

**One
Partnership**

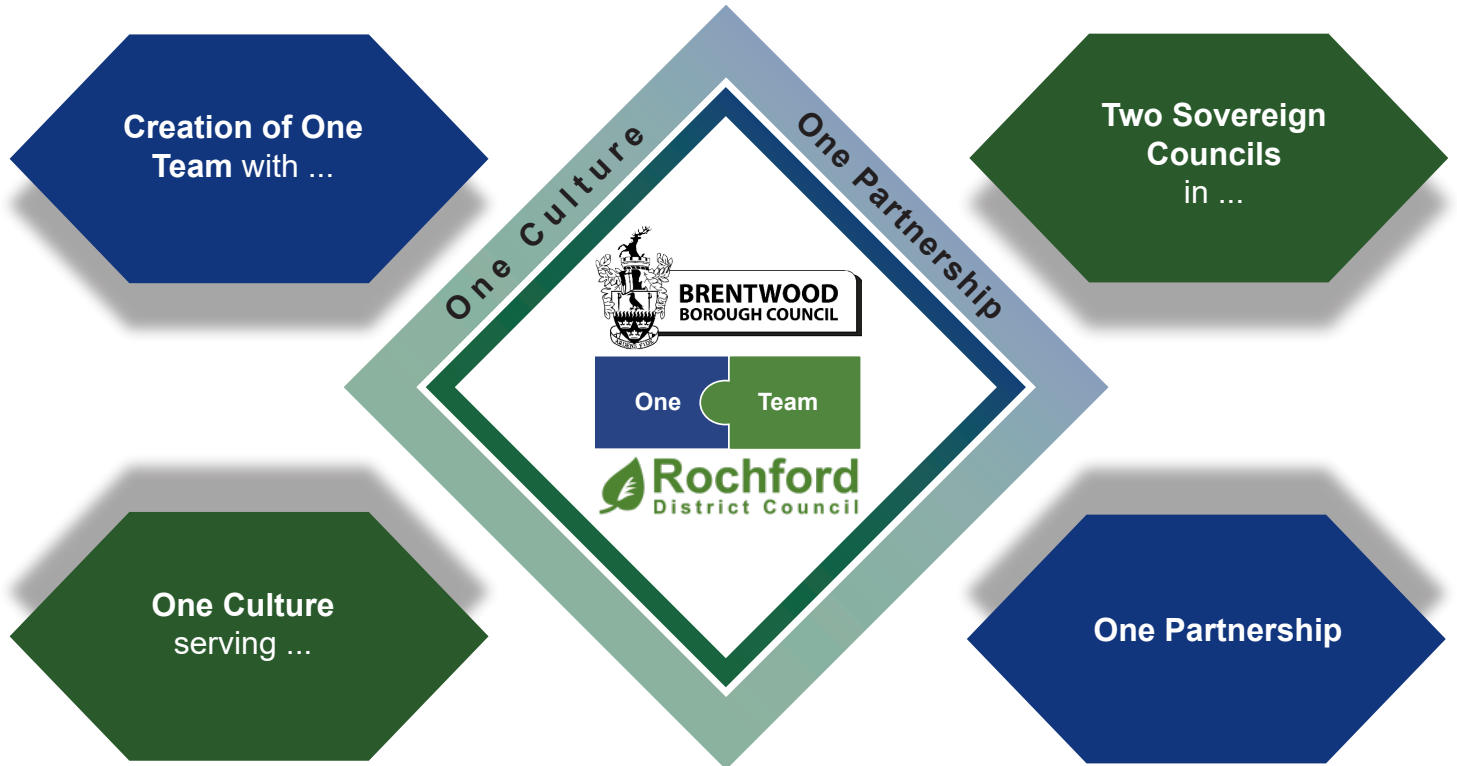


**BRENTWOOD
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



**Two
Sovereign
Councils**

Creation of One Team



Introduction

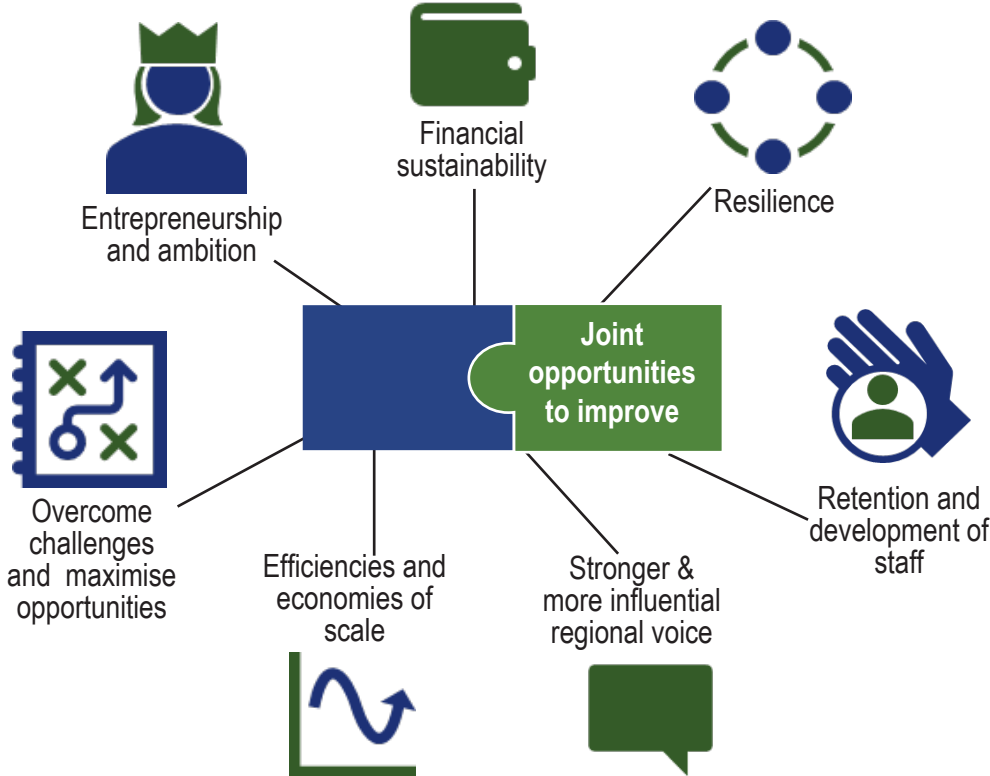
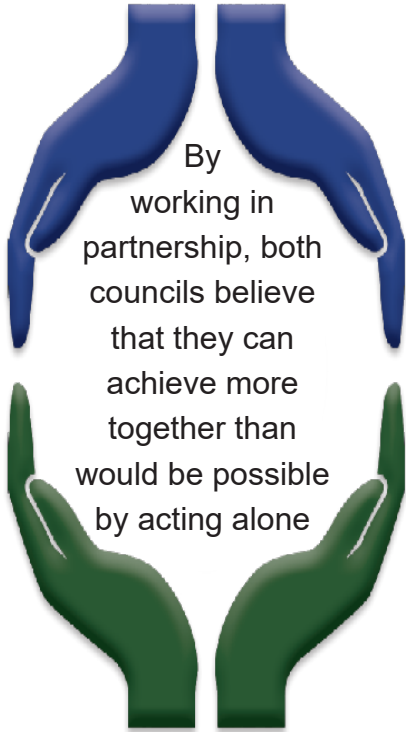
1. Following approval of respective full councils (RDC on 20 July and BBC on 28 July 2020) both authorities have been discussing at length what the proposed strategic partnership could be; what it is not; and how the two councils can work together. Jonathan Stephenson has been appointed as joint CEO for both councils until 28 February 2022. A Memorandum of Understanding has since been completed to capture the operational arrangements of his tenure.

2. Shared Service Architecture consultancy was engaged on behalf of both councils to facilitate the discussions between them; to ensure alignment of objectives and to help develop Heads of Terms for the proposed partnership. This has included engagement with senior leadership teams of both councils. The Heads of Terms were agreed on 12 November by both Leaders.

3. This Handbook sets out the key headlines and messages from the Heads of Terms and the work that has been undertaken to date to bring the proposed strategic partnership to life.



Why Partner At All



Why Rochford And Brentwood

Both are in South Essex

They already have a shared set of strategic interests as partners in ASELA



Both have a mixed economy of in-sourced/outsourced services

There is no dogma or overriding philosophy which could be a brake on creativity

There is no joining administrative boundary

There is no legal ability to merge into one council – because this is simply not an option, it removes any tension or suspicion from the partnership and allows the councils to focus on making it work

Both have similar size net revenue budgets

There is equality of bargaining power and both are experiencing similar financial pressures

Both are district councils

There is parity in their local government status

Both have similar socio economic make up and economics

There is much commonality in residents' interests

The Vision



An enduring partnership between two sovereign councils, with a unified officer team that delivers high quality outcomes for our communities, operating a one culture ethos

A partnership that retains 'local identity' for our residents and has the scale to make tangible investments and improvements for the wellbeing of our communities

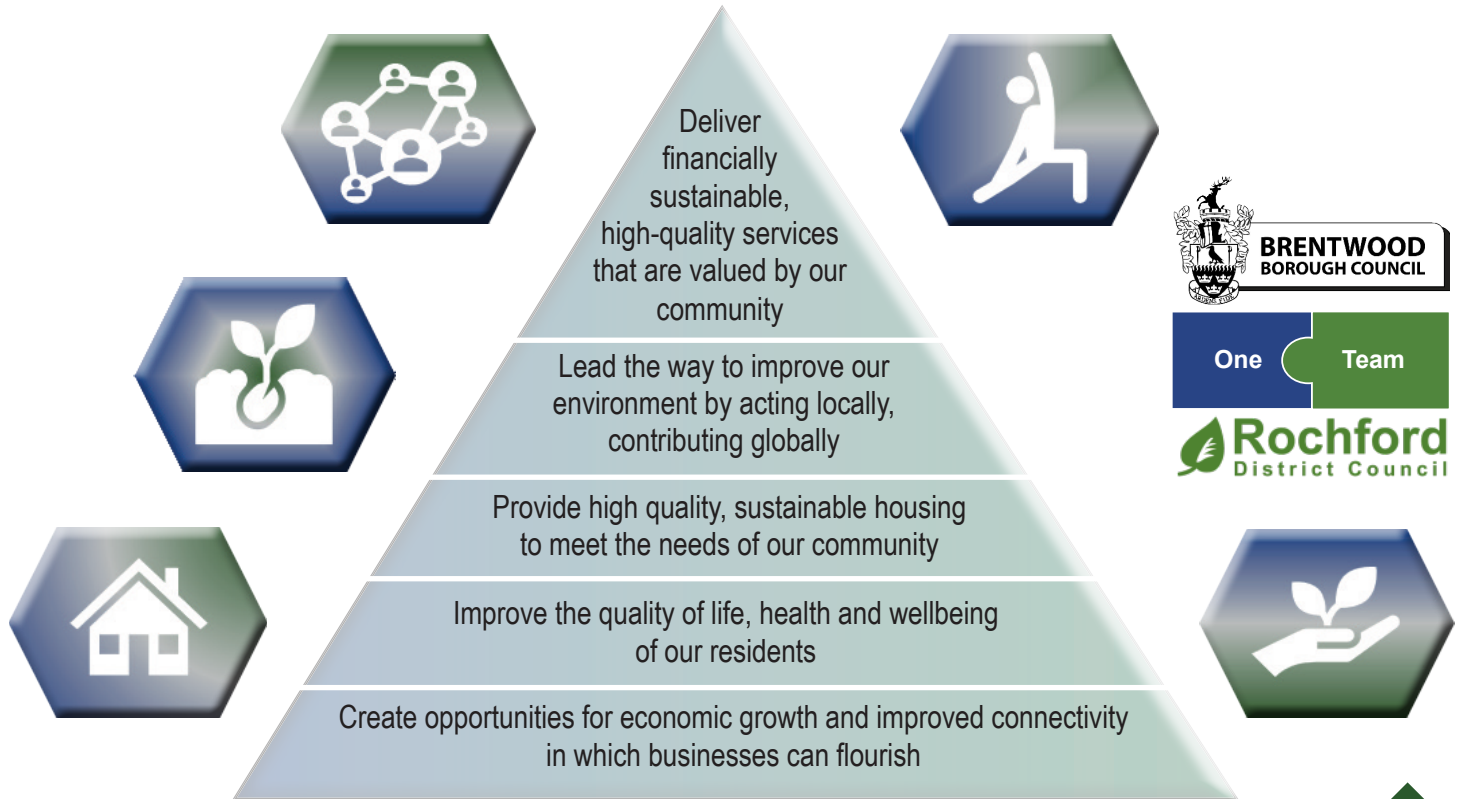
A people first partnership recognising that its strength comes from the talents our people bring through a depth of skills & experience developed further through collaboration and creativity

A partnership with greater combined capacity to manage change and strive for continuous improvement

A well-resourced and fully integrated, modern council officer team, delivering for both councils, with built-in resilience, focussed on improving front-line services and effective back-office functions

An equitable partnership that brings financial sustainability and organisational resilience to both councils while equitably balancing risk

Top 5 Strategic Objectives



Key Principles Which Underpin The Partnership

Corporate governance models remain unchanged

- The partnership is not a merger of the two councils nor is it a take-over by one council of the other. Both councils retain their own political autonomy, accountability, and local identity. There will be no change in the name of either of the councils.
- Each council will retain its own constitution, setting out how it makes decisions, provide for effective scrutiny and delegate authority.
- Each council will maintain its own fiscal independence, continuing to set its own budget, council tax and publish its own accounts.

Local democracy remains sovereign

- Each council will continue to speak up for its own residents first and foremost, even where there is an apparent conflict of interest between the councils but will always strive to secure an agreed approach wherever possible.
- Nothing within the partnership will stop the councils developing local ideas about how to best support their local communities.
- A power of veto will exist for each council to ensure that neither sovereign council will be forced to adopt a policy, accept a cost risk or change a priority that its political decision makers are not willing to support.

Neither council should be financially disadvantaged by the other

- The costs of changes and the benefits achieved from change will be attributed and shared to the satisfaction of both councils.
- No council will be obliged to break an existing contract.

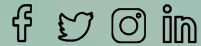
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BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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One Team



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