered in this context. If cost savings or demand management cannot be proven, investment decisions will need to consider the wider context of positive impact on residents through economic growth, climate impact, health and wellbeing outcomes, and community safety.

- 6.1.7 The approach, being rich in data and evidence, can be used to attract external investment. This funding could be from grants to trial pilot initiatives or funding to deliver on a larger scale project through a scheme like Levelling Up. As this can help maximise the impact for residents, seeking external funding is an important part of this programme.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 Under Part 2 of the Council's Constitution approving or adopting the Policy Framework is a matter reserved to Full Council. Full Council is asked to agree the proposed Corporate Framework to be adopted.

6.3 Equalities and Diversity

- 6.3.1 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework sets out a new strategic direction for the Council. It is expected to have a positive impact on improving equality in the borough.
- 6.3.2 15-Minute Neighbourhoods can help us understand inequalities more deeply and where they exist, and stand up to and challenge inequality together, throughout all that we do. We will start with our communities, listening to and understanding their diverse experiences, building on The Young Foundation research and our Resident Insight Survey. We will drive change by realising the action plan co-created with residents in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Making a Living Strategy. We will also fulfil the commitments of the Marmot Report on health inequalities, to ensure a fairer future for everyone in Waltham Forest.
- 6.3.3 An Equality Analysis screening of this decision was undertaken and at this stage there is no impact on the Council's equality duty. This will continue to be assessed as a delivery plan is developed and further Equality Analysis will be completed.

6.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

- 6.4.1 Sustainability is at the heart of 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Our Corporate Framework is expected to achieve positive outcomes predicted across climate, health, crime and disorder. This will continue to be assessed as a detailed delivery plan is developed.
- 6.4.2 We are facing a climate and environmental emergency and Waltham Forest is committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Council has stated its intent to lead and inspire collective action and will place climate action and environmental sustainability at the heart of realising 15-Minute Neighbourhoods. This will include interventions to accelerate climate action in Waltham Forest, adapting to the changing climate, and greater local action to protect, preserve, and enhance local biodiversity and natural capital.
- 6.4.3 Residents consistently identify fear of crime as a top priority. Resident engagement demonstrates that fear of crime is not just driven by lived experience of crime, but also environmental factors; and that residents being able to influence change is a protective factor. Crime and fear of crime are highly-concentrated in hot-spots and often the causes and solutions are highly-localised. 15-Minute Neighbourhoods is a significant opportunity to target efforts to specific neighbourhoods; to work in

partnership with residents to identify issues and priorities; and to actively problem-solve with them. It presents an opportunity to rethink how we work across the authority, and with partners, to create safe neighbourhoods where residents can thrive.

6.5 Council Infrastructure (e.g. human resources, accommodation or IT issues)

6.5.1 None specifically as a result of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None.