



South Derbyshire District Council

FILE

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Our Ref: PDS/KW/CA/5
Your Ref:

Date: 22nd June 2006

To: Distribution List: Council Meeting

Dear Councillor/Sir/Madam,

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING – 26TH JUNE 2006

I refer to the Summons for the Special Council Meeting and now enclose item No.11, Best Value Performance Plan 2006, for your attention.

Yours faithfully,

F. McArdle
Chief Executive

Enc.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

REPORT TO:	SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	26 JUNE 2005	CATEGORY:
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINTS:	SALLY KNIGHT (Ext. 5728)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2006	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that:

- the 2006 Best Value Performance Plan be approved
- the Chief Executive (in consultation with the Leader) be authorised to make any final changes to the Plan prior to publication

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To agree the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2006.

3.0 Detail

Statutory requirements

3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to publish a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) by 30 June.

3.2 Since 2004, statutory guidance has linked reporting requirements in the BVPP to Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) outcomes. As a 'fair' Council, the Plan must include the following information:

- A summary of the Council's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement. This should reflect corporate/business planning processes and the community strategy.

- An explanation of the arrangements for addressing the Council's improvement priorities, particularly the opportunities and weaknesses identified through CPA, and the outcomes that are expected to be achieved as a result
 - Details of performance:
 - Outturn performance for 2005/06 on all Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)
 - Targets for 2006/07 and the following 2 years for all BVPIs
 - A statement on contracts. The Council must state and certify that all individual contracts awarded during the past year, which involve a transfer of staff comply, where applicable, with the requirements in the Code on Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.
- 3.3 Council have also been advised to include details in the Plan of the efficiency savings they are now required to make as part of 'Gershon' agenda.
- 3.4 The BVPP is subject to audit by the Audit Commission; a formal report on the Plan is made as part of the Annual (Audit and Inspection) Letter.

BVPP 2006

- 3.5 A copy of the draft Plan is enclosed with the report.
- 3.6 This is now the Council's seventh BVPP. It sets out our record of delivering local services along with our plans and priorities for improvements.
- 3.7 The Plan is in 6 parts:
- | | |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Part 1 | Setting the Scene |
| Part 2 | Performance in 2005/06 |
| Part 3 | Audit and Inspection |
| Part 4 | Plans and Priorities for Improving Services |
| Part 5 | Finance, Efficiency Savings and Contracts |
| Part 6 | Appendices (including the required BVPI data) |
- 3.8 The Plan builds upon the quarterly performance reports that are now made to Members as part of the 'Achieving More' performance management framework. These cover progress in achieving milestones/actions/targets for the 2005/08 Corporate Plan, the 2005/06 CPA Improvement Plan, the Community Strategy Year 1 Action Plan and BVPIs for 2005/06.
- 3.9 The key message is that overall performance is much improved on last year with 84% of targets (181 out of 216) achieved or partially achieved. (This compares with 61% (94 out of 154) in 2004/05.)
- 3.10 Looking ahead, the BVPP also details targets for the new Corporate Plan (agreed at the Annual Meeting of Council in May); an updated Improvement Plan (discussed by the Improvement Panel on 14 June); BVPIs for 2006/07 and

the following two years (also considered by the Improvement Panel) and the Community Strategy Year 2 Action Plan which will be presented to the Local Strategic Partnership Event.

- 3.11 Many of the targets are 'stretching' in order to secure further improvements in quality of local services.

Next Steps

- 3.12 The Plan will be circulated to partner organisation and will be made available in libraries and on the web site. An item will also be included in the Team Brief for employees and in the 'The News'.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of printing and publishing the Plan will be met from existing budgets.

5.0 Background Papers

- 5.1 ODPM Circular 05/2006 'Addendum to ODPM Circular 02/2004 - 'Guidance on Best Value Performance Plans'

BVPP Working Papers (Policy and Economic Regeneration Division)

South Derbyshire District Council

(DRAFT)

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN

2006

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	Leader of the Council
Part 1:	Setting the Scene
Section 1	Introduction to the Plan
Section 2	Profile of South Derbyshire and the Council
Section 3	Guide to Parts 2-6
Part 2:	Performance in 2005/06
Section 4	Overview and key messages
Section 5	Corporate Plan 2005/08
Section 6	CPA Improvement Plan 2005/06
Section 7	Best Value Performance Indicators
Section 8	South Derbyshire Community Strategy (Action Plan 2005/06)
Part 3:	Audit and Inspection
Section 9	Audit Commission Annual Letter
Section 10	Housing Repairs and Maintenance Inspection
Part 4	Plans and Priorities for Improving Services
Section 11	Corporate Plan 2006/09
Section 12	Improvement Plan 2006/07
Section 13	Best Value Performance Indicators – Three Year Targets
Section 14	South Derbyshire Community Strategy (Action Plan 2006/08)
Section 15	Delivering Improvements
Part 5	Finance, Efficiency Savings and Contracts
Section 16	Financial Information
Section 17	Efficiency Savings
Section 18	Statement on Staff Contracts
Part 6	Appendices
Appendix A	Table A.1: Corporate Plan 2005/08 – Performance on 2005/06 Milestones
	Table A.2: CPA Improvement Plan 2005/06 - Performance
	Table A.3: South Derbyshire Community Strategy – Action Plan 2005/06 (Council Performance)
	Table A.4: Performance 2005/06 Best Value Performance Indicators.
	Table A.5: Significant Variances (Actuals/Targets) 2005/06

Appendix B	Table B.1: Corporate Plan 2006/09 - Actions
	Table B.2: Improvement Plan 2006/07
	Table B.3: Best Value Performance Indicators –Targets 2006/07 to 2008/09
	Table B.4: Priority Indicators- Achieving Targets
	Table B.5: Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys (Targets)
Appendix C	Comprehensive Performance Assessment (June 2004)

PART 1

SETTING THE SCENE

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

Context

This is the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2006. It sets out our record of delivering local services and our plans and priorities for improvements.

The Council has a total budget of around £46 million this year. The services and facilities that we provide, such as housing, refuse collection, parks & leisure, economic regeneration, environmental health, planning and community safety, impact on many aspects of local life.

This means that we need to be efficient and effective in everything we do, with a clear focus on the needs of our customers and on the planning and delivery of improved performance.

Best Value and Performance Improvement

The duty of Best Value came into effect in April 2000. It requires us to:

- *continually improve the way in which we deliver services in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness*
- *consult local people about what we do and how well we do it*
- *monitor our performance across a whole range of indicators and set targets so that people can see whether we achieved what we set out to do*
- *fundamentally review our services*
- *publish an annual Performance Plan*

In the following year, the Government announced a new national performance framework for local government, the cornerstone of which was Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for all Councils.

CPAs bring together Audit Commission judgements about the quality of local services, organisational effectiveness and capacity to improve. Councils assessed as high performing benefit from extra freedom and flexibilities from Government, whilst poorer Councils are offered more help and support.

The results of the Council's first CPA were announced in June 2004. We were assessed as 'fair' (on a scale ranging from excellent to good, fair, weak and poor).

The Commission is presently finalising the scope and nature of the next round of CPAs for District Councils, which will commence later in the year.

The new system is expected to focus on those Councils that can demonstrate substantial improvement in performance or where the Commission feels that performance has deteriorated.

Use of Resources Assessments and Direction of Travel Statements (introduced in 2005) and service performance information will be used by the Commission to evidence improvement or deterioration.

Scope and Contents of the Plan

Statutory guidance links reporting requirements in Performance Plans to CPA outcomes.

As a 'fair' Council, we have to include the following items in our Plan:

- a summary of our strategic objectives and priorities for improvement
- an explanation of arrangements for addressing improvement priorities and the outcomes that are expected to be achieved
- details of performance in 2005/06 in respect of the national suite of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs), along with targets for the current year (2006/07) and over the next two years
- a statement on contracts for staff transferred under outsourcing arrangements

Like all Councils, we have also been advised to include details of the efficiency savings we are now required to make as part of the Government's 2004 Spending Review.

The Plan has been divided into 6 parts:

- | | |
|--------|---------------------------------------------|
| Part 1 | Setting the Scene |
| Part 2 | Performance in 2005/06 |
| Part 3 | Audit and Inspection |
| Part 4 | Plans and Priorities for Improving Services |
| Part 5 | Finance, Efficiency Savings and Contracts |
| Part 6 | Appendices (including BVPI data) |

The remainder of Part 1 comprises a short profile of South Derbyshire and the Council (Section 2) and a guide to Parts 2-6 (Section 3).

Related Documents

'Core' documents

The Plan has been prepared in the context of our corporate and service planning processes and should be read alongside the following 'core' documents:

- South Derbyshire Community Strategy 2005/10

- Corporate Plan 2006/09
- Compendium of Service Plans 2006/09 (in preparation)
- Medium Term Financial Plan 2006/09
- Annual Efficiency Statement
- CPA (South Derbyshire District Council) Final Report (June 2004)

Summary Plan

In previous years, we have produced a leaflet summarising our performance and plans which was distributed with Council Tax bills.

This year, we included the information in the Spring edition of the Council's newsletter 'The News', which is circulated to all households, businesses and local groups.

The approach worked well (in terms of more comments and feedback from local people) and we will be using the newsletter again next year.

Feedback on the Plan

Comments or suggestions on the Plan are welcomed and should be sent to:

The Chief Executive
South Derbyshire District Council
Civic Offices
Civic way
Swadlincote
Derbyshire, DE11 0AH

Tel: 01283 221000
Fax: 01283 595854
e-mail yourviews@south-derbys.gov.uk

An electronic version of the Plan and related documents are available on our web site at:

www.south-derbys.gov.uk

SECTION 2: PROFILE OF THE DISTRICT AND THE COUNCIL

Introduction

This section provides a short overview of South Derbyshire and the Council as a context for our performance and improvement priorities.

The District of South Derbyshire

The Area

South Derbyshire covers an area of about 340 square kilometres and has a population of 86,500 (*ONS Mid 2004 Estimate*). The district is bordered by the City of Derby to the north and the towns Burton up Trent to the west and Ashby de la Zouch to the east.

For almost two decades, South Derbyshire has been the fastest growing district in Derbyshire. Most of this growth can be attributed to new development in the urban area of Swadlincote, on the fringes of Derby and at Hilton.

In the short term, current rates of growth are expected to continue.

Swadlincote - with a population of some 33,000 - is the main administrative and commercial centre of the district. The town is located on South Derbyshire Coalfield. Coal and clay working has all but disappeared.

The rest of the district is mostly rural in character, marked by open countryside, the valleys of the Trent and Dove and a patchwork of villages and small settlements.

A number of villages, such as Melbourne and Repton, are of architectural and historic importance. A total of 22 Conservation Areas has been designated across the district, including one for Swadlincote Town Centre.

A large part of South Derbyshire is included in the National Forest. This major initiative (now ten years old) is creating a new landscape for work, recreation and wildlife.

Population and Housing

According to the Census*, the district's population age structure is broadly similar to the national average but with a marginally higher proportion of people of school and working ages. Average household size is also slightly higher.

Nearly 3% of local people classified themselves as 'non white'. Although well below the national average, this is the highest percentage in Derbyshire outside of the City. (* ONS 2001 Census)

In April 2006, the district's housing stock stood at 37,070, including 3,180 Council homes. The vast majority of homes are either owner occupied or privately rented.

Currently, across all tenures, around 9,200 homes do not meet the Government's 'Decent Homes' Standard. A 'decent home' is one which is wind and weather tight, warm, energy efficient and with modern facilities.

The rise in house prices, coupled with policies to promote sustainable development, has brought the issue of affordable housing to the fore, especially in rural areas.

Economy and Employment

Businesses in South Derbyshire employ around 29,000 people. (ONS Annual Business Enquiry 2004)

The service sector provides around 60% of local jobs, agriculture and forestry 12% and manufacturing 26%. The relatively high proportion of manufacturing jobs can be largely attributed to Toyota at Burnaston.

Recently, other companies coming to the area include JCB, Bison Concrete, Futaba, Truma, and Morrisons.

Despite the growth in jobs, many local people continue to work outside of the district in the towns of the East and West Midlands.

At April 2006, the district had an unemployment rate of 1.4%, compared with 2.8% nationally. However, some parts of the district (manly former coalfield communities) had rates closer to the national average.

Local Facilities

South Derbyshire has 3 Leisure Centre (at Swadlincote, Etwall and Melbourne), 45 playgrounds & parks, 6 cemeteries and a crematorium which is managed by a joint committee with East Staffordshire Borough Council.

In rural areas, most villages have parish halls and meeting rooms.

The Trent Valley provides the setting for a variety of informal recreational pursuits. Attractions such as Calke Abbey, Melbourne Hall and the National Forest are important for the development of the local tourism industry.

The Council has recently opened a Tourist Information Centre in Swadlincote. This operates from Sharpes Pottery Museum and is managed by the Sharpes Heritage Trust.

Other characteristics

South Derbyshire is ranked 213 out of 354 local authorities (where a rank of 1 indicates the most deprived) in the Government's 2004 Indices of Deprivation. However, this hides an anomaly - that some parts of the district are amongst the most deprived areas in the country and some, amongst the least deprived.

Implications for services

The nature of the district creates a number of challenges for service provision. In particular,

- providing extra services to meet the needs of a growing district
- managing development pressures in sustainable ways
- meeting the need for good quality, affordable homes
- attracting more high quality jobs to the area
- maintaining leisure and community facilities to an appropriate standard
- providing services equitably across the district

The Council

Political Management Arrangements

The Council has 36 members representing 17 wards. At the present time, there are 20 members from the Labour Party, 14 Conservatives, 1 Independent and 1 vacant seat.

The next whole Council elections will be held in May 2007.

New political structures were adopted in 2002, based on a 'streamlined' committee system (*also known as 'alternative arrangements'*). The main components comprise:

- full Council (which makes decisions on key policies and the budget)
- three 'policy' committees (Finance & Management, Housing & Community Services and Environmental & Development Services)
- two 'regulatory' committees (Development Control and Licensing & Appeals)
- three Scrutiny Committees (Corporate Scrutiny, Community Scrutiny and Overview)
- a Standards Committee to oversee the conduct of District and Parish Councillors
- six Area Meetings (designed to improve community involvement in decision-making and provide a continuous link with members of the public, Parish Councils/Meetings and other public bodies)

- Independent Remuneration Panel

Recently, an Audit Committee has been established as a sub committee of the Finance & Management Committee.

Outside the urban area of Swadlincote, there are 50 parishes of which 33 are administered by Parish Councils and 17 by Parish Meetings.

Employee Structure

The Chief Executive heads the organisation, supported by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). Each member of CMT has responsibility for a number of service areas as detailed below:

TABLE 2.1: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	
Corporate Management Team	Service Areas/Heads
Chief Executive <i>and Head of Paid Service</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal & Democratic Services (<i>the Head of Service is also the Monitoring Officer</i>)
Deputy Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Economic Regeneration • Planning Services
Director of Corporate Services <i>and Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial & Property Services • Revenue Services • Human Resources • IT & Customer Services
Director of Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Services • Environmental Services • Leisure & Community Development

The Council currently has 369 employees based at three sites in Swadlincote (the Civic Offices, the Depot and the Granville Court Sheltered Housing Scheme). In November 2005, we were re-accredited 'Investors in People'.

Budgets

The Council's gross budget for 2006/2007 is £46.2 million comprising:

TABLE 2.2: ESTIMATED SPENDING 2006/2007	
Main Account	£ m
General Fund Revenue Account <i>(which funds most day to day spending)</i>	28.9
Housing Revenue Account <i>(which funds services to the tenants of Council homes)</i>	11.9
Capital Programme <i>(which funds longer term projects such as the purchase, provision or enhancement of land and buildings)</i>	5.4
Total Expenditure	46.2

Net revenue spending across all services (after taking into account income from fees, charges, contributions and specific government grants) is as follows:

TABLE 2.3: NET SPENDING ACROSS SERVICES	
Service Areas	£,000
Waste collection	1,794
Environmental Services	1,730
Recreation & Tourism	1,867
Planning & Economic Development	855
Corporate Costs <i>(includes democratic functions, policy and service strategy, core management and statutory services, such as treasury management)</i>	2,212
Housing & Community Services	1,273
Other Services	1,415
Total Net Spending	11,146

For 2006/07, the level of Council Tax for a Band D property is £1,288.43p. The Council's requirement is £137.32p (11% of the total).

The Corporate Plan 2006/09

The Council agreed a new three year Corporate Plan in May 2006.

The Plan is the result of extensive consultation with local people and other stakeholders about priorities and services.

It contains a new Vision for South Derbyshire, a more concise statement of the values that will guide our actions and the grouping of proposals under six 'cross cutting Themes.

These comprise:

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| Theme 1: | Safer and Healthier Communities |
| Theme 2: | You at the Centre |
| Theme 3: | Higher Quality Services |
| Theme 4: | Prosperity for All |
| Theme 5: | Rural South Derbyshire |
| Theme 6: | Stronger in the Region |

We have also clearly defined our priorities. There are just three and they comprise:

- **safer and healthier communities**
- **a cleaner and greener South Derbyshire**
- **more efficient, customer focused services**

Actions for delivery in 2006/07 are now being incorporated in Service Plans.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership (SDLSP)

The SDLSP was formally established in October 2003.

The Partnership Board is the 'executive arm' of the partnership, providing strategic direction and acting as a 'champion' for local issues. It has 24 places (6 from each of the local government, public, private and voluntary/community sectors) – the Leader, Chair of the Finance and Management Committee, Leader of the Conservative Group and the Chief Executive, represent the Council. The Council is the 'Accountable Body' for finances and also provides the Secretariat.

The focus of work for the SDLSP is on the delivery of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy. This was 'officially' launched at a public Forum event in July 2005 and covers the period 2005 to 2010.

The Strategy has 6 Themes

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| Theme 1: | Creating Opportunities for All |
| Theme 2: | Safe Communities |
| Theme 3: | Healthy Communities |
| Theme 4: | A Vibrant Economy |
| Theme 5: | A Sustainable Environment |
| Theme 6: | Lifelong Learning and Culture |

Over the past 12 months, the SDLSP has been progressing the delivery of the Year 1 Action Plan.

The Year 2 Action Plan (covering the period to the end of March 2008) is expected to be approved by the partnership in July.

Derbyshire Partnership Forum

The Council is a member of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum which is made up of county and district councils, the police, health and other public and voluntary sector interests.

The Forum is implementing the Derbyshire Local Area Agreement (LAA).

LAA'S set out a new approach to service delivery based on shared priorities between government, local authorities and their partners.

The Derbyshire LAA covers a three year period and sets targets for four 'blocks' of services – 'Children & Young People'; 'Safe and Stronger Communities'; 'Healthier Communities'; and, 'Sustainable Communities'.

Council Services

The Council provides a range of local services. They include:

- Refuse collection
- Recycling and composting schemes
- Street cleansing and grass cutting
- Provision of parks, sports and leisure facilities
- Delivering regeneration projects
- Collection of Council Tax and Business Rates
- Managing and maintaining Council homes (including Sheltered homes)
- Ensuring buildings and alterations are safe
- Provision of a Community Warden and CareLine Service
- Heritage conservation and protection
- Supporting local arts
- Cemeteries and public toilets
- Producing the plans and strategies which make up the Local Development Scheme (a land use framework)
- Disabled facilities grants
- Encouraging inward investment and promoting tourism
- Supporting local businesses
- Providing grants to voluntary and community groups and organisations
- Deciding planning applications
- Administering Council Tax and Housing Benefits
- Licensing alcohol sales, food premises, taxi services, public entertainment and street trading
- Working with partners to reduce crime and disorder
- Controlling pests, dog fouling, flytipping, water, noise and air pollution
- Enforcing Health and Safety
- Provision of sports and play activities
- Protecting public footpaths
- Electoral registration

SECTION 3: GUIDE TO PARTS 2-6

Purpose

This section provides a short guide to the organisation and contents of the main body of the Plan.

Organisation and Contents

Part 2 reports our performance in 2005/06.

Section 4 provides an overview of progress during the year.

Sections 5-8 examine our performance in respect of the Corporate Plan 2005/08 (Section 5); the CPA Improvement Plan (Section 6); Best Value Performance Indicators (Section 7); and, the South Derbyshire Community Strategy Action Plan (Section 8).

Part 3 focuses on audit and inspection work by the Audit Commission.

Section 9 outlines the key messages in the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter whilst Section 10 reports the findings and recommendations from the inspection of our housing repairs and maintenance service.

Part 4 looks ahead with our plans and priorities for improving local services.

Section 11 outlines the contents of our new Corporate Plan for 2006/09; Section 12 discusses the 2006/07 Improvement Plan; Section 13 details three year targets for the Best Value Performance Indicators; and, Section 14 sets out the arrangements for producing a new Community Strategy Action Plan.

The final section in Part 4 explains how we intend to deliver our plans and improvement priorities.

Part 5 provides information about Council finances (Section 16), efficiency savings (Section 17) and staff contracts (Section 18).

Part 6 contains various tables detailing our performance (Appendix A); plans and priorities (Appendix B) and related background information (Appendix C).

Further Information

Further information about our performance and plans can be found in:

- The 'core' documents listed in Section 1
- Previous Best Value Performance Plans which list our service delivery promises and contain a wealth of data on Best Value Performance Indicators going back to 1999/2000
- Service related plans and strategies (such as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy)

Most of these documents are available on our web site. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please contact the Policy Team on 01282 595728 or e-mail policy@south-derbys.gov.uk

PART 2

PERFORMANCE IN 2005/06

SECTION 4: OVERVIEW AND KEY MESSAGES

Introduction

This section provides a brief overview of our performance in 2005/06 as measured by the 216 milestones, targets and actions set for the:

- 2005/08 Corporate Plan (Year 1 milestones)
- 2005/06 CPA Improvement Plan
- 2005/06 suite of Best Value Performance Indicators
- South Derbyshire Community Strategy Action Plan

Support for Improvement

The 2005 Best Value Performance Plan drew attention to inconsistent performance across the organisation, 'coasting' and other Councils moving head at a faster rate.

Over the past year, we have put in place a number of mechanisms to support improved performance. Specific mention should be made of:

- **The Improvement Working Panel**

This is a cross party member working group which meets regularly to review performance and oversee improvement planning. The Panel (which is chaired by the Leader of the Council) reports to Council via the Finance and Management Committee.

- **Corporate Improvement Group**

With external support, this group (which comprises the Corporate Management Team and Heads of service) has been 're-energised' and is now taking forward the corporate planning and service improvement agenda.

- **The 'Achieving More' Framework**

In November, the Council agreed 'Achieving More' - a framework for managing performance and improving services. (This developed from an initiative by service departments to provide more performance related information to policy committees.)

The framework is based on the principles of '*plan, do, review and revise*' and the first round of performance reports was considered by the Improvement Panel just before Christmas.

The reports currently cover the CPA Improvement Plan, Corporate Plan, Community Strategy and Best Value Performance Indicators. They are based on a 'traffic light' assessment by the relevant manager where:

- * **Green** - 'on track' to achieve the target/milestone
- * **Orange** - at risk of failure
- * **Red** – probable failure

The reports also detail proposed remedial measures for targets/milestones that are likely to fail unless corrective action is taken.

Overall Performance

Table 4.1 reports our overall performance in terms of the 216 milestones, actions and targets which comprise the Corporate Plan, CPA Improvement Plan, Best Value Performance Indicators and the Community Strategy Action Plan.

TABLE 4.1: OVERALL PERFORMANCE		
	Total - Milestones/actions/targets (%)	
	2004/05	2005/06
Achieved	71 (46%)	151 (70%)
Partially achieved	23 (15%)	30 (14%)
Not achieved	60 (39%)	35 (16%)
Total	154	216

It is clear that the result for 2005/06 shows significant progress both in terms of numbers and percentages.

This would suggest that active in-year performance monitoring and management is making a positive difference to our overall performance.

Performance in detail

Table 4.2 looks in more detail at performance in respect of the 4 key areas of work.

TABLE 4.2: PERFORMANCE – KEY AREAS				
	Total (Milestones actions/targets)	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Corporate Plan				
2005/06	91	62 (68%)	19 (21%)	10 (11%)
2004/05	66	25 (38%)	15 (23%)	26 (39%)
CPA Improvement Plan				
2005/06	25	16 (64%)	8 (32%)	1 (4%)
2004/05	29	8 (28%)	8 (28%)	13 (45%)
Community Strategy				
2005/06	27	23 (85%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)
2004/05	N/A			
Best Value Performance Indicators				
2005/06	73	50 (69%)	N/A	23 (31%)
2004/05	59	38 (64%)	N/A	21 (36%)

Performance is improving across the board, although this trend is most marked in the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the CPA Improvement Plan (where the volume of work has also increased).

Sections 5-8 continue the process of 'drilling down' into our performance as well as outlining the outcomes for local people in terms of new or improved services. The data shows there is now more consistency between services and that we are moving closer to the top performing Councils.

SECTION 5: CORPORATE PLAN 2005/08

Introduction

The 2005/08 Corporate Plan was agreed by Council in June 2005.

The Plan sets out the Council's ambitions for South Derbyshire along with proposals for improving services.

Proposals are grouped under 8 Key Aims, which relate to:

- Caring for the Environment
- Economic Development
- Crime and Disorder
- Improving Services
- Good Quality Homes
- Leisure Activities
- Supporting the National Forest
- Community Leadership

Each of the Key Aims has a number of 'milestones' or targets for delivery/implementation in 2005/06. These comprise a mixture of CPA improvement priorities, local improvement priorities and service development. In total, there are 91 milestones.

A copy of the Plan is available on the Council's web site.

Our Performance

Table 5.1 summarises our performance over the past year.

TABLE 5.1: CORPORATE PLAN 2005/08 – 2005/06 MILESTONES (PERFORMANCE)				
Key Aim	Total Milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved
Caring for the Environment	7	6	1	0
Economic Development	8	5	2	1
Crime and Disorder	10	7	1	2
Improving Services	21	13	7	1
Good Quality Homes	15	13	2	0
Leisure Activities	9	7	1	1
Supporting the National Forest	6	5	0	1
Community Leadership	15	6	5	4
Total	91	62 (68%)	19 (21%)	10 (11%)

We achieved 68% (62/91) milestones and partially achieved a further 21% (19).

This represents a marked improvement over 2004/05 when we achieved 38% (25/66) of milestones and partially achieved 23% (15).

In the next few months, we will be considering how this improvement has been achieved to see what lessons can be learned for the future.

Performance in 2005/06 was good across all Key Aims, but especially 'Caring for the Environment', 'Good Quality Homes' and 'Supporting the National Forest'. The weakest area was probably 'Community Leadership' but even here we achieved 40% of milestones and partially achieved a further 34%.

Important achievements include:

- delivery of various measures to make South Derbyshire 'cleaner and greener' (such as Safer Neighbourhood Wardens, review of street cleansing regimes, and work with Groundwork Erewash Valley)
- gaining a better understanding about the local economy especially the impact of visitors to the area and workforce skills and development needs
- work with partners to deliver the Crime and Disorder Strategy which targets anti social behaviour, fear of crime & community reassurance, violent crime property crime and substance misuse
- establishing 'building blocks' for improving the way in which we manage our resources – employees, finances, procurement of goods, works and services
- securing a 'fit for purpose' housing strategy, strengthening our housing adaptations service and continuing to improve the condition of Council homes and the services we provide to our tenants
- helping to develop the capacity of local groups through the Cultural Forum and South Derbyshire Sports
- Improving leisure and recreation facilities
- promoting the development of the Nation Forest through planning policies, tourism promotion and projects/activities at Rosliston Forestry Centre
- supporting the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership in the development and delivery of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy

Table A.1 (Appendix A) provides more details of our performance.

The main reasons why milestones were not achieved appear to relate to:

- the effectiveness of partnership working - in particular, the capacity of partners to take projects forward
- staffing resources within some service areas
- higher (often community based) priorities
- the need to allow time for consultation

Looking Ahead

During 2005, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee initiated a review of our strategic planning processes. Members decided that they wanted to be more involved in the development of the next Plan, that there should be clear linkages to the Community Strategy and that the views of local people should help to shape priorities and actions.

The 'new look' Corporate Plan for 2006/09 is discussed in more detail in Section 11.

SECTION 6: CPA IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2005/06

Introduction

The results of the Council's first Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) were announced in June 2004.

The Audit Commission's overall judgement was that South Derbyshire was a 'fair' Council (on a scale from excellent to good, fair, weak and poor).

The judgement highlighted our strengths in terms of service quality, investment and learning, together with our weakness in respect of ambition, setting priorities and managing performance.

A summary of the Audit Commission's final report can be found at Appendix C. A copy of the full report is available on our web site.

Improvement Priorities

Following the assessment, the Council agreed a series of improvement priorities with the Audit Commission, comprising:

- working with the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership to develop and implement the community strategy
- strengthening the structure of the organisation to ensure that we can deliver high quality services, now and in the longer term
- improving our performance in delivering local services
- maintaining sound and stable finances with spending focused on priorities
- doing more to consult local people about our plans and priorities
- improving the efficiency and effectiveness of council policy and decision making
- having a planned approach to the provision and maintenance of community facilities
- improving services to the tenants of Council homes
- improving our 'customer' focus

These priorities were built into a Plan which has since been reviewed and 'rolled forward' as part of the development of the 2005/08 Corporate Plan.

Some 25 milestones (detailing specific actions for delivery in 2005/06) have been identified. It should be noted these milestones are included in the 2005/08 Corporate Plan and count towards the totals shown in Table 5.1 *ante.*)

Our Performance

Table 6.1 summarises our performance during 2005/06.

TABLE 6.1: CPA IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES – PERFORMANCE 2005/06 MILESTONES				
Improvement Priority	Total Milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved
South Derbyshire Community Strategy	2	1	1	0
Organisational Structure	2	2	0	0
Performance	3	0	3	0
Finances and Spending	2	2	0	0
Consultation and Engagement	4	2	1	1
Policy and Decision Making	3	2	1	0
Investment in Community Facilities	2	2	0	0
Council Homes	4	4	0	0
Customer Focus	3	1	2	0
Total	25	16 (64%)	8 (32%)	1 (4%)

The table shows that we achieved 64% of milestones and partially achieved a further 32%.

By way of comparison, in 2004/05, we achieved or partially achieved 56% of milestones – with both categories each having 8 milestones. Although, we had to deliver more milestones that year (29 in total), there has still been a significant improvement in performance.

Good progress has been achieved in relation to:

- delivery of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy
- workforce and member development
- updating our financial plans and taking forward the efficiency agenda
- improving facilities for visitors to the Council offices and bringing more services within the 'Customer First' contact centre
- reviewing council decision making
- upgrading our web site
- completing a comprehensive study of open space, sport and recreation throughout the district
- improving the strategic and operational aspects of our housing services

Probably, the weakest areas have been 'consultation & engagement' and 'performance'. We have begun to address these through a combination of measures including additional in house and external support and the adoption of more rigorous approach to performance management.

Table A.2 (Appendix A) has more details about our performance in relation to specific milestones.

SECTION 7: BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2005/06

Introduction

This section focuses on our performance in terms of the national suite of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

BVPIs are specified by Government and are one of the main yardsticks for measuring performance.

For 2005/06, the Council is required to report performance against 93 BVPIs (although in year monitoring has taken place for a further 3 indicators).

Targets were set for 73 BVPIs – the remaining 20 were mainly new indicator where data on actual performance was needed before realistic targets could be set.

For most BVPIs, the Council was free to set its own targets. However, for a small number, we were required to take into account national targets. These were of two types:

- 'performance standards' (where failure to achieve the standards will normally be judged as failure to achieve Best Value for that services)
- 'top quartile' targets (where we should aim to reach the performance level of the top 25% of Councils in the previous year)

Table A.4 (Appendix A) presents the (unaudited) outturn data for 2005/06.

It also gives the targets we set for 2005/06, our performance in 2004/5, the annual trend and performance against the 'All England' Council group for 2004/05. (This is divided into 4 'quartiles' corresponding to the 'top' 25% of Councils, second 25% in descending order,, third 25% and 'bottom' 25%.)

Comparison with other Councils

Table 7.1 compares our performance in 2005/06 against the performance of the 'All England' Council group in 2004/05 (which is the latest data that we have).

For the 49 indicators where comparative data is available, we achieved 'top quartile performance for 20 (41%); second or third for 23 (47%) and bottom for 6 (12%). This is an improvement over 2004/05, especially as we compared ourselves against the 'District Council' group which tends to be of a slightly lower standard.

TABLE 7.1: QUARTILE PERFORMANCE 2005/06				
Service Area	Total BVPIs)	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile	2/3 Quartile
Corporate Health	14	5	4	5
Housing	10	7	1	2
Homelessness	3	2	1	0
Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit	6	2	0	4
Waste and Cleanliness	6	1	0	5
Environmental Health	1	1	0	0
Planning	7	2	0	5
Culture and related services	0	0	0	0
Community Safety and well-being	2	0	0	2
Total	49	20 (41%)	6 (12%)	23 (47%)
2004/05	47	16 (34%)	9 (19%)	22 (47%)

We have 6 indicators in the 'bottom' quartile. These are detailed in Table 7.2.

TABLE 7.2 BOTTOM QUARTILE PERFORMANCE 2005/06				
BVPI No.	Description	Bottom Quartile All England 2004/06	SDDC Performance 2005/06	Comments
2b	The duty to promote race equality – checklist score	42%	42%	Performance declined
11b	Top 5% of earners from ethnic minority communities	0.0%	0.00%	No change in performance.
17a	Employees from ethnic minority communities	0.9%	0.6%	Performance declined
17a/b	Council employees from ethnic minority communities as a proportion of the district's economically active population from ethnic minority communities	50.0%	23.1%	Performance declined
74b	Satisfaction of ethnic minority tenants of Council homes – overall service	64% (District Councils)	50.00%	Small sample size
183 a	Length of stay by homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation	1	5.38 weeks	Performance declined

This illustrates very clearly that we need to do more in terms of promoting equality of opportunity in employment and service provision.

In the Corporate Plan, we identified a number of priority indicators for 2005/06 and set ourselves the target of having none in the bottom quartile and a least

60% in the top quartile. (The priority BVPIs have been highlighted in Table A.4 of Appendix A.)

Quartile information is available for 30 out of 46 indicators. Of these, just 1 (BVPI 74b) is bottom quartile and 14 (47% of the total) are top quartile. This indicates that we are performing better in priority areas.

Trends

Table 7.3 details trends over the past year (for the 46 indicators where data is available).

It can be seen that 44% of indicators (20) showed improved performance; 30% (14) stayed the same and 26% (12) deteriorated.

TABLE: 7.3: BVPI TRENDS 2005/06				
		Compared to previous year (Number of BVPIs)		
	Total BVPIs	Improving	Declining	No change
Corporate Health	13	6	4	3
Housing	11	4	0	7
Homelessness	4	2	2	0
Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit	3	0	2	1
Waste and Cleanliness	6	4	2	0
Environmental Health	1	0	0	1
Planning	6	4	1	1
Culture and related services	0	0	0	0
Community Safety and well-being	2	0	1	1
Total	46	20 (44%)	12 (26%)	14 (30%)
2004/05	54	25 (46%)	14 (26%)	15 (28%)

Significantly, 6 out of the 7 housing indicators where no change has been reported relate to tenant satisfaction surveys that rely on previously reported data.

Leaving this aside, the table suggests that our performance has remained fairly static. This is something we are now addressing through a more challenging target-setting regime (Section 13).

Achieving Targets

National standards and targets

In the Corporate Plan, we set ourselves the target of achieving all national standards and targets set for BVPIs. It can be seen from Table 7.4 that we achieved this objective for 7 out of 10 indicators (70% of the total).

TABLE 7.4: PERFORMANCE AGAINST NATIONAL STANDARDS/TARGETS 2005/06				
BVPI No.	Description	National Target	SDDC Performance	Comments
9	Council Tax collected	Top Quartile 98.29%	98.82%	Achieved
10	NNDR collected	Top Quartile 99.10%	99.46%	Achieved
12	Sickness absence (days)	Top Quartile 8.93	9.38	Not achieved Performance declined
14	Early retirements	Top Quartile 0.17%	0.30%	Not achieved Performance declined
15	Ill-health retirements	Top Quartile 0.17%	0.00%	Achieved
157	E-government	100% Dec 2005	100%	Achieved
82a i	Household waste recycled	Performance Standard 21% by 2005/06	13.19%	Achieved (82a i + 82b i)
82b i	Household waste composted	Ditto	12.40%	Ditto
109a	Planning applications in 13 weeks	Performance Standard 60%	56.25%	Not achieved Performance improved
109b	Minor applications in 8 weeks	Performance Standard 65%	69.92%	Achieved
109c	Other applications in 8 weeks	Performance Standard 80%	86.65%	Achieved

Local targets

Table 7.5 shows performance against the targets we set for ourselves. It can be seen that we achieved 50 out of 73 targets (69% in total).

The table also demonstrates that performance has continued to improve in terms of the both the number and the overall percentage of targets achieved.

TABLE 7.5: PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS 2005/06		
	Total BVPIs (where targets set)	Number at or above target
Corporate Health	17	9
Housing	13	10
Homelessness	4	2
Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit	7	5
Waste and Cleanliness	10	8
Environmental Health	1	1
Planning	10	8
Culture and related services	2	1
Community Safety and well-being	9	6
Total	73	50 (69%)
2004/05	59	38 (64%)

Variance targets/performance

Table A.5 (Appendix A) lists the indicators where there has been 'significant' variance between targets and actual performance. 'Significant' is defined as +/- 10% for financial indicators and +/- 15% for the rest.

In general, variance has arisen because of positive management interventions, resource availability, targets set for the first time and factors outside the Council's control..

Conclusions

Overall, performance is improving.

We have top quartile performance in most areas of our work, whilst bottom quartile performance is confined largely to aspects of the equalities 'agenda' that we acknowledge needs to be improved.

Top quartile performance in priority areas is especially pleasing.

The number of indicators improving, deteriorating and staying the same has remained fairly constant and this is something we are addressing. For 2005/06, the distribution across services was broadly representative of the Council as a whole.

There has been a steady improvement in performance against targets and we achieved the required national standards/targets for 70% (7 out of 10) indicators, compared with 7 out of 12 or 58% in 2004/05.

SECTION 8: SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN 2005-06)

Introduction

The South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership (SDLP) publicly launched the South Derbyshire Community Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan in July 2005.

The five year Strategy is based on 6 Themes, each with 2 Priorities. These result from extensive consultation with local people and other stakeholders.

The Themes and Priorities are detailed below:

TABLE 8.1: COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEMES AND PRIORITIES	
Themes	Priorities
Creating Opportunities for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving communication, consultation and involvement with local people to provide better services Improving social inclusion by providing fair and equal access to all services for everybody
Safe Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling the causes and effects of antisocial behaviour through partnership working and involving communities Reducing the fear of crime
Healthier Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better access and opportunities for everyone to improve their health and well being Better support to vulnerable people and families to improve their health and well being
A Vibrant Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and sustaining the local business base Encouraging inward investment and doing business in South Derbyshire
Sustainable Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving our environment by working together Reducing waste and improving our public space
Lifelong Learning and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access and choice for learning and skills development Increasing the number and range of leisure, arts and heritage opportunities

The Year 1 Action Plan contains 73 actions/targets. Delivery is progressed through 6 'thematic' Working Groups, made up of partners across the sectors.

Partnership progress

The Annual Report to the Partnership AGM (January 2006) provides an overview of the significant progress that is being made by the partnership in improving quality of life throughout the district.

Highlights include:

- the preparation of a consultation strategy for the partnership
- work to locate and profile existing community buildings so that gaps in provision can be identified
- establishing more community safety groups and securing the employment of 4 Police Community Support Officers for the district
- setting targets for the enforcement of 'low level' crime such as dropping litter, dog fouling and fly tipping
- actively promoting healthier lifestyles (through diet and exercise) and smoke-free environments
- establishing a business grants scheme to support woodland based projects in the National Forest
- helping community organisations pursue ideas for social enterprise projects
- improving public transport links to the employment opportunities at Nottingham East Midlands Airport
- securing the extension of Groundwork Erewash Valley into the district (which will improve engagement and action on environmental issues)
- supporting a local Cultural Forum and contributing to arrangements for 'SWADFEST' (a week of arts, food and leisure activities)

The Annual Report also outlines the steps that partners have taken to strengthen the operational effectiveness of the SDLSP Board* with the establishment of a Strategic Co-ordination Group.

The main role of the Group is to co-ordinate the work programme, monitor performance and deal with cross cutting issues, such as the development of the local workforce.

A copy of the Report is available on the Council's web site

** The Board is the responsible for the day to day operation of the partnership. It consists of 24 individual who represent a variety of organisations including the District and County Councils, other public sector bodies, businesses and the voluntary and community sectors.*

The Council's performance

The Council is specifically responsible for the delivery of 27 actions/targets in the Action Plan.

Table 8.2 (below) summarises our performance at year end.

TABLE 8.2: COMMUNITY STRATEGY YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN – THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE				
Theme	Total Council Actions	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Creating Opportunities for All	3	1	1	1
Safe Communities	6	6	0	0
Healthier Communities	4	4	0	0
A Vibrant Economy	3	3	0	0
Sustainable Environment	9	8	1	0
Lifelong Learning and Culture	2	1	1	
Total	27	23 (85%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)

We achieved, or partially achieved, virtually all of the actions for which we are responsible.

This is especially important in terms of our community leadership role, which requires us to be seen as a reliable partner.

Key outcomes for local people include:

- the formation of the Safer Neighbourhood Warden Scheme in consultation with the police and the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership and the commencement of uniformed park patrols
- the provision of more opportunities for local people to take part in physical activity through the 'Get Active In The Forest' project
- the setting up of a new tourist information centre in Swadlincote
- a review of our street cleaning operations and the targeting of 'hotspots' for more cleaning
- work with schools to promote waste reduction
- improvements to local parks

Table A.3 (Appendix A) provides more details our performance.

PART 3

AUDIT AND INSPECTION

SECTION 9: AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL LETTER

Introduction

The latest Annual Audit and Inspection Letter ('the Annual Letter') was presented to Council in May 2006 by the District Auditor and Relationship Manager.

The 'Annual Letter' summarises the conclusions and significant issues arising from the 2004/05 audit and inspection programme in terms of the Council's performance, Accounts and corporate governance arrangements.

A copy of the Annual Letter has been placed on the Council's web site.

Key Messages

These are reproduced in full below:

'Council performance'

2. *Since the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) in 2004, the Council has made progress in addressing corporate issues. It has implemented a new corporate management structure, agreed a community strategy and is now developing a new Corporate Plan.*
3. *The Council has also made significant improvements for its Council house tenants, which is reflected in high levels of satisfaction. It has improved customer focus and access to services through a telephone contact centre and a new reception area. However, the Council's best value performance indicators (BVPIs) show an inconsistent picture – just under half are still above average and less than half have improved since 2002/03 but there are more BVPIs in the bottom 25% nationally compared with two years ago.*
4. *The inspection of the Council's arrangement for the repair and maintenance of its housing stock assessed it as a fair, one star service that has 'promising' prospects for improvement. The prospects for improvement were labelled as 'promising' because a number of wide ranging improvements are underway and are expected to continue.*
5. *The Council is implementing its risk management strategy. However, it now needs to ensure that corporate risks are being actively managed.*
6. *To assist in strengthening the performance management culture within the Council, we held 'performance breakthrough' workshops for officers and members in two service areas. We identified a number of action points, including the important issue of 'user/customer' focus.*

Accounts and Governance

7. We gave an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounts on 31 October 2005 after agreeing with officers a number of amendments.
8. The Council's financial position is currently satisfactory. You have detailed medium-term financial plans to use part of your reserves to fund limited expenditure increases whilst maintaining balances above a specified minimum level. Clearly, the Council is going to have to continue to monitor its finances closely to achieve these plans.
9. The implementation of a new revenues and benefits system has been further delayed across the consortium by continuing problems with software reliability. The risk remains that the investment to date will prove abortive but along with other members of the consortium you are continuing to keep your position under review.
10. The Council has performed adequately on each of the five themes in the new use of resources scored judgement. Asset management was the one significant area where improvement was needed. The Council had recognized this as a key priority and at the time of the review had made funds available for developing a maintenance programme and a disposal strategy for surplus assets.'

Action Needed by the Council

The Annual Letter goes on to identify four areas where action is required:

- 'Use your new performance management system to review, manage and improve performance against national BVPIs
- Prioritise and implement the remaining aspects of the risk management strategy
- Deliver your plans to strengthen asset management
- Continue to monitor finances closely to achieve your medium term financial plans'

The Council has accepted these recommendations which are now included in our Improvement Plan (see Section 12).

Best Value Performance Plan 2005

The Annual Letter confirms that last year's BVPP was satisfactory in terms of compliance with statutory guidance.

However, it also draws attention to the fact that a number of BVPIs needed to be amended and two indicators were qualified (BVPI 66a rent collected Council homes and Housing Investment Programme Sections A1/A6 private sector voids).

Future Audit and Inspection Work

Specific mention should be made of several important components of the Audit Commission's programme for 2006/07:

- The inspection of the Council's cultural services (focussing on leisure and recreation)
- The review of our performance management system
- The Use of Resources judgement (covering financial planning and management, internal control, financial standing and 'value for money')
- Direction of Travel Assessment (reviewing progress in delivering improvements)

The outcome of this work will play an important part in decisions (by the Council and the Audit Commission) about a new CPA assessment.

Housing Repairs and Maintenance Inspection

The next section provides a more detailed account of the inspection of our housing repairs and maintenance service together with progress on the Audit Commission's recommendations.

SECTION 10: HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE INSPECTION

Introduction

The Audit Commission carried out an inspection of the Council's housing repairs and maintenance service in June 2005.

The areas covered included:

- access, customer care and user focus
- diversity
- capital improvement, planned and cyclical maintenance, and, major repairs to the Council's 3,235 homes
- responsive and void repairs
- gas servicing
- aids and adaptations for people with disabilities
- resident involvement and value for money

A copy of the Inspection Report (published in October 2005) is available on our web site.

Inspection Findings

The Audit Commission's overall judgement was that we provided a 'fair' one star service with 'promising' prospects for improvement.

The Inspectors identified a number of positive aspects about the service including:

- high levels of customer satisfaction
- a Customer Care Charter is in place and a repairs policy has been produced in conjunction with the Tenant Advisory and Consultation Team (TACT)
- all staff have received dedicated customer care and diversity training
- costs are low for responsive repairs and generally the stock is in good condition
- response times for emergency and urgent repairs have improved
- there is one team dealing with disabled facilities grants which works with the County Council to prioritise applications; customer satisfaction levels are high
- the Council produces regular newsletters for tenants which provide information about the housing service, including the performance of the repairs and maintenance service

However, the Inspectors also found a number of service areas that need improving. For example,

- tenants found access to the service confusing, with different telephone numbers, inconvenient opening hours and out of date leaflets
- many non urgent repairs were being completed outside their prescribed timescales
- the ratio of planned to responsive maintenance was below good practice levels
- tenants have not been engaged in procurement decisions or in the monitoring of performance; there was little tenant involvement in the management of planned works and they were offered a limited choice of external doors, bathrooms and kitchens

The inspectors assessed our prospects for improvement as 'promising' because amongst other things:

- there is an on-going repairs improvement plan which has led to positive changes
- vacant properties have reduced in number and properties are now being let more promptly
- the establishment of a new IT system has enabled the introduction of appointments, providing a more customer focused approach
- the Council has undertaken heating, kitchen and bathroom improvements to 896 properties over a two year period and is making steady progress towards tackling non decent homes
- new gas safety procedure have been established and a new contractor appointed, resulting in much improved performance
- improvement plans have been established following reviews and inspections, including the development of a vision and standards for the sheltered housing service
- the numerous housing related plans have been brought under a composite housing services actions plan and a new, more robust performance monitoring and reporting system has been introduced
- the Council has agreed to tender the responsive repairs and maintenance service in 2006 to ensure that it receives value for money

However, the Inspectors also identified a number of 'barriers' to our prospects for improvement. These included:

- some actions identified in previous inspections have not been implemented and progress has been slow on some issues
- Best Value principles have not been effectively and comprehensively applied to the service
- IT systems are not yet sufficiently developed

Audit Commission Recommendations

The Inspectors went on to make a number of recommendations designed to help the service continue to improve.

These are set out below along with a brief note on our progress to date.

TABLE 10.1: AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS – HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE		
Ref No.	Recommendation	Progress to date
Within 3 months		
R1	Report the findings and recommendations of this report to the Council, staff, tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders.	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reported the findings and recommendations to Members through the Housing and Community Services Committee (November 2005) • made the report available on our web site • advised all staff through a special staff meeting and through team briefs • placed an item in the autumn/winter edition of the 'Tenants Extra' newsletter
R2	Prepare a SMART action plan to address all weaknesses identified in this report and ensure that progress is regularly monitored and reported.	<p>An Improvement Action Plan has been prepared based on 6 key themes – diversity; access, customer care and user focus; gas servicing; responsive repairs; stock investment; and, void repairs.</p> <p>Improvements are monitored through monthly management meetings with the Director of Community Services and by members on a quarterly basis. Progress is also discussed with staff and TACT (Tenants Advisory Consultation Team). Significant improvements have already been seen in our voids performance, average re let time is down by 6 days per property, equating to an initial saving of £14,000.</p>
R3	Undertake a comprehensive review of the provision of repairs and maintenance leaflets to tenants to ensure that information is provided in a consistent and co-ordinated manner and that all tenants are supplied with information to help in the diagnosis of repairs.	A new Tenants Handbook is being produced which will be distributed to tenants during the summer. The handbook will include information about looking after your home, such as diagnosing and reporting repairs.

Ref No.	Recommendation	Progress to date
R4	Review progress against all outstanding diversity actions within the key action plans. Ensure that action is taken on all outstanding items.	<p>Progress on outstanding actions has been reviewed. Achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completion of race equality impact assessments, which are now being built into operational plans • review/update of tenant details • preparation of an action plan to secure compliance with the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice for social housing • commencement of works at sheltered housing schemes to secure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act • improved monitoring through the Housing Services management team • use of 'Language Line' by Housing services has now been adopted corporately.
Within 6 months		
R5	In conjunction with stakeholders undertake a detailed analysis of the responsive service to address the high incidence of variation orders and the reasons for the high levels of jobs being diagnosed and ordered as emergencies.	<p>A 'Challenge Day' has been arranged for tenants and other stakeholder on 21 July. This will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diagnosis of repairs • variation orders • performance in reletting vacant properties • emergency repairs • ways of making the service more customer focused
R6	Undertake a review in conjunction with stakeholders of contract administration, management and evaluation procedures to enable the delivery of a more customer focused service.	Ditto
R7	Review the procedures for aids and adaptations to ensure that initial requests for aids and adaptations are recorded, works are captured on property attributes and the service is monitored to ensure that it is meeting its stated objective of achieving independent living.	<p>A review of the procedures for aids and adaptations has been undertaken and changes have been made to ensure full monitoring from initial enquiry to completion. Performance is also reported monthly to the Director of Community Services and quarterly to committee.</p> <p>Properties are currently re-let taking into account existing adaptations. The formal recording of attributes (which is due to be introduced later this year once a review of the repairs reporting tool has been undertaken by Orchard) will support and strengthen this approach.</p>

Ref No.	Recommendation	Progress to date
R8	Continue to develop the provision of performance information so that it includes all service areas and corresponding commentary and actions to manage under performance and deliver service improvements.	Quarterly reports are provided for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Community Services Committee • Housing Services Management Team • Director of Community Services • Staff briefings • Tenants Extra newsletter • South Derbyshire Tenants Forum • Improvement Panel (corporate issues)
R9	Increase resident involvement and influence in all aspects of this service.	An action plan has been developed that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'challenge event' for repairs and maintenance (mentioned earlier) • A tenant 'challenge' on vacant properties • Use of 'mystery shoppers' for repairs issues • A 'challenge event' on Equality and Diversity <p>We are also working on a feasibility study to bring more of the repairs and maintenance service within the ambit of 'Customer First' contact centre/main reception service.</p>
Within 12 months		
R10	Implement appointments across all trades to enable all tenants to be offered them in accordance with prescribed timescales and to improve ease of access for tenants.	An appointment system is now in place. We are now doing in excess 85% of all jobs on appointment.
R11	Ensure that all elements of the repairs and maintenance service deliver value for money.	A suitable approach is currently being explored with key stakeholders
R12	In conjunction with contractors and tenants actively develop a strategy that will enable a move from a responsive to a planned maintenance service.	No formal progress at this stage.

PART 4

PLANS & PRIORITIES

FOR IMPROVING SERVICES

SECTION 11: CORPORATE PLAN 2006/09

Introduction

The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision for South Derbyshire, along with our plans and priorities for improving local services.

It also describes how we will work with partners to improve the quality of life of all our residents, the vitality of community groups and the success of local businesses.

Development of the Plan

This is the Council's fifth Corporate Plan and it is very different from previous editions.

The Plan contains a new Vision for South Derbyshire; a statement of the Values that will guide the organisation; and, the grouping of actions under six 'cross-cutting' Themes (which are intended to support 'joined up' service delivery).

We have also clearly defined our priorities. These result from an extensive programme of consultation with local people, partners and other stakeholders which involved presentations at meetings, questionnaires, active participation and a focus group.

This new approach was prompted by the Council's commitment to put local people at the centre of service delivery and the publication of the district's first Community Strategy.

A copy of the Corporate Plan is available on our web site.

The Council's Vision

Our Vision is to:

Make South Derbyshire a healthier, more prosperous and safer place to live

Our Values

The following principles will guide our actions and govern our relationships with local people and partners. We will:

- Make decisions openly and with integrity
- Involve the community in choices about services and priorities

- Be open and responsive to change
- Treat people fairly in everything we do
- Value employees and the essential role they play in service delivery

The Themes

The six cross-cutting Themes are:

- Theme 1: Safer and Healthier Communities
- Theme 2: You at the Centre
- Theme 3: Higher Quality Services
- Theme 4: Prosperity for All
- Theme 5: Rural South Derbyshire
- Theme 6: Stronger in the Region

Table 11.1 outlines the scope of each Theme together with some of the main challenges that we face.

TABLE 11.1: CORPORATE PLAN THEMES	
Theme 1:	<p>Safer and Healthier Communities</p> <p>This theme focuses on our work with the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership in tackling crime and anti social behaviour, activities for young people and the public health agenda (healthy eating, exercise, alcohol reduction etc).</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuing to reduce crime in South Derbyshire • creating an environment in which people feel safe • confronting anti social behaviour • increasing the uniformed patrolling presence across the district • helping people to take responsibility for their own health

Theme 2:	<p>You at the Centre</p> <p>This theme focuses on community consultation and engagement, sustainable communities, recycling & composting, environmental improvement, recreation & leisure facilities, and our work with the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving communication and consultation with local people and groups • giving local people a stronger voice in decisions about local issues • doing all we can to make our communities places where people will want to live and work • protecting and enhancing the environment now and for the benefit of future generations • providing more opportunities for people to take part in learning and cultural activities • empowering local communities to identify local projects and bring them to fruition • supporting the development of a vibrant and committed voluntary and community sector
Theme 3:	<p>Higher Quality Services</p> <p>This theme focuses on what needs to be done to improve the quality and efficiency of our services.</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting challenging service standards and targets • improving customer satisfaction with our services • making the best use of all our resources • driving up service quality throughout the organisation
Theme 4:	<p>Prosperity for All</p> <p>This theme focuses on issues relating to social exclusion, housing needs and economic regeneration.</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving everyone in South Derbyshire the opportunity to escape from poverty, enjoy good health, live in a safe environment and benefit from an increased sense of well-being • meeting the housing needs of all sections of the community, especially the most vulnerable • making sure advice and support is available to vulnerable people, when and where it is needed • attracting more, better quality, higher paid jobs into the district • supporting new and existing businesses to develop and grow • maximising the economic potential of South Derbyshire as a visitor destination

Theme 5:	<p>Rural South Derbyshire</p> <p>This theme focuses on the rural areas of South Derbyshire and the specific needs of their communities.</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making sure that all of the elements that support a rural way of life are in place – homes, local facilities, schools, jobs, transport, meeting places etc • managing pressures for development in the countryside • working more closely with parish councils/meetings and organisations such as the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils and the Derbyshire Rural Community Council on issues of concern to rural communities
Theme 6:	<p>Stronger in the Region</p> <p>This theme focuses on the Council's community leadership role in particular, speaking up for South Derbyshire and the delivery of the Community Strategy.</p> <p>The main challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making sure South Derbyshire's voice is heard in local, regional and national arenas • ensuring we get our fair share of the regional and national 'cake' in terms of resources and investment • improving communication with our partners about the community's needs and priorities • providing leadership to the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Our Priorities

Our priorities (shaped by feedback from local people are) are:

- **Safer and healthier communities**
- **A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire**
- **More efficient, customer focussed services**

Actions

For each Theme, there is an Action Plan.

These Plans detail specific actions, targets for 2006/07, outcomes by 2009 and 'Key Measures of Success'. Most of the Key Measures are Best Value Performance Indicators.

The emphasis is on local priorities for improvement and service developments, which will be 'visible' to local people and make a difference to their quality of life.

The six Action Plans are reproduced in Table B.1 (Appendix B)

Links to the Improvement Plan

The new Corporate Plan has been developed as an outward looking document, with an emphasis on actions that address community needs and priorities.

It is complemented by the Improvement Plan which focuses on internal processes, such as the management of resources, risk management and procurement, and takes forward the CPA improvement priorities and actions highlighted in the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

Clearly, progress in these areas will underpin the delivery of the Corporate Plan and improvements in local services.

The Improvement Plan is discussed in more detail in the next section.

SECTION 12: IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2006/07

Introduction

The Improvement Plan is an important building block in the work we are doing to improve local services.

In developing the Plan for 2006/07, we sought to take into account the following matters:

- new improvement priorities arising from audit and inspection work by the Audit Commission
- actions included in last year's Plan that to need to be progressed or developed further
- new 'ideas' generated from within the organisation or by external organisation (such as the Improvement and Development Agency) about ways of improving services
- complementary actions in the new Corporate Plan

Improvement Priorities

The Improvement Plan has 9 priorities which are outlined in Table 12.1.

The main changes from 2005/6 relate to the inclusion of new priorities concerned with procurement and risk management.

TABLE 12.1: IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES		
Improvement Priority	Objective	Comments
Customer Focus	To put customers at the centre of service planning and delivery	Priority remains unchanged from 05/06 Plan
Performance Management	To improve our performance in delivering local services	Ditto
Managing Employees	To invest in our employees to deliver improved services	Priority renamed to give new focus (previously, 'organisational structure')
Finances and Spending	To maintain sound and sustainable finances with spending linked to priorities	Priority remains unchanged from 05/06 Plan
Procurement	To establish efficient and effective procurement processes which contribute to the delivery of the Council's efficiency targets and improved local services	New priority to support the delivery of the value for money/efficiency agenda
Risk Management	To identify and effectively manage the risks to our business in order to help the organisation become more flexible and responsive to change	New priority (highlighted in the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter)
Capital Assets	To pursue a planned and sustainable approach to the provision, maintenance and retention of our land and property assets	Previously two priorities – 'Investment in community facilities' and 'Council homes'. These have been combined to give more focus and to address issues raised in Annual Audit and Inspection Letter /Use of Resources Assessment.
Consultation and Engagement	To improve arrangements for communication and consultation with local people and other stakeholders	Priority remains unchanged from 05/06 Plan
Community Leadership	To provide demonstrable leadership within the community	'South Derbyshire Community Strategy' priority expanded to reflect corporate governance aspects.

The Improvement Plan

Our Improvement Plan for 2006/07 is set out in Table B.2. (Appendix B).

It contains 19 actions (linked to targets and outcomes) which we are committed to delivering by year end.

The Plan also shows related actions that have been included in the 2006/09 Corporate Plan. These cover, for example, the development of a strategic approach to consultation, the delivery of the Community Strategy and the

management of our finances, which have been important components of previous Improvement Plans but which now support the external focus of the new Corporate Plan.

SECTION 13: BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – THREE YEAR TARGETS

Introduction

The Council is required to set three year targets for all Best Value Performance Indicators i.e. for 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09.

For the majority of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVIPs), targets can be set locally.

The exceptions are BVPI 109 a- c (time taken to determine planning applications). Here, the Government has prescribed 'standards'; failure to achieve these standards will normally be judged as failure to achieve Best Value for that service.

Prioritising the BVPIs

Although we would like to improve our performance across all BVPIs, we cannot do everything at once.

As a result, we have adopted the approach of prioritising the BVPIs and setting more stretching targets for the priority indicators.

Priority BVPIs are those which contribute to the delivery of the three Corporate Plan priorities or have been included in the Plan as 'Key Measures of Success'. To recap, the Corporate Plan priorities are:

- ***Safer and healthier communities***
- ***A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire***
- ***More efficient, customer focussed services***

Table 13.1 provides more details.

TABLE 13.1: PRIORITY BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		
BVPI No.	Description	Reason for priority
2a	Equality Standard for Local Government	More efficient, customer focussed services <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
9	Percentage of Council Tax collected	More efficient , customer focussed services
10	Percentage of non domestic rates collected	More efficient , customer focussed services
12	Working days lost due to sickness absence	More efficient , customer focussed services
156	Buildings accessible to people with a disability	More efficient, customer focussed services
63	Energy efficiency – average SAP Rating	Safer and healthier communities
66a	Rent collection and arrears recovery: rent collected	More efficient , customer focussed services
164	Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in rented housing	More efficient, customer focussed services
184a	Non-decent local authority homes	Safer and healthier communities <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
212	Average time to re-let Council homes	More efficient , customer focussed services
183a	Length of stay in temporary accommodation – Bed and Breakfast	Safer and healthier communities <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
183b	Length of stay in temporary accommodation – Hostels	Safer and healthier communities
78a	Speed of processing new claims to Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit	More efficient, customer focussed services <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
78b	Speed of processing changes of circumstances to Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit	More efficient, customer focussed services
82a(i)	Percentage of household waste recycled	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
82b(i)	Percentage of household waste composted	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
84a	Household waste collected – kilograms per head	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire

BVPI No.	Description	Reason for priority
91a	Kerbside collection of recyclables: one recyclable	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire
199a	Local streets and environmental cleanliness – litter	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
166a	Environmental Health – checklist of best practice	Safer and healthier communities
218b	Abandoned vehicles – removal within 24 hours	A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire
109a	Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	More efficient, customer focussed services <i>Key Measure of Success</i> *National Performance Standard
109b	Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	More efficient, customer focussed services *National Performance Standard
109c	Other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	More efficient, customer focussed services *National Performance Standard
200b	Local Development Scheme – milestones met	Safer and healthier communities A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire More efficient, customer focussed services
205	'Quality of Planning Services' Checklist	Safer and healthier communities A cleaner and greener South Derbyshire More efficient, customer focussed services
126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	Safer and healthier communities <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
127a	Violent crime per 1,000 population	Safer and healthier communities
127b	Robberies per 1,000 population	Safer and healthier communities
128	Vehicle crime per 1,000 population	Safer and healthier communities <i>Key Measure of Success</i>
174	Racial incidents per 100,000 population	Safer and healthier communities

Setting targets

A number of principles have been adopted in setting targets. These were:

- Achieve all national standards in 2006/07 and beyond
- For priority indicators
 - * No bottom quartile performance by March 2007

- * All performance to improve year on year (except where performance is, and will remain, top quartile and this enable resources to be focused on other areas for improvement)
- * All to achieve top quartile performance by March 2009
- For non priority indicators – there should be continuous improvement (i.e. targets must equal or exceed 2005/06 performance, unless performance is and will remain in the top quartile.)

Table B.3 (Appendix B) details our targets for this year, 2007/08 and 2008/09.

Table B.4 (Appendix B) provides a brief note of the measures we will be taking to ensure our targets for the priority indicators are achieved.

Expected outcomes

By the end of the three year period, we expect to have 50% of indicators (excluding satisfaction surveys) in the top quartile for the 'All England' Council group – this compares with 35% at the present time. There will also be a small reduction (around 5%) in the proportion of indicators in the bottom quartile.

In terms of the priority indicators, all are expected to achieve top quartile within three years, with the exception of BVPIs 109 a-c (planning applications determined) and BVPI 82 a (waste recycled) which are expected to be in the second quartile and BVPI 84 (waste collected) which is likely to move into the bottom quartile. We are now considering how to tackle these issues.

We also expect that all national targets/standards will be met.

Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys

Table B.5 (Appendix B) lists the targets we have set for the Best Value user satisfaction surveys that we will be undertaking during the year.

We have adopted a fairly cautious approach to target setting, mainly because we do not have recent data on which to form a judgement (the last surveys were undertaken three years ago) and also because we have little scope to influence outcomes.

Later this year, we will be deciding whether to undertake annual surveys of tenant satisfaction (BVPIs 74 and 75) which would enable more realistic, annual targets to be set.

SECTION 14: SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN 2006/08)

The new Action Plan

At present, the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership (SDLSP) Board is in the process of developing a new Action Plan.

The Plan will cover the period July 2006 to March 2008. (This extended timescale has been chosen to bring the Plan into line with the budgeting and reporting cycles adopted by most partners.)

The key dates in the programme are:

- 29 June 2006: Strategic Co-ordination Group finalises the draft Plan for consideration by the SDLSP Board
- 6 July 2006: Board approves the draft Plan
- 27 July 2006: Public launch of the Action Plan at an SDLSP Forum event

The Board has agreed a number of principles to guide the preparation of the Plan which is being undertaken by Working Groups under the direction of the Strategic Co-ordination Group.

The main ones are:

- continuation of the Community Strategy Themes and Priorities (as the Strategy covers the period to 2010 and is based on extensive consultation with local people and other stakeholders)
- have regard to the Derbyshire Local Area Agreement*
- a small number (around 5/6) of priority actions per Theme
- all non-completed Year 1 actions to be reviewed and, if still needed, rolled forward into the new Plan
- feedback from workshops at the partnership AGM (January 2006) should be reflected in the Plan
- anticipated outcomes should be set out for each action
- actions should reflect realistic assumptions about resources

It is expected that the Council will continue to have a significant role in delivering actions either directly or with partners.

Strengthening the Partnership

Since the establishment of the partnership (in which the Council played a key part), we have maintained support through our membership of the Board and Working Groups, the provision of the Secretariat and as the 'Accountable Body', responsible for financial matters.

In our role as community leaders, we need to ensure that the partnership continues to operate effectively and to high standards of governance, that performance is managed and that resources are in place to deliver the community's vision and priorities.

Last year, we helped partners to begin a process of review and evaluation. An appraisal of the Constitution was undertaken and the Strategic Co-ordination Group established.

Further work is planned for the current year.

** As mentioned in Section 2, the Derbyshire Local Area Agreement is being progressed by the Derbyshire Partnership Forum, which comprises county and district councils, the police, health and other public and voluntary sector interests.*

It covers a three year period and sets targets for four 'blocks' of services – 'Children & Young People'; 'Safe and Stronger Communities'; 'Healthier Communities'; and, 'Sustainable Communities'.

SECTION 15: DELIVERING IMPROVEMENTS

Setting the Scene

Previous sections have set out our plans and priorities for improving and developing local services. We now need to ensure that we deliver everything we have promised.

Mention has already been made of the 'building blocks' we have established during 2005 to support the planning and delivery of improvements, in particular, the member Improvement Panel, the Corporate Improvement Group (made up of senior managers) and the 'Achieving More' performance management framework.

A key task in the year ahead will be to consolidate these arrangements and to further develop the 'Achieving More' framework.

'Achieving More' Framework

The framework is based on a number of guiding principles:

- performance management is the concern of everyone in the organisation (members, managers and other employees) and should be part of the 'day job'
- all aspects of performance management should be covered – planning, delivery, performance monitoring & reporting, and, performance review & intervention
- responsibilities and accountabilities should be clearly defined
- there should be clear linkages ('the golden thread') between different levels of planning (e.g. between the Corporate Plan and Service Plans)
- performance monitoring judgements should be 'self –assessed' by the responsible officer
- performance reports should be based on good quality information; produced on a timely, regular basis; and, meet the needs of stakeholders
- the 'rules' for management intervention in cases of under performance should be fair, proportionate and transparent
- successes should be celebrated and opportunities taken to learn from mistakes and under-performance
- the framework should be capable of further development and support the national performance management framework for Councils (delivered

through the Best Value regime and Comprehensive Performance Assessment).

A significant challenge for the Council is to ensure that there is a 'golden thread' which links national, community, corporate, service and individual objectives so that local people and other stakeholders understand what the Council is trying to achieve and employees know how they are contributing to the 'big picture'.

Our community newsletter 'The News' (published for the first time in 2005), team briefs and the employee development and review scheme will help with this process.

Some of the other actions we will be taking to 'embed' and strengthen performance management include:

- provide performance management training to members and employees across the organisation
- 'refresh' the format for Service Plans (so that plans meet the needs of users) and develop a robust set of local performance indicators
- Make more use of service users views and satisfaction surveys
- Undertake a pilot project for collecting and analysing performance data at a local (sub district) level
- Establish procedures/protocols for ensuring data quality – this is linked to plans to investigate IT based solutions for streamlining the recording and reporting of performance information across the Council and with partners
- Develop reporting mechanisms to include a 'value for money' dimension

We also plan to commission a 'peer review' of the organisation and to identify a suitable performance improvement tool (such as the Balanced Scorecard) in order to support improvement planning.

Organisational Capacity

The Improvement Plan details a number of actions for improving the capacity of the organisation to deliver more efficient and effective local services. Key areas include:

- The management of our resources – people, finances, capital assets
- Procurement practices and procedures
- Partnership working
- The management of risk

Finance is a prime consideration in our capacity to deliver improved services. Section 16 outlines our financial strategy and medium term spending plans.

Specific mention should be made of our plans to review base budgets with a view to disinvesting resources in low priority areas and re-allocating them to higher priority areas.

We also propose to build on the work that has been undertaken over the last year to identify and deliver efficiency savings. These will be achieved through a combination of more effective procurement practices, development of the 'Customer First' Contact Centre, increased use of IT solutions to reduce transaction costs and the disposal of assets that are surplus to requirements. The details can be found in Section 17.

Recently, we have decided to pilot a 'business process re-engineering' programme within the Planning service. This will look at ways of doing things more efficiently, whilst delivering improved performance. Awareness training has been provided to the Corporate Improvement Group and the intention is that business process re-engineering (or a similar process such as 'kaizen') will be rolled out across all service areas.

Finally, we need to highlight the important role that employees and members play in the delivery of improvements.

The implementation of our People Strategy (agreed earlier this year) will reinforce the measures that are already in place to support good employment practice and the development of the workforce. These have been 'officially' recognised through the re-award of 'Investors in People' status.

Initial work has also been completed with member training 'champions' to identify a suitable programme of learning activities. This will be developed over the year ahead.

Over the past 12 months, members have made a significant contribution to policy development/review and performance management, as evidenced by the new Corporate Plan and the work of the Improvement Panel.

This involvement is set to increase with the development of work programmes for policy committees, more timely (and planned) performance reports, the establishment of an Audit Committee (as a sub committee of the Finance and Management Committee) and through projects undertaken by our scrutiny committees.

PART 5

FINANCE, EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

& CONTRACTS

SECTION 16: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Introduction

This section provides an overview of our finances as a context for our plans and improvement priorities.

It should be read alongside our Medium Term Financial Plan 2006 to 2009 (which is available on our web site).

Key Messages

The Council's overall financial position has been relatively healthy over recent years and is forecasted to remain on a sound and stable footing in the medium term.

This is in part due to additional Government Grant over the next 2 years, which recognises the growth of the district and the demands this places on services.

As a result, we have been able to build on previous service developments and capital investment by providing additional resources for revenue spending (£1.1 million) and capital investment (£650,000) over the next 3 to 5 years. These resources have been directed to priorities identified in our new Corporate Plan.

Although our current financial position is forecasted to remain fairly sound and stable, it is subject to risk and uncertainty and possible issues arising from factors outside our control. In addition, service improvements and new investment are likely to put further pressure on the current financial position.

This means that we can never be complacent about our finances – a constant review of existing spending, consideration of alternative service delivery options, shifting resources to higher priorities, and, being more efficient are as important as ever.

The Council's Financial Strategy

The overarching aim of our financial strategy is to maintain a sound and sustainable financial position.

Key components comprise:

- Planning financially over 3 years for revenue and 5 years for capital investment
- Maintaining and keeping up to date a 3 year projection on the General Fund; a 5 year capital expenditure and financing programme; and, a 10 year projection on the Housing Revenue Account
- Maintaining balances on the General Fund at the end of every 3 year planning period of 10% of net revenue expenditure (to guard against unforeseen factors)
- Assessing the affordability of new spending proposals over the 3 year planning period (5 years for capital investment)
- Reviewing Council spending in the light of changing priorities and new spending pressures
- Generating/maximising external funding by, for example, making funding bids which are in line with our priorities to a wide range of organisations and negotiating Section 106 (Planning Agreements) with developers to provide community facilities
- Disposing of assets that are no longer required
- Delivering services more efficiently
- Maintaining and developing sound systems of financial management
- Ensuring probity and high standards of stewardship in the use of public funds

Budgets for 2006/07

The Council's gross budget for 2006/07 is £46.2 million comprising:

TABLE 16.1: ESTIMATED SPENDING 2006/2007	
Main Account	£ m
General Fund Revenue Account <i>(which funds most of our day to day spending)</i>	28.9
Housing Revenue Account <i>(which funds services to the tenants of Council homes)</i>	11.9
Capital Programme <i>(which funds longer term projects such as the purchase, provision or enhancement of land and buildings)</i>	5.4
Total Expenditure	46.2

This is budgeted to be spent on the following items:

TABLE 16.2: BREAKDOWN OF SPENDING 2006/2007	
How the Council Spends the Money	£ m
Employee Costs	10.8
Premises Related Costs	0.7
Transport Related Costs	0.8
Supplies and Services	4.9
Contracted Services	3.3
Benefits and Agency Payments	19.3
Interest on Debt and Credit	1.0
Capital Investment?	5.4
Total Expenditure	46.2

The General Fund

The General Fund meets the cost of most of our day-to-day spending and is funded from Government grants, Council Tax and fees & charges.

We start the three-year planning period with very healthy general reserves in excess of £2.7 million. By 2009, the forecasted level is just over £1.1 million (which is above the minimum safe level).

The forecast also allows for potential changes to the future base budget including potential costs arising from the nationally agreed Pay and Grading Review, pension increases and the cost of administering the next local elections. In addition, a prudent view has been taken about anticipated levels of income, especially relating to planning fees and interest on bank deposits.

As mentioned previously, some £1.1 million has been set aside for service developments, which support Corporate Plan priorities. The main areas are:

- Expansion of kerbside recycling
- Improved street cleaning
- Establishment of the Safer Neighbourhoods Scheme
- Support for the voluntary and community sector
- More sporting activities for young people

During the year, we will be commencing a review of base budgets. This is primarily aimed at identifying low priority areas with a view to disinvesting resources here and shifting them to higher priority areas.

We will also continue to build on the work that has taken place over the last year to identify efficiency savings through reductions in transaction costs, more effective procurement practices and service reviews.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) must meet the management and investment needs of the Council's housing stock and is funded mainly from rents.

We have been guided by the Government to monitor the HRA over a 10-year period. This follows the Council's decision to retain its housing stock after a comprehensive review of other management options.

The overall forecast for the HRA shows a strong position, especially in the short term. The balance on the general reserve is forecasted to fall from its current level of £1.35 million to just over £500,000 by 2015, which is the recommended minimum level.

However, the forecasted deficit on the HRA increases from 2008/09 and is projected to be around £370,000 per year by 2015 (as a result of core expenditure exceeding overall income).

Key risks to the HRA include the level of Council house sales (because of the impact on rental income) and the need for controls over the repairs budget, which amounts to around £3 million a year.

Capital Investment

Council has a 5-year capital investment programme, which takes into account the likely availability of resources.

The position is very tight, with a forecasted shortfall in resources on General Schemes of around £455,000 over the 5-year planning period. Should the shortfall be realised during this time, resources set aside in the no longer required Commutation Reserve would be used.

Future resources are uncertain (especially in terms of Government allocations for housing). Apart from partnership funding and any specific Government grants that may be available, the Council's resources are very much dependent upon generating capital receipts.

We have recently updated our Disposals Policy as part of a review of the Asset Management Plan. The Policy provides for the on going identification of assets that may be surplus to requirement to generate resources for capital investment.

During the budget round for 2006/07, the existing programme was reviewed in the light of the new Corporate Plan. As a result, new investment has been identified for:

- The provision of new youth facilities
- Improvements to play areas, football pitches and parks & woodlands
- Maintenance of public buildings

We also have an extensive programme of investment in public and private sector homes, which is planned to continue to 2010.

Committee Spending

The budget is set annually by Council. Under the Constitution, spending is devolved to the three policy committees (based on their areas of responsibility) as outlined below:

TABLE 16.4: ESTIMATED NET COMMITTEE SPENDING 2006/07	
Committee	£m
Environmental & Development Services	4.3
Housing & Community Services	3.0
Finance & Management	3.8
Total Net Spending	11.1

Net spending across all services (after taking into account income from fees, charges, contributions and specific government grants) is shown in Table 16.5.

TABLE 16.5: NET SPENDING ACROSS SERVICES	
Service Areas	£,000
Waste collection	1,794
Environmental Services	1,730
Recreation & Tourism	1,867
Planning & Economic Development	855
Corporate Costs <i>(includes democratic functions, policy and service strategy, core management and statutory services, such as treasury management)</i>	2,212
Housing & Community Services	1,273
Other Services	1,415
Total Net Spending	11,146

Efficiency Savings

The next section looks in more detail at our performance and plans in respect of the efficiency savings mentioned earlier.

SECTION 17: EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

Introduction

This section discusses the background to the Government's ('Gershon') efficiency agenda and the Council's progress in delivering the required saving.

In 2003, the Government asked Sir Peter Gershon to undertake a review of public sector efficiency. The 2004 Spending Review translated his findings into an efficiency savings target of 2.5% per annum over the following three years across the public sector.

Every local authority is expected to meet this target – for the Council, this amounts to approximately £240,000 per year and £710,000 by 2007/08.

At least half of the efficiency gains have to be 'cashable'. Non-cashable efficiencies are those arising from using time more productively, more efficient processing of transactions and increases in the quality of services (where this is measurable).

This reflects that efficiency is not just about saving money – it also relates to getting more out of existing resources, improving quality and increasing value for money.

Annual Efficiency Statement - Reporting to date

In April 2005, all Councils were required to submit a Forward Look Statement to the Government. This was intended to set out how the first annual target for 2005/06 was to be achieved.

In June 2005, Councils were then required to submit a Backwards Look Statement, detailing efficiencies gained in 2004/05, which could be counted towards the first year target.

At that time, we submitted efficiencies totalling £66,500, of which £44,500 was cashable. This included savings made from price reductions in letting planned maintenance contracts for Council homes, replacing the telecoms system together with a reduction in the Council's sickness absence rate.

Details of both Statements were reported in last year's BVPP.

In April 2006, Councils were required to submit a second Forward Look Statement. This was intended to set out the broad strategy and key actions for achieving the annual target for 2006/07 and the overall target by 2007/08.

We identified the following key actions:

- Procurement
- Further development of the Customer First Service
- Expanding the use of the web site
- Introducing paperless direct debits
- Disposal of assets surplus to requirements

Progress to June 2006

Table 17.1 (at the end of this section) shows progress to date. (This is effectively the Backward Look Statement that will be submitted to Government).

It can be seen that bottom line efficiencies (counting towards the Council's target) totalled approximately £532,000 at the end of 2005/06, some £292,000 above target. Approximately 90% of this was 'cashable'.

This does not include further efficiencies (totalling £468,000) which are planned over the next 2 years. These are outlined in Table 17.2 and include those submitted as part of the Forward Look to 2007/08.

TABLE 17.1: EFFICIENCY SAVINGS RECORD (JUNE 2006) – ACTUAL AND CONFIRMED SAVINGS RETURNED									
Efficiency Area	2004/05 Actual		2005/06 Actual		2006/07 Projected		2007/08 Projected		
	Cash £	Non-Cash £	Cash £	Non-Cash £	Cash £	Non-Cash £	Cash £	Non-Cash £	
Environmental Services (Improvements in street cleanliness)				21,712		22,242		22,834	
Social Housing (Changes to procurement practice for Planned Maintenance contracts and combined window/general cleaning contracts for sheltered homes)	26,000	7,500	20,287		20,782		21,335		
Corporate Services (Implementation of Customer First and restructuring/reshaping of specific service areas)			25,092		36,037		32,471		
Procurement (Implementation of E-Government Partnership Programme - especially web site and CRM; revised contracts for IT servers/infrastructure and mobile phone tariffs; new contract for agency staff; purchase of new telecoms system; and, re-tendering of insurance contract)	72,246		269,316		202,531		207,800		
Productive Time (Reduction in days lost to sickness absence)		14,500							
Transactions (More use of web site – especially e-forms & e-payments and implementation of e-recruitment)				11,956		14,246		16,558	
Miscellaneous (Asset sales and increased demand for residential development – planning fees)			63,803		41,625		41,625		
ANNUAL TOTALS	98,246	22,000	378,498	33,668	300,974	36,488	303,231	39,391	
CUMULATIVE TOTALS			476,744	55,668	777,718	92,157	1,080,949	131,548	

	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Projected	2007/08 Projected
Overall Cumulative (Cash +Non Cash)				
Achieved		532,412	869,874	1,212,497
Target		240,000	470,000	710,000
Above Target		292,412	399,874	502,497
Cashable must be at least 50%				
Achieved		476,744	777,718	1,080,949
Target		120,000	235,000	355,000
Above Target		355,744	542,718	725,949

TABLE 17.2: FURTHER PLANNED SAVINGS IN THE PIPELINE (ESTIMATED FIGURES)				
Efficiency Area	2006/07 Projected		2007/08 Projected	
	Cash £	Non-Cash £	Cash £	Non-Cash £
Social Housing (Replacement of Piper Lifelines)		5,000		
Corporate Services (Streamlining processes and further development of Customer First)	39,200	17,000	39,200	17,000
Procurement (Refuse freighters, wheelie bins and central services such as advertising, energy and printing etc together with the roll out of e-procurement)	110,000		110,000	
Transactions (Implementation of paperless direct debits)	12,000	2,500	12,000	2,500
Miscellaneous (Asset sales and strategic/base budget reviews)	7,250	40,000	14,500	40,000
Total	168,450	64,500	175,700	59,500

SECTION 18: STATEMENT ON STAFF CONTRACTS

Introduction

About a third of the Council's annual expenditure is spent on externally procured goods, works and services.

Contracts are awarded in accordance with Part 1V of the Constitution (Contract Procedure Rules). Later in the year, we plan to review and update these Rules as part of the delivery of our new Procurement Strategy.

Code of Practice

The Code of Practice sets out the principles that will be applied in service contracts that involve the transfer of staff from a local authority to a service provider or on a re-tender of contracts. It seeks to ensure that all staff working in public service contracts are treated fairly and receive protection afforded by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981.

The Council formally adopted the Code in June 2004. Subsequently, we have agreed a procedure with the Trade Unions that provides a framework for full consultation should the issue of staff transfers arise.

Statement on Staff Contracts

The Council is required to include a statement in the Plan certifying that all contracts awarded during the previous 12 months comply, where applicable, with the requirements of the Code. This is our statement.

I certify that none of the contracts awarded by the Council between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006 involved a transfer of staff to which the Code applies.

Signed

Frank McArdle
Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

PART 6

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TABLE A.1

**CORPORATE PLAN – PERFORMANCE ON
2005/06 MILESTONES**

TABLE A.1: CORPORATE PLAN – PERFORMANCE ON 2005/06 MILESTONES

KEY AIM: CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT			
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments	
Caring for the Environment	Increase the uniformed patrolling presence across the district - also a <i>Crime and Disorder</i> Milestone	Achieved Contractor patrols of parks have begun. Recruitment of Safer Neighbourhood Wardens has also commenced; full patrols are expected to begin in July 2006	
Caring for the Environment	Extend litter picking and the removal of chewing gum deposits	Achieved A one-off clearance of chewing gum from Swadlincote, High Street was undertaken in May 2005. Litter picking has been extended around Newhall Park and 75 streets (considered to be litter hotspots) have had the frequency of litter picking increased. This was achieved out of additional capacity created by use of a green machine sweeper.	
Caring for the Environment	Implement Year 1 of the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Plan	Achieved Programmed initiatives completed include junk mail prevention, plays and a magicians show in Primary Schools, composting, washable nappy promotion, food on the go – litter reduction, waste minimisation road shows. Significantly, the total waste collected across the district has reduced.	
Caring for the Environment	Achieve the 2005/06 milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme	Achieved Milestones have been achieved. The Statement of Community Involvement has been adopted and the Annual Monitoring Report submitted to DCLG. (Both documents are available on our website.)	

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Caring for the Environment	Support a review of public transport provision in South Derbyshire with the County Council and other partners as part of the production of the second Local Transport Plans (LTPs)	Achieved Responses have been made to Derby and Derbyshire LTPs. Consultation information has also been provided to the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership (SDLSP) to support their engagement.
Caring for the Environment	Establish and start to deliver a programme of community based environmental projects through Groundwork	Achieved An initial programme funded by the Council has commenced. Long term sustainability is subject to DCLG approval.
Caring for the Environment	Develop a programme of corporate environmental improvements and deliver Year 1 actions	Partially Achieved Although a programme has been developed, some actions have been rolled over to year 2.
KEY AIM: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Economic Development	Establish a baseline for the number of visitors to South Derbyshire and levels of expenditure	Achieved A county-wide survey has been completed and the results for districts have been produced. This data will inform the development of the Economic Regeneration Strategy and our work with the tourism partners.
Economic Development	Establish a local delivery point for tourism advice and information services	Achieved A fully staffed Tourist Information Centre is now open at Sharpes Pottery Museum. The only remaining work is to finalise a Service Level Agreement with Sharpes Heritage Trust.

Table A.1 Page 2

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Economic Development	Initiate a review of workforce skills and barriers to skills development with partner organisations	Achieved A sample survey of business has been completed and contact made with local colleges. Workforce skills and development has now been adopted as a 'flagship' project by the SDLSP Partnership Board.
Economic Development	Undertake a feasibility study for the proposed Swadlincote Regeneration Route	Achieved Arrangements have made for the study to be performed by Derbyshire County Council and this is now underway.
Economic Development	Commence preparation of the Woodville-Swadlincote Action Area Plan	Achieved A study by consultants (funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership) has now been completed.
Economic Development	Develop a new 5 year Strategy for economic development and regeneration in South Derbyshire	Partially Achieved Baseline data has been collected and a presentation made to the Environmental and Development Services Committee. A member workshop (to explore issues) has been held and a tour of the district undertaken. A project brief has been agreed by Members and a bid for additional staff to support economic regeneration work has also been made. The Strategy has been rolled forward to the 2006/09 Corporate Plan.
Economic Development	Establish a Project Plan for the introduction of the Single Business Account	Partially Achieved The website, A to Z and Contact Centre will be used to provide businesses with relevant services. In addition, the Single Account is in use on the Council's finance system. The Derbyshire Partnership business case suggests this initiative should not be progressed any further at the present time.

Table A.1 Page 3

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Economic Development	Develop a strategy for marketing South Derbyshire as a location for new investment and place to 'do business'	Not Achieved The content of the strategy is linked to proposals in the Economic Regeneration Strategy. Consequently, work in this area has been delayed. This milestone has been replaced in the 2006/09 Corporate Plan by an action relating to the implementation of 'Tractivity' (an electronic property enquiry system for inward investors).
KEY AIM: CRIME AND DISORDER		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Crime and Disorder	Work with partners to deliver the Year 1 Action Plan for the 2005/08 Crime and Disorder Strategy	Achieved Progress in delivering the Action Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership. All the key elements have been delivered including an anti social behaviour reporting 'hotline', a Police Community Office at Gosely and Liberation Day for older people.
Crime and Disorder	Contribute to the establishment of a Prolific and Priority Offender Scheme	Achieved Support has been given and a process is now in place.
Crime and Disorder	Review security at community facilities in the area	Achieved Five facilities have been secured, where problems have been identified.
Crime and Disorder	Support the development of a Domestic Abuse Drop in Centre	Achieved A funding bid was successful and staff have been appointed.
Crime and Disorder	Develop an Anti Social Behaviour Policy for the district	Achieved The Policy was approved in November 2005 and the Action Plan is being monitored.

Table A.1 Page 4

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Crime and Disorder	Increase the uniformed patrolling presence across the district	Achieved Contractor patrols of parks have begun. Recruitment of Safer Neighbourhood Wardens has also commenced; full patrols are expected to begin in July 2006
Crime and Disorder	With partners, monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to the legislation relating to liquor licensing	Achieved The Liquor licensing regime commenced in November 2005. To date, only 1 enquiry from the Police and complaints (of noise) from the public have been received. Monitoring is continuing.
Crime and Disorder	Develop a Section 17 Action Plan and 'roll out' throughout the organisation	Partially Achieved Although the Plan has been agreed, roll out has been postponed until later in the year.
Crime and Disorder	Deliver the key components of the Youth Facilities Plan	Not Achieved Consultation has been undertaken for three sites. However, procurement has been delayed by our plans for a partnering agreement. The way forward has now been agreed and facilities will be provided shortly at Overseal, Gresley and Midway.
Crime and Disorder	Work with partners to establish long term funding arrangements for the development and delivery of priority crime and disorder initiatives	Not Achieved No agreement has been reached on joint funding for a Safer Neighbourhood Officer (Substance Misuse), although funding has been secured for an Anti Social Behaviour Officer. Consultation with partners is continuing.

Table A.1 Page 5

KEY AIM: IMPROVING SERVICES		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Improving Services	Publish an annual report on the delivery of the Race Equality Scheme (RES)	Achieved The report was considered by the Finance and Management Committee in June and has been published on our web site. A successful funding bid has also been made for additional support from the Derby Racial Equality Council, which will assist in the future development and delivery of the RES.
Improving Services	Deliver key stages in the project plan for 'Customer First'	Achieved Key stages have been delivered including refurbishment of the reception area at the Council offices; preparation of a customer care policy; agreement reached with Trade Unions about workforce planning; and, the on going transfer of staff to Customer First (Housing and Environmental Services).
Improving Services	Develop a People Strategy in consultation with stakeholders	Achieved The Strategy was adopted in March 2006. It has 5 themes – how we manage change; how we promote diversity; how we employ people; how we develop people; and, how we communicate. The delivery of the strategy has been included in the 2006/07 Improvement Plan.
Improving Services	Establish a Leadership and Management Development programme	Achieved A pilot project has been undertaken within the Community Services Directorate. The results are now being evaluated to determine a way forward.

Table A.1 Page 6

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Improving Services	Deliver key stages in the Single Status Action Plan	Achieved All key milestones have been achieved including the establishment of a Framework Agreement with Trade Unions and the completion of a pilot job evaluation project to test out local conventions and other arrangements. Full roll out of job evaluation is planned for later in the year.
Improving Services	Review the way in which full Council operates	Achieved The review was completed in December 2005 and the recommendations have been implemented regarding the order and conduct of business and publicity for meetings.
Improving Services	Adopt the Members' Development Charter with Member Development Reviews to identify on going training requirements	Achieved The Members Development Charter has been adopted and initial work has been completed with the member training champions to identify suitable programme of learning activities.
Improving Services	Produce a three year financial strategy linked to the Corporate Plan	Achieved Members have approved a Medium Term Financial Plan covering the period 2006/09. A copy has been published on our web site.
Improving Services	Produce a Project plan for the Gershon Efficiency Review / 'Shifting Resources' project and deliver key stages	Achieved Efficiency statements have been produced and the required savings achieved. Arrangements for the 'shifting resources' project have been outlined in the Financial Strategy. Key stages delivered include the development of Customer First Contact Centre, work to refresh the Procurement Strategy and the adoption of a Disposals Policy for capital assets.

Table A.1 Page 7

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Improving Services	'Refresh' the current Procurement Strategy and deliver Year 1 Actions	Achieved A new Procurement Strategy has been approved and implementation is underway. Further work in this area has been included in the 2006/07 Improvement Plan.
Improving Services	Implement and update the Risk Management Strategy	Achieved A detailed review of the risk register has been completed and training and awareness sessions delivered. A Member 'champion' has been appointed and the framework for on-going monitoring and review established. Risk management is also covered in the 2006/07 Improvement Plan.
Improving Services	Achieve the targets set in the IEG 4 Statement for electronic service delivery	Achieved All milestones have been achieved and the Council now has 100% electronic service delivery capability as measured by Best Value Performance Indicator 157.
Improving Services	Develop a Corporate Property Strategy	Achieved The Asset Management Plan was reviewed and updated in October 2005 and a Disposals Policy adopted in February 2006.
Improving Services	Develop a Social Inclusion Strategy based on a vision shared across the organisation and with key stakeholders	Partially Achieved Workshops have been held with internal and external stakeholders to identify issues for inclusion in the Strategy. These issues have now been prioritised and will be considered by the Finance and Management Committee along with the timetable for completing the Strategy. This Strategy is now included in the 2006/09 Corporate Plan.

Table A.1 Page 8

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Improving Services	Establish service standards in consultation with service users for all service areas	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Initial stages in this project have been completed including approval of a corporate identity (and logo) and the establishment of a series of generic Customer First Standards.</p> <p>This project has also been rolled forward to the new Corporate Plan.</p>
Improving Services	Assess services against DEFRA rural service standards and the Countryside Agency's rural proofing checklist and develop an Action Plan to tackle inequalities	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>An initial review has been completed by our Consultant in consultation with Heads of Service. The review concluded that more work is required on the collection and evaluation of service delivery data at a local (i.e. sub district) level before a formal assessment and action plan can be produced.</p> <p>A pilot project for collecting and analysing service delivery data at a local level has been included in the 2006/07 Improvement Plan.</p>
Improving Services	Initiate annual work programmes for Policy Committees	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Member Working Panels have met to consider work programmes and reports are being progressed through policy committees</p>
Improving Services	Achieve the required level of performance for Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) subject to national standards or targets	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>This required level of performance was achieved for 7 out of 10 BVPIs subject to national standards/performance.</p>
Improving Services	Take action to ensure that no BVPIs in priority areas are in the bottom quartile and that at least 60% achieve upper quartile	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Quartile information is available for 30 of the 46 priority indicators identified by the Council. Only 1 indicator is bottom quartile (and that relates to small sample size for one element of the housing satisfaction surveys); 14 out of 30 indicators (47%) are upper quartile.</p>

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Improving Services	Deliver key stages in the CPA Improvement Plan	Partially Achieved The Improvement Plan contains 25 milestones for delivery in 2005/06. 16 (64%) have been achieved; 8 (32%) partially achieved and 1 (4%) not achieved.
Improving Services	Develop a Corporate Equalities Plan	Not Achieved Limited progress to date because of the need to prioritise work on the Race Equality Scheme. However, a timetable and programme has been produced for the delivery of the plan (through the corporate working group) and the achievement of Level 2 of the Equality Standards for Local Government by March 2008. This proposal has been rolled forward to the new Corporate Plan.
KEY AIM: GOOD QUALITY HOMES		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Good Quality Homes	Achieve 'fit for purpose' rating for the South Derbyshire Housing Strategy and deliver 2005/06 actions	Achieved The Government Office issued a 'Fit for Purpose' judgement in June 2005. Delivery of the Action Plan is monitored bi-monthly by the Core Strategic Housing Group. Actions delivered include the selection of East Midlands Housing Association as our preferred partner to develop rural housing and the commencement of a programme of research on the need for affordable homes in rural communities; work with Walbrook Housing Association to provide two 'floating support' projects to prevent homelessness; and, the adoption of a new Private Sector Renewal Strategy (with additional funding from the Regional Housing Board to target non decent homes in the private sector, especially those occupied by vulnerable households).

Table A.1 Page 10

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Good Quality Homes	Work with the Trent Valley Rural Housing Partnership to undertake a programme of housing needs surveys in rural areas	Achieved Work is on schedule for the completion of the surveys planned for this year.
Good Quality Homes	Produce an annual report of housing land availability in the district and share results with key stakeholders	Achieved The Land Availability Survey has been completed and the results will be published in December as part of the Annual Monitoring report for the Local Development Framework.
Good Quality Homes	Develop and deliver maintenance and improvement programmes which contribute to a reduction in the number of Council homes which are non decent and the delivery of the national targets	Achieved The Decent Homes programme was agreed by Members in February 2005 ensuring the decent homes standard will be met by 2008-09, prior to the 2010 deadline. During the year, the number of non decent homes reduced from 447 to 258.
Good Quality Homes	Prepare for the introduction of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System	Achieved Staff have been trained and arrangements are in place for the new system.
Good Quality Homes	Develop a new Private Sector Renewal Strategy	Achieved The new Strategy was adopted in March 2006. It focuses on meeting the Government's decent homes standard and implementing the new provisions of the Housing Act 2004.
Good Quality Homes	Work with partners to establish a Heating and Warmth Referral Scheme to assist households living in fuel poverty	Achieved The scheme has been established and is working well. To date, 121 referrals have been received and 29 households have received grant assistance.

Table A.1 Page 11

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Good Quality Homes	Review the operation of housing adaptations service for people with disabilities	Achieved The service has been reviewed, improvements introduced and new staff have been appointed. Architectural work for private sector homes is now handled in house and is progressing much faster.
Good Quality Homes	Continue to contribute to the development and delivery of the inter agency Derbyshire Supporting People programme	Achieved The Council has actively supported both the Supporting People Core Strategic Group and the Commissioning Body Group. Additional funding has been secured to extend Floating Support for Tenancy Sustainment in the district.
Good Quality Homes	Develop a plan for the delivery of the Council's vision for the Sheltered Housing Service and deliver 2005/06 actions	Achieved Phase 1 has been completed. Nine schemes have been declassified and architects have been appointed to consider future options. Works to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act commenced in January, security has been increased in many schemes and there has been a successful Supporting People Review. Consideration now being given to Phase 2.
Good Quality Homes	Negotiate Section 106 (Planning) Agreements to secure local facilities and services to meet the needs generated by new housing development	Achieved 19 planning permissions have been issued with Section 106 (Planning) Agreements.
Good Quality Homes	Deliver key stages in the Improvement Plan for the housing stock investment and asset management Best Value Review	Achieved The Audit Commission Inspection Report was published in October 2005. An Improvement Plan is in place and actions are being progressed.
Good Quality Homes	Update the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and review the decision to retain our housing stock	Achieved The Housing Revenue Business Plan has been updated and the decision taken to retain the stock.

Table A.1 Page 12

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Good Quality Homes	Produce best practice planning guidance on the provision of affordable housing	Partially Achieved Although work has commenced on the preparation of the guidance, progress in reaching agreement with partners on key issues has been slower than expected. A new definition of 'affordable' housing is also expected from Government. This action has now been rolled forward to the 2006/09 Corporate Plan.
Good Quality Homes	Work with partners to deliver Year 3 of the Homelessness Strategy	Partially Achieved Although some operational elements have been achieved (such as a satisfaction questionnaire for service users) some actions involving partnership working have not yet been completed.
KEY AIM: LEISURE ACTIVITIES		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Leisure Activities	Promote the 'Get Active in the Forest' project and the 'Walk the World' physical activity campaign	Achieved The 'Get Active in the Forest' Project is being successfully delivered and participation rates have increased significantly. The 'Walk the World' campaign has been abandoned because of the withdrawal of the main partner.
Leisure Activities	Provide support for the establishment and development of the South Derbyshire Cultural Forum	Achieved The Forum has now been established.
Leisure Activities	Support South Derbyshire Sport to deliver a programme of club events and the adoption of child protection policies	Achieved Support is being provided on an ongoing basis. Training has been provided and a May Day even has been held.
Leisure Activities	Evaluate the results of the study of Open Space, Sport and Recreation (carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17) and develop an Action Plan	Achieved The study has been completed and an Action Plan agreed.

Table A.1 Page 13

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Leisure Activities	Continue to bring play areas and play equipment up to current standards (in accordance with the agreed strategy)	Achieved New play areas have been provided at Linton and Hartshorne and a new site developed at Coton Park. A new management and maintenance regime has also been established.
Leisure Activities	Complete key stages in the restoration of Maurice Lea Memorial Park and prepare a 10 year Management Plan	Achieved The works have been completed and the Management Plan has been agreed.
Leisure Activities	Undertake a Children's Needs Survey (to build on the existing Youth Needs Survey)	Achieved Survey completed.
Leisure Activities	Establish a baseline for community participation in leisure and other cultural activities	Partially Achieved The South Derbyshire Citizens' Panel has been consulted and the Junior Needs Survey completed. Finalisation of the baseline depends on the national survey of physical activity which is due to be completed during the Summer 2006.
Leisure Activities	Deliver facilities planned for 2005/06 in the Youth Facilities Plan	Not Achieved Consultation has been undertaken for three sites. However, procurement has been delayed by our plans for a partnering agreement. The way forward has now been agreed and facilities will be provided shortly at Overseal, Gresley and Midway.

Table A.1 Page 14

KEY AIM: SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL FOREST		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Supporting the National Forest	Apply National Forest Planting Guidelines to all relevant planning applications	Achieved The policy has been applied to all relevant applications.
Supporting the National Forest	Review the Council's landholdings to assess the scope for further tree planting	Achieved This now forms part of milestone 43 in the Asset Management Plan.
Supporting the National Forest	Establish current levels of awareness amongst South Derbyshire residents of the National Forest and its attractions	Achieved Levels of awareness have been established through the Citizen's Panel (based on questions agreed with our 'National Forest and Beyond' partners).
Supporting the National Forest	Develop an Action Plan for promoting the National Forest and its attractions to local people	Achieved Key actions have been identified with the National Forest Company.
Supporting the National Forest	Deliver Year 2 of the Rosliston Forestry Centre Strategic Development Plan	Achieved The main building contract has been substantially completed. This will provide a visitor centre and conference facilities. In addition, further log cabins, outdoor trails/tracks and a new play area provided.
Supporting the National Forest	Establish a partnership for the management and development of the Swadlincote Woodlands Forest Park	Not Achieved No progress has been made due to capacity issues within the service.

KEY AIM: COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP		
Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Community Leadership	Make improvements to the Council's website and establish arrangements for ensuring that information is kept up to date	Achieved Completed.
Community Leadership	Implement actions arising from the 2004 Employee Survey	Achieved Actions have been implemented. In addition, an Employee Working Group has been set up and further actions are being explored.
Community Leadership	Clarify delivery and reporting arrangements for the Derbyshire Local Area Agreement and link to Council plans and strategies	Achieved An approach has been agreed with Derbyshire County Council and this has been incorporated in the 'Achieving More' performance management framework.
Community Leadership	Finalise and deliver the Year 1 Action Plan of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy	Achieved The Action Plan was launched in July 2005 and good progress is being made by the Council and its partners in delivering the actions.
Community Leadership	Establish a framework agreement with Parish Councils to better support the delivery of community priorities	Achieved A baseline review of Parish Council funding has been completed. The Corporate Plan 2006/09 makes provision for consultation with Parish Councils about the future funding regime.
Community Leadership	Publish a local Code of Corporate Governance and report annually on compliance	Achieved The Code was published in August 2005 and the first report will be made later this year.

Table A.1 Page 16

Key Aim	Milestone	Status and Comments
Community Leadership	Complete the review of the existing consultation strategy (including mechanisms for communicating with local people and other stakeholders)	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Limited progress has been made on a formal review of the Strategy.</p> <p>However, the Citizens' Panel has been 'refreshed' and is now being consulted on a regular basis, staff have been trained in the use of 'e-forms' and facilitation techniques and a successful funding bid has been made to support consultation with hard to reach groups. The development of the 2006/09 Corporate Plan also involved an extensive programme of community consultation.</p>
Community Leadership	Review the operation and performance of the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership (including funding arrangements)	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The Constitution has been reviewed and the Strategic Coordination Group established (to coordinate the work of the thematic groups and deal with cross cutting issues). Funding issues have also been considered by the SDLSP Board.</p> <p>However, a more formal evaluation of the partnership is required together with the establishment of a more systematic approach to performance management and project appraisal. Funding also needs to be placed on a more sustainable basis.</p>
Community Leadership	Work with partners and local people to develop and deliver community facilities at Hilton, Etwall and Swadlincote	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The Hilton Village Plan is being delivered, discussions are ongoing with John Port School (Etwall) and funding has been secured for an Artificial Turf Pitch at Pingle School (Swadlincote).</p>
Community Leadership	Develop a strategy for funding community and voluntary sector groups/organisations in consultation with stakeholders	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>A review is ongoing through a joint Council/Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group. The consultation process has been completed and recommendations are expected to be finalised by July 2006.</p>

Table A.1 Page 17