Leader’s foreword

My vision is for Westminster to be a City for All – an unrivalled city of choice and aspiration where the connections amongst residents, businesses and visitors get stronger as everyone plays their part in, and benefits from our city’s continued success.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the City of Westminster as we know it today. It is a city that uniquely touches everyone through its history, culture and institutions, benefiting the nation as an economic powerhouse and as a place of extraordinary heritage and creativity. Our city is home to 225,000 people and welcomes a million commuters and visitors each day.

In 2015, I believe that we can all look forward with pride and optimism to the future as we celebrate the extraordinary character, traditions and history that define this special place.

Our total commitment to offering the best and most efficient services, making it as easy as possible for people to speak to and do business with us and creating opportunities for all, whilst maintaining low tax, clean streets and supporting those that need our help most, will remain at the heart of what the council does. But as the squeeze on public finances goes on, our response to the challenges that we face must continue to evolve. We must face our challenges together, helping people and families to make the right choices so they can aspire to make the best of their lives, while ensuring that people have the opportunity to engage in and contribute to the decisions that affect them.

City for All is our three-year plan to support a city that is confident, tolerant and where everybody is able to share in the benefits of economic success. It invites each and every one of us to play our part, creating a City of Aspiration, Choice and Heritage.

City for All outlines our ambition to ensure that the full benefits of being part of the world’s greatest city are enjoyed by all. It is a plan for how the council and every part of the city can work together:

• City of Aspiration – We will enable all our communities to share in the economic prosperity of our city
• City of Choice – We will create opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors to make informed and responsible choices for themselves, their families and their neighbourhood
• City of Heritage – We will protect and enhance Westminster’s unique heritage so that every neighbourhood remains a great place to live, work and visit both now and in the future

This is a plan for us all and I call on everyone – residents, partners, businesses and visitors – to join us and play your part.

Cllr Philippa Roe
Leader of Westminster City Council

City for All
Over the next five years, we will invest £60 million to build new and better homes, including 1,250 affordable homes across the city.

With our partners we will build the city’s first University Technical College.

We will continue to back local businesses and help create jobs, including creating a new enterprise space for small and growing businesses in Church Street.

We will give extra support to people to buy their first home.

We will work with, and challenge our partners, to reduce by a third, within three years, the 10,000 residents who are long-term unemployed.

Through the West End Partnership we will set out a 15 year plan to focus hundreds of millions of pounds of investment in the West End to secure the future of one of the most vibrant and exciting places on the planet for generations to come.

We will invest more than £1 million a year in services to tackle obesity and help people live a healthy lifestyle.

We will reward those who volunteer in their communities with up to 50,000 credits over the next three years to spend on activities such as cinema visits and sport.

Libraries will become the heart of our neighbourhoods and centres of information and community activity.

We will help families deal with problems the first time to prevent as many children as possible from going into care.

It will be easier than ever to contact the council and use our services online, anytime, anywhere.

Older people will have more choice and control over their care and with the NHS we will provide more people-focused, coordinated care so they can stay in their own home.

75 new City Inspectors will take to the streets to tackle anti-social behaviour and clampdown on irresponsible business practices.

Over the next three years we will invest £7 million, with our partners, in new public realm schemes, including walking and cycling improvements, and road safety schemes.

We will keep the city moving in preparation for the introduction of the first phase of Crossrail in 2018.

We will continue to remember the centenary of World War One through community events and we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the City of Westminster.

Over 500,000 people will enjoy our best ever West End LIVE event celebrating world-leading West End theatre.

We will introduce a new basements planning policy in 2015.
Achievements 2014/15

- Agreed a ground breaking £11 million pilot to support 4,000 long-term unemployed residents across central London with health conditions into work.
- Achieved our best ever Key Stage 2 results, with 86% of children achieving level 4 and above in reading, maths and writing.
- Digital Champions have helped residents learn IT skills and get online.
- Supported 68 residents with gang ties or family problems to find employment.
- Supported over 1,000 people to volunteer.
- Supported the creation of 21 neighbourhood areas, more than any other council in the country and the first new Parish Council in London in over a generation.
- 90% of residents are satisfied with our clean streets and the proportion of residents concerned about dog fouling is at an eight-year low.
- Satisfaction with the council reached an all-time high.
- Agreed a Better Care Fund plan to provide coordinated health and social care.
- Co-founded SohoCreate festival with 800 people attending and 62 leading creative industry speakers.
- Held the largest one mile event in the world, Westminster Mile, with 5,800 registrants.
- Led the West End Partnership into its next phase of work identifying key projects and coordinating investment.
- More people than ever think the council offers good value for money.

Rolled out 3,000 parking bay sensors across the West End to show, in real time, available spaces via our award-winning ParkRight app.
Volunteer
Brenda Meadows won the Inspiration Award at the Westminster Community Awards 2014. Aged 82, Brenda works tirelessly to improve both individual lives and the community as a volunteer at the community market and the Out and About Club and as a group leader in the local Scout groups.

Brenda participates in Westminster’s Open Age groups, from singing to games sessions, even leading the current affairs class. As an informal befriender, she helps to reduce loneliness in older people by checking in on her fellow members when they can’t attend and tiding a neighbour’s garden who can no longer tend to it.

With an active civic presence, as Vice-President of the City of Westminster District Scout Council and as a Resident Board Member for Waterton and Elgin Community Homes, Brenda turns great visions for the future of the community into action. The time and skill that Brenda volunteers to help her neighbours and community is an inspiration.

Communities coming together
On 4th August 2014, lights across the UK were switched off as part of the national ‘Lights Out’ campaign of remembrance, marking 100 years since Britain entered the First World War.

To pay tribute to Westminster’s fallen heroes, Westminster City Council and Land Securities arranged for a World War One roll of honour to be screened on the world-famous Piccadilly Lights between 10pm and 11pm. During this hour, thousands of people stood below the iconic lights to see the tribute, as a hush fell upon the busy Piccadilly intersection.

Over 2,000 soldiers were honoured on the night, after a list of people from Westminster who fought and died during the Great War was compiled by the Westminster City Archives team. Kaitlyn Hof-Mahoney, a volunteer at Westminster City Archives who helped to research and create the roll of honour, said: “Undertaking this research project at the City of Westminster Archives has really opened my eyes to the global nature of World War One, and especially Westminster’s contribution. Men from Westminster, Paddington and Marylebone – amalgamated in 1965 as the City of Westminster – fought and died in every major conflict of the First World War.”

Facing the job market together
Getting into employment after a long time out of work can be daunting, especially for families who are experiencing difficulties in other areas of their life. Navigating through the maze of public services can be complex, time-consuming and costly for all involved.

Westminster’s Families and Communities Employment Service was designed in partnership between the council, local job centres and key partners to help provide a solution. The programme provides each resident with a dedicated employment coach who gives them hands-on, one-to-one support built around their needs and circumstances.

For example, John*, 20, was supported by the service to help him move away from gang activity, where he was at serious risk of violence, and into work. The team met regularly with John to talk about his options for exiting the gang and build up his confidence to prepare for interviews. He has since found full-time employment as a decorator.

Another example is Aresma Haile, who cares for her three children and has been out of work for nine years. Through our Families and Communities Employment Service she receives one-on-one interview preparation, assistance with job applications, vacancy alerts and free training.

Aresma says: “I feel more confident now as a person and less stressed about finding jobs and applying for them. My coach emails me vacancies so I am able to apply for these roles straight away, which is really helpful.”

*Name has been changed
We will enable all our communities to share in the economic prosperity of our city.

**ASPIRATION**

**Our commitment:** We will support every young person in their journey towards a successful working life.

How we will do this:

We will bring about a step-change in the contribution employers make to equipping people with skills for the future. In partnership with BT we will provide 100 young people with traineeships and 60 residents over the age of 18 with work placements. We will also provide a further 90 apprenticeships to young people working in partnership with UK Power Networks.

Working with University of Westminster, Network Rail, Transport for London, BT Fleet, Land Securities and Crossrail we will build our city’s first University Technical College which will teach, train and inspire the inventors and engineers of tomorrow by providing state-of-the-art machinery and facilities for 550 students a year.

**Our commitment:** We will build more affordable housing and support those who need help to get on the housing ladder.

How we will do this:

This year we will see spades in the ground and the foundations will be laid for 350 new homes in Church Street and Ebury Bridge, as part of an investment of over £60 million to provide more and better homes and improving community facilities and green spaces. We will ensure that the whole city benefits from this investment.

Over the next five years we will build 1,250 affordable homes. We will invest £12 million to tackle cold and damp conditions and identify tenants most at risk of poor health and work with them to improve their homes.

We will give extra support to hard working professionals wanting to get their foot on the housing ladder by launching a new scheme that will give households access to housing equity. This will provide them with a helping hand to build up a deposit.

**Our commitment:** We will ensure that residents can benefit from the job opportunities created by keeping the city a global destination of choice for all types of businesses.

How we will do this:

We will work with, and challenge our partners, to reduce by a third, within three years, the 10,000 residents who are long-term unemployed.

We will help 30 people a year with learning and physical disabilities, sensory impairment and mental ill health into rewarding jobs. We will also work with employers and our partners from across central London to support 500 residents with significant barriers closer towards work.

We will create the conditions to enable job creation across the whole city – from working with SohoCreate to support the world leading creative industries of the West End – to supporting the biomedical firms of the future. On top of this we will invest a further £2 million of government funds in supporting new and growing businesses.
We will create opportunities for everyone to make responsible choices for themselves, their families and their neighbourhood.

**CHOICE**

**Our commitment:** We will connect all of our communities by making everything we do digital where it matters, so that wherever you are and whatever the time you’ll be able to have your say on the issues that matter to you.

**How we will do this:**
- We will continue to transform the way that people talk to and do business with us. This will mean that whether they are applying for a licence, paying for pest control or reporting rubbish on the street, they’ll be able to do it quickly and easily online.
- By 2018 we want every person in the city to delight in being digital. To do this we will deliver, where it makes sense, instant access to the things that matter to them – whether it is planning their care or finding out about local events – and we will provide an online hub to share experiences and make local connections.
- We know that it doesn’t make sense to do everything online and we will reinvigorate the role of libraries at the heart of our neighbourhoods, making them centres of information and community activity.

**NHS**

**Our commitment:** We will create places and opportunities for everybody in the city to be physically active and play a role in their community.

**How we will do this:**
- We will invest more than £1 million a year to help children and families in Westminster eat well and stay active. We will sign 20 businesses up to our Healthy Catering Commitment, which will see them working with a nutritionist to change their menus and cooking techniques so that they have a significant positive impact on the health and wellbeing of their local communities.
- We will reward those who help their neighbours and play an active role in their communities with up to 50,000 ‘credits’ over three years, which they can spend on a range of activities such as cinema visits and sport.
- We will launch a new Community Independence Service, providing tailored help to allow people to regain confidence, maintain their independence and stay where they want to be most – in their own homes.

**ASPIRATION**

**Our commitment:** We will prioritise those who need our help the most.

**How we will do this:**
- We will make it simple and easy for families who need support to get the right help at the right time. Keeping families together and making sure that as few children as possible are taken into care.
- Working with the NHS, we will enable older people and people with long-term conditions to have more choice and control over their care so they can stay in their own homes. Simple devices that can be used at home (such as easy to use blood sugar monitors) and a mixture of online, face-to-face and telephone support will help people self-manage their conditions on a daily basis. For those people who need more support, a named GP and a single care plan will ensure that the right support is received at the right time. This will prevent unnecessary trips to hospital and will ensure people feel in control of their conditions and their lives.
- We will work closely with partners to promote community cohesion and help vulnerable residents by tackling head on the serious issues of violence and extremism.
We will protect and enhance Westminster’s unique heritage so that every neighbourhood remains a great place to live, work and visit both now and in the future.

**Our commitment:** We will create great local places where people enjoy living, working and visiting.

**How we will do this:**
- The city has some of the finest public spaces in the world and over the next three years we will invest £7 million with our partners, in new public realm schemes, including walking and cycling improvements, and road safety schemes.
- Current forecasts suggest that, as a result of Crossrail, on a typical weekday, the total number of passengers entering or leaving Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road stations will rise to around 300,000 people. We will work with our partners to keep the city moving in the lead up to the first phase of Crossrail 1 opening in 2018 and plan for the opening of Crossrail 2 in 2030.
- We will create a greener city including launching an innovative new campaign to encourage residents to dramatically increase recycling and stamp out illegal dumping.

**Our commitment:** We take pride in our role as custodian of this great city and we will protect our heritage by managing places and spaces that can be enjoyed now and in the future.

**How we will do this:**
- We will revolutionise how we manage the city with around 75 new City Inspectors on our streets from April. The team will be on the frontline taking carefully coordinated and balanced action to tackle anti-social behaviour, clampdown on irresponsible business practices and help maintain cohesive communities.
- We have listened carefully to the concerns of residents and we will launch a new basements planning policy alongside more stringent construction management guidance in 2015.
- We will bring forward our own planning policy to limit office to residential conversions, to come into force in September 2015.

**Our commitment:** We will take pride in our civic role at the centre of the nation’s commemorations and celebrations.

**How we will do this:**
- We will continue to commemorate the centenary of World War One, through our own programme of community events and activity as well as playing host to national commemorations.
- We will mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the City of Westminster in its current form, hosting a service at Westminster Abbey and a number of local events.
- We will make West End LIVE more spectacular than ever, attracting more than half a million spectators.
94% of residents are satisfied with the area as a place to live.

30% of the population churn a year.

Over 600,000 jobs in Westminster, the largest employment centre in the UK.

75% of Westminster lies in a conservation area.

Over 50% of Westminster's open spaces have heritage designations.

91% of residents use the internet.

£3 billion, the largest night-time economy in the country, generating £3 billion.

3% of the UK economy is made up by our business economy.

21 neighbourhood planning areas.

38 theatres.

1 million people come into Westminster every day.

£1.8 billion, the West End shopping area had a footfall of 21.5 million in May 2013.

11,000 listed buildings and structures, one of the highest concentrations of nationally important historic buildings of any local authority.

£55.7 billion, higher economic output than the City of London contributing £55.7 billion to national output.

12,000 planning applications a year, the most in the UK.

43,000 businesses.

Between them, firms in Soho have won 18 Brit Awards and win an average of two Oscars a year.

£1.8 billion business rate collection, only 4% of this is kept by the council.