Best Value Performance Plan

2004-2005

Contents

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

Revised Performance Plan Requirements

This Plan has been compiled in accordance with the revised Guidance on Best Value Performance Plans contained in ODPM Circular 02/2004.

The Local Government Act 1999 requires all Best Value authorities to prepare an annual Performance Plan and this is a key element of Best Value. But it is important that the Plan does not become an end in its own right. It is a means to an end and is less important than either the planning process that underlies it, or the planned improvements that result.

The primary audience for the Plan should be the Authority itself. Elected members and officers with responsibility for delivering quality local services need to be aware of the authority's improvement priorities and how they will be addressed over the coming year. Not least because they can influence the improvement measures being introduced.

A District Council where a Comprehensive Performance Assessment has not been reported must include the following items in their Plan:

a - A brief summary of the Authority's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement. This should reflect its corporate planning processes and community strategy.

b - Arrangements for addressing the authority's improvement priorities, particularly the opportunities and weaknesses identified in the CPA self assessment, and the outcomes that are expected to be achieved as a result.

c - Details of performance:
    - outturn performance over the past year on all Best Value Performance Indicators
    - targets for the current year and subsequent two years for all BVPIs

d - A brief statement on contracts. The authority should state that all individual contracts awarded during the past year which involve a transfer of staff comply, where applicable, with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority service Contracts.

Here at North West Leicestershire District Council, (a) and (b) have been covered in the self assessment for our Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection that took place in May 2004 so this has been reproduced along with our High Level Action Plan and Corporate Plan Action Plan in Chapter 2.

The requirements of (c) are met in Chapter 3.

With regard to (d), no such contracts have been entered into during the year.

2. Vision, Objectives and Priorities

- Comprehensive Performance Assessment Self-Assessment

- High Level Action Plan 2004-2007

- Corporate Plan Action Plan 2003-04 to 2006-07

Comprehensive Performance Assessment Self-Assessment

PART ONE: INTRODUCING THE DISTRICT

The District of North West Leicestershire came into existence as part of local government reorganisation, taking over responsibility for service delivery on 1 April 1974. We are situated between Leicester, Burton-on-Trent, Derby and Nottingham in the heart of the Midlands.

We encompass an area of 27,933 hectares. We have a resident population of 86,576 (2002). A higher than County average proportion is near or above retirement age and we have very low numbers from ethnic minorities. Our main centres of population are Coalville, Ashby de la Zouch and Castle Donington. The Council's main administrative centre is based in Coalville, our largest town.

Our District is steeped in history with many settlements mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. We enjoy a variety of scenery ranging from the granite crags of Charnwood Forest to the reclaimed derelict land being transformed into the new National Forest. We have large areas of rolling clay farmland with well-dispersed villages and, in contrast, urban areas whose origins can be traced to the sinking of pit shafts in the post-industrial revolution years of the 19th century.

We enjoy good road and air transport links. We are well located within the national motorway network with Junction 24 of the M1 in the north of the District being one of the busiest within the country. The increased accessibility provided by the A42/M42 east-west link through the District has made us an even more attractive business location. East Midlands Airport is located in the north of the District and has expanded considerably over recent years, becoming a major employer and a major freight terminal.

We have no railway stations in the District but the Council is spearheading a campaign for the reintroduction of passenger services between Leicester and Burton-on-Trent along the National Forest Line. This would improve accessibility within and beyond the District boundary. Along with many partners, we see this to be important for business development and increased tourism. The issue of sustainable transport is a key issue for a District located at the heart of the National Forest.

Our good highway links have resulted in a trend towards commuter "dormitory" developments with incoming residents less engaged in community activities people with local roots.

The history of our local economy is rooted in mineral extraction – most notably coal mining but also clay, stone and gravel. The pits employed over 25% of the workforce in 1984 but by 1991 the sudden decline of the mining industry resulted in the loss of some 8,000 local jobs. Local unemployment rates soared to an average of 18%. Worst hit was the former mining village of Measham where unemployment peaked at nearly 35%.

Educational attainment was low. Children left school without the qualifications needed to meet these changed economic circumstances. The closure of the mines also left significant areas of environmental dereliction. By the end of the 1980s, the economic situation was bleak and the outlook for the future uncertain. Larger urban areas were unattractive to prospective new employers. Radical action was needed to secure the future of our towns, villages and people.

During and following the rundown of the local mining industry, there was no major government regeneration funding available to help us tackle these devastating consequences. Our focus was on working with our local communities to identify needs, priorities and solutions; developing partnerships; making the case for external help with regeneration funding; agreeing a robust long term regeneration strategy and having in place a range of initiatives that could be brought forward at the appropriate time, as and when funding opportunities presented themselves.

Our efforts to turn these problems around have resulted in considerable successes over the last 10 years. Our strong vision for the future, a determination to work together with local communities and businesses to embrace change, significant private sector investment and the successful attraction of substantial public sector regeneration funds have all resulted in the very different North West Leicestershire we see today. In terms of investment, the Council, in partnership with other agencies, attracted a total of around £16 million of Government and European funding which in turn generated around £54 million of additional public and private investment.

Unemployment is down from 18% to less than 2%. The immediate and visible regeneration tasks have been tackled successfully. An area once dominated by coal mining has been transformed into a much greener place with increasingly diverse employment opportunities.

The area has been highly successful in attracting inward investment, creating new employment and diversifying its economy. In recent studies and

surveys, businesses, investors, developers and occupiers have pointed to a number of factors that have contributed to this remarkable success:

− Excellent cost competitive location, sites and premises
− Above average growth prospects
− Quality workforce and diverse skills base
− Large catchment area for labour supply
− Impressive track record of attracting inward investment
− Recognition as a place to do business by market leaders
− A growing area with a quality image

As a result, many national and international companies have located and invested in the District, including:

− Ashfield Pharmaceuticals
− Benson Box
− Brantano
− British Midland/bmi baby
− Canon
− Copper Cable Company
− Cott
− DHL
− Easy Jet
− East Midlands Electricity
− Hill-Rom
− Holiday Inn
− Hormann
− KP Snacks
− Laura Ashley
− Metzeler Automotive Profile Systems
− Nestle
− Nissan
− Plastic Omnium
− PriceWaterhouseCoopers
− TNT
− United Biscuits
− UPS
− Wilson Bowden

Our local economy has grown and diversified. Employment is at all-time high. Compared to the UK as a whole, our District has shown stronger growth rates in employment, construction, distribution, hotels and catering, transport and communications and other services. We have also maintained our manufacturing strength. Future projections show our economy continuing to grow. Financial and business services, distribution, hotels and catering and engineering (showing a reverse of the national trend) are all forecast to show particularly strong growth.

Following a decision by the Countryside Commission back in 1990, we are now at the heart of the National Forest - one of Britain's biggest,

boldest long-term environmental initiatives. The National Forest aims to provide an accessible, multi-purpose forest for the nation by transforming 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire.

We have led major regeneration projects in partnership with others including the development and reclamation of the former colliery sites, the development of the Heart of the National Forest Visitor Centre (pictured below), development of business and industrial sites and community facilities and the creation of over 40 hectares of new woodland. Until fairly recently, this focus led us to commit some 12½% of our net budget of £8m to economic development and regeneration.

Some of the major issues still facing the District relate to a mismatch between the skills demanded by local employers and those of the local workforce, especially with regard to continuing low educational attainment. For example, we have the highest proportion of the workforce in Leicestershire outside the City without any recognised NVQ or equivalent qualification. Local workers' wage rates are amongst the lowest in the Country and many of the newly created higher paid jobs have been taken up by people from outside the area. The town centres of Coalville and Ashby are in decline and need regenerating. Coalville, in particular, has a poor image which acts as a deterrent to investment.

While official unemployment rates are low, there are still pockets of high and long-term unemployment and pockets of multiple deprivation in Coalville, Ashby and the Rural Coalfield. The Greenhill Ward is one of the most deprived wards in England (Indices of Deprivation 2000 DETR).

The decline of the mining industry has also left behind social problems. The close-knit spirit of the former mining communities is waning, resulting in a weakening social fabric and the need to take action to strengthen communities.

Our northern parishes do not share the mining heritage of the rest of the District and face distinct

challenges posed by their accessibility to the motorway network and East Midlands Airport. This has proved a valuable asset for holiday and business passengers alike, but also a source of on-going complaints from some local residents. It is now the fastest growing regional airport in the country. In 2003, it served over 4 million passengers and had over 6,000 staff working at the site. Cargo operations too have continued to grow and EMA is now widely recognised as the UK's largest pure cargo airport. As well as DHL, TNT and UPS both have bases here and the Airport is also one of Royal Mail's primary hubs. The Council vigorously objected to proposals for major expansion at the Airport in response to a Government consultation on the future of air transport because these would lead to more noise, more pollution and more night flights that would affect more local people.

Tourism now makes a major - and increasing - contribution to our local economy. The Heart of England Tourist Board has indicated that 1.8 million visitors came to North West Leicestershire in 2000 spending some £68 million and supporting 2,000 tourism related jobs.

We have been identified as being in a "medium crime area". We have specific problems concerning domestic burglaries and vehicle crime that need to be tackled. We also have higher than average rates for teenage pregnancies. We have particular local health problems with higher than average mortality rates for coronary heart disease within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. (Leicestershire Health Authority 2001).

Implications for our District

We now face a number and variety of issues relating to health, low educational achievement and social well-being. However, none of these provides the overriding priority of the regeneration challenge of the 1980s, and none is the sole responsibility of one agency. We must therefore work together with our key partners and pool resources to tackle these cross cutting issues.

We have now refocused our priorities and resource allocation to address this new social agenda.

INTRODUCING THE COUNCIL

Since the May 2003 elections, the Council comprises 38 members representing 20 wards. In 1999, we revised both our political management arrangements and senior management structures. We have subsequently been operating cabinet-style government with separation of executive and scrutiny functions.

These arrangements have been improved and developed, particularly those for scrutiny. There are two scrutiny boards - one for Performance Monitoring and the other for Policy Review and Development. The current arrangements are set out in our adopted Constitution.

All Cabinet members have been allocated a specific portfolio and are responsible for driving forward the Council's key strategic aims.

Management Team was reduced from 10 to 8 on 1st April 2004 (Chief Executive, 2 Directors and 5 Service Managers) to reflect the changes in our priorities.

Our net revenue budget in 2003/4 is £9.8m. The average District share of Council Tax for a band D property is £127.45. The gross housing expenditure on our 4,880 properties, including rent rebates and capital charges, is £19.356m.

Implications for the Council

Our changing social agenda has implications for the way we need to operate.

This means moving from delivery of good quality public services in isolation to a more flexible approach; consulting with our communities and working with a range of partners to improve quality of life for the people of the District.

We recognise that working with partner organisations and stakeholders is the most productive approach for a Council of our size and we are therefore prioritising this approach.

Consequently, we have worked hard over the last two years to establish the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire (our Local Strategic Partnership) which has published its first draft Community Strategy.

By having flexible political and management structures, changing resource allocations and priorities, resolving conflicting social pressures and balancing the Government's agenda against local choices, we have been able to develop a strong track record of community leadership.

This is evidenced by such examples as flooding (calling multi agency meetings to ensure a range of residents' concerns are addressed); the "Keep Justice Local" campaign against the closure of our Magistrates Court; creation and development of a Youth Council; establishment of farmers' markets; creation of the "Network Gold" Business Forum; spearheading the campaign for re-introduction of passenger train services between Burton on Trent

and Leicester and establishment and development of Community Action Zones in Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch.

Customer Focus/Satisfaction:

The 2000 Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys showed that net satisfaction with the way the Authority runs things overall was a disappointing 43.8%.

Net satisfaction with individual services was mixed with Refuse Collection (pictured above) at 84.9% and Sport & Leisure at 48.7% scoring well, but Clearing Litter and Refuse (22.8%), Recycling Facilities (50.3%, Parks Open Spaces and Play Areas (41.8%), Environmental Services (47.1%), Planning Services (21.2%), Cultural and Recreational Services (45.4%), Housing Services (26.1%) and Complaints Handling (-7.1%) scoring from medium to low.

Further customer satisfaction work has subsequently been undertaken including annual "Listening Weeks" by Direct Leisure Services, Housing Tenants' Conferences and consultation exercises for Best Value Reviews of Waste Management, Development Control, Housing Benefit, Leisure Centres, Car Parking, Community Safety and Central Support Services.

Citizen and Customer Satisfaction with the Council in its dual roles as community leader and service provider have been identified as a priority for further work as part of the "Better Performance Better Services" improvement initiative. Unfortunately, pressure of other work meant that progress was not being made as fast as had been hoped and, in June 2003, this aspect was merged into the Better Communications Team.

To carry this improvement work forward, our 2003 Best Value User Satisfaction Performance Indicator Survey used the full 5,000 addresses supplied by the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister to provide the biggest survey of public opinion about the Council and its services ever undertaken. The larger the sample, the more robust the data obtained and we will use this as a new baseline to identify areas where improvement is required.

We added an additional question inviting respondents to volunteer to take part in further survey work. Having established what people think, this will enable us to go back to them to find out why they think it and thereby identify opportunities for improvement. The Council must now decide whether to go ahead with the recruitment of a Citizens' Panel or continue using random sample surveys.

Our Corporate Plan includes a commitment to do annual survey work in the future to track changes in satisfaction. This will help us to identify whether efforts to improve are succeeding and to amend our actions accordingly if they are not.

Conclusions

The sustained efforts made over the last 20 years to tackle the legacy of the pit closures are widely recognised as a success story. Our regeneration activities are now being scaled down to help enable future needs and issues to be addressed. These are dealt with in Part 2.

Our approach and experience in working with partners needs to be developed further. A good example is the Local Strategic Partnership, which has produced a Community Strategy that seeks to tackle various social, economic and environmental issues facing our District. This work is ongoing.

1. WHAT IS THE COUNCIL TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

We are striving to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the District by delivering high quality services and concentrating on what the public want.

The Council's vision to 2010 aims to promote democracy, community leadership and social, environmental and economic well being.

We will work with key partners to deliver this vision. Underpinning this will be our strong focus on local priorities, a sound financial strategy and effective performance management.

AMBITION

What are the Council's specific longer-term ambitions for the area?

Our long-term ambitions for the area are described in our high level vision to 2010. Our ambitions and priorities are also clearly set out within our Corporate Plan and are directly linked to the Community Strategy. This is set within a framework of seven strategic aims:

– Strong, safe communities
– Healthy, fulfilled population
– A fairer District
– Local prosperity and employment
– Attractive and sustainable environment
– Decent, affordable homes
– Good value, accessible services

We have developed Service Plans for all services and these are linked to a corporate performance management system.

We are committed to using E-government as a tool to increase service delivery, particularly to rural areas, while keeping costs of delivery as low as possible. The following is an example of this:

We have introduced a fully electronic leisure booking and membership scheme. Customers now have a single 'Activ8' magnetic swipe card (previously had up to 5 types of card) that automatically recognises user type, bookings made, and price level. Since going live in September 2003 over 16,000 Activ8 memberships have been registered which is considered to be a remarkable penetration rate.

The new system allows for cross-site bookings, and significantly improved customer service and management information.

The most exciting development will be real time "web-bookings" (24/7 accessible booking service) from June 2004.

How realistic and robust are its ambitions?

We believe that our ambitions pass both of these tests. They are supported by sound financial management as evidenced through our medium term financial strategy.

Our finances are aligned to our priorities with significant investment currently being directed to recycling and street cleansing.

These ambitions have been developed following consultation and by identifying what the public expect of the Council.

Partnership working is vital to our future success in meeting the challenges we face.

A good example is the work on waste minimisation where the Council is working closely with Leicestershire County Council on the Waste Management Strategy and the Public Service Agreement in the delivery of challenging targets.

We have an agreed set of corporate indicators reinforced by targets and a proper performance management framework to deliver our ambitions.

How effective is the Council at offering leadership to the local community and to its own services?

We have a successful history of effective community leadership. This is most clearly evidenced by our work with partners to regenerate the District following closure of the pits. In 2001/2002 we led with others to secure a Sub-Regional Partnership based on the area of the National Forest. Whilst that was unsuccessful it did lead to recognition of the special needs of the area.

We have also played a pivotal role in the development of the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire with our Deputy Leader chairing meetings for the first year. Now the Chairing has been taken by one of our partners.

Our Community Planning Process has provided a mechanism for us to drive forward with community leadership.

<div style="background-color:green">

CASE STUDIES DEMONSTRATING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

– Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum
– Community Safety Partnership
– Campaign for the reintroduction of rail passenger services between Burton on Trent and Leicester.
– Campaign to fight proposed closure of Coalville Magistrates' Court.
– CCTV
– Community Action Zones
– Campaign Against Poverty
– Establishment of Citizens' Advice Bureau for the District
– Health Forum

</div>

Our leadership in the delivery of Council services can be seen from innovative developments resulting in service improvements in such areas as Recycling, Community Action Zones, Development Control, Housing Maintenance (appointments system) and loan arrangements for Private Sector Housing.

PRIORITISATION
Has the Council made clear what its priorities for improvement are, and what are

RECYLING: Early projections show the authority should exceed challenging targets thanks to new kerbside scheme

not its priorities for improvement?

Yes - our budget process for the last few years has been developed to enable us to focus on our priorities. In 2001 we consulted on priorities and undertook a strategic review of our services.

That resulted in the formulation of a new vision for the future and identification of a number of strategic aims and key activities. We then determined which of the key activities were to be our priorities.

We have subsequently refined this process. We conducted a rigorous assessment of the issues affecting the community.

This followed a public consultation exercise and an assessment of existing statistical data.

In summer 2003, member workshops identified a limited number of issues to shape our focus for the next few years:

– clean, green, safe and healthy
– developing active communities
– revitalising town centres

Subsequently, this general direction was refined into specific actions under the three focus areas that are set out in our Corporate Plan.

Our budget for 2004/05 and our Medium Term Financial Strategy will reflect the agreed focus areas and priorities.

Our Corporate Plan makes it clear that the Council will not be prioritising:

– economic regeneration, as this is largely a mission accomplished
– national government and other agencies' priorities that have no local relevance unless they contribute to our wider agenda
– Direct service provision where services can be delivered better by our partners

Is there a clear basis for these priorities?

Yes - in arriving at our priorities, we have taken account of local indicators such as surveys, feedback from community planning meetings and issues arising from village appraisals etc.

In addition, we have paid attention to national indicators such as Best Value Performance Plan targets, the main thrust of the Government's priorities where in line with our own priorities and specific national imperatives e.g. the e-government agenda and recycling.

The issues identified in the 2003 member workshops have given us a clear focus for the following three years.

The importance of these issues to local people was tested through a "Listening Day" consultation exercise in September/October 2003.

In addition, we also tested the issues against the consultation responses to the Community Strategy and against needs data etc, available at that time.

How effective have priorities been communicated internally and externally?

Very effectively – our priorities have been communicated internally in a variety of ways including our staff newsletter, Intranet, Chief Executive's weekly all-staff e-mail briefings, Chief Executive's meetings with the Management Network and divisional management teams. Our priorities are detailed in our Best Value Performance Plan and website. These have been communicated to residents through our "Vision" newspaper that is delivered to all households in

the District.

There are a number of examples where we have run campaigns to inform the public of priority areas e.g. "Cameras Cut Crime", "Keep Ashby in the Swim" and "Less to Landfill".

We have approved Communications and Consultation Strategies and set up a dedicated team chaired by the Assistant to the Chief Executive (Corporate Communications) to lead on improvements to communications, customer care and citizen engagement generally.

Has the Council shifted resources to match priorities?

Yes - following our service priority review in 2001, we took conscious and difficult decisions to shift resources from non-priority to priority areas e.g. discontinuation of drain rodding to help fund improved street cleansing; major scaling back on economic regeneration to divert resources into recycling and e-Government.

We terminated our highways agency agreement with the County Council to stop District Council resources supplementing a service that was not a core function. We also used housing capital

receipts to finance recycling vehicles and purchase wheeled bins.

The refinement of the resources allocation process has allowed members to concentrate on priority areas.

We have a 'Balanced Budget' strategy to match spending to income and eliminate subsidies from reserves by 2006/07 and the medium term financial strategy will link directly to our Corporate Plan.

This aligns the Council's financial capacity with the delivery of the Council's service priorities identified in our medium term focus.

FOCUS

Does the Council stay focussed on what matters?

Yes, and to ensure we continue to stay focussed, we have put the following arrangements/processes in place:

– Service Delivery Planning
– Performance Monitoring
– Member Scrutiny arrangements – workplan
– Corporate Plan
– Corporate Performance Management System

As indicated in Part 1, this District has undergone massive change over recent years following the closure of the pits. This was the over-riding issue facing the District and economic regeneration became the focus for all activity. At the peak of this activity, it accounted for some 12.5% of our total budget.

This clear and sustained focus enabled us, working in partnership with others, to successfully attract major inward investment.

As a result, the District has now been regenerated - there are new industries, unemployment rates are below the national average and the natural environment has been improved to heal the scars of industrial dereliction.

Our Executive Board does not allow its meetings to be deflected from the real issues.

It concentrates on decision-taking and information items are only allowed on its agendas in exceptional circumstances. Recent examples of maintaining our focus include:

– We were not deflected by localised flooding resulting from a "400 year storm" in 2002. Flood alleviation measures are not a District

priority but we have nevertheless worked to encourage other agencies to address problems

- Not joining a countywide scheme to subsidise free bus travel prior to 9.30am for old people (other than the disabled) because we were not satisfied this would target those in most need.

We have an extensive system of delegation that enables members to concentrate on the major issues.

To maintain focus on the Council's strategic aims, each member of the Executive Board has a portfolio for each of the aims. These are thematic and cross cutting so as not to align directly with officer structures.

Our Performance Monitoring Board regularly monitors key indicators to chart improvements and calls Members and Officers to account. Key performance information is communicated through the Members' Information Bulletin.

On e-government, we have concentrated for the past two years on development of system upgrade.

We are now moving towards provision of online transactions such as our new "Activ 8" online leisure booking system.

<div style="background-color:green;color:white;padding:1em;">

THE NEXT STEPS

- To make sure that priorities are fully known through the Council and amongst partners.
- To concentrate on delivering the Council's focus areas of:
  - clean, green, safe & healthy
  - developing active communities
  - revitalising town centres

</div>

2. HOW HAS THE COUNCIL SET ABOUT DELIVERING ITS PRIORITIES?

We are moving forward in a planned way.

CAPACITY

Does the Council currently have the capacity and skills it needs to achieve change?

Yes - we will have a medium term financial strategy to help us to concentrate our available financial capacity on what matters. We are aware of the need to explore new ways of procuring services.

Our corporate capacity suffered a blow in early 2003 when one of our three Directors went off on long term sickness. That was addressed by interim arrangements to provide the additional capacity required to deal with a range of corporate issues. Unfortunately, the problems were compounded when one of our six Managers, who had been an Acting Director, left the Authority in late 2003. This created a vacuum that we addressed by buying in specialist skills for specific projects.

Following re-evaluation in December 2003, we retained our Investors in People (IIP) status. This requires a corporate personal development review process that identifies staff training needs and skills requirements that are incorporated into annual training plans. We have recognised the need to ensure managers have the appropriate skills and have implemented the first stage of a management competence programme that also includes 360-degree feedback.

We actively embrace work/life balance to improve the recruitment and retention of employees - and also as an aid to stress reduction. We have previously been in the top quartile for sickness absence (BVP1 12).

When this took a dip, we quickly recognised the problem and introduced a range of initiatives to combat the problems.

These included equipping supervisors with qualification based training in stress awareness, training supervisors in back to work interviews and introducing a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme.

We also have a sickness absence monitoring policy. While our sickness levels have increased over the previous years we have introduced initiatives to address this eg. The Employee Assistance Programme.

We have a full-time training officer who produces a range of internal courses for employees tailored to their identified training needs.

Our recruitment and retention issues are managed well and we have a number of schemes in place to attract new and to retain existing staff. These include market supplements for key posts and use of the planning development grant in an innovative way.

We have a new People Management Strategy and a wide range of Human Resources policies in place. There is appropriate consultation machinery in place for unions and staff.

The roles of our councillors are clearly spelled out in job descriptions contained in the Constitution.

We have made a significant investment in Councillor capacity through induction and training, whilst the Council's e-government programme has enabled us to provide them with laptop computers together with training and development support through a partnership with Appleby On-Line.

Our scrutiny process (which has been in place since 1999 before it became a statutory requirement) has been developed and refined.

We have an agreed scrutiny workplan and the Performance Monitoring Board monitors our agreed corporate indicators and targets. One example of poor performance being picked up through such monitoring was the determination of planning applications.

This resulted in the Executive Board approving additional resources for the Manager of Planning and Environment to make improvements. We also decided to extend delegation arrangements for planning applications.

Our willingness to make resources available to tackle capacity issues is further evidenced by our response to the Best Value Inspection Report on Support Services when additional financial resources were made available for both the Legal and IT sections. In addition, we have also resourced the appointment of a Performance Management Officer.

Investment in e-government has allowed us to expand our capacity. We are focussed on expanding our capacity to offer services to a highly decentralised population. Our website allows us to decentralise services in a controlled manner. In the future, we plan to extend the website from an information access point to a service point by adding greater transactional capability.

The Council's website (below) was launched in April 2002 to help it meet the requirements of the e-Government agenda.
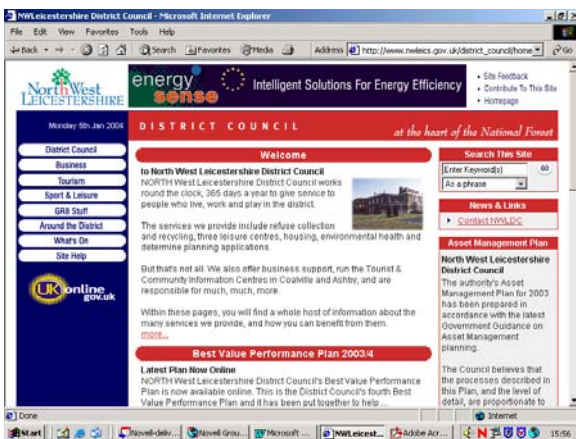
We have upgraded back-office systems so information can be shared more easily and growing customer demand can be handled more effectively. In addition we are increasing channels for delivering services e.g. web based, face to face e-enabled, etc.

We have also exploited ICT positively to increase access to services - for example, the new Activ8 leisure centres booking services system.

Are officers and members clear about what they are responsible for and accountable for?

Our councillors and officers have a clear understanding of their respective roles. We have:

− A clear split between decision-taking and scrutiny
− Extensive delegation policy which speeds decision taking. This scheme works on the exceptions principle, i.e. everything is delegated to the appropriate officer unless specifically reserved to a board or group. There are job descriptions for all posts within the Council. The Personal Development Review process enables manager to monitor training needs and personal development.
− Clear financial regulations and standing orders in place.
− Job descriptions for members included within the Council's Constitution. We operate a system of portfolios for Executive members with each of the seven strategic aims assigned to a member of the Executive Board. There are defined policy areas and partnership responsibilities assigned to each portfolio together with relevant service areas.
− Service areas with a direct link to cost centres within our budget.

− A dedicated scrutiny officer to support councillors. All councillors also have direct access to the appropriate chief officer or member of staff.
− A Standards Committee with five external independent members. This provides guidance and support to members.
− A regular officer meeting relating to ethics and probity and an up to date whistle-blowing procedure in place.
− A member/officer protocol in place to deal with disputes (though we enjoy excellent working relationships and respect between members and officers and there is a strong relationship between the Leader and the Chief Executive).

Does the Council use partnerships effectively to deliver complex priorities?

Yes - we can point to a long and successful history of partnership working involving a range of different types of partnership. This can be illustrated by the work of the Area for Mining Decline Committee, which played a crucial role in securing regeneration for the area. Before the advent of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Section 17 duty upon authorities to form Crime Reduction Partnerships, we had already established our own local partnership under the title "Partnership for Safer Communities".

PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION: Grief Driving brought the horror of joy riding to life in front of more than 1,000 young people through Grief Driving, organised by the Partnership in Safer Communities.

More recent examples of good partnership working that have resulted in benefits to the community include the Ashby Woulds Regeneration Forum whose successes were recognised by the 2001 Royal Town Planning Institute Silver Jubilee Award, while we are also the only authority in the County to have officer liaison arrangements with the voluntary sector. This has resulted in us being the first Council in Leicestershire to formally enter into a compact with the voluntary sector.

Our Chief Executive is an active member of the Leicester Shire E-Government Partnership. One

contribution we have made is to pilot a tourism information system that enables visitors to not only find information about event facilities, transport and hotels electronically but also to click through to be able to book and pay on line.

The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire (our Local Strategic Partnership) has developed considerably over the past two years with partners working well together. We have been closely involved with the development of the National Forest. The Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive are Directors of the Heart of the National Forest Foundation. The Corporate Plan Action Plan identifies the partnerships and partners we shall be working with.

Key outcomes of our partnership working include:

− Public Service Agreement
− County wide waste strategy development
− Securing funds from central government for e-government initiatives
− Regeneration – see evidence document

We enjoy good relationships with the County Council and other Districts in Leicestershire. We all work together on initiatives such as implementing electronic government and waste minimisation.

There are other examples of effective working with other districts, for instance the joint drugs executive with Charnwood Borough Council and also the joint health forum with the Borough. In addition, we have worked with three other District Councils to develop our Homelessness Strategy.

We have also agreed to enter into a partnering arrangement with the private sector for the delivery of repairs and maintenance of council housing to work alongside the Direct Work Organisation.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Do members and managers have the right mechanisms and information to enable them to both measure and manage performance effectively?

Yes - we have recognised the need for effective performance management. Over the past year we have greatly improved our arrangements for service delivery planning.

Reviewing our 2003/04 service plans, the Auditor concluded that the "preparation of draft service plans had moved service planning on to a new level at the Council". Since then service plans have been developed and put in place throughout the

Council. We have agreed customer care standards for priority service areas.

Recognising the importance councillors place on performance management, we allocated resources at the beginning of 2003 to provide for the appointment of a specific Performance Management Officer. That officer has developed a Performance Management Strategy and has put in place a corporate Performance Management Framework, which includes the monitoring and reporting of performance.

In June 2003, the Council agreed a number of corporate indicators and targets. Management has added to those in order to keep check of quartile performance. These are regularly monitored by our Management Team, the Executive Board and the Performance Monitoring Board as part of the scrutiny process. The Performance Monitoring Board is chaired by a member of the main opposition political party. Service performance is monitored at regular intervals by divisional management teams with the focus on priorities and continuous improvement.

The Performance Monitoring Board has established task and finish performance review groups in appropriate cases to look at specific service areas such as responsive housing repairs and development control.

Do staff know what is expected of them and do managers know if they are achieving it?

Since 1st April 2003 we have had service delivery plans in place throughout the Council backed up by appropriate monitoring procedures. Managers receive regular reports from their staff and in turn are required to report to Management Team every quarter on achievement against agreed targets.

Has the Council assessed the risks inherent in its corporate and service plans?

We have an approved Risk Management Strategy. This recognises the importance of bringing to a higher profile the management of corporate risk. The process of risk management has been implemented throughout the Council. The Council is a member of ALARM (Association of Local Authority Risk Managers).

Does the Council ensure that it is making its resources work in the best way to deliver value for money?

Yes - our corporate policy framework provides the basics for prioritising the allocation of resources. Our budget process has continually been refined

over the past few years and for the 2004/05 budget there was greater clarity showing direct links between resources and priorities and fully involving councillors in the process. Our emphasis for 2004/05 has been to direct funding towards achieving our agreed corporate indicator targets.

This refinement of the Council's budget process and reviews of service priorities has led to difficult choices being taken in switching funding from regeneration activities to recycling and street cleaning. The Executive Board has flexibility to react to specific problems by granting supplementary estimates. There have been a number of Best Value reviews demonstrating value for money.

We have a well-developed Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan, both of which have been assessed by the Government Office as 'good'. Sound systems of financial management are in place and working.

However, the Council was advised to pay particular attention to the Council Tax collection rates and to introduce a clear policy for capitalising expenditure. This has subsequently been done.

NEXT STEPS

- To continue to develop partnership working.
- To expand capacity by progressing the e-govt agenda.
- To continue to develop Performance Management as a way of working.

---

3. WHAT HAS THE COUNCIL ACHIEVED/NOT ACHIEVED TO DATE?

We have many pockets of excellence, though we recognise there are other areas that need to be improved.

ACHIEVEMENT IN QUALITY OF SERVICE

What level of quality is the Council currently achieving in its service delivery?

The graph below shows how the percentage of Best Value Performance Indicators has improved over the three-year period between top, middle and bottom quartile.

North West Leicestershire DC: Indicators in Quartile Catergories
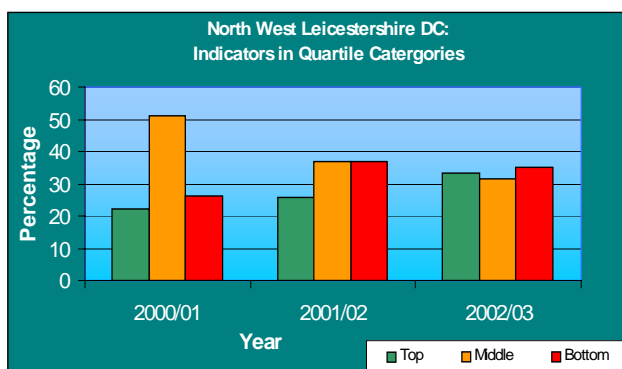
Overall, we provide good quality services. This is evidenced by the following Best Value reports:

- Housing Benefits and Leisure Centres have both been judged to be good two-star services.
- Our Refuse Collection service was considered alongside Recycling in a Waste Management Best Value Review. Inspectors judged the joint service as a fair one star service with promising prospects for improvement. It was clear that Refuse Collection was seen to be a good service.
- Waste management and recycling was recognised as an area that needed to be improved. We have subsequently made considerable progress towards meeting recycling targets. Projections for 2004/05 and 2005/06 show that we will meet not only national targets but also the more challenging "stretch" targets included in the County Public Service Agreement.
- Development Control was judged as a fair one-star service uncertain to improve. However, since that time we have made additional investment and introduced a new delegation scheme that has resulted in significant improvements in Development Control.

Both the Council's <u>Asset Management Plan</u> and <u>Capital Strategy</u> have been externally judged as 'good' (highest category) by the Government Office for the East Midlands.

Our Leisure Centres have a sustained track record in service quality. Using the APSE national benchmarking service, they deliver 'upper quartile' performance compared to our family group. Positive trends in usage and income are evidenced year on year, particularly amongst key target groups.

We have made significant improvements in Sport and Leisure. Our long-term aim to provide indoor swimming and enhanced leisure provision in Ashby was realised in 2002 with £2.8 million worth of improvements at Hood Park - another example of sustained focus and working effectively in partnership. This provision has doubled the number of users, tripled income and increased public swimming hours.

In 2003, a pilot appointments system for Housing Repairs enjoyed a 98% success rate, with many positive comments from tenants. This has been extended and will be a cornerstone of future maintenance contracts including innovative new partnering arrangements.

The Housing Maintenance Private Sector Partnering arrangement will involve delivering responsive repairs to tenants. The initial contract will be in the region of £1m with potential to be up to £10m if planned maintenance is included at a later stage.

Our Housing Benefits service was judged by the Fraud Inspectorate as a two star service with uncertain prospects for improvement. This was prior to the implementation of the National Verification Framework in 2003, with subsequent performance remaining in the upper quartile of BVPIs.

E-government has led to improvements in service quality. For example, an online bookings system for leisure facilities and piloting a Destination Management System project to promote tourism. We are also involved in the County Council initiative Better Access for Better Services (BABSI), which sets standards for customer contact.

In Private Sector Housing we have introduced an interest free loans scheme to assist home-owners to improve unfit properties and also help more people to remain in their own homes, contributing to more sustainable communities and reducing pressure on elderly persons accommodation. We are proactive in preventing Homelessness. We have a dedicated Homelessness Prevention and Resettlement Officer, set up a Homelessness Forum and invite community involvement.

We use Best Value Performance Indicators to help identify where we need to improve performance. Just one example is Housing Voids where measures were successfully introduced to reduce average re-let times.

Are improvements in line with the Council's priorities?

Economic regeneration has been a long-term success story. The significant improvements in recycling rates have been in line with our priorities and investment. Our Best Value Performance Plan 2003/04 clearly sets out the wide range of improvements and achievements against our seven strategic aims.

Is the level of quality realistic in relation to local context and constraints?

We have concentrated quality improvements on areas highlighted by consultation, such as cleaner streets. Our budget process and service priority reviews illustrate how we are concentrating investment and improvement in those areas that matter to local people.

How satisfied are communities and users with the service they receive?

The level of satisfaction with our services is mixed. Overall the 2000 BVPI User Satisfaction Survey showed a disappointing satisfaction rating of 43.8%. However, satisfaction for individual services was mixed with refuse collection and sport and leisure scoring well but other services scoring from medium to low.

An external Customer Satisfaction Survey in late 2002 showed staff on the whole to be 'very approachable and friendly with excellent customer service skills'. The results of the 2003 Best Value User Satisfaction Survey are awaited.

We have very few complaints referred to the Ombudsman that are investigated - click here for figures for the last three years.

In relation to effective partnership working, the Partnership in Safer Communities has received a letter of commendation from Leicestershire Constabulary on effective partnership working. Stakeholder satisfaction with the voluntary sector is high enabling us to develop a Compact.

ACHIEVEMENT OF IMPROVEMENT

What is improving in services and in cross-cutting areas that impacts on quality of life?

We are increasing the number of our BVPIs that are in the top quartile:
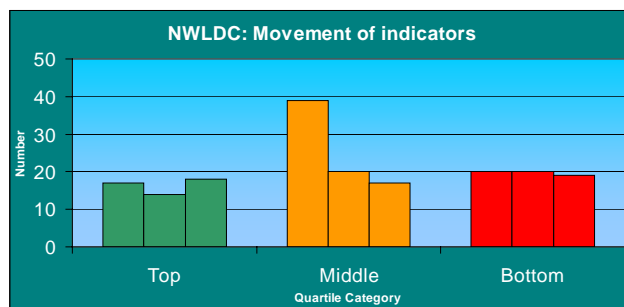
Examples of improvements include:

Support Services: The Best Value Review judged this service as fair with uncertain prospects for improvement. Since then an improvement plan has been implemented.

CCTV: We have improved CCTV provision by partnership working. The new CCTV scheme installed in Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch town centres and Agar Nook, Coalville and the links to the police and retail radio are becoming increasingly effective and make a very positive contribution to reductions in crime and fear of crime. This is important to our focus areas of Strong Safe Communities and Town Centres.

CAMERAS CUT CRIME: Councillor Eddie Palmer officially opens the new CCTV system for Coalville and Ashby

Recycling: This is a key focus area for the Council. A phased kerbside collection scheme achieved a 125% increase in recycling/composting in 2003/4 with further improvements to follow. To ensure that progress is sustainable, full on-going revenue costs are included in our base revenue budget. A Waste Minimisation Strategy has been agreed by joint working with other councils. The Council has been successful in securing a DEFRA grant of £1.1m for recycling.

Street Cleansing: Public consultation demonstrated that our residents wanted cleaner streets. As part of our service priority review in 2002, we responded to this demand by putting

more resources into street cleansing. Again in the resource allocation for 2004/05 more resources were made available.

Housing: Since March 2001, we have substantially improved the level of tenant satisfaction with housing repairs. We intend to continue this by entering into partnering arrangements with the private sector. Our Housing Strategy has improved from 'below average' to 'average' and there are expectations of further improvements.

Planning: We have improved our performance on Development Control and Forward Planning and for 2004/05 have received £292,622 planning grant, more than 2003/04 to reflect progress and improvement in performance from October 2002-September 2003.

Social Inclusion & Community Development: We have a strong, anti-poverty culture and a specific policy officer leading on these issues. There are many examples of how we are developing community cohesion and improving the quality of life, particularly for disadvantaged people. Our Anti-Poverty Strategy is currently under review.

Health Inequalities: We run projects to address issues identified by the Leicestershire Health Authority - exercise referral, 'Happy Hearts Day', chronic obstructive pulmonary disease/coronary heart disease, classes at a local surgery, stop smoking talks at local schools, junior citizens scheme and a safety equipment loan scheme.

Our GP 'Exercise Referral' programme is widely recognised as an example of good practice.
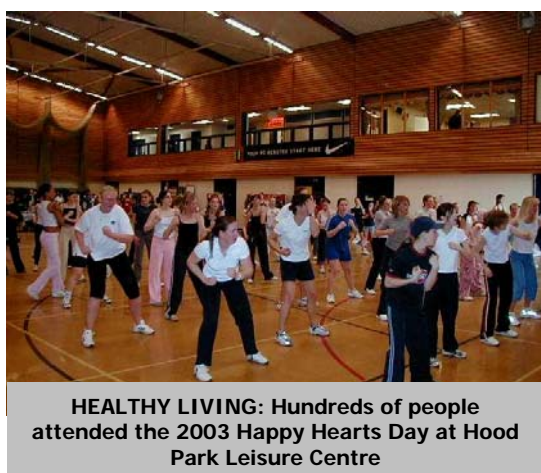
HEALTHY LIVING: Hundreds of people attended the 2003 Happy Hearts Day at Hood Park Leisure Centre

Environmental Improvements: In addition to our regeneration activities, a planning agreement secured a £200,000 developer contribution towards environmental improvements in the Sence Valley area.

What is not improving in services and cross–cutting areas?

Although many service areas are improving, we are aware that some aspects are not. Examples include:

Equality Issues: Whilst we have a Race Equality Scheme, we have not moved forward as quickly we could have with respect to equality issues. We are committed to achieving at least level 1 of the Equality Standard by the end of 2004/5 and a new inter-divisional Council-wide group will also investigate actions needed on equality issues/areas. We have met with partners to progress this and have had it discussed at our Local Strategic Partnership.

Sustainability Issues: We have approved a Sustainability Statement, though much of the detailed work has not yet been implemented due to capacity issues.

Are improvements in line with priorities?

Yes – we have shown how improvements link back to our strategic aims.

Would communities and users recognise these improvements?

Yes – many improvements are clearly visible for all to see.

How much progress has the Council made?

The constraints of our previous regeneration focus are now being addressed through the Community Strategy and our Corporate Plan to refocus Council activity on future priorities. We have, however, made some significant improvements in certain areas including community development, anti poverty initiatives, leisure services, town centre improvements and housing renewal areas.

INVESTMENT

Is the Council putting the right building blocks in place that will enable future improvements in services and cross–cutting issues?

Yes - we recognise the need for planned investment to continually improve services and meet expectations.

Investment in People: We have a demonstrable track record including developing a People Management Strategy and promotion of cross team working through the Better Performance Better Services Initiative – with one improvement team focussing on a motivated and well trained

workforce. The Council achieved the IIP National Standard in 1999 and retained it in December 2003 after reassessment.

Investment in Scrutiny: We are continuing to develop our scrutiny processes. In early 2003, we appointed a dedicated Scrutiny Officer. We intend to set up a scrutiny reference group.

Investment in Information and Communications Technology: We have both a website and intranet. Partnership working has secured significant funding. Through the e-government initiative, we have made considerable investment to improve both back office systems and "front end" capability.

Performance Management: We have made a considerable investment in performance management over the past year with the appointment of a Performance Management Officer and development of a Performance Management Framework.

Asset Management: We have an officer Asset Management Group chaired by the Director of Resources. Our Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plans have both been assessed in the highest category. We have invested in Asset Management computer software to further develop the asset management process.

Procurement: Whilst we have a Procurement Framework, we acknowledge that this is an area for development. During the resource allocation exercise for 2004/2005 the Council made resources available for benefits advice to be procured from the voluntary sector. In addition Officers were authorised to actively discuss with the NWLCVS alternative means of service delivery in order to achieve efficiency savings.

Community Engagement & Capacity Building: We have a number of community development workers. A good example of this work can be illustrated by reference to work on Coalville's deprived Greenhill Ward through the Community Action Zone.

Financial Planning: We shall have a medium term financial strategy and a procurement framework although we acknowledge that these require development and improvement.

Councillors: We have made a considerable investment in councillor development and provide a structured training programme. Since 2001, investment in training, the number of courses and attendance have all increased.

Partnerships: A Partnership Strategy is under development and numerous partnership arrangements in place to deliver improvements. One long-standing example is the successful Partnership in Safer Communities.

The Council works closely with Town and Parish Councils. A new charter was introduced this year to help guide these relationships. Quarterly Parish Clerks' network meetings have been held for some years. We are active members of a County Training Partnership.

The Council has agreed to enter into a partnership arrangement with the private sector to deliver housing repairs in line with the principles in 'Rethinking Construction'.

Risk Management: We have an approved Risk Management Strategy.

Is the Council securing the necessary resources for investment?

Yes - we have an excellent track record in securing external funding for regeneration. Furthermore, some £3.5m of funding to develop sport and leisure opportunities has been won from Sport England and Lottery – the fourth highest in the entire East Midlands region equating to a massive £40.27 per capita against the Leicestershire average of £18.37 and a national average of £27.27.

Does the Council have a track record of opening itself up and responding to external challenge?

Yes, we do. Our response to external challenge is evidenced by our IIP Re-assessment, EFQM Assessment, benchmarking with APSE and SOCITM, Best Value Reviews, internal challenge through "Better Performance, Better Services" improvement teams, the Health Impact Assessment for Private Sector Housing Strategy, our public suggestion scheme and responses to District Audit Reports.

THE NEXT STEPS

- To develop customer standards of service throughout and to develop procurement and alternative means of service delivery and improve customer satisfaction.
- To continue to improve recycling and street cleaning
- To improve the housing repairs service by entering into partnering arrangements with the private sector
- We will continue to work with the Partnership in Safer Communities to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

---

4. IN LIGHT OF WHAT THE COUNCIL HAS LEARNED TO DATE WHAT DOES IT PLAN TO DO NEXT?

We are striving to be a 'high performing' Council by having the majority of our Best Value Performance Indicator above the median for English Districts and no key indicators in the bottom quartile.

LEARNING

How self-aware is the Council about what it has done well and the problems it still faces?

We are proud of what we have achieved and ambitious in what we want to achieve. In April 2003 we produced a document showing achievements against the Council's Corporate Policy Statement. Our many successes include:

–   Community development – ongoing consultation and a focus on community development. Tackling areas of deprivation and social exclusion issues
–   Funded Community Strategy – development of our Local Strategic Partnership
–   Community facilities – we have provided a considerable range
–   Regeneration – we successfully tackled regeneration priorities following the pit closures
–   Improved performance management
–   Work with the voluntary sector and development of a compact
–   Access to good leisure facilities
–   A well maintained housing stock
–   Development of health initiatives e.g. GP Referral Scheme
–   Introduction of CCTV
–   Membership of Leicester-Shire e-Government Partnership which shares best practice
–   Cultural Strategy

ACHIEVEMENTS: The Council's housing stock is well-maintained

However, we are not complacent. Much still needs to be done. We have identified the following as our immediate corporate challenges:

–   Continued councillor development
–   Implementation of Community Strategy
–   Housing Maintenance
–   Development Control
–   Communication and consultation
–   Learning

We have an agreed Communications Strategy. We work closely with the local media and issue our own quarterly newspaper to all homes. Good communications with staff are maintained through the Intranet, the staff newspaper and the Chief Executive's weekly e-mail briefings.

Members receive a regular digest of decisions and a monthly Information Bulletin. However, we acknowledge that communications can always be improved.

COMMUNICATIONS: NWLnet provides a valuable source of information for staff and elected members
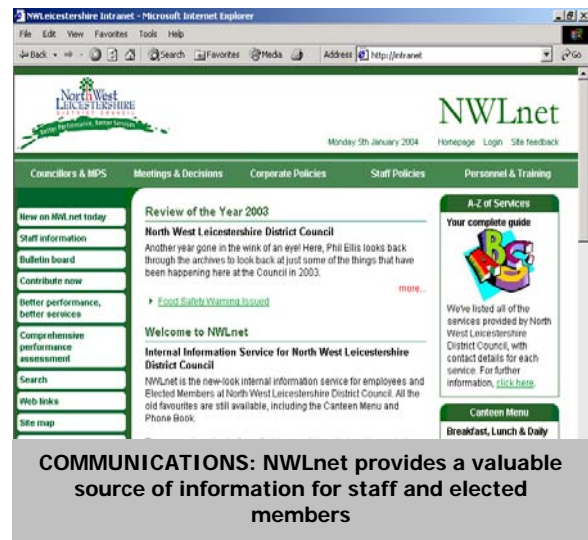
Many staff are involved in countywide groupings to discuss mutual problems and identify good practice. We attend regular political leaders' and chief executives' meeting organised by the County Council.

We are well aware that there are problems still facing the District that need to be addressed. The development of our Community Strategy has helped us to identify what matters most to local communities.

A number of workshops with councillors to pin down the issues facing the District were held in the summer of 2003. The outcomes were tested via public consultation and provided the focus for future activity.

Any challenges identified by our Peer Review will be addressed.

Has the Council learnt from its own experiences and made changes in the light of this?

Yes – our service priority review in 2001 provided the basis for us to take difficult decisions to change focus, which translated into budget decisions in subsequent years to shift resources away from regeneration.

We have made some important improvements and changes during recent years including:

- a new corporate policy framework
- new political management arrangements
- improved performance management
- improved scrutiny arrangements
- accountable decision making
- capacity building – member/officer training and development
- development of e-government

Does the Council actively learn from others and make changes as a result?

Yes – we are always open to learn from good practice and innovation elsewhere. Areas where lessons have been learnt include:

- strength of partnerships e.g. Partnership for Safer Communities
- long term financial management
- emphasis on corporate planning
- Chief Executive as a CPA peer review member
- "Better Communications" initiatives evolved from IDeA "Connecting with Communities" on-line resource

Recently, councillors and staff visited Leicester City Council to look at their housing management systems.

The visit convinced everyone that it was imperative that we introduce an appointment system and that we had the ability do it.

Many of the principles of the Leicester system have been used to establish our own appointments system that is being piloted at the moment.

Areas for change in the future where we recognise there may be barriers to overcome include:

- Increase in Council Tax levels
- Systematic arrangements for proper reporting back on work of Partnerships and outside bodies
- Development of councillor networking arrangements

- Development of procurement and pooling of resources
- Councillor development, particularly in relation to IT

Is learning shared throughout the Council?

This is an area for further development – we recognise the need to establish formal channels to share best practice throughout the Council.

However, pockets of sharing have already happened e.g. follow up seminars for staff involved in Best Value reviews to learn from the experiences of the reviews on Leisure Centres and Support Services.

We distribute information from the Local Government Association and the Local Government Information Unit around the Council.

Our Chief Executive has regular briefings with the section heads through a new Management Network.

FUTURE PLANS

Does the Council have robust future plans and strategies, including statutory plans, which set out a sustained focus to achieving the Council's ambitions?

Yes – we recognise that we must have robust plans for the future, particularly to address poorly performing areas.

We have a corporate Performance Management Framework that helps us to monitor performance data for national and locally set indicators.

We have a People Management Strategy that identifies the necessary competencies required to drive forward improvements.

We have a number of key strategies and plans that have to be assessed by Government Office of the East Midlands.

These include the following, with our current ratings:

Asset Management Plan - Good
Housing Strategy - Average
Capital Strategy - Good
Housing Business Plan - Average

A full library of the Council's plans, strategies and Corporate Plan is available to all councillors and employees on our Intranet.

Is the Council addressing areas where it has not achieved what it wanted to?

Yes – we know what needs to be done and we're taking action. Areas being tackled include:

Waste management & recycling: We were well aware that we had a long way to go before reaching the national targets for recycling. New collection methods have been implemented and latest performance promises that national standards may even be exceeded next year. We've invested major resources to make this happen and have the incentive of benefiting from an award grant as part of the Public Service Agreement and a grant from DEFRA.

Housing – We intend to improve the housing service by entering into partnering arrangements with the private sector for housing repairs. In addition we will be carrying out a second options appraisal with a view to realising our assets and transferring the housing function to a new registered social landlord subject to this not being against the wishes of the tenants.

Procurement: A future commitment. We recognise that efficiencies can be achieved and will be looking to improve our procurement arrangements. The Council has authorised officers to actively discuss with the voluntary sector alternative methods of service delivery.

Sustainability: Still a work in progress. Whilst our Community Strategy contains sustainability statements, we recognise the need to improve on sustainability issues.

Are staff, partners and communities effectively engaged in planning for the future?

Yes – our community planning process provided a platform for significant consultation with the public on issues facing the District. We also have an approved consultation strategy that is reviewed annually.

There are many examples of engagement by staff, partners, stakeholders and communities in future planning including:

- Waste Strategy
- Cultural Strategy consultation including Playday, Arts Network, Youth Council, Play and Sports Forums and Heritage Thanks
- Staff and union involvement in restructuring, priority service review, job evaluation and Better Performance Better Services (BPBS)
- Improvement teams under BPBS

- Community Safety People's Panel
- Community Action Zones
- Tenants on best review panels and monitoring boards

Having developed our Performance Management Framework, the Community Services Division is currently piloting the 'Investors in Excellence' programme supported by Midlands Excellence.

We envisage this programme will provide a 'strategic framework for continuous improvement' that will ultimately be extended across all our services.

How will the Council ensure that it has the capacity to identify, implement and maintain further improvements?

By planning ahead. We have recently adopted our Corporate Plan that is being resourced via the medium term financial strategy. This will greatly help us to drive forward improvements.

To avoid a vacuum in the top management structure and to drive forward the CPA Action Plan, the Council has agreed succession planning for the Chief Executive. We look to have a new Chief Executive in post from September 2004 to take the work forward.

A new Chief Executive to replace Malcolm Diaper (above) should be in post by September 2004.

On capacity and the important issues to be addressed, we have already shown that we have a proven track record of being able to concentrate on what is necessary and taking difficult decisions.

We have resourced improvement plans following Best Value Reviews. These are monitored and illustrate our ability to ensure we have the capacity to improve.

Our e-government agenda will continue to develop. Our website will get transactional capability. We will be considering new channels

such as 'Text Capability' (already in use for Building Control Services) for service provision.

Does the Council regularly reassess its future plans and capacity in line with changing national and community priorities?

Yes – to maintain continuous improvement we recognise that we must closely monitor and address future plans.

We will be keeping the following issues in mind:

– recognising over-trading
– Maintaining focus on service delivery and customer satisfaction
– Reassessment of current and future needs

NEXT STEPS

To have in place mechanisms for sharing learning throughout the Council.

We will continue to modernise the Council and have in place a change management agenda to do this
We will transfer the housing function subject to our tenants agreeing with this.

The Council is now changing. The way we see ourselves and the way others see us has moved on. Traditional expectations that we will provide all our services directly cannot be maintained. We have new challenges to face, so our old ways of working will have to change.

High Level Action Plan
2004-2007

HIGH LEVEL ACTION PLAN 2004–2007

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES

KEY TASKS	MILESTONES 2004-2007	PERIOD
Work with the LSP and Partners to develop effective arrangements for the engagement of local communities and inform policy development and decision making	– Assess the degree of alignment of the objectives, decision making, performance management and delivery of the Council's services and activities to the Community Strategy	April – Sept 04
Develop more effective partnership working	– Review key partnerships to assess effectiveness and appropriateness, identify gaps and determine future action	April – Sept 04
Review engagement at regional and sub regional level	– Carry out audit of regional and sub regional activities and opportunities, benefits and cost of involvement	Oct – Dec 04
To work with the Partnership in Safer Communities to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	– Appoint an anti social behaviour co-ordinator – Deliver on targets in County Public Service Agreement – Monitor and review effectiveness of the Partnership	April – June 04 As in PSA to March 06 ongoing

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

KEY TASKS	MILESTONES 2004-2007	PERIOD
To continue with the development of the Council	– Engage consultants to manage succession planning – Appoint new Chief Executive – Review top management structure – Produce project plan to implement structural and cultural changes	April – July 04 July – Sept 04 Oct 04 – Mar 05 Apr - July 05
Explore alternative service delivery mechanisms and procurement of services	– Establish member/officer Management Group to review procurement options – Undertake procurement health check/diagnostic – Produce project plan to review procurement of services and to deliver National Procurement Strategy requirements	April 04 April - Sept 04 By 2006
Work with partners to revitalise Ashby and Coalville Town Centres	– Agree Action Plans – Establish funding framework to deliver action plans – Deliver Action Plans	July – Sept 04 Apr – Oct 04 Oct 04 – Mar 07 onwards
Secure arrangements for achieving affordable housing targets	– Produce plan to deliver the identified affordable housing targets	April – Sept 04

Secure arrangements for future management of the housing stock	– Produce project plans for
	  ▪ managing the options appraisal
	  ▪ managing the outcome of the appraisal
	– Implement outcome including tenants ballot
		
		July – Oct 04
		Oct 04 – May 05
		Dec 05

SERVICE PRIORITIES

KEY TASKS	MILESTONES 2004-2007	PERIOD
Deliver improved services in line with national and local priorities	– Increase recycling in accordance with statutory targets – Increase street cleansing to meet local priorities and targets	As in PSA to March 06 Ongoing
Improve the housing repairs service	– Carry out risk assessment of issues including capacity, IT support – Site visit to examine best practice in an area where partnering has been successfully implemented – Publish OJEC notice and enter into discussions with prospective partners – Enter into a formal contract	April – June 04 April – June 04 July – Sept 04 Jan – Apr 05

Corporate Plan Action Plan
2004-05 to 2006-07

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 1. HIGH QUALITY, GOOD VALUE LOCAL SERVICES							
1.1 Leadership, Policy and Strategy							
1.1.1 Strategic focus and successful management of change.	a) 3 Focus Areas identified. b) Continue modernisation of the Council. c) Effect cultural change in performance management, communications, and training and motivating staff.	All Divisions and Members. Stakeholders.	Existing resources used more effectively to address needs of Focus Areas.	• Engage consults to manage succession planning of Chief Exec. • Action Plans for 3 Focus Areas. • Develop Improvement Strategies to manage change effectively.	June 2004 2004/05 2004/05	Improvement Action Plans. HR Strategy.	Improveme nt Teams/ MT
1.1.2 More effective Scrutiny and Executive functions.	a) Clearly define roles and processes for Scrutiny and Executive functions. b) Annual work plan for Scrutiny activity.	Scrutiny and Executive Board Members.	Existing resources.	• Scrutiny Systems and Processes clearly defined. • Produce Annual Scrutiny Work Plan	2004/05 2004/05	Council Constitution	Members/ MT
1.2 Resources and Partnerships							
1.2.1 More effective use of resources to deliver Council priorities.	a) Adopt a robust and strategic approach to financial management. b) Undertake structured and systematic review of all services and base budgets to ensure the Council's key aims and priorities are addressed and meaningful and measurable outputs are delivered. c) Explore alternative service delivery mechanisms and procurement of services. d) Adopt consistent and improved procurement practices.	All divisions. Other public sector partners. Private sector. IDeA LSEP	Existing resources to be directed at key aims and priorities and related to outputs.	• Medium Term Financial Strategy. • New resources allocation and monitoring system. • Agree Corporate minimum standards for statutory services. • Protocol and processes for review of options for service provision. • Complete systematic review all services and base budgets. • Complete review of service delivery. • Produce Procurement strategy and action plan.	April 2004 2004//05 2004/05 2004/05 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06	Community Strategy Service Delivery Plans Procurement Framework.	Director of Resources
1.2.2 More effective partnership working.	a) Review effectiveness/appropriateness of key Council partnerships. b) Review engagement at regional and sub-regional level. c) Play leading role in the delivery and review of the Community Strategy. d) Secure effective engagement and commitment of LSP partners, ensuring partner objectives and actions are aligned to Community Strategy. e) Develop charter with Parish Councils. f) Ensure Corporate Plan aligned to Community Strategy.	GOEM. Parish Councils. LSP partners. County LSP. LSEP. Regional Assembly.	Existing resources used more effectively. May require review of resources required to participate in valued partnership. Seek resources from partners for management of LSP and delivery of Community Strategy.	• Complete a review of key partnerships. • Complete audit of regional and sub regional activities and opportunities, benefits and cost of involvement • BVPI 16 Review Community Strategy and Action Plan. • Produce LSP Alignment Plan. • Agree Charter with all Parish Councils.	September 2004 2004/05 2004 and every three years 2004/05 2004/05	Partnership strategies. Community Strategy and Action Plan	Director (External)

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we will need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 1. HIGH QUALITY, GOOD VALUE LOCAL SERVICES (CONT.)							
1.3 Effective Systems and Processes							
1.3.1 Improved service planning and performance management.	a) Embed agreed performance management framework across all services and monitor effectiveness, especially quality of reporting and measurement of performance. b) Undertake programme of consultation with stakeholders and partners to monitor needs and priorities and levels of satisfaction with Council services.	All divisions. Corporate Support Unit.	Existing resources.	• Performance Management Framework operated in all services.	April 2004	Service Delivery Plans Consultation Strategy	MT
				• Communications and Consultation Strategies fully implemented and monitored.	2004/05		
				• Consultation with stakeholders and partners.	March 2005		
1.4 Customer and Public Service Quality and Satisfaction							
1.4.1 Deliver improved services in line with national and local targets.	a) Targeted improvement of service BVPI's currently in bottom quartile. b) Maintain upper quartile performance.	All divisions. Corporate Support Unit. Stakeholders. Citizen Panel Partners	Refocusing of existing resources required. Additional resources required in 2005/06 onwards to raise standards of service BVPI's currently in bottom quartile.	• Produce Improvement Plan for services in bottom quartile.	July 2004	BVPP	MT
				• BVPI 3 – 62% citizens satisfied with Council services (2003/04).	2004/05		
				• NWLDC 08 – At least 50% BVPI's within top 25% district councils.	2005/06		
				• NWLDC 09 – No more than 15% of service BVPI's within lower 25%	2006/07		
				• No Council service BVPI's in bottom quartile.	2006/07		
				• All service BVPI's above average.	2006/07		
1.4.2 Widened choice for the local community to access our services.	a) Electronic Service Delivery for all services where possible through implementation of annual e-Government Plan and monitoring effectiveness.	All divisions. County and District Councils. Stakeholders. Other partners.	Significant additional funding required to be secured through government grant. Require changes to work practices and service delivery.	• BVPI 157 – 77.77% of permissible services delivered electronically.	2004/05	IEG Statements IT Strategy	e-Govt. Working Party
				• Review IT Strategy.	2004/05		
				• Improve Council website and monitor effectiveness.	2004/05		
				• Integration of "back office" ESD systems.	2005/06		
				• BVPI 157 – 100% of permissible services delivered electronically.	2005/06		

Page 30

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we will need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 2. STRONG, SAFE COMMUNITIES							
2.1 Reduction in crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.	a) Ensure cross-divisional working within the Council services to achieve this aim. b) Focus Council support on tackling vehicle crime, domestic burglary, drug abuse, domestic violence and anti-social behaviour (ASB). c) Improve co-ordination within the Council, and with Police and Social Services on ASB. d) Provide leadership and officer support to the NWL Partnership in Safer Communities.	Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services. NWL Partnership in Safer Communities. Local Strategic Partnership. Community Safety Officers. Primary Care Trust Police. Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership.	Monitor level of resources required over the next three years to help deliver priorities targets. Work with partners to maximise use of partner resources to deliver targets in Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. Government fixed term funding for ASB co-ordinator.	• ASB Co-ordinator in place. • Review contribution and alignment of Council services. • Deliver on targets in County Public Service Agreement • BVPI 128a – 12.7 vehicle crimes per 1,000 population. • BVPI 126a – 9 domestic burglaries per 1,000 pop. • BVPI 176 - 0.7 domestic violence refuges/1,000 pop. • Review performance of NWL Partnership in Safer Communities.	April 2004 2004/05 As per PSA 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05	Community Strategy. Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy BVR Community Safety and Improvement Plan. Communities Against Drugs Strategy	NWL Partnership in Safer Communities/ Communities Against Drugs Executive.
AIM 3. HEALTHY, FULFILLED POPULATION							
3.1 Reduction in health inequalities.	a) Focus Council support on tackling coronary heart, respiratory diseases, cancer teenage health and accident prevention. b) Support campaign to increase participation of local residents in regular sport and physical activity.	Local Strategic Partnership. Primary Care Trust, GP's. Locality Public Health Team. Health Forum. Social Services (accident prevention). Youth workers (teenage health). Trading Standards. Police. Fire and Rescue. Local Businesses. Cultural Strategy Sub-Group Leisure centres.	Use of existing resources, partner resources and other external resources. Resources more clearly directed to meet local needs.	• Produce Health Action Plan with the Health Forum. • NWLDC 33 – 18 Health Improvement Initiatives. • Produce Public Health Strategy with the PCT. • Produce a Lifestyle Strategy with key partners, focusing on young people and disadvantaged groups and accessibility issues. • NWLDC – 90% GP Referral rate. • BVPI 119 55% residents satisfied with sport and leisure services. • NWLDC 03 – 9,723 users of leisure centre per 1,000 pop.	August 2004 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05	Community Strategy Health Strategy. Leisure Strategy. Cultural Strategy. National Service Frameworks. East Midlands Health Strategy	CSD
3.2 Working towards maximising the talents and abilities of local people.	a) Support partners in promoting lifelong learning. b) Support new Local Learning Forum learning strategy. c) Encourage workbased training and investment E.g. IIP.	Leicestershire Learning Partnership. Local Learning Forum Learning and Skills Council.	Use partner resources more effectively to address the learning needs in the District.	• Local learning strategy in place.	2004/05	Community Strategy. LSC Strategy LSEP Strategy	CSD/P&ED

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 4. A FAIRER DISTRICT							
4.1 Reduction in poverty, social exclusion and deprivation.	a) Focus Council support on tackling areas of multiple deprivation and the socially excluded. b) Ensure cross-divisional working within the Council services to achieve this aim. c) Provide leadership and support to the community action zones: Greenhill and Ashby. d) Ensure action within deprived areas focussed on clear strategies and action plans. e) Review Anti-poverty Strategy.	Ashby CAZ. Greenhill CAZ. Advice Forum. Local residents. Partners. PCT. Faith Groups. County Council Education. Housing Associations. NWLCVS.	More effective use of partner resources to meet local need. Seek other external resources.	• Review contribution and alignment of Council services and refocus SDP's if required.	Sept 2004	Community Strategy Anti-poverty Strategy Service Delivery Plans	CSD
				• Revised anti-poverty strategy.	Sept 2004		
				• Produce delivery strategies and action plans with clear targets to tackle deprivation.	Sept 2004		
				• Review support given to voluntary sector and community groups to ensure action aligned to wider strategies to tackle deprivation and social exclusion.	2004/05		
				• Evaluate effectiveness of and support for the CAZ's.	2005/06		
4.2 Reduction in inequalities across the District.	a) Improve access to benefits through improved telephone and counter services. b) Deliver prompt and accurate processing and payment of benefits. c) Provide most appropriate support for the provision of benefits advice and information.	Inland Revenue, DWP, Private landlords. Social Services. Voluntary sector. CAB. NWLCVS. Job Centre Plus. Connexions. Employers. Residents.	More effective use of partner resources to meet local need. New ICT being introduced.	• Complete improvements to telephone and counter services.	April 2004	Community Strategy Anti-poverty Strategy	CSD
				• Monitor customer satisfaction.	2004/05		
				• Complete improvements to IT systems.	2004/05		
				• Review options for providing benefits advice.	2004/05		
				• BVPI 78c – 92.5% processed on time.	2004/05		
				• BVPI 78a – 18.5 days	2005/06		
				• BVPI 78b – 5 days	2005/06		
				• BVPI 79a – 99.9% accuracy.	2005/06		
				• BVPI 80g – 82% overall satisfaction.	2005/06		
				• NWLDC 40 – 93.5% new Council Tax benefit claims processed within 14 days	2005/06		
				• NWLDC 41 – 92.5% new housing benefit claims processed in 14 days.	2005/06		
				• NWLDC 42 – 96.5% new claims paid within 14 days.	2005/06		
4.3 More accessible Council services and facilities.	a) Implement Equality Standard. b) Undertake improvements to Council buildings to increase accessibility for disabled people. c) Support the Disability Forum in delivering improvement.	Race Equality Council. Disability Forum Social Services.	Existing resources.	• BVPI 2a - Level 2 Equality Standard.	2004/05	Community Strategy	MT
				• Produce Disability Action Plan.	2004/05		
				• BVPI 156 - 12% of council buildings open to the public are accessible by disabled.	2005/06		

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 5. LOCAL PROSPERITY AND EMPLOYMENT							
5.1 Revitalised town centres in Coalville and Ashby	a) Ensure cross-divisional working within the Council services to achieve this aim. b) Agree framework for regenerating Ashby and Coalville town centres. c) Action to revitalise the town centres to be partnership-led. d) Measure vitality of the town centres (targets to be produced once master plans and action plans finalised).	Leicestershire County Council LSEP Emda English Partnerships Local businesses Residents	Additional capital and revenue resources required to deliver priorities in the town centres. Secure LSEP funding approval for town centre action plans. Seek other external funding.	• Review contribution and alignment of Council services to achieve this aim and refocus SDP's.	2004/05	Ashby and Coalville town centre strategies and action plans. NWL Regeneration Strategy LSEP Economic Regeneration Strategy Regional Economic Strategy Community Strategy	P&ED
				• Produce Corporate Focus Area Service Action Plan for Revitalising the Town Centres.	2004/05		
				• Adopt town centre strategies and action plans for Ashby and Coalville town centres.	2004/05		
				• Complete town centre car parking management feasibility study in Ashby.	2004/05		
				• Produce business plan to promote large scale capital investment in Coalville town centre.	2004/05		
				• Introduce car parking charges.	2004/05		
				• Establish and support town centre partnerships in Ashby and Coalville.	2004/05		
				• Complete site investigation and purchase of land for additional off-street car parking in Ashby.	2005/06		
				• Review need for Town Centre Manager.	2005/06		
				• ECR13(a): Pedestrian footfall in the town centre.	tbc		
				• ECR13(b): User satisfaction with town centre.	tbc		
				• ECR14(a): Number of ground floor units not being used as a proportion of the total number of ground floor businesses.	tbc		
				• ECR14(b): No. of charity shops as a % of the total number of ground floor businesses.	tbc		
				• ECR14(c): Prime retail rent per square metre.	tbc		
5.2 A buoyant and balanced local economy creating quality employment and a highly skilled local workforce.	a) Provide clear focus for future economic development activity. b) Provide leadership to Skills Development Steering Group. c) Work with training providers and employers to promote appropriate training and reduce skills gaps. d) Provide support for community enterprises, local exchange schemes. e) Draw up Co-operative Development Strategy.	Business Link. LSEP. Emda Chamber of Commerce. LSC. LLCDA. SEEM. Job Centre Plus. Stephenson College. Centre for Enterprise. Private sector. Voluntary and community groups. Co-operative Development Agency.	Existing Council resources. Use of partner resources to provide more appropriate training. Seek external funding (ESF, LSEP).	• Produce new long term economic development strategy.	2004/05	NWL Regeneration Strategy LSEP Economic Regeneration Strategy Community Strategy Cross-regional National Forest Development Strategy	P&E/ CSD
				• Develop new inward investment campaign and after-care programme.	2004/05		
				• LOCAL - 200 inward investment and business enquiries handled.	2004/05		
				• LOCAL – 50 businesses assisted.	2004/05		
				• Develop follow-up programme to the Skills Mapping Project to address skills gaps and barriers to training.	2004/05		
				• Review most appropriate means of providing support for community enterprises, local exchange schemes.	2004/05		
				• Produce Co-operative Development Strategy.	2004/05		

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 5. LOCAL PROSPERITY AND EMPLOYMENT (CONT.)							
5.3 Re-introduction of a passenger rail service between Leicester and Burton (National Forest Line)	a) Provide effective leadership for the National Forest Line Partnership. b) Re-examine demand for passenger services.	National Forest Line Partnership Leics County Council, GOEM Emda, LSEP	Existing resources. Secure commitment of partners to support agreed activities.	• Release findings of Demand Study. • Produce Action Plan of future activity agreed by Partnership.	April 2004 June 2004	National Forest Line Study	CE
AIM 6. AN ATTRACTIVE SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT							
6.1 Improved quality, cleanliness and safety of our public space, streets and parks	a) Better integration and co-ordination of Council services to ensure a high quality local environment. b) Continued improvements to waste collection and street cleansing service. c) Ensure frontline staff are more responsive to issues such as vandalism, graffiti, fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour.	Community Safety Wardens Police Partnership in Safer Communities	Additional capital and revenue resources allocated for improvements in street cleansing service. May also require re-prioritisation of resources.	• Review contribution and alignment of Council services to achieving this aim. • Amend Service Delivery Plans. • BVPI 119(e) – 36% of residents satisfied with Council-owned parks /open space. • Implement street cleansing programme. • Additional Mini Road Sweeper. • Investigate opportunities to achieve green flag status in parks.	2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2005/06	Community Strategy	T&CSD
6.2 Increasing proportion of household waste that is recycled and composted.	a) Introduce phased recycling and composting schemes. b) Support educational measures that seek to effect a cultural change on the issue of waste.	DLO Schools Leicestershire County Council	Additional capital and revenue resources allocated for improvements in recycling service.	• Complete Recycling Phase 1 and 2 • Investigate feasibility of supporting or organising educational campaigns to reduce waste – "Trips to Tips". • Complete Recycling Phase 3 • Complete Recycling Phase 4 • Provision of additional Wheelie Bins. • Additional Recycling Vehicles. • BVPI 82a – 10% recycled. • BVPI 82b- 14% composted. • BVPI 84 – 420kg household waste.	2004/05 2004/05 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06 2005/06	Community Strategy Waste Minimisation Strategy	T&CSD
6.3 Sustainable development of the environment	a) Implement the Council's LA21 Strategy.	Leicestershire County Councils District Councils National Forest Company	Will need to review level of resources required. Seek external funding opportunities.	• Investigate opportunities to support improvements in energy efficiency in the home and amongst local businesses. • Develop new Environmental Improvement Programme. • BVPI 63 – 59% average SAP rating for Council houses. • Establish an Environmental Management System under EMAS to cover all Council activities.	2004/05 2005/06 2005/06 2006/07	Affordable Warmth Policy Housing Business Plan. Community Strategy National Forest Strategy	CSU/ HD/ T&CSD

CORPORATE PLAN 2003/04 TO 2006/07
ACTION PLAN

Outcome	How we will achieve it	Who we will work with	The resources we need to achieve it	Target	When we will achieve it	Links	Lead
AIM 7. ENOUGH DECENT AFFORDABLE HOMES							
7.1 Improved standards in Council House stock and Housing Service	a) Ensure that all Council Properties meet the decent homes standard by 2010. b) Secure arrangements for achieving affordable housing targets. c) Improve the housing repairs service. d) Undertake Options Appraisal to determine best option to meet Decent Homes Standard.	Council Tenants Housing Associations Housing Consultants (Options Appraisal). Independent Tenant Advisors (Options Appraisal).	Additional capital resources allocated to improving standard of council houses. Partnering – resource requirements and capacity issues to be determined.	• Second Stock Conditions Survey. • Produce plan to deliver the identified affordable housing targets. • Establish and implement Partnering arrangements. • Carry out Options Appraisal for Housing Service. • Complete programme of improvements to kitchens/central heating systems. • BVPI 184b – 100% change in non-decent council houses. • BVPI 75 – 60% council house tenants satisfied with opportunity to participate in management and decision making. • BVPI 74 – 84% of council house tenants satisfied with service provided by Council. • BVPI 184a – 0% council houses non-decent • Ballot tenants on housing service transfer. • Implement selected option. • Implement the Repairs and Maintenance Best Value Review.	May 2004 June 2004 Oct 2004 Oct 2004 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2004/05 2005/06 2005/06 Jan 2006 2006/07	Housing Strategy Housing Business Plan	HD
7.2 Improved conditions in all housing sectors	a) Promote closer working with Landlords. b) Provision of grants and loans and improvements with a focus on deprived areas and vulnerable groups.	Council Tenants Private Landlords Private house owners.	Additional capital resources allocated to improve private sector vacant dwellings.	• Establish Landlords Forum • BVPI 62 – 3.9% of unfit private sector dwellings made fit/demolished by Council. • BVPI 64 – 4 private sector dwellings returned into occupation	April 2004 2005/06 2004/05	Private Sector Housing Strategy. Housing Strategy.	HD
7.3 Working towards securing a balanced local housing market	a) Seek to increase the amount of affordable housing being built.	Developers Landlords Housing Associations.	To be determined.	• Produce plan for affordable housing. • Investigate options to move towards achieving a balanced housing market.	Sept. 2004 2004/05	Private Sector Housing Strategy. Housing Strategy.	HD
7.4 Reduce homelessness.	a) Work with Homelessness Forum to implement Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.	Homelessness Forum	Existing resources.	• Implement Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.	Sept. 2004	Homelessness Strategy.	HD

11.03.04

3. Service Delivery

- Performance and Targets

- Best Value Reviews

Performance Information

1. Strong, safe communities

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
001a	Does the authority have a Community Strategy developed in collaboration with the local strategic partnership, for improving the economic, social and environmental well being in a way that is sustainable?	NO	NO	YES	YES	☺	Target Achieved	n/a	n/a	n/a	Top
126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	14.84	12.2	12.6	12.1	☹	There is a slight increase in the number of offences of burglaries from 2002/03. There is a pattern emerging in that all Leicestershire Districts failed to meet their targets and experienced an increase. There are many complex reasons why crime rates are affected and we continue to support to improve active partnership working and to reduce levels of burglary.	9	n/a	n/a	
127a	Violent crimes by a stranger per 1,000 population	3.79	7.7	9.4	Not Available	☹	The national crime recording standards have changed over the last year which have impacted on violence figures.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Bott.
127b	Violent crimes in a public place per 1,000 population.	4.74	6	7.4	Not Available	☹	The national crime recording standards have changed over the last year which have impacted on violence figures.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Midd.
127c	Violent crimes in connection with licensed premises per 1,000 population	0.95	1.2	1.4	Not Available	☹	The national crime recording standards have changed over the last year which have impacted on violence figures.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Midd.
127d	Violent crimes committed under the influence per 1,000 population	2.45	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available			n/a	n/a	n/a	

128	Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population	14.41	15.7	15.4	14.1	☹	Performance Improved. We have achieved a reduction in vehicle crime from 15.7/ 1000pop to 15.4/ 1000pop in 2003/04. Although we have not achieved our target, strong partnership work continues to bring success in this indicator despite the relatively high number of vehicles which enter the area in relation to the M1, A42, Moto services, Donington Park and East Midlands Airport.	12.7	11.4	11.4	
NWLDC 11	Number Of Community Groups Supported.		53	N/A	50		Deleted				
NWLDC 15	Number Of "Secure" Car Parks.		0	0	0	😐		1	1	1	

2. A healthy, fulfilled population

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
114	The adoption by the authority of a local cultural strategy.	55.98%	100%	100%	100%	☺	Target Achieved. The Authority has adopted the Local Cultural Strategy.				Top
119	Percentage of residents satisfied with the local authorities cultural services										
119(i)	(a) sports & leisure			56%	55%	☺	Target Exceeded.			58%	
119(ii)	(b) libraries				n/a						
119(iii)	(c) museums			29%	n/a					30%	
119(iv)	(d) theatres & concert halls			22%	25%	☹					
119(v)	(e) parks & open spaces			66%	36%	☺	Target Exceeded.			68%	
170a	The number of visits to/usage of museums per 1,000 population.	278.08	0	0	0			0	0	0	
170b	The number of those visits that were in person per 1,000 population.	224.79	0	0	0			0	0	0	
170c	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups.	2,354.63	0	0	0			0	0	0	
NWLDC 01	Reduction in the number of reported food bourne diseases.			28.7%	5%	☺	Target Exceeded. There has been a reduction in number of food borne illnesses. Deleted				
NWLDC 02	Reduction in the number of reported work place accidents.			-20%	1%	☹	The number of fatals/majors has increased this year. Deleted				

ID	Description						Status	Comment			
NWLDC 03	Number of annual leisure centres users per 1,000 population. (all NWLDC managed facilities)			11358	9,723	☺	Target Exceeded..	11,800	12,100	12,400	
NWLDC 16	Number Of Visitors To Museums Grant Aided By North West Leics. /1,000 Population.		20,263	20,366	18,000	☺	Target Exceeded.	20,500	20,700	21,000	
NWLDC 18	Increase Number Of Swims And Other Visits By 25% Over 5 Years.		826,584	858,045	835,000	☺	Target Exceeded. Replaced by NWLDC 72				
NWLDC 19	Introduce "Sports Specific" Coaching Programmes For Active Sports Attracting 12,000 Attendances Over 5 Years.		4,271	3500	3,000	☺	Target Exceeded..	3,500	3,500	3,600	
NWLDC 20	Launch A "Street Sport" Campaign Taking Informal Sport And Recreation To Deprived Areas - Achieving 5 Geographical Venues Over 5 Years.		2	5	4	☺	Target Exceeded. Replaced by NWLDC 73				
NWLDC 21	Number Of Additional Cycle/Multi-User Trails Constructed.		2km	3km	1km	☺	Target Exceeded..	1km	1km	1km	
NWLDC 23	Number Of Leisure Links (Concessionary Access Schemes) Membership By Target Areas.		2,838	3653	2,900	☺	Target Exceeded.. Replaced by NWLDC 74				
NWLDC 24	Number Of Community Led Guided Walks.		22	27	22	☺	Target Exceeded.. Replaced by NWLDC 75				
NWLDC 25	Number Of Playgrounds And Play Areas Provided By The Council Per 1,000 Children Under 12.		2.89	6.5	6.5	☺	Target Achieved. Deleted				
NWLDC 30	Number Of Sports Pitches Per 1,000 Population			0.61	0.64	☹	Deleted				
NWLDC 33	Contribute To Health Improvement In the District by reducing heart disease, cancers, accidents. (Initiatives)		15	18	16	☺	Target Exceeded. Deleted				
NWLDC 34	To Maintain Registration Of Patients Referred To The Gp Referral Scheme.		93%	88%	>90%	☹		>90%	>90%	>90%	
NWLDC 69	To maintain Leisure Centres' operational recovery rate.						New	>80%	>80%	>80%	
NWLDC 72	Increase number of swims and other visits by 25% over 5 years at Hermitage and Hood Park Leisure Centres						New	870,000	880,000	980,000	

NWLDC 73	Operate a "Street Sport" programme – achieving 5 geographical venues per year					New		5 Venues	5 Venues	5 Venues	
NWLDC 74	Number of Leisure Link (Concessionary access scheme members)					New		3,700	3,800	3,900	
NWLDC 75	Number of Community Guided Walks supported					New		24	26	28	

3. A fairer district

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
002a	The level (if any) of the Equality Standard for Local government to which the authority conforms.	1	LEVEL 0	LEVEL 0	LEVEL 1	☹	Standard not reached because of capacity issues. Being addressed by building in capacity - amending the job description of the vacant post (Policy Officer Social Exclusion) and appointment of a Corporate Initiatives Officer.	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Bott.
002b	The duty to promote race equality expressed as a %			37%	27%	☺	Target Exceeded.	55%	72%	89%	
009	Percentage of Council Tax collected	97.26%	95.80%	96.40%	97%	☹	Performance Improved. Working towards government set targets within the authority's social inclusion policies and with new computer software.	97.5	98.5	98.5	Mid.
010	The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the	98.18%	96.20%	97.70%	97.50%	☺	Target Exceeded. Working towards government set targets within the authority's social inclusion policies and with new computer software.	98	99	99	Bott.
011a	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women.	19.28%	8.59%	11.20%	10%	☺	Target Exceeded.	12	12	13	Bott.
011b	The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities.	1.52%	0%	0%	3%	☹		3	6	9	Bott.
156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	27.42%	6%	6%	6%	☺	Target Achieved.	12%	12%	12%	Bott.
174	The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population.	0.88	0	1.15	1	☹		1	1	0	

175	The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action.	70%	0%	0%	100%	☹		100%	100%	100%	Bott.
177	% of authority expenditure on legal and advice services which is spent on services that have been awarded the Quality Mark and meet a priority legal need identified in the Community Legal Service Partnership Strategic Plan.	39.44%	100%	100%	100%	☺	Target Achieved.	100%	100%	100%	Top
NWLDC 14	Develop A Programme Of Initiatives To Tackle Disadvantage In Community Action Zones (Number Of Initiatives).		18	31	28	☺	Target Exceeded. Deleted				

4. Local prosperity and employment

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
008	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services which were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the authority.	90.24%	98.71%	98.90%	100%	☹	Performance Improved. Statutory target appears unrealistic. Even so another good year on year improvement – top quartile.	100%	100%	100%	Top
NWLDC 04	Occupancy rate of Council owned commercial properties.			97.58%	94%	☺	Target Exceeded.	95%	96%	96%	
NWLDC 05	The overall amount of land available for employment purposes			356 ha.			Deleted				
NWLDC 10	Number Of Community Enterprises, Co-Operatives And Credit Unions Supported.		9	N/A	8		Deleted				
NWLDC 48	Produce New Long Term Regeneration Strategy For North West Leicestershire & Action Plan.		On-Going	N/A	Review		Deleted				
NWLDC 51	Number Of Business Assisted.		201	N/A	50		Deleted				
NWLDC 52	Number Of Jobs Created / Safeguarded.		47.5	N/A	105		Deleted				
NWLDC 54	Amount Of Managed Workspace Developed In Partnership With Public / Private Sector (Sq.Ft.).		7,266	N/A	5,000		Deleted				
NWLDC 61	Produce Tourism Strategy.		Yes	Yes	Yes	☺	Target Achieved. Deleted				
NWLDC 63	Percentage Tourist Accommodation Inspected By Etc/Aa/Rac.		64%	68%	65%	☺	Target Exceeded.	70%	70%	72%	

5. An attractive, sustainable environment

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
082a	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled.	10.03%	6.10%	8.90%	8%	☺	Target Exceeded. Increase in the percentage recycled is a direct result of the introduction of the kerbside scheme	10.50%	12%	13%	Mid.
082b	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been composted.	1.27%	0.40%	5.40%	8%	☹	Performance Improved. The amount of garden waste collected less than predicted due to a dry summer	10%	13%	14%	Top
084	Number of Kilograms of household waste collected per head.	402.45	460Kg	444.8Kg	440Kg	☹	Performance Improved. Significant reduction compared with a national increase of 2-3%	450Kg	440Kg	430Kg	Top
086	Cost of waste collection per household.	31.48	£37.83	£40.89	£40.92	☺	Target Exceeded.	£46.90	£50.16	£52.00	Bott.
089	Percentage of people satisfied that the authority has met their statutory duty to keep relevant land and relevant highways for which the authority is responsible clear of litter and refuse.			49%	65%	☹	Follow up surveys to be carried out to established why customer satisfaction has fallen. This does however follow a national trend.	55%	60%	65%	
090a	Percentage of survey respondents expressing satisfaction with recycling facilities.			76%	70%	☺	Target Exceeded. This probably reflects the introduction of a multi-material kerbside recyclable collection to some 20,000 properties during 2003	80%	85%	90%	
090b	Percentage of survey respondents expressing satisfaction with household waste collection and civic amenity sites.			68%	85%	☹	Changes to the refuse collection service and issues concerning the County Council's civic amenity sites are reflected in this indicator	70%	75%	80%	

091	Percentage of population resident in the authority's area which are served by a kerbside collection of recyclables.	84.19%	73%	88.50%	75%	☺	Target Exceeded. This probably reflects the introduction of a multi-material kerbside recyclable collection to some 20,000 properties during 2003	90%	95%	98%	Midd.
166a	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health/trading standards.	66.86%	21.7%	20.00%	75%	☹	Failure to produce council approved enforcement policies as defined in the definition and guidance for this indicator. The inclusion of "Taxi and private hire licensing" in the Guidance in Feb 2004 reduced the score to 20% from a possible 56.7%.	25%	55%	70%	Bott.
180a	Energy consumption/m2 of local authority operational property,	92.65%	80%		80%		Not Required 2003/04	79%	78%	77%	
180b	compared with comparable buildings in the UK as a whole.	74.62%	49%		49%		Not Required 2003/04	49%	48%	47%	
199	The proportion of relevant land having combined deposits of litter & detritus.			39%	40%	☺	Target Exceeded. New indicator for 2003/04	35%	30%	28%	
200a	Development plan adopted in last 5 years where end date has not expired.			YES	Yes	☺	Target Achieved.				
200b	If "no" are there proposals on deposit to replace /			N/A	N/A						
NWLDC 31	Area Of Parks And Open Spaces Per 1,000 Population.			1.69ha	1.69Ha	☺	Target Achieved. Deleted				
NWLDC 32	Total Net Spending On Parks And Open Spaces Per Head Of Population.			£12.88	£11.45	☺	Target Exceeded. Deleted				
NWLDC 47	Hectares Of Countryside (Open Space/Woodland) Developed And Managed.		45	N/A	50		Deleted				

6. Enough decent and affordable homes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BVPI	Definition	CIPFA Ave 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2002/03	NWLDC Actual 2003/04	Target 03/04	Perform-ance	Comments	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Quartile Position v. All England
062	The proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority.	2.92%	7.93%	2.94%	2%	☺	Target exceeded due to proactive work to bring unfit dwellings back into use.	4%	6%	8%	Midd.
063	Energy efficiency - the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings.	56.6%	56.02	57.6	57%	☺	Target Exceeded.. Planned Maintenance on Airey refurbishment and kitchen modernisation are completed. Heating renewal on target with 90 gas conversions planned or underway, which address non decency.	58%	59%	60%	Midd.
064	The number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during 2002/03 as a direct result of action by the local authority.	11.13	5	3	5	☹	Cancellation of grants has lead to targets not being achieved. Additional resources and publicity will result in improved performance	7	8	8	
066a	Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected.	97.89%	98.20%	99%	98.70%	☺	Target Exceeded. Working towards set targets within the authority's social inclusion policies and with new computer software	99.1	99.2	99.5	Top
074	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided.		81%	81%	84%	☹	Improvements to repairs following the Best Value review of Housing Maintenance are not yet reflected in the Status Survey which was carried out in October 2003. However, a further analysis of tenants satisfaction with the repairs service was carried out in March 2004 and shows that satisfaction levels have risen and should continue to increase once the appointments system is operating district-wide.			84%	Midd.

074(i)	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided - black & ethnic minority.	63.3%	89%	82%	89%	☹	With such a small black and minority ethnic population (1.22%) the smallest shift in the numbers satisfied has a marked effect on the overall percentage figure.			85%	Top
074(ii)	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided - non black & ethnic minority.	69.5%	81%	81%	84%	☹				84%	Midd.
075	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making.			64%	60%	☺	Target Exceeded. The increase in satisfaction is largely due to the tenant compact being agreed in 2000/2001 and all the action plan targets being completed. Two tenant representatives were appointed to the scrutiny boards of the Council in 2002/03, tenants have also been represented on two best value review panels, the housing options appraisal process and partnering arrangements for housing repairs.			66%	
075(i)	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making - black & ethnic minority.			71%	60%	☺	Target Exceeded.			72%	
075(ii)	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making - non black & ethnic minority			64%	60%	☺	Target Exceeded.			66%	
106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.	55.24%	33.7%	39%	39%	☺	Target Achieved.	59%	80%	89%	Bott.
107	Planning cost per head of population	10.65	£10.00	£10.44	£10.20	☹		£10.40	£10.20	£10.00	Midd.
111	Percentage of applicants satisfied with the service received.		66%	64.60%	60%	☺	Target Exceeded.				

164	Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing and follow the Good Practice Standards for social landlords on tackling harassment in the Code of Practice for Social Landlords: Tackling Racial Harassment'?	YES	NO	NO	YES	☹	Further work will be done on this indicator during 2004/05 once all new staff are in post following the recent restructure of the Housing Division.	YES	YES	YES	
176	The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population, which are provided or supported by the authority.	0.64	0.7	0.69	0.7	☺	Target Achieved.	0.69	0.69	0.70	Top
183a	Average length of stay in bed & breakfast accommodation	5.16	2 weeks	3 weeks	2 weeks	☹	Number presenting themselves as homeless increased significantly in 2003/04 resulting in a greater use of B&B. Strategies recently approved are designed to reduce the use of B&B in the future.	2	2	1	Midd.
183b	Average length of stay in hostel accommodation.	9.77	0 weeks	0 weeks	1 week	☺	Target Exceeded.	1	1	1	Top
184a	The proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at 1 April 2002.	33.72%	6.78%	4.86%	2%	☹	Performance Improved. Changes in the interpretation in the calculation of this indicator have affected the performance figure for 2003/04.	2	0	0	Top
184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent LA homes between 1 April 2002 and 1 April 2003.	-.66%	32.60%	62.5%	66%	☹	Performance Improved. Changes in the interpretation in the calculation of this indicator have affected the performance figure for 2003/04.	100%	0%	0%	Top
185	Percentage of responsive (but not emergency) repairs during 2002/03, for which the authority both made and kept an appointment.	23.88%	N/A	0%	N/A		The appointment system is currently being trailed within the district. A new computerised system will be implemented in April 2005 to meet the target.	0%	70%	80%	Bott.
NWLDC 06	Number of applicants on Council housing waiting list			1,778	1,400	☹	Deleted				
NWLDC 07	Number of persons accepted as homeless			244	381	☺	Deleted				

NWLDC 13	The Number Of Unfit Private Sector (Excl. Rsl Dwellings) "Dealt" With As A Proportion Of The Local Authority's Assessment Of Need.		2.06%	2.94%	2%	☺	Target Exceeded. Deleted			
NWLDC 55	Percentage Of Dwellings That Are Empty, Available For Letting, Awaiting Minor Repairs.		1.30%	1.1%	1.3%	☺	Target Exceeded. Deleted			
NWLDC 56	Percentage Of Private Sector Stock Homes Brought Back Into Use Of All Private Sector Stock.		0.60%	0.4%	0.6%	☹	Deleted			
NWLDC 70	The average re-let period for local authority dwellings excluding major repairs.			57.4 Days	-		New	47 Days	36Days	25 Days
NWLDC 71	The average re-let period for local authority dwellings excluding major repairs and difficult to let dwellings.			39.2 Days	-		New	35 Days	28 Days	20 Days

7. High quality, good value, accessible services

1 BVPI	2 Definition	3 CIPFA Ave 2002/03	4 NWLDC Actual 2002/03	5 NWLDC Actual 2003/04	6 Target 03/04	7 Perform-ance	8 Comments	9 Target 2004/05	10 Target 2005/06	11 Target 2006/07	12 Quartile Position v. All England
003	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the authority.		57.40%	51%	62%	☹	Reflects a national downward trend in satisfaction			55%	
004	The percentage of those persons making complaints who are satisfied with the handling of those complaints.		41.90%	24%	50%	☹	Further work to be undertaken to establish reasons behind this result			50%	
012	The number of working days/shifts per employee lost due to sickness absence.	10.77	9.46	12.27	8.8	☹	The deterioration in performance has been due to a high level of long-term absence and an increase in stress-related sickness absence. Measures have been put in place to reduce this.	10.7	10.2	10	Bott.
014	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce.	1.05%	0.36%	0.38%	0.38%	☺	Target Achieved.	0.45	0.45	0.45	Midd.
015	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce.	.58%	0.36%	0.56%	0.38%	☹	With just one more employee retiring on ill-health grounds the percentage has increased to a higher level then the previous year.	0.38	0.38	0.38	Midd.
016a	The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition.	2.52%	3.31%	3.84%	4.00%	☹	Performance Improved.	4.00%	4.1	4.2	Top
016b	The percentage of economically active people in the authority area declaring they are disabled.	14.03%	13.57%	13.57%							Midd.

017a	The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities.	.97%	0.47%	0.61%	1.00%	☹	Performance Improved.	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%	Bott.
017b	The percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area.	1.6%	1.14%	1.14%			Target not possible. Calculated as an annual statistic.				Bott.
076	Security: whether the authority has a written and pro-active strategy for combatting fraud and error which embraces specified initiatives including those sponsored by the Dept. of Social Security which is communicated regularly to all staff.	Yes	YES				Housing Benefits Indicator				
076a	Number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload. *(Housing Benefits Indicator)*			232.72	2.4	☺	Target exceeded, but this is largely due to the fact that the initial target was not arrived at in a robust manner.	240	245	250	
076b	Number of fraud investigators per 1,000 caseload. *(Housing Benefits Indicator)*			0.48	0.52	☹	Not quite reached targets mainly due to a small decrease in caseload, over which we have little control. Assuming that this trend will continue, this figure will not increase without additional resources.	0.5	0.48	0.46	
076c	Number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload *(Housing Benefits Indicator)*			48.86	56	☹	Not quite reached target mainly due to a small decrease in caseload, over which we have little control. Assuming that this trend will continue, this figure will not increase without additional resources.	48	47	46	
076d	Number of prosecutions/sanctions per 1,000 caseload. *(Housing Benefits Indicator)*			7.83	5	☺	Target Exceeded. High performance, well above target. This is the first year for this BVPI and no national comparisons are available, but from local benchmarking, this will likely be in the top quartile.	7.9	8	8.1	

078a	Average time for processing new claims (days).	40.89	19.1	25.36	18.75	🙁	Short term problems caused by a combination of staff sickness with the major holiday period and the disruption and training required in implementing the Verification Framework, pension credits and generic working and the use of a new national application form has effected this indicator. However it is still a Top Quartile performance.	25	24.5	24	Top
078b	Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance (days).	11.14	5.2	5.44	5.7	🙂	Target Exceeded. Only slight deterioration though still on target, despite a difficult year. Top quartile.	5.4	5.35	5.3	Top
078c	Percentage of renewal claims processed on time.	76.04%	91.30%	81.82%	92.50%	🙁	The implementation of the Verification Framework and the abolition of benefit for pensioners and the use of the more complicated national benefits form has effected this indicator, which depends on customers returning applications and information in a timely manner. The process has now changed therefore targets are no longer applicable.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Top
079a	Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available for the determination for a sample of cases checked post-determination.	97.12%	98.8%	98.8%	98.80%	🙂	Target Achieved. Minimal increase in targets due to existing high performance.	98.9%	99.0%	99.1%	Top
079b	The percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recovered in the year.	45.38%	41.10%	38.86%	41%	🙁		41%	41%	42%	Bott.
080	User satisfaction survey covering issues of accessibility, staffing issues such as helpfulness and communications and information including issues such as clarity or adequacy and timeliness of the information.										

ID	Description										
080(i)	Contact/access			83%	87%	☹				85%	
080(ii)	Service in benefit office			84%	86%	☹				85%	
080(iii)	Telephone service			81%	84%	☹				82%	
080(iv)	Staff in benefit office			84%	87%	☹				85%	
080(v)	Clarity of forms			67%	72%	☹				70%	
080(vi)	Time taken for decision			83%	83%	☺	Target Achieved.				85%	
080(vii)	Overall satisfaction			85%	82%	☺	Target Exceeded. Overall satisfaction exceeded targets and in top quartile nationally.				86%	Top
109a	Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks.	37.74%	52%	48%	54%	☹	Anticipated improved performance through Planning Improvement grant.	58	60	65	Midd.
109b	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks.	53.48%	41%	59%	50%	☺	Target Exceeded.	60	62	65	Midd.
109c	Percentage of other applications determined within 8 weeks.	71.77%	60%	80%	70%	☺	Target Exceeded.	80	82	84	Midd.
157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a % of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery.	44.68%	45%	55.5%	58.74%	☹	Performance Improved.	77.77%	100%	100%	Midd.
179	The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days.	79.67%	100%	100%	100%	☺	Target Achieved.	100%	100%	100%	Top
188	The No. of decisions delegated to officers as a % of all decisions.	82.77%	65%	85%	70%	☺	Target Exceeded.	85%	90%	90%	Midd.
NWLDC 08	The percentage of services identified within top 25% of district authorities			33%	50%	☹		50%	60%	70%	
NWLDC 09	The percentage of services identified within lower 25% of district authorities.			29%	15%	☹		20%	10%	0%	

NWLDC 40	Percentage Of New Claims For Council Tax Benefit Processed Within 14 Days.		91%	88.08%	93.5%	☹	Reduced level of performance reflects the introduction of the Verification Framework in 2003/04 targets have been set accordingly	90%	92%	94%
NWLDC 41	Percentage of new claims for Housing Benefit from local authority tenants processed within 14 days.		90.3%	88.92%	92.5%	☹	Reduced level of performance reflects the introduction of the Verification Framework in 2003/04 targets have been set accordingly	90%	92%	94%
NWLDC 42	Percentage Of Successful New Claims For Rent Allowance Paid To Tenants Within 14 Days Or Direct To Landlord By The Due Date After The Start Of The Tenancy.		96.1%	89.81%	96.5%	☹	Reduced level of performance reflects the introduction of the Verification Framework in 2003/04 targets have been set accordingly	91%	93%	95%
NWLDC 43	Percentage Of Renewal Claims For Rent Allowance Paid On Time.		93.7%	85.91%	97%	☹	Reduced level of performance reflects the introduction of the Verification Framework in 2003/04 targets have been set accordingly	88%	90%	92%
NWLDC 58	Percentage Of Initial Inspections Into Alleged Unauthorised Development Carried Out Within 10 Working Days Of Receipt.			92%	85%	☺	Target Exceeded.	93%	94%	95%
NWLDC 64	Percentage of Council Tax band change schedules updated within 5 days.		100%	92%	100%	☹		95%	95%	95%
NWLDC 65	Percentage Of Council Tax Letters Replied To Within 7 Days.		80%	71%	84%	☹		75%	80%	85%
NWLDC 66	Percentage of NNDR schedules updated within 5 Days.		89%	75%	90%	☹		80%	90%	90%

Best Value Reviews

The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) has provided a significant challenge for the Council.

The CPA, undertaken by external assessors, will take a view on the performance of the whole council, looking at the corporate centre – the overall management of the council - as well as services. It is designed to identify performance improvements required and set an action plan to deliver these, leading to improved services.

We have recognised that we have much work to do to achieve the CPA target we have set ourselves of becoming a "high performing" council by Summer 2005.

As part of our work to improve services and satisfy the CPA, we have introduced the principles of the European Foundation for Quality management (EFQM) Excellence Model as a protocol for self-assessment and benchmarking.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister issued Circular 03/2003 "Best Value and Performance Improvement" in March 2003 which contained further new guidance on Best Value reviews.

Paragraph 41 of the Circular said that to date, too much attention had been focused on ensuring compliance with the process of carrying out reviews at the expense of the outcomes and improvements that they are intended to achieve.

As a result, the potential benefits had not always materialised. Authorities should balance the effort and resources put into a review against the potential gains arising from it. The scale and focus of reviews should reflect the importance of the service, the issues facing it and the associated risks and opportunities for improvement.

Paragraph 45 added that reviews should not be undertaken simply because authorities had previously given undertakings to assess a particular service in an earlier programme. Similarly, many straightforward improvements could be made without the need for a review.

Advice at an Improvement and Development Agency Workshop on Cross Cutting Reviews held at Hinckley on 14 March 2003 went even further in suggesting that future reviews should be issue rather than service based; examining how services address Council priorities rather than looking directly at the services themselves.

It was also indicated that the only issues of sufficient importance to justify the resource commitment of a full-scale review were likely to be the pillars of the Councils Community Strategy or the two cross-cutting themes of the CPA.

So that we could undertake the work that the CPA and EFQM demand effectively, we recognised last year that it was vital that with limited staff resources we keep our Best Value Review programme to a minimum.

This approach is endorsed by the latest guidance and continued last year while the Community Plan evolved.

The outcome of the CPA due later in the year will be an Action Plan part of which will determine the service areas for improvement and review. We believe that in the future this approach will help us to pursue an even more focused Best Value Review programme.

In the meantime, we have undertaken a Procurement Health Check under the auspices of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). The recommendations will form the basis for a review of our existing procurement practices.

Conclusion

The latest guidance makes it clear that Best Value Reviews should better reflect an authority's priorities. We believe completion of our CPA, EFQM work and the Community Planning process will enable us to draw up a new programme for future years that will do just this. In the meantime, work will continue on the review for improving procurement following the recent IdeA Health Check.