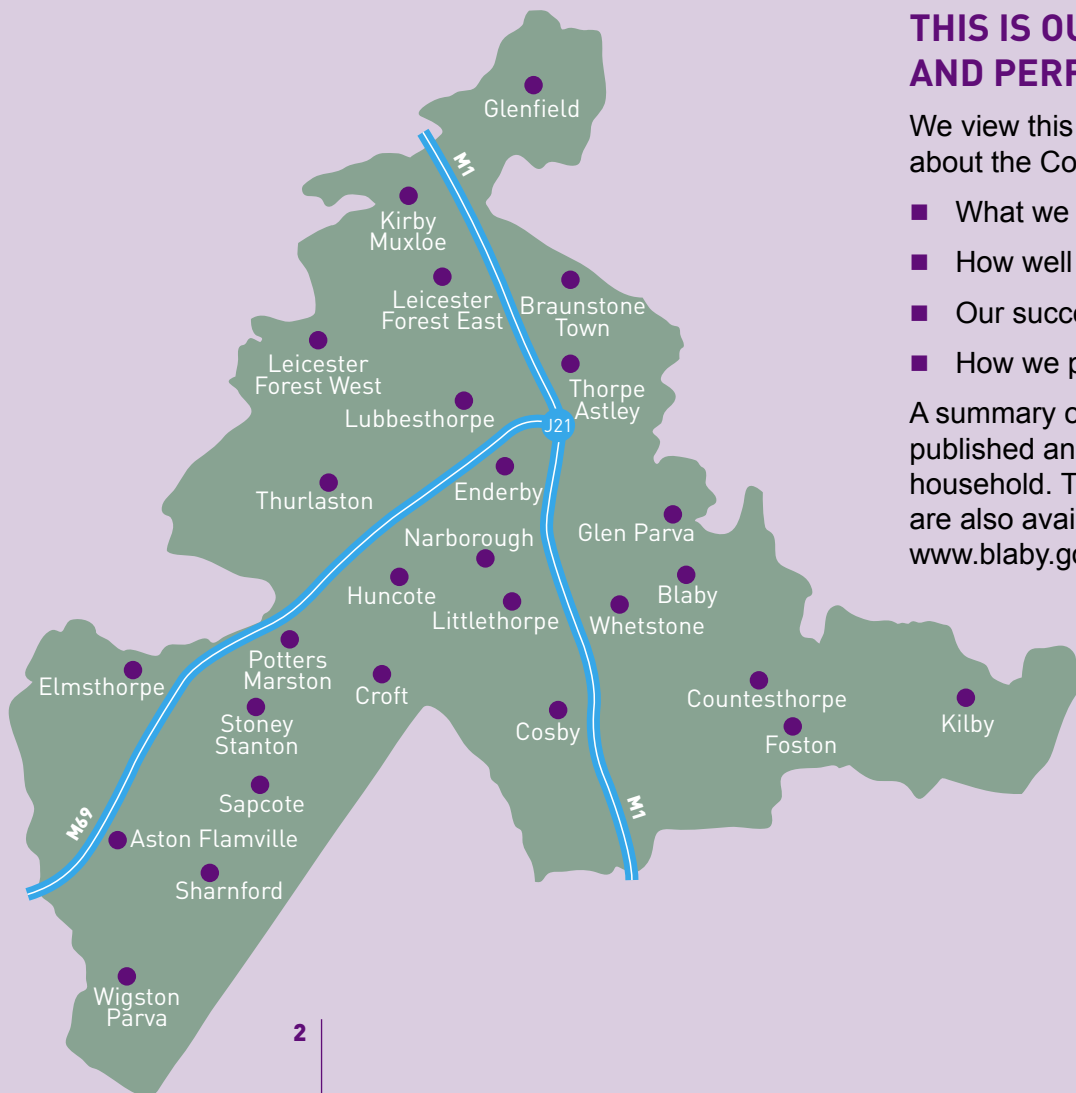




What is the Annual Report and Performance Plan?



THIS IS OUR ANNUAL REPORT AND PERFORMANCE PLAN.

We view this as an opportunity to tell you about the Council, and in particular:

- What we do
- How well we do it
- Our successes and achievements
- How we plan to improve

A summary of the Plan has also been published and delivered to each household. The full Plan and Summary are also available on our website www.blaby.gov.uk

The Plan can also be made available on request in other languages and formats, for example large print and Braille.

If you would like a copy of this document please contact

Blaby District Council, Council Offices, Narborough, Leicester, LE19 2EP

Telephone 0116 275 0555

Fax 0116 275 0368

Minicom 0116 284 9786

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about this plan please contact Corporate Performance, telephone 0116 272 7732 or email us at: bvpplan@blaby.gov.uk

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Foreword

Welcome to our second
Annual Report and
Performance Plan.



In this Annual Report we tell you about what the Council does, how well we've done it and our plans for the future. It is aimed at residents, employees, business partners, visitors and anyone who has an interest in our District and its services.

We will continue to report to you each year so that you know what your local Council is delivering on your behalf.

Over the next few pages you'll find out more about Blaby District Council and the "Blaby Way" of doing things so that we make real improvements to the lives of local people.

You'll read about our achievements under our current six priorities, as well as what we have achieved as community leaders, and our new plans and priorities for how we will further improve services to you.

The past year has been one of real significance for the Council. We have continued to make progress in improving services at the same time as taking big steps forward to lay the foundations for future sustained and radical change, in service design and performance. The focus for all these activities is to provide you as customers and residents of Blaby District with ever improving levels of services and quality of life.

Highlights of the year include:

- Celebrated the opening and growth of The Pavilion at Huncote as a Community and Leisure Resource Centre in partnership with Voluntary Action Blaby District.
- Secured a positive vote for the transfer of the Council's housing stock, resulting in securing an additional £30 million of investment.
- 150 community safety issues resolved through the Joint Action Group (JAG) during 2007/08 by bringing together agencies and parishes to work jointly to quickly solve local community safety problems.
- Improved the way we deal with Benefits, Council Tax, Planning and Waste Services so that services are provided more quickly and conveniently for customers.
- Provided over £78,000 of grants for 35 Community projects.
- Secured £200,000 BIG Lottery funding to develop five children's play schemes.

The Council exists to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of local people. We do this through our services, in partnership with others and through our community leadership role.

This document sets out how services have fared during 2007/08 and our plans and priorities for improvement over future years.

In 2006 Blaby Council decided to adopt 'LEAN service' or 'systems thinking' principles in everything we do. These principles were developed in, and are used by, the most successful companies in the world today. This approach is radically different from the traditional local government approach and we believe it will transform everything we do.

Over the past year we have made much progress in applying and developing systems thinking to some of our most important customer facing services. This is already making a difference to local people not only in Council Tax collection where a reduction in 'hassle' and the ability to spread payments over longer periods has benefit for residents but more significantly in the Benefits Service where claims are now processed in an average of 18 days compared to the previous 55, with some taking just one day to process. Not only is this really helping some of the most vulnerable and needy members of society with their finances, but by improving the quality of assessments, ensuring that payments go to those individuals in the greatest genuine need and actively seeking out those who should benefit.

Partnership working continues to develop, achieving more and better outcomes for local people. One example of this is the Local Area Agreement (LAA), for Leicestershire. This involves the public, private and voluntary sectors aligning resources and working together to deliver jointly agreed priorities for local communities. The LAA has become an increasingly important framework for the Council. This links up with, and supports the work of the Blaby Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) who have worked together during 2007/08 to agree shared priorities for the District for future years. These are set out in the Districts Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) to be published in the summer.

The District of Blaby is made up of many talented individuals and caring communities. We have a role and responsibility in nurturing and celebrating this. During 2007/08 we held our fourth annual awards for Outstanding Achievement sponsored by local businesses and culminating in a gala dinner. A separate category of awards for our own staff was introduced in 2007 to reflect the importance of what they do for local people.

We recognise our responsibility to "shape" the District and help make it a great place for everyone, both to

live and work in. This role for local government has been acknowledged by national government in both the Local Government White Paper and the Lyons Review of Local Government Finance. This acknowledged the role of local authorities in "place shaping" that goes far beyond their direct responsibilities for service provision.

The next few years will bring new challenges. These include working creatively with partners to deliver even more of what the customer wants within our limited resources and joining things up where it makes sense so that practical solutions happen quickly.

We are very interested to hear what you think of this document and any of the information contained within it. Please give us your comments by post, telephone or email. Contact details are inside the front cover.

Sandra Whiles

Sandra Whiles, Chief Executive



Ernie White, Leader of the Council



Blaby District

The District of Blaby covers an area of about 129 square kilometers and contains a wide mix of urban and rural areas.

The 2001 Census put the District's population at 90,250, representing an increase of 9.1% compared to the 1991 population and making it one of the fastest growing districts in Leicestershire. The population has continued to grow since 2001, albeit at a reduced rate, with the latest Office of National Statistics data estimating the population at 92,500 in 2006.

This growth in population reflects the District's popularity as a place to live.

The Council provides a range of essential services to this growing population and recognises the need to respond and adapt effectively to meet the demands of a dynamic and changing district. In recent years the Council has been able to evidence success in a number of areas that demonstrates it has embraced both the philosophy and practice of 'continuous improvement'.

The attractiveness of the District as a place to live is clearly reflected in the findings of two recent but separate national surveys.

According to new (2007) research from Halifax Estate Agents, Blaby District is the 24th best place to live in the country. The District, along with the County of Rutland, are the only two authorities from the entire East Midlands region to be ranked in the Top 30 places that enjoy 'the best quality of life in Great Britain'. The Halifax quality of life index for 2007 focused on local authority areas in Great Britain and was based on a range of factors including life expectancy, weather, earnings, house prices, health, crime and education.

A 2006 Reader's Digest poll of 'best places to bring up your family' ranked the District as 37th out of over 400 local authority areas in England, Wales and Scotland. Leicestershire, along with Surrey, jointly achieved the most entries in the Top 40 in this survey, based on the opinions of parents across the UK about factors which affect family life, such as good state schools, affordable family housing, and a low crime rate.



Management and Decision Making

Blaby District Council has 39 Members, representing 18 wards, elected every four years. The last election was held on 3rd May 2007.

The Council's 'decision making' system is based on a 'Cabinet Executive' and 'Scrutiny' model.

The Cabinet Executive has seven Members. Each is responsible for specific areas of policy and service or 'portfolios'. The Leader of the Council appoints Cabinet Members and assigns responsibilities. The seven portfolios are;

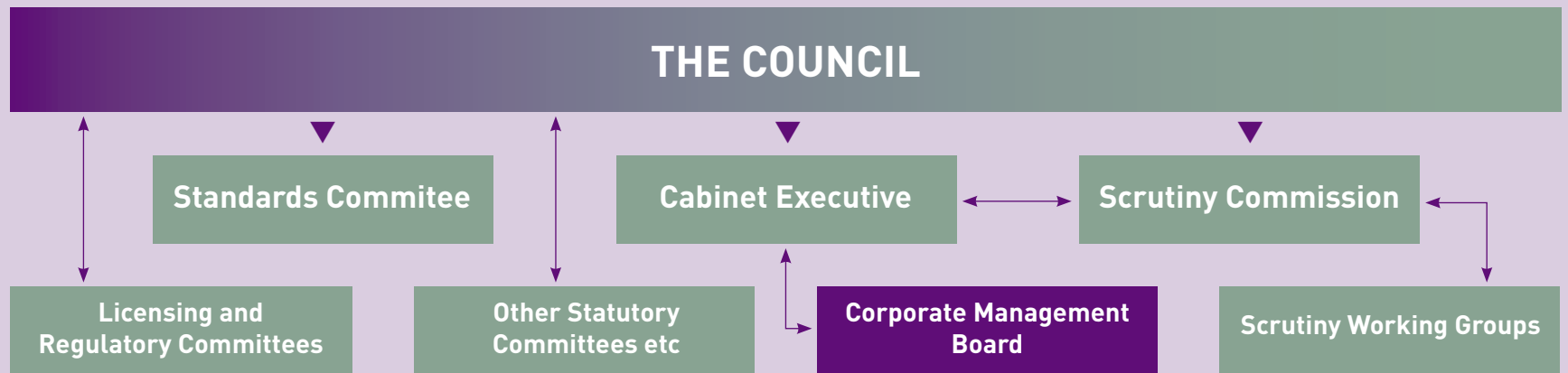
- Policy, Equality and Strategic Management
- Asset Management and Housing
- Finance and E-Government
- The Natural and Built Environment
- Quality Services and Parish/Town Councils
- Community Focus
- Safer Communities

The Cabinet meets monthly and is the Council's main decision making body. Some decisions mainly relating to setting the budget and policy are by law reserved to the Full Council.

The Scrutiny Commission is made up of eighteen non cabinet executive Members, including three Commissioners, who co-ordinate the activities of its working groups. The role of Scrutiny is to provide 'checks and balances' through scrutiny of service delivery, the budget setting process and Cabinet Executive decisions, and to provide research and development around specific topics.

The Council's decision making also involves a number of other Committees which carry out specific legal duties. The complete structure and inter-relationships are shown diagrammatically on the next page. All elected Members are part of the political 'decision making' process. The Corporate Management Board (CMB) shown supporting the Cabinet Executive, is the senior officer management body, chaired by the Chief Executive.

Decision Making at the Council



The Cabinet Executive



Councillor White



Councillor Webster-Williams



Councillor Hudson



Councillor Dickinson



Councillor Clements



Councillor Sanders



Councillor Jackson

Climate Change Champion



Councillor Blackwell

Older Peoples Champion



Councillor Coles

Younger Peoples Champion

The Scrutiny Commissioners



Councillor Welsh



Councillor Tanner



Councillor Fox

Blaby Management Team

OFFICER MANAGEMENT

The day to day running of the Council is the ultimate responsibility of the Corporate Management Board (CMB) which comprises the Chief Executive, (CE), Strategic Director/ Deputy CE, Strategic Director, Head of Administration & Legal Services and Head of Performance & Organisational Development. The CMB is supported by Senior Managers, who are each responsible for a major service division.

Corporate Management Board and the senior Managers together comprise the Blaby Management Team.

Back row:

left to right: Mike Spencer, John Leach, Dawn Dawson, Jane Toman, Colin Jones, Vicki Heathcote, Phil Clarke

Front row:

left to right: Kris Johnston, Tim Griffith, Sandra Whiles, Steve Beard, Julie Hutchinson

Absent from Photo:

Jim Holden



Finance

The Council needs money in order to carry out its functions and employ the staff who provide its services to the public.

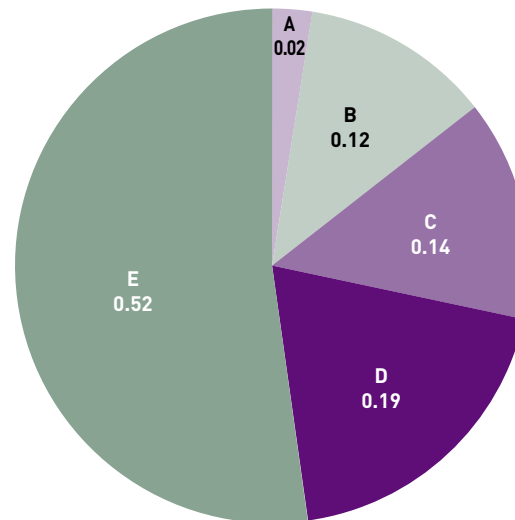
The Council allocates its money through an annual budget to fund its services and meet its corporate priorities and commitments. The budget is considered each year by the Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet Executive before being approved by Full Council. Once the budget is set the Cabinet Executive is responsible for ensuring it is spent correctly.

The Council has a Medium Term Financial Strategy underpinned by a three year financial forecast to make sure that future resources are planned in line with corporate objectives and priorities.

WHERE DOES THE COUNCIL'S MONEY COME FROM?

The Council's money comes from a number of sources. These include Government Grants, Council Tax, Council House rent and fees and charges. Over a half of the money comes from

Chart 1: Where each pound of the Council's money comes from in 2008/09

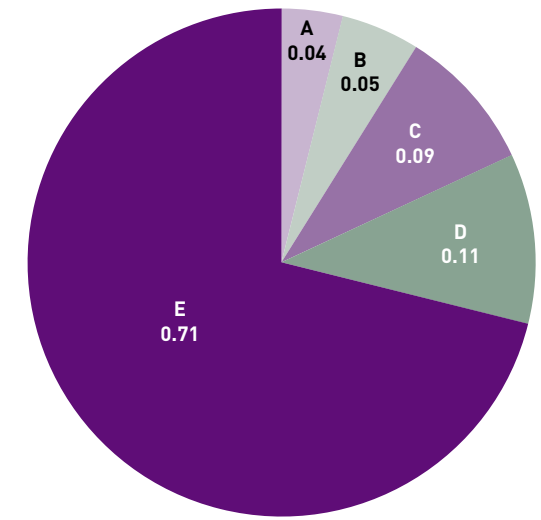


- A. Investment Income
- B. Council Tax
- C. Other Income
- D. Council House Rents & Charges
- E. Government Grants

Government Grants with less than 12% coming from residents' Council Tax.

The charts below show where the money the Council has available to spend comes from and where each pound of local resident's Council Tax will go to, in this financial year 2008/09.

Chart 2: Where each pound of residents' Council Tax will go to in 2008/09



- A. Fire Authority
- B. Parish Council
- C. Blaby District Council
- D. Leicestershire Police Authority
- E. Leicestershire County Council

HOW IS THE COUNCIL'S MONEY SPENT?

The Council spent over £32 million last year (2007/08) and plans to spend almost £34 million this year (2008/09). The highest proportion of this money will be spent on benefits (Council Tax and Housing), and managing and improving Council Homes.

The Council's spending comprises Revenue (day to day spending on services, including employee wages and

office running costs) and Capital (usually one off spending on projects, especially property related).

REVENUE

The charts below show how the Council spent each pound of its revenue money in 2007/08 and how it will spend each pound during 2008/09. A Summary Statement of the final 2007/08 accounts will be provided on the Council's website in September.

Chart 3: How the Council spent each £ in 2007/08

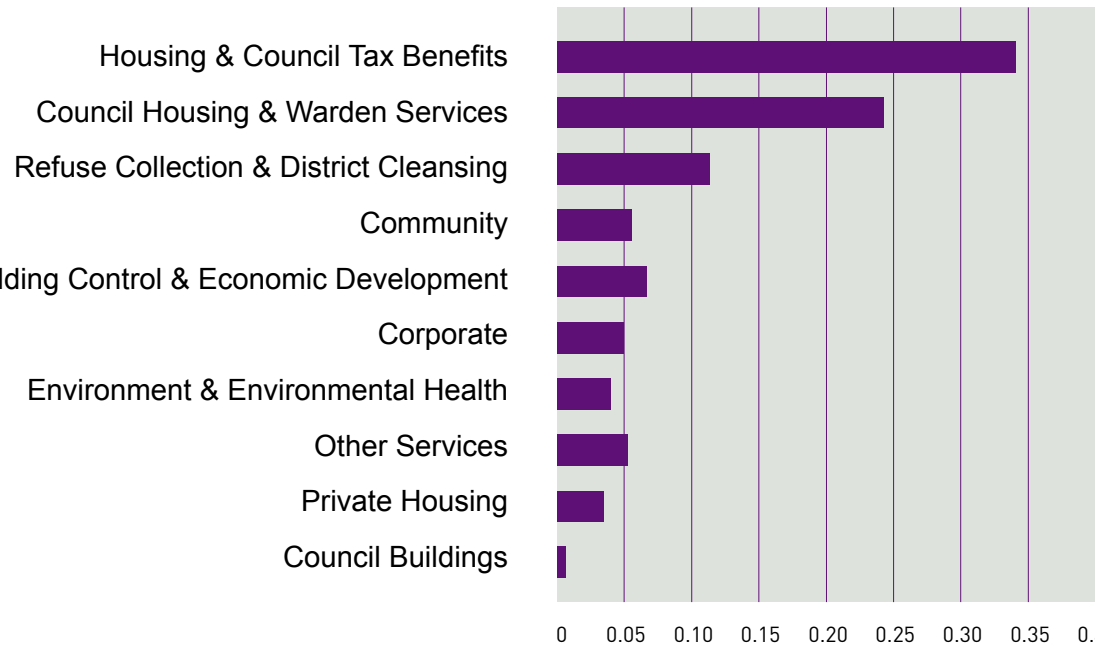
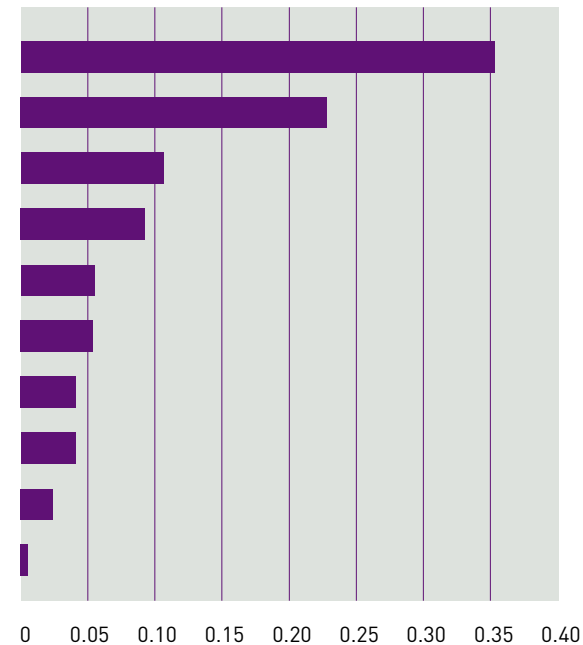


Chart 4: How the Council will spend each £ in 2008/09



CAPITAL

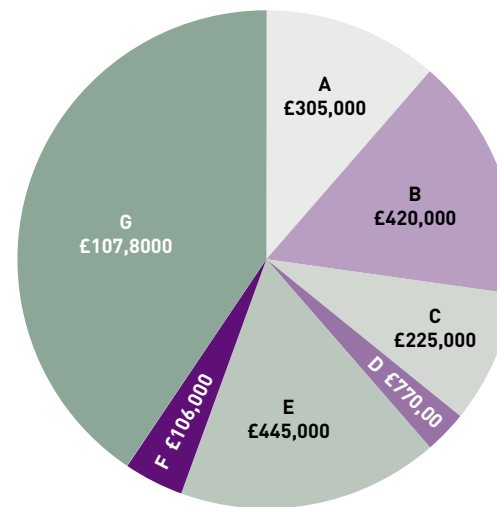
The Council will spend over £2.5 million on properties and equipment during 2008/09. Of this £1.5 million will be spent improving residents' homes of which £445,000 will be used to provide facilities for disabled people. An additional £295,000 will be spent improving public car parks, whilst £175,000 will be used on children's play facilities – see chart 5 for more details.

GERSHON EFFICIENCY REVIEW

In 2004 Sir Peter Gershon published proposals for wide ranging efficiency gains in the public sector over the three years to 2007/08, (known as SR04) with a specific target for local government to achieve a 2.5% annual efficiency target amounting cumulatively to £6.45 billion.

The figures for the Council's contribution to SR04 have not yet been finalised but whilst ongoing efficiency gains over the three year period of some £621,400 have so far been identified, against a target of £713,000, it is anticipated that the target will be met when all remaining gains are added in.

Chart 5: Capital Programme 2008/09



- A. Land Use and Economic Development
- B. Contingences
- C. Community Projects
- D. Equipment
- E. Private Housing
(inc disabled adaptations)
- F. Other Council Assets
- G. Council Houses

Following on from the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07) the challenge now for councils is to build on previous progress and further embed a culture of innovation and focus on value for money. All public services have been set a target of achieving at least 3% net cash-releasing value for money gains per year over the period 2008/09 to 2010/11, with councils expected gains amounting to a cumulative £4.9 billion. This presents a considerable challenge, the scale of which should not be underestimated.

Under the CSR07 proposals councils will no longer have a prescribed efficiency target unless it has been agreed as one of the Local Area Agreement targets.

It is important to note that 'efficiency gains' are not cuts in services. They can arise from doing:

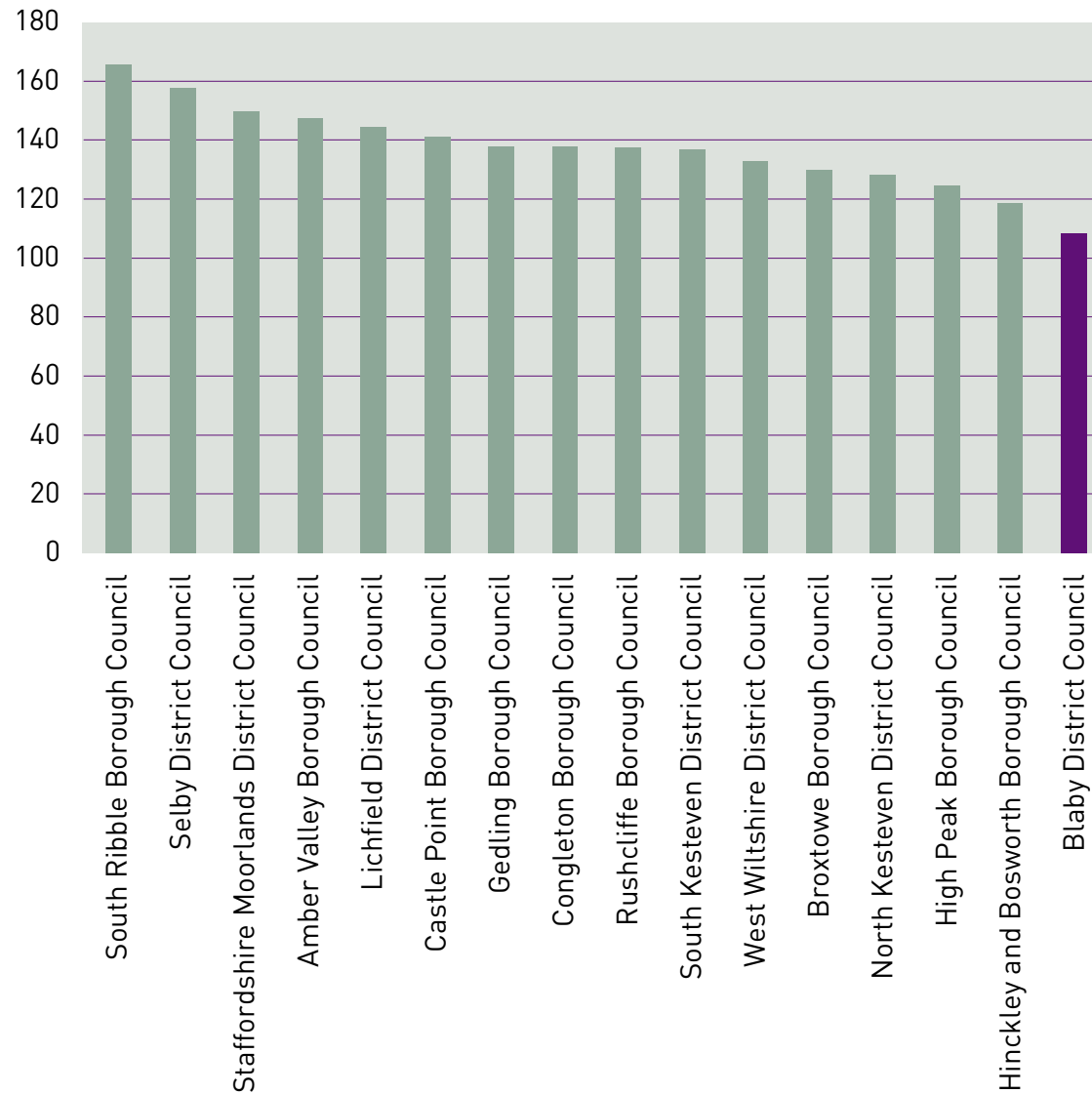
- A little less for much less money
- The same for less money
- More for less
- More for the same money
- Much more for a little more money

COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNCILS

The chart shows how much the Council planned to spend on services per head of population compared to its fifteen 'Nearest Neighbours' (i.e. other District councils which are most similar to Blaby in terms of socio-economic and demographic factors) in 2007/08. Councils that spend the lowest amount per head are generally regarded to be the most efficient.

It can be seen that the Council's planned spend per head of population of £108.41 was the lowest amount of the whole group and is an indicator of the Council's efficiency.

Chart 6: Total Expenditure on Services per head of population 2007/08



Achieving Our Corporate Aims

The last year has seen progress for the Council, including further developments and new projects which are already starting to change the way we deliver our services to our customers.

This chapter identifies our key achievements and performance highlights in 2007/08. We have linked these to each of our previous corporate aims in order to show our progress in their achievement.

CORPORATE AIMS:

- Promoting the provision of quality housing
- Providing a clean, attractive and sustainable natural and built environment
- Working together to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Deliver high quality, cost effective services valued by customers
- Being THE focus for listening to the community and taking action
- Supporting people in their communities



HOUSING

Key Achievements

- Secured a positive vote for the transfer of the Council's housing stock, thus securing an additional £30 million of investment.
- Helped improve the homes of vulnerable residents by completing, or providing funding for, over 250 minor aids and 105 major adaptations.
- Provided sixteen grants and loans to private landlords for energy efficiency improvement work.
- Completed a thermal efficiency programme in all of our council tenant's homes.

Performance Highlights

- Reduced the time taken to re-let our council homes from 72 to 57 days.
- Increased the number of homeless households for whom housing advice resolved their situation from 216 to 293.
- Significantly reduced the time taken to process Housing Benefits from 52 days during the last quarter of 2006/07 to just over 20 days during the last quarter of 2007/08.

- Increased the amount of council housing rent collected to 97.3% and reduced the amount of rent arrears by £20,000 since September 2007.

ENVIRONMENT

Key Achievements

- Held a Flood Fair for residents and business to raise awareness of flooding and the effect it has on homes, business and livelihoods.
- Helped promote sustainable transport systems by:
 - Working with the County Council to progress a 1000 space Park and Ride Scheme.
 - Hosting a seminar to encourage business to produce sustainable travel plans.
- Declared Glen Hills a Local Nature Area and worked with Leicestershire County Council and Sports & Leisure Management (SLM) to complete a £30,000 tree-planting scheme at Enderby Golf Course
- Led a campaign to combat dog fouling and litter within the District.
- Worked on the Local Development Framework. (LDF) which will set out how land will be developed to provide the housing, employment and



transport links needed in the District up to 2026. It will be influenced by the East Midlands Regional Plan which we have commented and fed into.

- Protected public health by carrying out inspections in high risk areas in relation to food hygiene and health and safety enforcement.

Performance Highlights

- Increased the amount of household waste recycled from 38% to over 41%.
- Removed 92% of abandoned vehicles within 24hours.

- Achieved 100% compliance with the Environmental Health Enforcement Checklist.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

Key Achievements

- Working with our partners we have:
 - Established over 25 “No Calling Zones” to help deter distraction burglaries.
 - Developed a protocol for dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and undertaken work in ASB ‘hot spots’.
 - Ran four Community Road Shows to provide crime prevention advice and deal with specific issues raised by residents.



- Recruited a Domestic Violence Outreach Worker for the District, who has to date supported 70 females and males subjected to domestic abuse, set up a drop in service and published a new domestic violence directory for the District.

Performance Highlights

- Reduced the number of household burglaries recorded in the District from 8.1 per thousand households in 2006/07 to 7.5 per thousand households in 2007/08.
- Reduced the number of violent crimes recorded in the District from 12.0 per thousand population in 2006/07 to 11.0 per thousand population in 2007/08.
- Helped reduce the number of racial incidents recorded in the District to just 1.
- Resolved 150 community safety issues through the Joint Action Group (JAG).

QUALITY SERVICES

Key Achievements

- Completed a £1m refurbishment of Enderby Leisure Centre to improve and extend the services offered.



- Introduced a 'systems thinking' approach into Council Tax and Waste Services so that services are provided more quickly and conveniently for customers.
- Worked with other Leicestershire districts to introduce the "Scores on Doors" food safety scheme to provide the public with a standard grading system of catering establishments.



- Contained the Council Tax increase to below the rate of inflation.
- Established the South Leicestershire Partnership to support the delivery of improvement and efficiencies in waste and open space services across the south of the county.

Performance Highlights

- Reached level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- Increased the Council's Use of Resources assessed score from 'performing adequately' to 'performing well'.
- Doubled in 3 years the percentage of residents who think the Council provides "Good Value for Money" to over 50%.

- Through a 'systems thinking' approach made it possible to process a request for a new or amended Council Tax payment in just 1 day.

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

Key Achievements

- Reached an agreement with Leicester City Council to enable monthly Farmers Markets to be held in Blaby Town Centre.
- Introduced monthly surgeries for Glenfield residents, which include officers from the police and the Council's Housing and Community and Neighbourhood Services.
- Worked with local businesses and residents to produce a Master Plan of improvements for Blaby Town Centre.
- Established Community Forums to better involve residents in identifying and finding solutions to issues in their local area.
- Set up an Older Persons Forum with over 30 people attending the first meeting in February 2008.
- Held the "Pirates of Leicestershire" event, and improved and extended the Christmas celebrations in Blaby Town Centre in association with our partners.

Performance Highlights

- Used feedback from residents and key partners to help set the priorities for the District up to 2026.
- Ranked the 24th "Best Place to Live in the Country" in the 2007 Halifax "Quality of Life" survey.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

Key Achievements

- Provided over £78,000 of grants for 35 community projects.
- Launched 'The Pavilion' at Huncote to provide a leisure and community facility.
- Worked with County-wide partners to introduce a range of regular physical activity sessions across the District (Active Together).
- Worked with Voluntary Action Blaby District to secure funding for a sports worker for young people with mental health difficulties.
- Supported businesses to ensure compliance with the introduction of smoke free public areas.
- Worked with Braunstone Town Council and the Thorpe Astley Community Partnership to finalise proposals for the new community resource at Thorpe Astley.

Performance Highlights

- Completed a programme to ensure all of the Council's public buildings are fully accessible for disabled people.
- Ran an expanded Summer Activities programme for over 274 young people.
- Held a "Kick out Racism" football tournament involving over 100 young people.
- Secured £200,000 BIG Lottery funding to develop five children's play schemes



Performance

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

The Council constantly measures how well it is providing services and meeting its customer's needs. This is done using national and local performance indicators and measures.

Every local authority is required to report on national performance indicators so that 'like with like' comparisons can be made between councils. The government analyses these figures and publishes national statistics (averages, best 25% and worst 25%) so that Blaby's performance can be compared to performance nationally.

In previous years the national set of indicators were known as Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) but since 1st April 2008 these have been replaced by a new and largely different set of indicators called National Indicators (NI's).

The performance figures for 2007/08 are for the last year of BVPI usage.

This chapter presents analysis and comparisons of the Council's performance based on its BVPI's. The comparisons of the Council's

performance against other councils nationally, uses data for 2006/07. This is because the government's national analysis of 2007/08 data will not be available until December 2008. For 2007/08, comparisons have been made of actual performance both against previously set targets and against performance for the previous year.

Full details of performance for each indicator for both 2006/07 and 2007/08 are shown in Appendix 1.

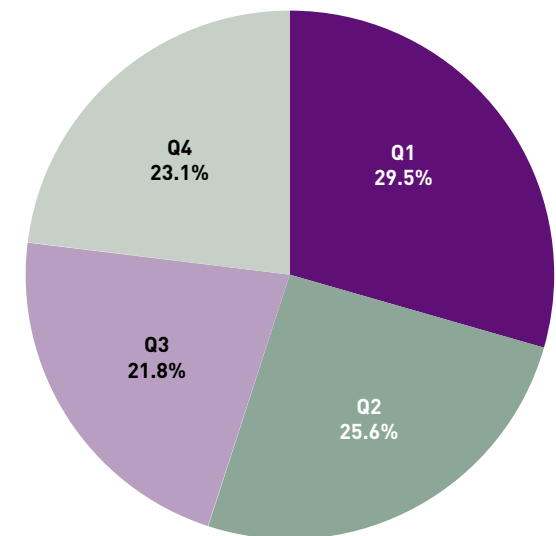
HOW WE DID IN 2006/07

Councils were previously ranked on their BVPI indicators, with those performing in the best 25% of authorities placed in the top quartile (Q1) and those performing in the worst 25% placed in the bottom quartile (Q4). The remaining indicators were placed in the middle two quartiles (Q2 or Q3).

The following charts show the Council's performance in relation to all English Councils. The first chart shows the percentage of the Council's indicators in each quartile and the second shows the percentage of indicators above and below average.

In 2006/07 performance was similar to the previous year with almost a third of indicators (29.5%) in the top quartile (Q1) and just over a fifth (23.1%) in the bottom quartile (Q4). Over a half (59.0%) were better than the average for all English councils.

Chart 1: 2006/07 Percentage of Indicators in Each Quartile



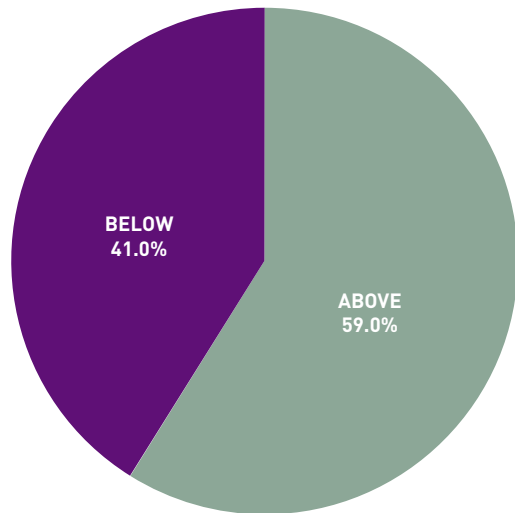
Q1 (Best) - indicators in top 25%

Q2 (Second Quartile)

Q3 (Third Quartile)

Q4 (Worst) - indicators in bottom 25%

Chart 2: 2006/07 Percentage of Indicators Above and Below Average



A more detailed picture of performance for each service area is shown in the charts.

Community Safety and Waste & Cleanliness continued to perform particularly well. All of the Community Safety indicators and 93% of those in Waste and Cleanliness were above average with a high proportion being in the top two quartiles. Homelessness also performed well, with two thirds of indicators above average and a similar proportion in the top two quartiles.

Housing and Planning performed the least well with two thirds of indicators below average and a similar proportion in the bottom two quartiles.

Chart 3: Number of Indicators in Each Quartile by Service Area

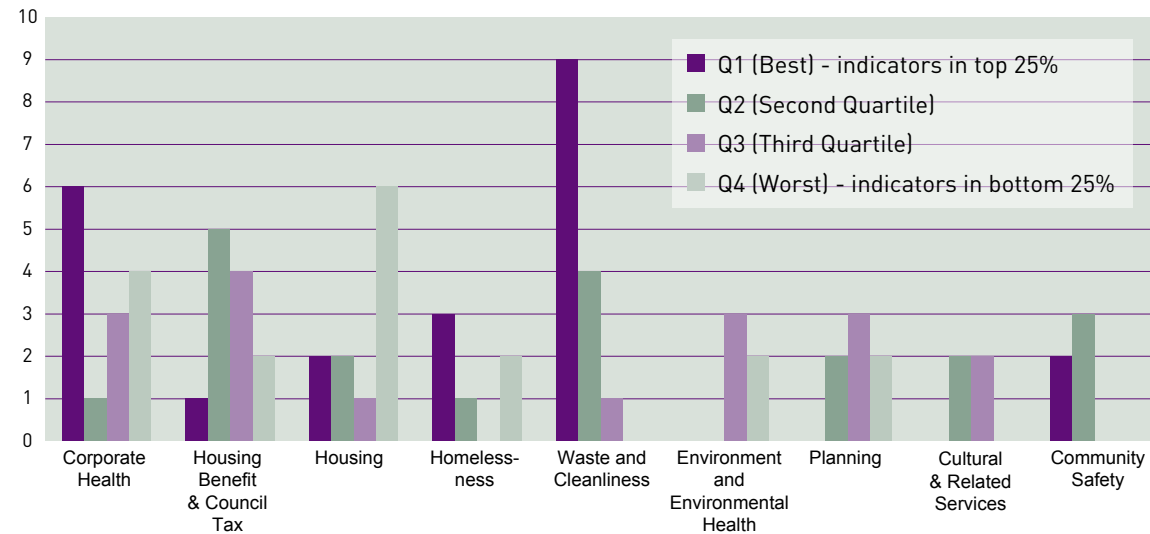
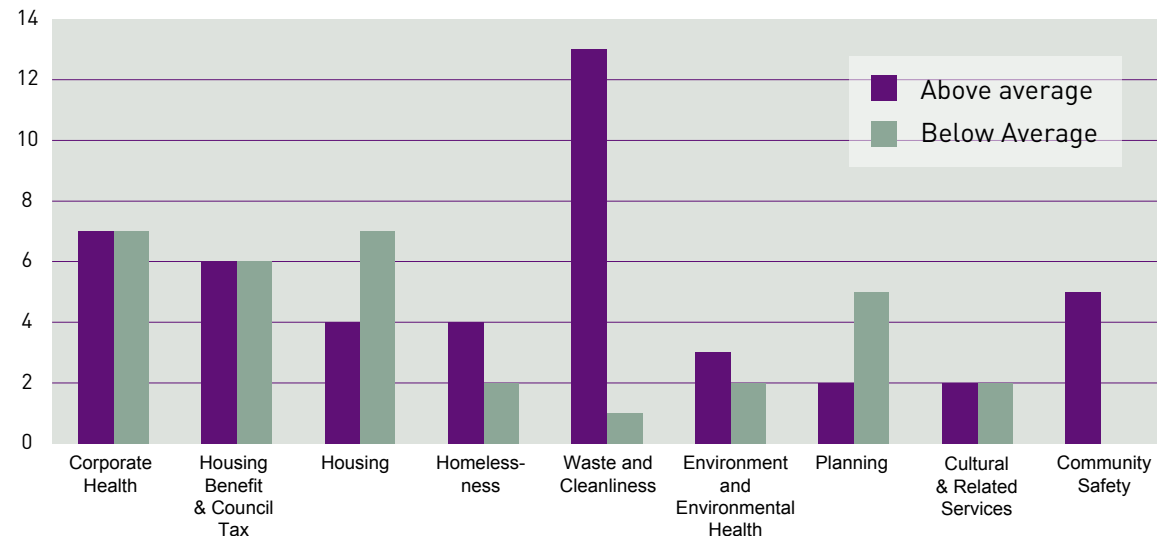


Chart 4: Number of Indicators Above & Below Average by Service Area

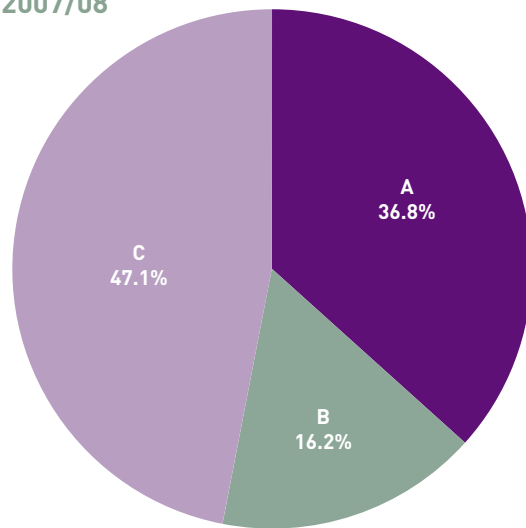


HOW WE DID IN 2007/08

As previously stated, comparative information on the performance of other councils is not currently available for 2007/08. The Council's performance for this year has therefore been compared to:

- The performance targets set for 2007/08.
- 2006/07 actual performance.

Chart 5: Actuals Compared to Targets: 2007/08



- A. Exceeded Target
- B. Met Target
- C. Below Target

Performance compared to targets

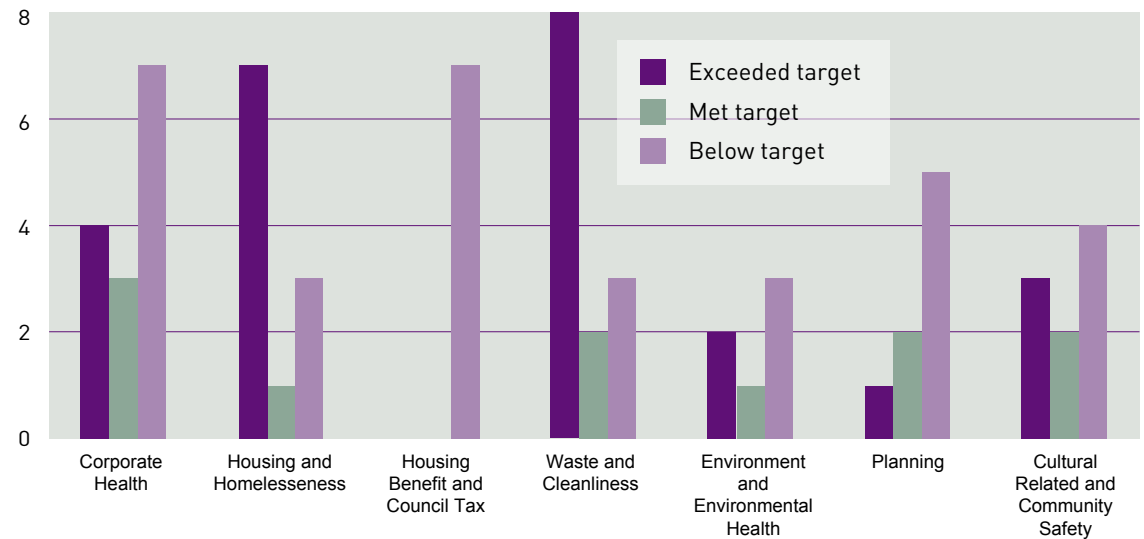
The chart (5) below shows actual performance in comparison to the targets set for 2007/08.

Over a half of indicators, 53% met or exceeded the target set for 2007/08. This is an improvement on the previous two years when 47% (2006/07) and 41% (2005/06) of indicators met or exceeded target.

A breakdown by Service Area is provided below (chart 6).

Waste & Cleanliness and Housing & Homelessness performed particularly well and achieved or exceeded over 70% of the targets set in these areas. Planning and Housing Benefit & Council Tax achieved the lowest proportion of targets. Planning achieved or exceeded 38% of targets; however Housing & Council Tax did not achieve any of the targets set, narrowly missing 2 targets by less than 0.5%.

Chart 6: Actuals Compared to Targets by Service Area 2007/08

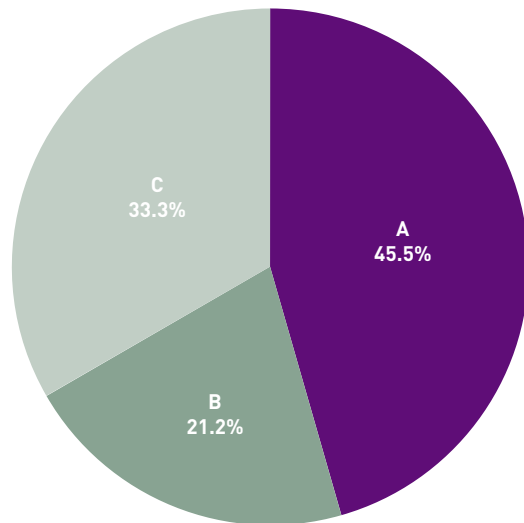


Performance Compared to BVPI Actuals in 2006/07

The chart below compares 2007/08 performance with that for 2006/07. It shows (where comparisons can be made), the percentage of indicators that improved, stayed the same or deteriorated during 2007/08 compared to 2006/07.

Of the 66 indicators that could be compared, 46% improved in 2007/08. This is larger than the proportion of

Chart 7: 2007/08 Performance Compared to 2006/07



- A. Improved
- B. Same
- C. Deteriorated

improving indicators in the previous year when 36% improved.

A further 21% of indicators maintained their 2006/07 performance. Of these 5 were achieving the maximum performance in 2006/07 and maintained this in 2007/08.

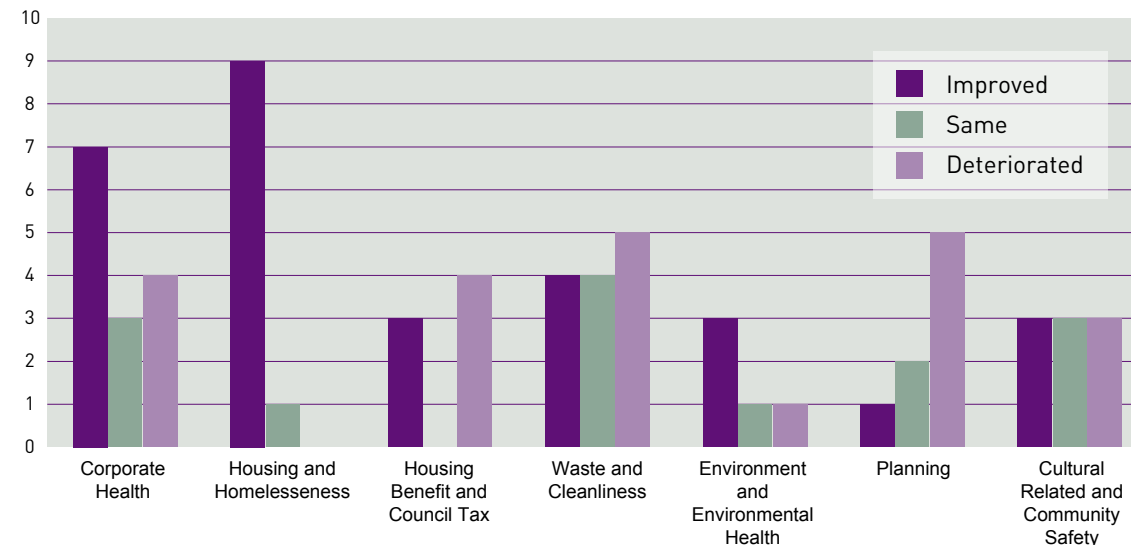
The chart below provides a breakdown of performance by service area.

At 90%, Housing & Homelessness had the highest proportion of improving indicators with the remaining 10%

maintaining their 2006/07 performance. Both Environment & Environmental Health and Corporate Health also had a relatively high proportion of improving indicators, at 60% and 50% respectively.

Planning had the lowest proportion of indicators improving at less than 15%. The service has, however, recently been subject to a 'systems thinking' intervention involving new ways of working, which may have adversely affected performance in the short term.

Chart 8: 2007/08 Performance Compared to 2006/07 by Service Area



RESIDENTS' SATISFACTION LEVELS

The Council carries out regular surveys of residents and service users, some to its own design and some based on national BVPI's. The information provided includes satisfaction with services and views on a wide range of local issues, and is another important way of measuring Council performance. Although not all of the responses are directly comparable between years, due to differences in survey methods, key trends can nevertheless be identified.

BVPI USER SATISFACTION (GENERAL SURVEY)

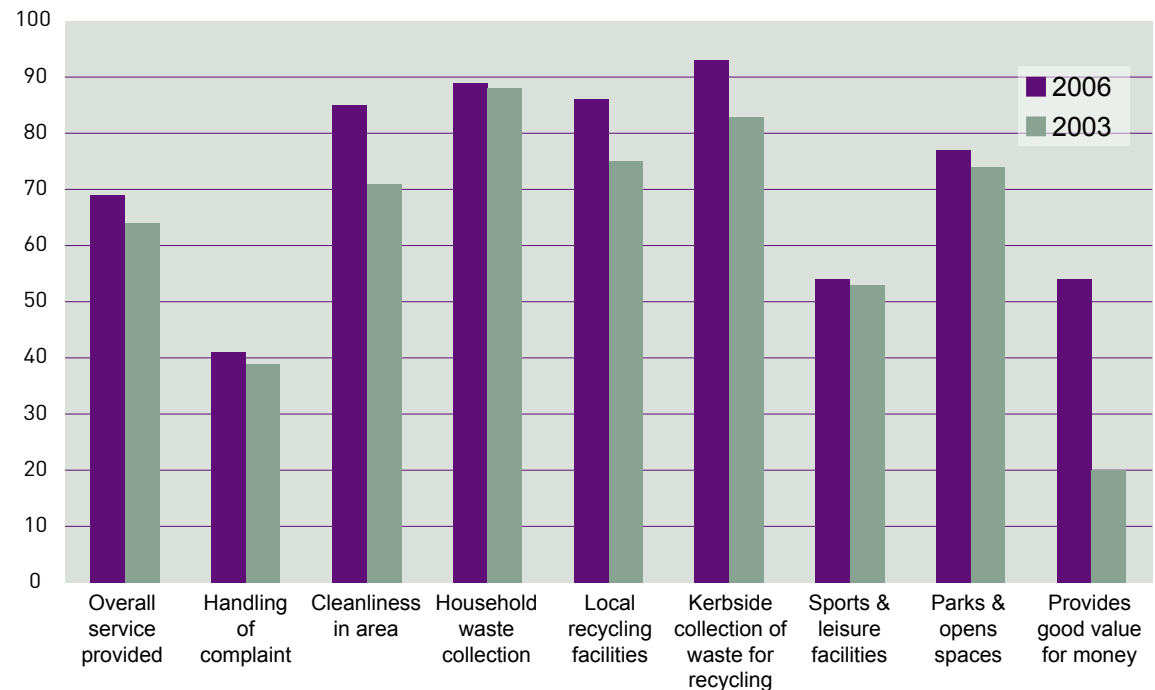
The national BVPI user satisfaction surveys (which, from 2008 are replaced by the NI based Place Survey) were carried out every three years from 2000/01. They were conducted by all English Councils and used a standard set of questions defined by the Audit Commission. Councils could add additional questions if they wished. The latest such surveys were conducted in

2006/07. Four surveys were carried out - a General Survey, a Planning survey, a Housing Tenants survey and a Benefits survey.

The General Survey, as its name suggests, asked about satisfaction with a range of council services and local issues. These included satisfaction with the overall service provided by councils and also with various environmental

related services, such as refuse collection and parks. The responses to the service based questions were scored as BVPI's; in Blaby's case there were seven of these, which are comparable both over time and also with other councils. The Council's General Survey took place in Autumn 2006 and questioned 2500 randomly selected local residents of which 1206 responded.

Chart 9: % Resident Satisfaction - 2006 compared to 2003



A TOP PERFORMING COUNCIL NATIONALLY

The results for the General Survey showed that the Council had some of the most satisfied residents in the country in 2006/07.

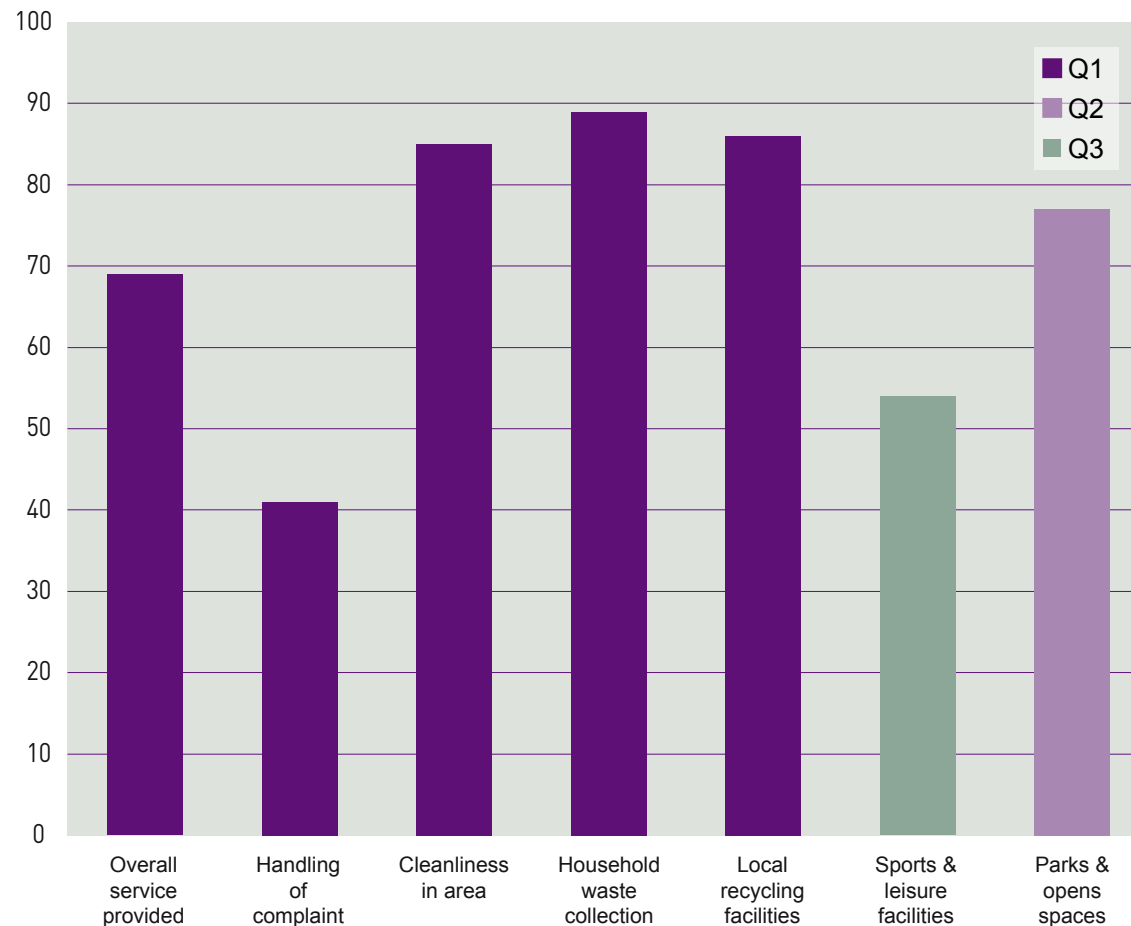
Highlights included some scores at or very close to, the national top scores:

- Highest score in England for satisfaction with recycling facilities at 86%*
- 2nd highest score in England for satisfaction with street cleanliness at 85%*
- 6th highest score in England for satisfaction with the overall service provided at 69% (national average score 54%). It was also the 3rd highest score out of the 238 district councils

The results are presented from different perspectives in charts 9 and 10 comparing them, respectively:

- Over time (with the 2003 results),
- Nationally with all other English councils results.

Chart 10: Satisfaction Levels Compared to All English Councils



* Whilst all 387 English councils reported on the survey, only 353 reported on street cleanliness, waste collection and recycling, as the 34 County Councils are not responsible for these services.

EQUALITIES MONITORING

The Council is committed to equal opportunities in all its activities both in its employment of staff and delivery of services to the public. This means

Employees (as at April 2008)

363	Number of staff
201	Number of females
162	Number of males
5	Staff with disability
316	White British
4	Asian
4	English (stated as English)
6	Indian
2	Irish
1	White & Black Caribbean
3	White Other
27	Unknown
0	Aged between 16-20
46	Aged between 21-30
80	Aged between 31-40
124	Aged between 41-50
81	Aged between 51-60
23	Aged 60+
9	Age Not Stated

treating all staff and customers fairly regardless of race, gender, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation.

In the table at Appendix 1 a number of BVPI's relate to equalities However some further numerical information relating to

Post Entry Training 2007/08

17	Number of employees who received post entry training last financial year
9	Number of males
8	Number of females
1	Number of employees with disability receiving training
1	Has now left the Authority
15	White British
1	African
1	Asian
0	Aged between 16-20
6	Aged between 21-30
5	Aged between 31-40
6	Aged between 41-50
0	Aged between 51-60
0	Aged 60+

the Council's employees is set out in the three tables below.

The Council is currently developing its equalities monitoring systems with the intention of publishing more detailed information and analysis in future years.

Leavers (as at April 2008)

35	Number of Employees
15	Number of Males
20	Number of Females
25	White British
1	Irish
1	Indian
1	Caribbean
7	Unknown
7	21-30
12	31-40
9	41-50
3	51-60
1	60+
3	Age Not Stated

External Performance Assessment

The Council is committed to continuously improving its performance and the quality of its services to its customers, reflected in a wide range of improvements in recent years.

This performance is not only managed and analysed internally, as reported in the previous chapter, but is also subject to external scrutiny and assessment by the Audit Commission (AC).

This chapter summarises the outcomes of the various aspects of the Council's external performance assessments undertaken by the Audit Commission since 2004 as part of its programme of Comprehensive Performance Assessment and annual audit.

COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection in May 2004 rated the Council at the top point of the CPA "Fair" category and described it as being 'well managed and having achieved significant improvements in a number of services

in recent years'. It highlighted that the Council is 'clear on future direction and priorities, with well resourced plans and the capacity to deliver these'.

Starting in the Autumn of 2005 and annually thereafter three 'Use of Resources' and 'Direction of Travel' assessments of the Council's performance have been carried out by the Audit Commission to update the 2004 inspection. In addition to this the Commission has inspected three of the Council's front line services to the public - Housing Repairs and Maintenance (November 2006), Cultural Services (March 2007) and Benefits (February 2008).

All these activities have strengthened the Council's self-awareness and focused attention on the actions and priorities required to achieve continuous improvement, both by ourselves and

involving joint working with our partners. Outcomes from this work have fed directly into the Council's Corporate Plans - see 'Planning for Improvement' Chapter.

Following consultation, proposals for the replacement of CPA for councils by Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) in April 2009 have now been published by the Audit Commission. CAA, as its name suggests, will focus on how services are delivered across geographical areas with more emphasis on the views of local people as service users and on outcomes rather than processes. Both the Council's current activities as well as its future plans make it well placed to meet the ongoing challenges of this assessment as it moves towards an area partnership basis over the next year.

Set out below are the Audit Commission's key findings in relation to the 'Use of

Resources' and 'Direction of Travel' assessments.

USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Whilst this assessment focuses on the Council's financial management it also looks at how this is integrated with its strategy and corporate management, and how it supports priorities and delivers value for money.

The auditors gave an unqualified opinion on the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2007.

It is particularly encouraging to note that the Council's overall Use of Resources assessed score of level 3 (out of a maximum score of 4) 'performing well' and consistently above minimum requirements, marks a significant improvement compared to the previous score of level 2, 'performing adequately'.

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL REPORT

This report comprises an assessment of the progress the Council is making in planning for and actually achieving improvements in service performance and outcomes for customers.

Whilst the report identifies that the Council is not consistently improving

across all its priority areas, recognition is given to those key service areas, including waste collection and recycling, which are consistently in the top performing 25% of councils nationally.

The report also draws attention to significant improvements in certain aspects of the housing service, in particular performance in carrying out urgent repairs and managing homelessness, even though in BVPI terms the service overall performs below the national average.

Partnership working continues to be identified as a strength and the report recognises the further work that is required to achieve positive outcomes from shared service initiatives.

It is also noted that the Council achieves high levels of customer satisfaction, is achieving its efficiency targets and has a sound approach to value for money in service delivery. It was noted that the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy and review of the Corporate Plan will provide a robust corporate framework for future service delivery and improvement.

ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

Every year each council receives an 'Annual Audit and Inspection Letter'

based on the work of external auditors who examine the way its resources are managed, focusing on the financial accounts and performance management arrangements.

The letter summarises their key messages for the authority, identifying areas of good practice and making recommendations where improvement is needed.

This year's letter, published by the Audit Commission in March 2008, gives an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2006/07 financial accounts and on the Best Value Performance Plan published in June 2007.

In terms of key actions needed, the auditors concluded that the Council should:

- Strengthen its approach to performance management in relation to improvement planning.
- Through organisational reviews (Blaby Systems Thinking) ensure that there is requisite capacity to deliver the improvement priorities.
- Strengthen the approach to joint working with other Leicestershire councils.

The Way Ahead

VISION, MISSION, PRIORITIES AND VALUES

The Council's vision, mission, corporate priorities, supporting ambitions and values together make up the framework of the Council's new Corporate Plan, which is due to be adopted by the Council in July 2008. The Plan details the Council's contribution to the achievement of the District of Blaby's long term vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which sets out what 'Blaby Together' (the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)) plans to do to make Blaby District an even better place to live, work and enjoy.

The development of the SCS has drawn upon the concerns and aspirations of local people as well as data and information about the District. The priorities have been agreed in partnership by Blaby Together.

Values:

The Council's Corporate Values are the standards we aim for in everything we do including delivering the new Vision for Blaby District. We aim to:

- Be fair, open, honest and accountable.
- Be willing and keen to work in partnership with others.
- Be open to new and better ways of doing things.
- Fully play our part in protecting the environment.
- Be consistent in the promotion of equality throughout.
- Ensure Council activities are open and accessible.
- Give evidence to all that we work as one team.
- Maintain high ethical standards.

Further details of the Council's overall approach to the planning, achievement of improvement, Blaby Together and the SCS are set out in the Making Improvement Happen Chapter.

The separate elements of the Corporate Plan are shown in the diagram on page 28.

The next sections highlight some of the Council's plans for improvement during 2008/09 set out under each of the Council's four new Priorities:



A Vision for Blaby 2026

In 2026 Blaby District will be made up of thriving sustainable, safe, healthy and secure communities where people are happy to live and work.

Mission:

“To create, in partnership with others, a district in which people want to live and work and to provide services that respond to the needs and aspirations of all our communities”

We want Blaby District to be known for:

Its clean, attractive and sustainable environment where:

- The economy is prospering and prosperous
- It is easy to get about using sustainable, integrated transport networks
- The physical environment across the whole of the District makes people proud
- We are doing everything we can to respond to the challenges of climate change
- People can afford to live in high quality, sustainable homes in strong communities

The contribution of its children and young people where:

- Children and young people make positive choices about their health and behaviour
- Young people are actively involved in planning and delivering improvements to services
- All children and young people can reach their potential

The safety, strength and health of its communities where:

- People work together to make their communities safer
- Anti-social behaviour is a thing from the past
- People from differing backgrounds and needs have the opportunity to be engaged in their community
- Communities and individuals have the skills and confidence to actively work together to shape their community
- All people are as healthy and active as they can be
- Older people are independent and enjoy a good quality of life

High quality, responsive, efficient and valued public services where:

- Agencies communicate and work together to provide customer focused services
- Customers expect and receive the very best services



The contribution of children and young people

- Continue and extend the programme of sporting activities for disabled young people.
- Expand opportunities for young people to be involved in art and cultural activities.
- Work with the County Council and other partners to investigate ways of improving educational attainment.
- Involve Young People in the development of services and facilities through consultation and adopting a “Hear by Right” Strategy.
- Establish a Youth Council to help inform and influence our decision making.

A clean, attractive and sustainable environment

- To ensure that employment opportunities are enhanced by promoting Blaby District as a good place to site new business.
- Work with local businesses to develop travel to work plans and implement our own travel plan encouraging employees to use alternative forms of transport to travel to work.
- Ensure major new housing developments have good cycle and footpath links to community amenities and work opportunities.
- Reduce graffiti and fly posting within the District and encourage activity to improve the local environment.
- Hold the second annual Flood Fair to raise public awareness of the threat and consequence of flooding and encourage preventive measures.
- Improve and extend car parking facilities at Narborough Railway Station and provided a formalised car parking facility at Narborough Recreation Ground.
- Combat dog fouling and other dog related problems through the introduction of Dog Control Orders and by increasing CCTV usage.
- Work to ensure that the most vulnerable people in the District have decent homes to live in.



- Encourage healthy lifestyles through education, play and activities such as the 'Walk to School' initiative which this year will highlight street sounds to young people as part of 'Noise Action Week'.
- Work with partners and schools to encourage positive behaviour patterns amongst young people through participation in projects such as the 'Warning Zone' programme.

The safety strength and health of communities

- Work with partners to establish ways to further reduce Anti Social Behaviour through targeted programmes of preventative education and activity.

- Promote the small grant scheme to provide funds for Community Projects.
- Promote the "Health and Well-being" awards to encourage business to help to improve employee's health.
- Hold further Community Safety Road Shows in high crime areas.
- Produce a crime prevention pack for people moving home and a pack for people going away on holiday to be distributed via estate and travel agents.
- Target home energy efficiency programmes towards vulnerable older people.
- Produce a guide on services for older people.



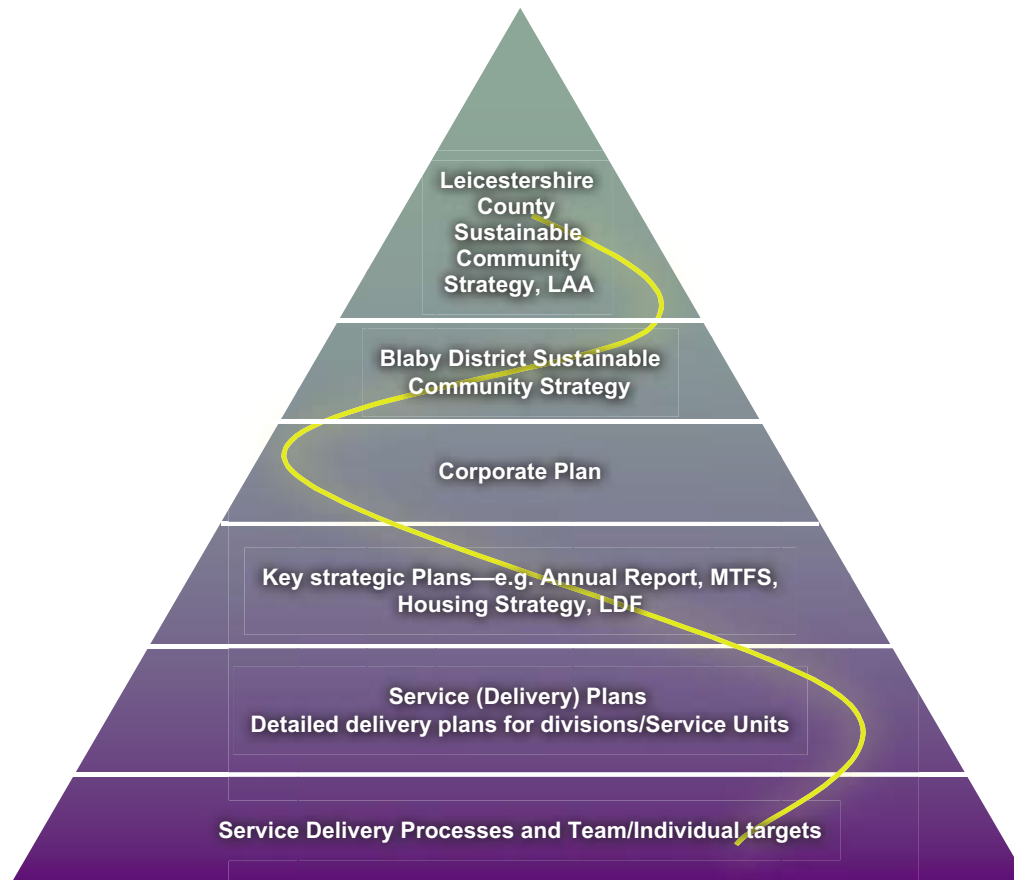
Delivering high quality cost-effective services, valued by customers

- Work with partners to establish further opportunities for joined up service delivery.
- Gather customer information and satisfaction levels in order to define and develop services further.
- Publicise the purpose of services for customers and service standards customers can expect to receive.
- Hold the 'Egypt in Leicestershire event' in Blaby Town Centre in July 2008.
- Establish a contract with seven other local authorities to deliver an 'Out of Hours' Dog Warden Service.
- Continue to implement new ICT systems to improve customer's services.



Making improvement happen

Achieving and sustaining improvement in the quality and efficiency of its services, based on the customer's needs, underpins all of the Council's activities, as does a recognition that in some services the pace of improvement needs to quicken.



This chapter outlines the Council's approach to bringing all of this about.

A robust planning framework provides the starting point for action and forms a pyramid as shown in the diagram, with the various levels linked together by the 'Golden Thread'.

The Council's Corporate Plan (CP) provides the long term vision to improve the delivery of services, and is where its priorities, ambitions and critical project plans are brought together. Timetabled by year and reflecting the priorities and ambitions of the District and County Sustainable Community Strategies (SCSs) the Corporate Plan is the Council's own delivery plan for achieving these.

Even the best laid plans are of limited use without effective methods to translate them into action and improved outcomes for the customer. In 2006 the Council decided to adopt 'Systems Thinking' principles in all its activities, principles that were

developed in, and are used by, the most successful companies in the world today. This approach is radically different from the traditional incremental local government approach, as it brings with it the potential to totally transform the way services are delivered.

Over the past year much progress has been made in applying and developing 'systems thinking' to some of the Council's most important customer facing services. This along, with other improvement mechanisms, is already making a difference to local people.

PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

At the top of the planning hierarchy is the Leicestershire 'Local Area Agreement' (LAA), an agreement between partners which aims to improve the quality of life in the area. This agreement links to and is supported by, the Leicestershire and Blaby District Sustainable Community Strategies. These plans support partnership working in the County and District and cover areas and organisations wider than just the District or the Council.

The Blaby SCS was adopted by the local strategic partnership, 'Blaby Together' in April 2008. The Council develops its own specific plans to be in line with this overall partnership planning framework and the new Corporate Plan will be

formally adopted in July 2008, replacing the previous Corporate Plan which ran up to 2010. The new Corporate Plan is the key strategic document of the Council's planning system. It sets the framework for annual operational plans and priorities i.e. Cabinet Portfolio priorities, Service Plans, workforce development objectives, performance monitoring systems and budget preparation. The Corporate Plan incorporates the concerns and issues that our customers have told us are important to them along with facts and figures about the District. The long term vision in the Corporate Plan and the 3 year associated action plan in turn inform our short term improvement planning. The annual Portfolio statements include priorities for each Cabinet Portfolio, whilst corporate priorities are identified by CMB and service improvement priorities through the annual service planning process.

The introduction of three year financial settlements for councils in 2005 has enabled the Council to plan the delivery of its Corporate Plan with greater certainty, through its linkage with its Medium Term Financial Strategy. This ensures that we have the money and resources allocated over a 3 year period to enable us to deliver our corporate priorities (see also finance chapter).

MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Blaby Systems Thinking

The Council's aim is to create a consistently high performing and constantly improving organisation, with clarity of purpose, perfection in service delivery and minimal wasted effort and resources, to be achieved by becoming a 'brilliant systems thinking' Council. This means recognising that the approach of staff to their work and 'work culture' fundamentally and primarily affects their performance. Thus, the full contribution of every individual is seen as being essential to achieving excellent performance, based on an acknowledgement of personal impact and responsibility to improve the way of working.

This is not a new management fad or a belief in theory. The Council's commitment and belief in this approach has come from the results it has been able to bring about for customers by applying it in practice.

Work started in 2006 in Council Tax collection where a reduction in the average time taken time to issue a bill from 25 days to 1½ days was achieved. Although possibly an area where the benefits for customers from this change were perhaps less obvious, the reduction in 'hassle' and ability to spread payments

over longer periods do benefit residents. An improvement of this magnitude would not have been achieved by the usual “performance improvement” techniques of setting targets and monitoring progress towards them. They could only have been achieved by thoroughly understanding the system, the demands upon it and everyone involved working continuously to reduce failure and waste in the system – freeing up time to do what really matters.

During 2007/8 the approach was spread into Benefits, waste collection and recycling and most recently, Planning (Development Control). The Benefits Service handles Housing and Council Tax benefits which are intended to help some of the most vulnerable and needy members of society. Whereas previously it took an average of 55 days to process a claim for these benefits, they are now processed in an average of 18 days, with a significant proportion being completed in just 1 day. Not only is this really helping people with their financial situation, by stripping out the waste and failure in the system this has improved the quality of assessments – ensuring that payments go to those individuals in most genuine need and actively seeking out those who should benefit – safeguarding public funds and helping those in greatest need.

How often do we read of waste collection services adopting a “jobs worth” attitude

to try to force people to reduce waste or recycle? At Blaby the Council’s approach centres on explaining and working with residents to solve problems so that they can get the best value from the systems operated. A “same day” service for the removal of bulky items has been introduced and when problems do occur the capability to put things right has also improved dramatically.

Work in Development Control is still at an early stage – but meetings with agents who regularly submit planning applications shows that they are already noticing a difference to the relationship as well as the speed of decision making in this area.

Over the next year work will continue to embed the approach in those areas already mentioned as well as spreading into new areas – homelessness, private sector housing work - developing better integration with Housing Benefits; leisure and open spaces; district cleansing as well as “back office” support services are all possibilities.

There is clearly a long way to go before consistency throughout the organisation is achieved but the change has started and the Council has moved significantly forward in achieving its aim of delivering truly brilliant first class services to residents.

Project Cristal

This is a major new £830,000 ICT project involving the introduction of two powerful interlinked computer systems - Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM).

The project’s name ‘Cristal’ stands for ‘Customer, Records, Information, Stats, Together, Access, Library’ and the overall aim is to significantly improve the Council’s performance in direct customer service contact and related information handling. This will mean customers having to contact the Council only once to obtain information, request a service or resolve queries, and will also enable faster and more reliable responses. It also will help the Council gain a better understanding of its customers and their varying needs, in order to provide more effective focussed services.

The ‘Frontline’ (CRM) system will provide a reliable, single, combined database of customer related information, which will enable a wide range of information to be collated and reported. By electronically collating data from all the Council’s different customer ‘access channels’ improved performance can be routinely measured and demonstrated across the organisation, including key systems thinking measures and NI’s. CRM also has a range of useful features such as a

powerful knowledge base which will help staff accessing relevant information to assist with customer enquiries.

The 'Trim' (EDRM) system, the 'back office' part of the project, will provide management, control and access to all the Council's electronic documents, both computer created files (such as word documents, spreadsheets and e-mails) and scanned images, from creation to archiving and all stages in between. Trim will be responsible for tracking an electronic document's lifecycle and providing it with authenticity for use now and in the future until it is eventually archived or destroyed. This will enable the Council to have a systematic approach to the retention and disposal of records within the prescribed timescales and therefore ensure full compliance with all relevant statutory requirements, including Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

Planning of the project began in 2006 and its implementation commenced earlier this year, on a phased basis, with a target completion date of February 2010. The service areas in the first phase comprise Revenues and Recovery, Benefits and 'Customer Service' i.e. reception and cashiers at the main offices plus the Blaby and Braunstone Service Shops.

Performance Management

Performance Management is about

identifying opportunities for improvement and change. At Blaby we aim to take action in response to actual performance in order to improve service provision to local people. The performance management framework at the Council is demonstrated in the 'Golden Thread' diagram on page 28.

A number of initiatives are being taken in the coming year to take performance management at Blaby forward:

- Continuing development of the specialist software to enable effective performance management.
- To further develop regular performance reporting by Cabinet Portfolio.
- To work closely with our partners to improve performance across the District and County through the new SCS and Local Area Agreement.
- Continuing to work with other local authorities through the Leicestershire and Rutland Improvement Partnership (LRIP) with the aim to share best practice and develop new ways of working across the County.
- Integration of "systems thinking" into the performance management framework.
- To develop mechanisms to report performance regularly to residents.
- To develop the Council's work with the new Comprehensive Area Assessment framework.

Scrutiny Activity

Scrutiny's achievements over the year reflect its focus on improving the way we provide services and tackling issues which are important to the community. During 2007/08 a number of reviews covering policy, performance and service related matters have been undertaken including:-

- The Council's Housing Transfer process.
- Community Transport.
- The Community Safety Partnership.
- Sale of Alcohol to underage young people.
- Scrutiny of the Council's Budgets.
- Sickness Absence.
- The Council's website.

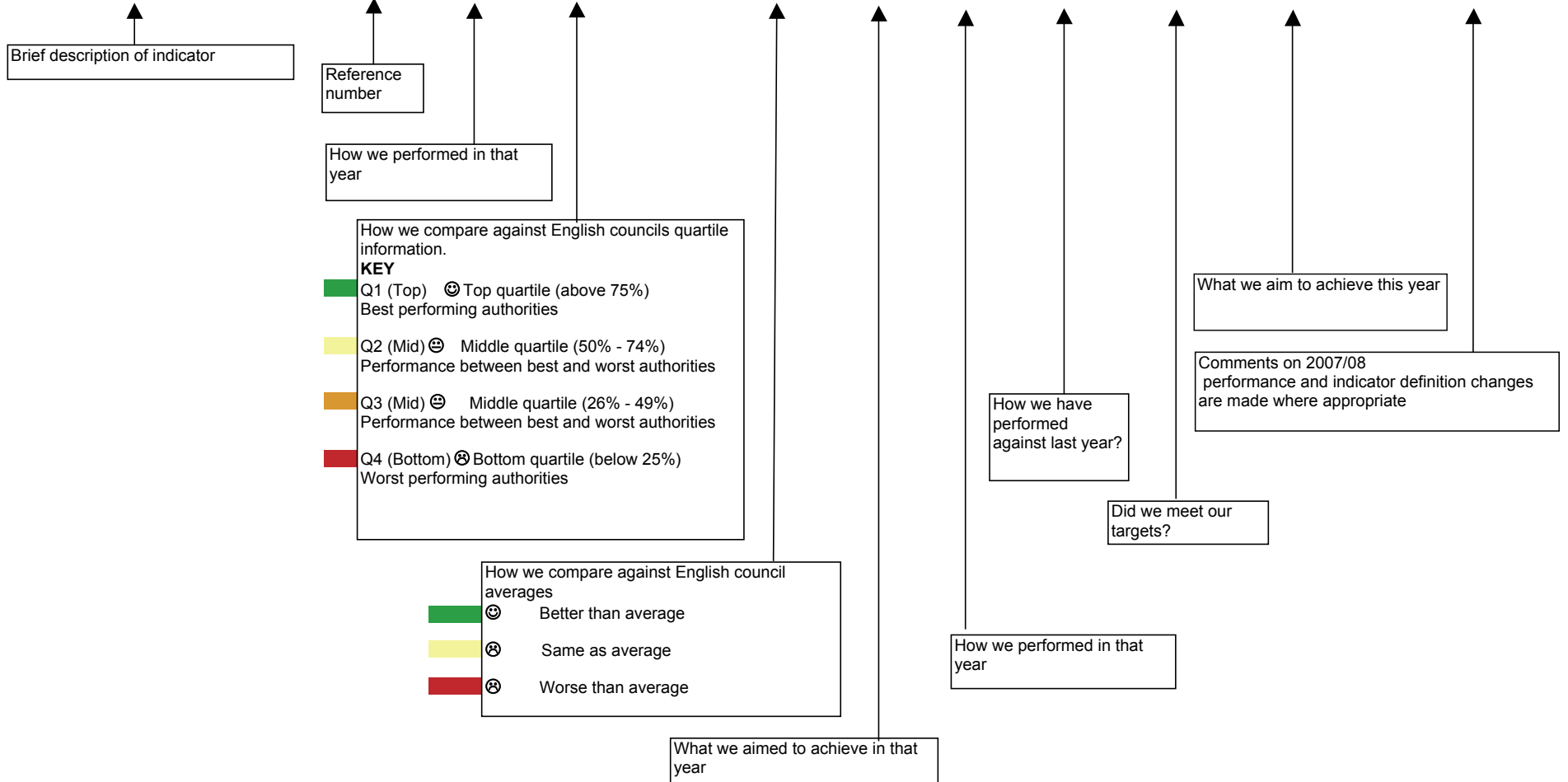
Scrutiny values the involvement of stakeholders, witnesses and the public in its reviews and has been pleased with input into work it has carried out. We have also been involved in consultation exercises with the Health Service, the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Development Framework.

The Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan will take forward the role of scrutiny and develop councillors in their community leadership role and for the tasks ahead.

Key to 2007/08 Best Value Performance Indicator Table

Appendix 1

Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08			Target	
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Final Outturn	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target	2008/09



Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08				Comments	
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Actual	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target		Targets 2008/09
CORPORATE HEALTH										
Level (if any) of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms H	BV2a	1			Level 2	Level 2	😊	😐	Level 2	
Duty to promote race equality - checklist score H	BV2b	42%	😞	70	61%	78%	😊	😊	89.0%	Adopted new Racial Equality Standard (Dec 2007) and commenced Impact Needs Assessments during 2007/08.
% of undisputed invoices paid in 30 days H	BV8	96.69%	😐	93	100%	96.63%	😞	😞	100.00%	
% of Council Tax collected H	BV9	98.54%	😊	97	98.80%	98.47%	😞	😞	98.60%	New ways of working have changed the way we bill taxpayers so that bills are issued sooner which is impacting on collection figures.
% of Non-Domestic Rates collected H	BV10	99.44%	😊	99	99.71%	99.71%	😊	😐	99.72%	The collection rate is on target.
% of top 5% earners that are women H	BV11a	31.25%	😐	33	34.00%	31.25%	😐	😞	31.25%	This indicator is influenced by the low numbers of staff on which it is based. The target would have been exceeded if there had been one more top female earner
% of top 5% earners from an ethnic minority H	BV11b	0.00%	😐	3	3.00%	0.00%	😐	😞	0.00%	Remains static due to recruitment on merit and low turnover in top 5%
% of top 5% earners with a disability H	BV11c	6.25%	😊	4	5.50%	6.25%	😐	😊	6.25%	Remains static due to recruitment on merit and low turnover in top 5%
Number of working days lost due to sickness absence L	BV12	13.45	😞	9	10.00	9.11	😊	😊	8.60	There has been a reduction in sickness absence as a result of a new Attendance Management Policy
Early retirements as a % of the total workforce L	BV14	1.56	😞	1	0.94%	1.52%	😊	😞	2.00%	Introduction of flexible retirement and pension changes has had an impact on this indicator
Ill-health retirements as a % of the total workforce L	BV15	0.31%	😐	0	0.60%	0.00%	😊	😊	0.31%	Better use of attendance management procedure and occupational health has had an impact on this indicator
% of staff with a disability H	BV16a	1.66%	😞	4	2.00%	1.33%	😞	😞	1.33%	Recruitment is done on merit and there is a low turnover of staff
% of economically active population in local authority area with a disability	BV16b	10.9%				10.94%				
% of staff from ethnic minority communities H	BV17a	6.1%	😊	5	6.2%	5.6%	😞	😞	6.10%	Recruitment based on merit
% of authority buildings open to public which are suitable for and accessible to disabled people H	BV156	66.67%		N/A	100.0%	100.00%	😊	😐	100.00%	Significant refurbishment works completed at Enderby Leisure Centre and The Pavilion at Huncote

Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08				Comments		
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Actual	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target		Targets 2008/09	
HOUSING											
Housing											
Energy efficiency - average SAP rating of LA owned dwellings H	BV63	59	☹	68	☹	60	62	☺	☺	64	A programme of work targeting properties with lower SAP ratings is in place. All works affecting the SAP ratings of all properties regularly updated.
Private sector vacant dwellings returned into occupation or demolished during 2004/05 as a result of LA action H	BV64	0	☹	89	☹	1	0	☹	☹	1	Due to the relatively low levels of empty stock and capacity issues, the authority has chosen not to prioritise work in this area
Rent collection and arrears recovery : % of rent collected H	BV66a	96.8%	☹	98	☹	97.75%	97.25%	☺	☹	98.00%	Function incorporated into Housing during this year. Training for new staff and the Housing Stock Transfer impacted upon recovery of rent arrears. A new strategy, policy and procedure have been implemented to address issues.
Rent collection and arrears recovery : % 7 weeks arrears L	BV66b	3.49%	☺	6	☺	2.80%	3.31%	☺	☹	3.00%	Function incorporated into Housing during this year. Training for new staff and the Housing Stock Transfer impacted upon recovery of rent arrears. A new strategy, policy and procedure have been implemented to address issues.
Rent collection and arrears recovery : % NSP's served L	BV66c	27.84%	☹	26	☹	25.00%	24.40%	☺	☺	24.00%	More targeted approach to recovery has increased performance in this area
Rent collection and arrears recovery : % evicted L	BV66d	0.14%	☺	0.45	☺	0.32%	0.09%	☺	☺	0.85%	More targeted approach to recovery has increased performance in this area
Proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at start of year L	BV184a	23%	☹	29	☺	22%	23%			17%	The available financial resources do not allow the Council to meet the Decent Homes Standard and hence the decision to transfer the Council's housing stock.
% change in proportion of non-decent LA homes during the year H	BV184b	3.4%	☹	16.7	☹	5.0%	14.0%	☺	☺	16.0%	Programmes specifically targeted to Decent Homes work hence the improvement in this area
Average time to re-let LA housing, days L	BV212	72	☹	39	☹	62	57	☺	☺	42	The indicator is adversely affected by the number of low demand properties in the sheltered housing stock. A Low Demand Strategy has been drafted to address this and reduce re-let times
Homelessness											
Average length of stay in temporary accommodation, hostel, weeks L	BV183b	22	☹	10	☹	25	0	☺	☺	5	No persons were placed in Local Authority Hostel
Number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the LA L	BV202	5	☹	3	☹	0 - 10	0-10		☹	0-10	
Number of homeless households for whom housing advice intervention resolved their situation H	BV213	6	☺	5	☺	1	7	☺	☺	9	More person have been assisted via homeless prevention this financial year
Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit											
Number of fraud investigators per 1000 case load	BV76b	0.26				0.26	0.26			0.00	
Number of fraud investigations per 1000 case load	BV76c	9.87				10.50	11.27			12.00	
Number of prosecutions/ sanctions per 1000 case load H	BV76d	1.65				3.25	2.99	☺	☹	3.35	
Speed of processing: average time for processing new claims, in days L	BV78a	39.3	☹	30.8	☹	32.0	37.7	☺	☹	30.0	Below target as first quarter contained a backlog which impacted on indicator. Significant improvements occurred during the last two quarters of the year
Speed of processing: average time for processing changes of circumstance, in days L	BV78b	14.2	☹	12.6	☹	10.1	17.3	☹	☹	10.0	Below target as first quarter contained a backlog which impacted on this indicator . Significant improvements occurred during the last two quarters of the year
Accuracy of processing: % of cases calculated correctly H	BV79a	95.60%	☹	97.7	☹	97.60%	97.20%	☺	☹	97.75%	The target was not met mainly due to first quarter error rate being slightly higher
Accuracy of recovering overpayments: % of total overpayments recovered H	BV79b(i)	89.01%	☺	72.9	☺	90.00%	84.69%	☹	☹	86.00%	Out-turn figure is not as high as anticipated although still above the median figure for previous year
Accuracy of recovering overpayments: % of total overpayments (debt plus amounts arising) recovered H	BV79b(ii)	31.34%	☹	33.2	☹	36.00%	25.25%	☹	☹	32.00%	Older debts will be targeted during 2008-09
Accuracy of recovering overpayments: % of total overpayments (debt plus amounts arising) written off L	BV79b(iii)	3.33%				6.00%	6.45%	☹	☹	6.00%	

Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08				Targets 2008/09	Comments	
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Actual	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target			
ENVIRONMENT											
Waste and Cleanliness											
Household waste arisings - % of total tonnage recycled H	BV82a(i)	27.52%		19.59		26.75%	28.82%			29.00%	Estimated outturn. Higher than anticipated tonnages collected.
Household waste arisings - total tonnage recycled H	BV82a(ii)	9446.94				9300.00	10012.42			10600.00	Estimated outturn. Higher than anticipated tonnages collected.
Household waste arisings - % of total tonnage sent for composting or for treatment by anaerobic digestion H	BV82b(i)	10.90%		10.91		15.00%	12.40%			14.00%	Estimated outturn. Slightly lower than anticipated tonnages collected
Household waste arisings - total tonnage sent for composting or for treatment by anaerobic digestion H	BV82b(ii)	3743.39				3800.00	4306.98			4800.00	Estimated outturn. More compost collected although it accounted for a smaller percentage of the overall waste collected.
Kg of household waste collected per head L	BV84a	375.60		441.34		405.00	375.6			365.00	Estimated outturn.
% change from previous year in Kg of household waste collected per head L	BV84b	-0.10%		0.33		1.00%	0.00%			3.00%	
Cost of waste collection per household L	BV86	£50.20		50.89		£54.76	£51.36			£50.78	
% of resident households served by kerbside collection of one recyclable H	BV91a	100.0%		95.87		100.00%	100.0%			100%	
% of resident households served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables H	BV91b	100.0%		93.27		100.00%	100.0%			100%	
% of relevant land & highways having combined deposits of litter and detritus falling below an acceptable level L	BV199a	5.4%		12.97		12.0%	10.1%			11.0%	
% of relevant land & highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible L	BV199b	2%		4.07		2%	3%			2%	Marginal variation from predicted outturn results from surveying different areas. Other highways and recreation areas identified as most affected by graffiti.
% of relevant land & highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible L	BV199c	0%		0.78		0%	3%			1%	Marginal variation from predicted outturn results from surveying different areas. Secondary Retail/Commercial and other highways identified as most affected by fly posting.
Year on year reduction in number of incidents & increase in number of enforcement actions taken against 'fly tipping' L	BV199d	Grade 2				Grade 3	Grade 2			Grade 2	The database used to calculate the outturn is managed on behalf of DEFRA by the Environment Agency. The spreadsheet currently only covers the first two periods of the year and despite several requests an update has yet to be provided by the EA.

Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08				Targets	Comments	
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Actual	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target	2008/09		
Environment & Environmental Health											
% score on checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health H	BV166a	80.0%		93.8		90.0%	100.0%			0.0%	The target was reached and improved as a result of the new Environmental Health Enforcement Policy and Smoke Free Enforcement Policy. This indicator has now ceased and therefore no targets have been set as the new national indicator is not comparable.
Number of 'sites of potential concern' in the LA area with respect to contaminated land ?	BV216a	277				277	277			135	
Number of 'sites for which information is available to decide on remediation, as a % of 'sites of potential concern' H?	BV216b	0%		11.8		50%	0%			50%	Sites considered to be potentially contaminated are being risk rated. There are 277 under review and the target will be achieved by the end of the summer .
% of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time H	BV217	94%		92.3		95%	97%			98%	There are 34 processes prescribed for this indicator. Of these 33 are fully compliant with the pollution control improvements measured.
% of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24hrs of notification H	BV218a	90.70%		87.4		90%	69.96%			90.00%	89% of all abandoned vehicle reports were investigated within 2 working days meeting our local indicator. A 29% increase in reports from 2006/07 has impacted on staff resources and ability to respond within 24 hours.
% of abandoned vehicles removed within 24hrs from point of legal entitlement of removal H	BV218b	89.66%		82.9		94%	92.11%			94.00%	A total of 38 abandoned vehicles fell within this category of which 35 were removed within the required 24 hours.
Planning											
% of new homes built on previously developed land H	BV106	67.26%		78.72		60.00%	49.38%			60.00%	High percentage of completions on Greenfield land due to the number of dwellings completed at Thorpe Astley during 2007/08.
60% of major applications determined in 13 weeks H	BV109a	77.27%		71.54		60.00%	39.13%			60.00%	This area has been subject to a fundamental review. This has resulted in a significant temporary reduction in performance to accommodate the transition from the old way of working to the new customer focussed approach.
65% of minor applications determined in 8 weeks H	BV109b	66.08%		76.89		65.00%	34.36%			65.00%	This area has been subject to a fundamental review. This has resulted in a significant temporary reduction in performance to accommodate the transition from the old way of working to the new customer focussed approach.
80% of other applications determined in 8 weeks H	BV109c	79.55%		88.15		80.00%	60.99%			80.00%	This area has been subject to a fundamental review. This has resulted in a significant temporary reduction in performance to accommodate the transition from the old way of working to the new customer focussed approach.
Did the LPA submit the LDS by 28 March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3 year rolling programme?	BV200a	Yes				Yes	Yes			Yes	
Has the LPA met the milestones in the current LDS?	BV200b	No				Yes	Yes			Yes	Milestones in the Local Development Scheme for 2006/07 were not met as the Council accepted the advice of GOEM that to continue with the preparation of the Core Strategy would run the risk of it being 'unsound'. A revised LDS (May 2007) established new milestones for 2007/08 and beyond.
% of total appeals against refusal of planning permission allowed L	BV204	33.3%		32.01		25.0%	42.1%			35.00%	The transition to a new ways of working included the determination of most of the older applications with higher than normal refusals rates. The number of appeals received has fallen substantially for applications processed under the new system.
% score on 'quality of planning services' checklist H	BV205	94.4%		93.28		94.0%	94.4%			94.00%	

Performance Indicator	BVPI ref.	2006/07			2007/08				Comments		
		Actual	Quartile	Average	Target	Actual	Comp. Against Last Year	Comp. Against Target		Targets 2008/09	
CULTURAL & RELATED SERVICES											
% of conservation areas with up-to-date character appraisal H?	BV219b	33.3%		30.1		40.00%	11.11%			40%	The Conservation officer post has been vacated since October 2006. Progress on designating additional Conservation Areas, or updating existing Character Appraisals has therefore been affected.
COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELL-BEING											
Domestic burglaries per 1000 households in LA area L	BV126	8.10		10.37		7.70	7.50			7.10	Target achieved through preventative initiatives such as Community Safety Road shows.
Violent crime per 1000 population in LA area L	BV127a	12.00		19.23		11.40	11.00			10.45	Target achieved through preventative measures in terms of alcohol awareness and personal safety initiatives as well as support provided to victims of domestic abuse.
Robberies per 1000 population in LA area L	BV127b	0.40		1.23		0.40	0.50			0.50	Target not achieved but very small numbers involved, total of 48 offences this year compared to 36 last year.
Vehicle crimes per 1000 population in LA area L	BV128	8.70		11.01		8.30	10.20			9.69	A number of initiatives have been run to tackle vehicle crime including "Operation Accelerate Quake", themed vehicle crime road shows and the distribution of free sat nav wiper cloths. The increase in vehicle crime has mainly been caused through the theft of Sat Nav's .
Number of recorded racial incidents per 100,000 population L	BV174	3.28				4.50	1.08			3.28	Number of incidents fallen assisted by the introduction of the Hate Incident Monitoring Project
% of recorded racial incidents resulting in further action H	BV175	100.00%		96.69		100.00%	100.00%			100.00%	There was only one incident during the year which was dealt with accordingly.
% of questions from domestic violence checklist to which LA can answer 'yes' H	BV225	72.7%				81.8%	72.7%			81.8%	The council has yet to compile with 3 of the 11 checklist questions .These are refuge places, tenancy agreements and information sharing protocol.
Total expenditure on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations	BV226a	£42,860				£49,792	£49,792				£5,000 increase plus 3% inflation increase each year on funding
% expenditure on advice and guidance services provision given to organisations with CLS Quality Mark H	BV226b	100.00				100.0%	100.00%			100.00%	
Total expenditure on advice and guidance on housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters provided directly by LA to public	BV226c	£151,072				£158,004	£153,973			£164,646	This figure is made up from Housing Services, benefits and a grant to Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

GLOSSARY

Audit Commission	The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is used economically, efficiently and effectively.
Best Value	Best Value is a challenging framework to improve council services. Under Best Value, councils are required to put in place measures to ensure continual improvement in their services and the involvement of local people.
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicators. All councils have to measure their performance against a standard set of performance indicators, thus allowing comparisons both over time and against other councils. The Government specified BVPI's for this purpose until March 2008, when they were replaced by the new National Indicator Set (see under NIS)
BVPP	Best Value Performance Plan. Each year all councils have been required by law to produce and make available for public inspection a plan, which sets out current performance, successes and achievements and plans for improvement. Following changes in the law, this year will be the last year of BVPP publication.
CAA	The Audit Commission's proposed replacement for CPA from April 2009, which will look at how services are delivered across geographical areas rather than by a particular council. In Leicestershire these areas will be those covered by the county/ LAA and individual districts.
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission. Established in April 2008, the Commission's remit covers the whole equalities agenda and brings together in one body the functions of the previously separate Commissions for Equal Opportunities, Race and Disability.
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment. An inspection process carried out by the Audit Commission on behalf of the government to measure the overall performance of individual councils and promote improvements in their performance. CPA will be replaced by CAA in April 2009.
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality – replaced by EHRC from April 2008
CTB	Council Tax Benefit
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government. Government Ministry responsible for Local and Regional Government issues.
GOEM	Government Office for the East Midlands. This brings together all central government departments in one regional office based in Nottingham.
HB	Housing Benefit.
IEG	Implementing Electronic Government

IT/ICT	Information Technology/Information and Communication Technology
IIP	Investors in People. A national quality standard awarded to organisations in recognition of their commitment to supporting and developing their employees.
LA	Local Authority (Council).
LAA	Local Area Agreement. A three year agreement between (unitary and county only) councils working in partnership with other public, private and voluntary bodies and the Government, aimed at improving the quality of life in an area e.g. Leicestershire. The new LAA for Leicestershire, (of which Blaby District Council is a contributing partner organisation) commenced in April 2008.
LGA	Local Government Association. A national body that represents the interests of all councils in England and Wales.
LGO	Local Government Ombudsman. A Government official who investigates complaints by the public against councils.
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership. A partnership between a council and other local public, private and voluntary bodies responsible for producing and implementing a Sustainable Community Strategy for the council area – see under SCS.
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer. The transfer of ownership of a council's housing stock to another landlord, eg a Housing Association.
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy. A council's three year financial strategy within which its annual budgets and financial planning are developed
NIS	National Indicator Set. All councils have to measure their performance against a standard set of performance indicators, thus allowing comparisons both over time and against other councils. The Government has specified the new NIS for this purpose from April 2008, replacing BVPI's.
NNDR	National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates)
PI	Performance Indicator.
Portfolio	An area of service responsibility of a Cabinet Member of the Council
RSL	Registered Social Landlord. A not-for-profit landlord, eg a Housing Association
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure. Used to determine energy efficiency ratings in domestic dwellings.
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy. This is produced by a LSP and sets out a long term vision for improving public services and quality of life in a council's area. At county level, the county SCS is the delivery vehicle for the LAA.

Statement on Contracts

The Local Government Act 1999 requires councils to state and certify that all individual contracts involving transfers of staff comply, where applicable, with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

The Council hereby certifies that the service contract awarded during 2007/08 involving a transfer of staff complied with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

Statement of Responsibility

The Council is responsible for the reporting of the performance information in this Plan and its accuracy. In this respect the Council is committed to the continuous improvement of all aspects of data quality and related performance information systems. The Council is satisfied that the information and assessments included in the Plan are in all material respects accurate and complete at the time of going to print and that the Plan is realistic and achievable. Performance and financial data will be subject to external audit, any changes required will be published as an addendum and will be made available on our website.

