

**Bath & North East Somerset  
Council**

**Corporate Plan  
2008-2011**

**Refreshed to include the emerging issues**

**2009/10**

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# 1 Executive Summary

The Bath and North East Somerset Corporate Plan 2008-2011 has been updated and refreshed to include the emerging issues for 2009/10, with a particular focus on our response to the recession to ensure our improvement priorities remain relevant.

It also includes the key measures by which our improvement priorities will be judged, incorporating the targets included in the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 which were approved by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008.

The Plan sets out the Council's objectives and targets. It also refers to its available resources and how they will be managed. It represents the Council's high level strategic plan and encapsulates the activity that will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement both of which are for the Council and its partners, government, public sector agencies, business, voluntary and community sectors, to achieve.

The plan is divided into:

**A Story of Place** - community, economic and environmental issues affecting the district.

**Our Vision** - for the district:

- A distinctive place
- With vibrant communities
- Where everyone fulfils their potential

**Our Priorities**

- Improving transport and the public realm
- Building communities where people feel safe and secure
- Addressing the causes and effects of climate change
- Improving the availability of affordable housing
- Promoting the independence of older people
- Improving the life chances of disadvantaged children and young people
- Improving school buildings
- Sustainable growth

**The final section** - Value for Money, Resources and Delivery - explains how the plan will be implemented effectively using its limited resources, working closely with external partners and implementing the organisational change programme designed to help enable the Council achieve its objectives.

## **2 Introduction**

This document is the Bath & North East Somerset Council Corporate Plan which sets out our priorities for the next three years. The Corporate Plan will build on past success - which has led to the Council being rated by the Audit Commission as “a three star” local authority which is “improving well.”

The Corporate Plan sets out the improvement priorities for the Council and priority actions to address them over the coming years. The improvement priorities are also supported by the findings of the recent Voicebox survey, which showed the level of affordable housing and traffic congestion as areas of key concern for the general public, as well as concerns over road and pavement repairs, crime and public transport.

It is recognised that Bath & North East Somerset is at a critical stage in its development, with a number of challenges around affordable housing, a low wage economy and high levels of congestion. There is a need for substantial investment and a co-ordinated approach both across the area and the sub-region to tackling these issues. The area is also set to experience substantial growth over the next 20 years due to the requirements of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, which presents clear opportunities as well as challenges.

The Council has worked closely with its partners in the Local Strategic Partnership in order to develop a strong vision for the area. This will be set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The opportunities and challenges presented by the growth agenda will be met and delivered through the Core Strategy.

The ambitions stated in this plan need to be considered in conjunction with the resources available to deliver them. This information is set out in detail in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

This Corporate Plan clearly demonstrates what the priorities are for Bath & North East Somerset Council over the next three years and how we will deliver improved outcomes for the people we serve.

## **3 Purpose**

The Corporate Plan sets out Bath and North East Somerset's principal objectives, identifies issues selected for improvement (referred to as Improvement Priorities), specifies key targets and the broad strategies and resources required to deliver these targets. It is intended to be a broad high level document, with the specific detail of how actions are to be achieved being contained within Service Plans.

## 4 Bath & North East Somerset – The Story of Place

### ***Refresh 2009/10: Section 4 B&NES – The Story of Place***

*A sub-section has been added at the end, in black italics, to provide current information on the impact of the recession*

Bath & North East Somerset is a great place to live, work and visit. Over two thirds of the area is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt. The World Heritage City of Bath forms the main urban conurbation with Keynsham and Midsomer Norton and Radstock being the other significant areas of population. The rest of the district consists of small rural communities including 69 villages.

Bath & North East Somerset enjoys a unique quality of built and natural environment, world-class arts and culture, a relatively strong economy and low levels of unemployment. The area has very high levels of educational achievement, low crime levels, excellent public services and a relatively affluent and healthy population.

There are a great many positive things about Bath & North East Somerset. However, a number of challenges have developed over the last 50 to 100 years bringing the area to a tipping point, exacerbated by the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The principal challenges are set out below.

### **4.1 Community**

Bath & North East Somerset has healthy, safe communities and overall levels of deprivation are well below the national average. However, there are pockets of deprivation within the district. A small number of neighbourhoods feature within the most deprived 10% in the country, with one featuring in the most deprived 5%<sup>1</sup> which is in stark contrast to the majority of the area and results in significant levels of inequality and impacts adversely on the life chances of the population living in these areas.

People who live in Bath and North East Somerset continue to enjoy better than average health compared with the country as a whole. For the period 2003-2005, life expectancy was significantly in excess of the national average, although this masks considerable health inequalities within small pockets of the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2007. Particular super output areas in Bath & North East Somerset feature in the most deprived 10% areas in specific domains. One features in the most deprived 5% for a specific domain. For full details, refer to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007.  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/deprivation07/>

Although crime levels are low, fear of crime and anti social behaviour are priorities for local people. Evidence shows pockets or “hotspots” of crime in particular localities.

Additionally, there are identifiable “communities of interest” such as People with Learning Difficulties and some Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities who fare significantly less well than mainstream residents with many of the same deprivation issues as the neighbourhoods described above.

Narrowing the gap between the most and least affluent is a real challenge facing the area and impacts on a multitude of factors, including health, educational achievement and access to services. This leads to a variety of related issues including poverty of aspiration within a number of isolated areas. Addressing inequality is essential in building stronger communities.

## **4.2 Economy**

The economy in Bath & North East Somerset is relatively strong and recent analysis shows that the direction of travel for continued economic growth in the area is favourable. There is a healthy knowledge driven economy, a relatively high level of self employment and an excellent skills base. About 70% of jobs are taken by residents therefore suggesting that the local skills profile does provide sufficient human capital to meet the needs of the local economy.

However, a lack of historical planning of the economy has resulted in a heavy reliance on the public and tourism sectors which in turn has resulted in a low wage economy.

The desirability of Bath & North East Somerset as a place to live and associated high quality of life has led to very high housing costs, with the area featuring in the 5% least affordable housing areas in the country. There are serious shortages of affordable / key worker housing which, when considering the low wage economy of the area, presents problems for many people, some of whom have no choice but to commute to work from outside the area.

The road and rail network are at capacity and congestion across the area is a problem in terms of journey times and public transport travel times, a key impediment to maintaining a healthy economy. Congestion is also affecting air quality and in areas of Bath City Centre air pollution has reached levels that are higher than the Government recommended acceptable limits.

## **4.3 Environment**

A high proportion of the area is classed as rural and there are a large number of thriving villages. The area benefits from an exceptional natural and built environment with Bath city, a designated world heritage site, having an exceptionally high quality built environment. However there has traditionally been a substantial under investment in the public realm leading to outdoor spaces and urban environments that need particular attention. This deters

private sector investment which is essential to the future regeneration of the area.

The requirements for growth contained in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy are set to have a substantial impact on the area over the next 20 years. A growth requirement that equates to building a new town the size of Keynsham and Radstock combined presents a major challenge, but also an opportunity to address the shortage of affordable and key worker housing. However, this growth needs to be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and with the necessary infrastructure in place.

#### ***4.4 What the Community Has Told Us***

In a recent Voicebox<sup>2</sup> Survey conducted with local residents, the level of traffic congestion in the area was identified as the top issue in need of improving by respondents with 44% identifying it as their top priority. Road and pavement repairs also ranked highly, lending weight to this as an improvement priority. Activities for teenagers were the second highest priority, identified by 35% of respondents. Affordable housing, the level of crime, public transport, cleanliness of streets and the level of pollution also featured in the list of priorities identified.

#### ***4.5 Going Forward***

The lack of affordable housing, the low wage economy and congestion problems leads to a local economy that is unsustainable without major investment and a diversification of the economic base. These are undisputedly priorities for the area and have been identified strongly through consultation with local residents.

For the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities, inequalities must be addressed and the disadvantaged and vulnerable protected.

Additionally, the causes and effects of climate change are becoming increasingly important, with the national, statutory carbon reduction target having just been increased to 80% by 2050. Actions to reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to unavoidable climate change will need to be fully considered and built in to all plans and strategies for the future.

Bath & North East Somerset is a great place to live, work and visit. It is recognised that there are a number of challenges facing the area; however, there are also significant opportunities to address these issues especially through the sustainable growth agenda.

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<sup>2</sup> Residents survey conducted in Bath & North East Somerset in 2007 with 5000+ responses. Data available to ward level.

## **4.6 The Impact of the Recession**

*As we move into 2009/10, financial analysts are tentatively indicating that the worst of the credit crisis may be over but that the recession is only just beginning. The length and depth of the recession is a source of much speculation and different sectors of the economy will see different effects.*

*An analysis has been carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA) of the likely impact of the recession on different parts of the country. It concludes that based on previous experience, together with an analysis of the sectors of the economy:*

- *most at risk is London & the South East*
- *least at risk is the South West, and*
- *that there will be variable impacts at a sub regional level or below.*
  - *the centre for cities research suggests the impact on the Bristol area could result in the loss of 20,500 (i.e. West of England). Jobs by 2011*

*The national analysis suggests that Bath in particular may be less affected. The district will though be affected by very local variations:*

- *the performance of the independent retail sector in Bath*
- *potential impact on the tourism industry (volume of domestic and international visitors generally will fall); however Bath visitor profile potentially more resilient*
- *the success of individual employers*
- *housing market differences between Bath, Keynsham, Norton Radstock and rural areas*
- *differentials in incomes leading to the potential exposure of some residents in more deprived wards to fuel poverty*
- *manufacturing in the South of the district*

*At this stage there are only a few indicators that show that the credit crunch or recession is biting locally. However:*

- *housing development has come to a virtual halt impacting on the programme of affordable housing provision*
- *sales and lettings of surplus and commercial properties is becoming more challenging*
- *demand on advice services - not least money advice - is increasing*

*We have an important role to play as a community leader at this time. As such we are working to support the local community by working more closely with advice agencies and revisiting our priorities to ensure they remain relevant.*



## 5 Our Vision

Careful consideration of the economic, environmental and social factors that will help shape Bath & North East Somerset over the coming years has allowed an aspirational vision for the area to be developed. Our vision is:

### **Making Bath & North East Somerset an even better place to work, live and visit**

Specifically, this means that **Bath & North East Somerset is a distinctive place with vibrant, sustainable communities where everyone fulfils their potential.**

We are therefore working towards:

#### **A distinctive place that has:**

- Outstanding built and natural environment
- A dynamic, low carbon economy
- Connectivity
- World class arts and culture

#### **With vibrant sustainable communities**

- That are active, lively and inclusive
- Where people feel safe, take responsibility and make a contribution,
- That are carbon neutral,
- Where the disadvantaged are supported
- Where the vulnerable are protected
- Where people feel proud to live

#### **Where everyone fulfils their potential by having an equal opportunity to:**

- Learn and develop skills
- Enjoy a healthy, low carbon lifestyle
- Influence the future of their area
- Contribute to the economy and society

Bath & North East Somerset Council's core values for moving towards this vision are: **quality, value** with **customer focus**.

## 6 Our Priorities

### ***Refresh 2009/10: Section 6 Our Priorities***

*This section has been updated to include examples of proactive responses to the recession, to ensure our priorities remain relevant. These are set out in black italics.*

*Many of the performance indicators identified as designated indicators in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011 are aligned to each improvement priority. Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years, along with the LAA performance indicators that will be used to measure our progress, are set out in tables in black italics under each of the improvement priorities below.*

The vision for Bath & North East Somerset Council will drive local plans and policies and ensure that the future of Bath & North East Somerset is a sustainable one.

Underpinning the vision, are the Council's improvement priorities for the next three years:

- Improving transport and the public realm
- Building communities where people feel safe and secure
- Tackling the causes and effects of climate change
- Improving the availability of affordable housing
- Promoting the independence of older people
- Improving the life chances of disadvantaged children and young people
- Improving school buildings
- Sustainable growth

For each improvement priority, the plan below sets out the priority actions either underway or planned during the life of the Corporate Plan. Detailed information underpinning the priorities can be found in the relevant service and financial plans.

*Narrowing the gap between the most and least affluent is a real challenge facing the area and this will be exacerbated by the recession. A cross-cutting priority will be to sustain and develop actions to support the narrowing the gap principle, such as an economic strategy that promotes economic inclusion, improves skills and qualification levels and increases job opportunities for those in our poorest wards.*

## **6.1 Improving Transport and the Public Realm**

Our Transport Vision

[http://www.westofengland.org/downloads/Our\\_Future\\_Transport\\_October\\_2007.pdf](http://www.westofengland.org/downloads/Our_Future_Transport_October_2007.pdf) explains how we and our West of England partners will address

congestion, access and air quality issues over the next 20 years.

Government funding and support has been agreed in principle for £110million of improvements through 2 major schemes - the Greater Bristol Bus Network and the Bath Transportation Package. Five other sub-regional schemes are in preparation. The Greater Bristol Bus Network and the Bath Package are at an advanced stage and they will improve bus routes, Park & Rides, accessibility, bus frequency, pedestrian access and information across the sub-region. Further investment bids will be pursued in 2008/09 for implementation over the next 5/10 years.

Transport improvements go hand in hand with enhancements to our public realm and the Future for Bath & North East Somerset document.

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/future/Bath/A+Spatial+Framework/Living+heritage.htm> explains how we plan to invest in simple, high quality, pedestrian friendly public spaces.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Achieve “full consent” status for Bath’s Transportation Package so we can deliver:
  - a. A new Park & Ride site and expansion to our current sites
  - b. New Bus Rapid Transit between Newbridge through the city and to the East of Bath
  - c. Showcase bus routes
  - d. Parking & travel information systems
  - e. Pedestrian & access improvements
2. Prepare a full business case for submission of an £840 million Transport Innovation Fund bid for transforming transport provision in Bath and the sub region
3. Improved effectiveness of Home to School Transport for eligible children and young people
4. Community reparations work by young offenders
5. Creative use of our estate and developer contributions to release capital for improvements to the public realm
6. Use of CIVITAS and New Growth Points funding to improve city signage and to test new ways of improving air quality and more sustainable travel

*To ensure this priority remains relevant within the context of the recession, possible actions include bringing forward some capital expenditure with a view to generating local employment and local confidence with an investment in the public realm*

<b><i>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</i></b>	<b><i>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</i></b>
<i>A reduction in congestion of more than 13% in the average journey time per mile during the morning peak</i>	<i>Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak</i>
<i>Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling for all households will have increased to 58.4%</i>	<i>Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling (To be measured by: Access to Major Employment sites; Journey time by Public Transport 40 mins)</i>
<i>Local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the authority area will have risen to 56,883</i>	<i>Local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the authority area</i>

## **6.2 Building Communities Where People Feel Safe and Secure**

Crime in Bath & North East Somerset is low by comparison to many other areas. However crime, and in particular the fear of crime, has a significant impact on communities and individuals. The Council will continue to work with all its partners - notably the Police - to address specific pockets of high crime, and to target specific types of crime where these are local priorities, including tackling domestic violence, addressing anti-social behaviour and reducing the impact of drugs and alcohol on communities.

The Council will pay particular attention to reducing the impact of crime and the fear of crime on how people live their lives. For example, tackling hate crime means addressing the current low levels of reporting, so raising awareness is therefore a key element of this work.

As a member of the Community Safety and Drugs Partnership, the Council has a significant role in supporting communities to tackle local issues as well as making sure that its services – in particular those associated with the appearance of neighbourhoods - are delivered well. The Council will also use its licensing powers to achieve its overall aims.

Over the next 3 years, the priority actions to deliver this improvement priority will be:

1. Developing further the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) initiative with the Police and others to empower local community groups to address and resolve issues which are important to them
2. Implementing our new Neighbourhood structures so that our environmental services are aligned more closely with partners' services. This means we can respond even more quickly to local

- concerns about the Council's key areas of responsibility - such as litter and graffiti
3. More "Deep Clean Keep Cleans" and "Environmental Action Days" which focus the work of public services on getting things done locally. For example, our Deep Clean Keep Clean in Keynsham saw litter bins replaced, litter cleared up and 95% of the "target area" deep-cleaned
  4. Increasing the quality of parks and open spaces - for example, working with local communities to achieve 7 "Green Flag" awards
  5. Extend our work with other agencies, including the Courts, to provide greater support for victims of domestic violence and abuse, and bring more offenders to justice
  6. Increasing our focus on tackling Anti Social behaviour through the work of our new, partnership-based Anti Social Behaviour team, working with local communities. This will build on our recent successes in securing Anti Social Behaviour Orders in relation to Bath City Centre.
  7. Working with the Police to reduce offences associated with the "night-time economy"- for example continuing our marshalling schemes
  8. Improving the effectiveness of drug and alcohol treatment – with a significant increase in the treatment available for alcohol misuse
  9. Increased targeting of Youth Service support to hot spots

<b><i>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</i></b>	<b><i>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</i></b>
<i>A 9% reduction in recorded Serious Acquisitive Crime from a rate of 14.06 crimes per 1,000 population in 2007/08 to a rate of 12.8 crimes per 1,000 population in 2010/11; we will also aim for the the Serious Acquisitive crime rate in the Southdown and Twerton wards to be no higher than the area-wide average.</i>	<i>Serious acquisitive crime rate</i>
<i>A decrease in the rate of proven re-offending by young offenders</i>	<i>Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders</i>
<i>An increase in the percentage of people who agree that the police and local councils are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area</i>	<i>Percentage of people who agree that the police and local council's are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area</i>
<i>A decrease in the re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders</i>	<i>Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders</i>
<i>A decrease in the repeat incidents of domestic violence</i>	<i>Repeat incidents of domestic violence</i>
<i>A 1% year on year increase in the number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment</i>	<i>Drug users in effective treatment</i>

### **6.3 Tackling the causes and effects of Climate Change**

The Council's primary focus has been on managing waste. Over the period of the corporate plan, the Council will broaden its approach to include reducing its own carbon footprint and providing leadership for the area to reduce its carbon footprint (including through its approach to transport) and build resilience to unavoidable climate change.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. To reduce the Council's carbon emissions by 30% by 2014 by implementing our first five-year Carbon Management Plan (April 2009 to March 2014) , building on the energy efficiency work begun in Our Big Energy Challenge, but now including schools, street lighting and all outsourced services with a wide range of carbon reduction projects, such as:
  - a. Improved energy management systems and practice and completion of basic green housekeeping measures in buildings;
  - b. Efficiency driver training and improved green travel planning;
  - c. Implementing improved in-house recycling
  - d. Implementing flexible location working for our staff
  - e. Efficiency improvement to street lighting
  - f. Making changes in our capital programme for new build and adaptations of current assets to achieve very low or zero carbon emissions from buildings
  - g. Efficiency gains through IT improvements
  - h. Reduced emissions from all our new vehicles
  - i. Where possible sourcing our food products locally
2. To raise awareness about how the community can reduce their carbon footprint and apply influence to achieve reductions in emissions
3. Review planning processes and ensure that the new Local Development Framework contains policies that will help to deliver a low carbon economy for the area and achieve the government's targets for all new homes to be zero carbon by 2016 and non-residential buildings to be zero carbon by 2019
4. Continue to work towards our aspiration of 'zero waste', through action and education to reduce waste production, as well as to increase recycling
  - a. Sustaining and improving our excellent track record in recycling as one of the top Unitary Councils
  - b. Reach agreement on sub-regional waste solutions
  - c. Introduce food waste collections throughout the district
5. Following the LGA Climate change commission report, the Council will review in the light of the report:
  - a. Its planning processes and building standards;
  - b. Its sustainable procurement policies

To ensure this priority remains relevant within the context of the recession, possible actions include linking the fuel poverty issue with the climate change priority to reduce carbon emissions

- initiatives to encourage investment in insulation especially from and for the benefit of vulnerable groups
- public sector visiting officers have a role to play to ensure that there is good signposting of advice to improve fuel efficiency and avoid fuel poverty

<b>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</b>	<b>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</b>
<i>A reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> from Local Authority operations</i>	<i>CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from Local Authority operations</i>
<i>An increase in the percentage of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating</i>	<i>Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating</i>
<i>A reduction of residual household waste per household to 530 kg per head per household based on 78,300 households</i>	<i>Residual household waste per head</i>

## **6.4 Improving the availability of affordable housing**

The Affordable Housing Delivery Plan aims to increase the availability of affordable housing that “meets the needs of those who cannot afford to secure decent housing on the open market either to rent or buy” by focusing attention on six key priority areas:

- Planning
- Land
- Funding
- Tenure
- Sustainability
- Cross-authority and Partnership working

In providing “decent homes” they also contribute to reducing health inequalities. Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Getting the most from development (section 106) agreements through 35% affordable housing requirement
2. Narrowing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged by:
  - a. Improving access to housing for vulnerable people both through mainstream social housing and the commissioning of specific housing schemes

- b. Grant & low cost loans (for one year) to improve poor private sector housing
- c. Prevention of homelessness (reducing demand on social housing) by:
  - i. Supporting access into private sector housing using the deposit bond scheme
  - ii. Ensuring the Supporting People Programme targets helping vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies

*To ensure this priority remains relevant within the context of the recession, possible actions include looking at options to lever in investment in housing:*

- *engaging with the new Homes & Communities agency to identify options*
- *working with local courts to help avoid repossessions*
- *working with landlords to help avoid evictions where these would result in homelessness*
- *working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to bring forward any vacant private sector property for affordable housing*
- *increasing the availability of housing advice services by improving efficiency of management and overhead costs and investing in front line services.*

<b><i>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</i></b>	<b><i>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</i></b>
<i>511<sup>3</sup> affordable homes will have been delivered</i>	<i>Number of affordable homes provided (gross)</i>
<i>The number of adults receiving secondary mental health services in settled accommodation will have increased</i>	<i>Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation</i>
<i>Increase the number of adults with learning difficulties in employment</i>	<i>Adults with learning disabilities in employment</i>

## **6.5 Promoting the independence of older people**

The relationship between health, social care and wider community services will be integral to the creation of a high quality care system which is fair; accessible and responsive to the individual needs of those who use services and their carers.

People, irrespective of illness or disability, are supported to: live independently; stay healthy and recover quickly from illness; exercise

<sup>3</sup> This number was set as part of the 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement (LAA) before the credit crunch and recession. The Council will be reviewing this figure as part of subsequent refreshes of the agreement



maximum control over their own life and where appropriate the lives of their family members; participate as active and equal citizens, both economically and socially; have the best possible quality of life; retain maximum dignity and respect. These priorities contribute significantly to “narrowing the gap” and, to some considerable extent, “reducing health inequalities.

Our work will shift the balance of services away from heavy dependence on acute care to provide more and better preventative health, supported living and social care in the community.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Continue to exceed the Government guidance on concessionary fares for older and disabled people (we start at 9am, Govt guidance states 9:30am) These concessions are also available on our Park & Ride schemes
2. Expand our 3 successful dial a ride schemes for residents who cannot easily access scheduled bus routes
3. To commission an increased range of housing and supported living options for older people including older people with mental health problems, learning difficulties and physical and / or sensory impairment
4. More older people supported to live independently in a home of their choice, including older people with learning difficulties and dementia
5. Fewer inappropriate referrals to sheltered housing and residential care, fewer hospital admissions and delayed discharges
6. Increased range of community based support services for people with dementia
7. Develop ‘access to physical care and therapy’ protocol for people in mental health in-patient beds
8. Increase availability of prevention and healthy living options e.g. balance classes, falls prevention work
9. Merger of Community Team for Older People and Intake & Re-enablement teams to develop Intermediate Care Service
10. Consolidate and develop services which prevent admission to hospital and facilitate early discharge
11. Commission day service providers for new community resource centres with a focus on those with high physical care need and dementia
12. Increase choice and control through roll out of individual budgets

<b><i>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</i></b>	<b><i>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</i></b>
<i>922 Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets) per 100,000 population</i>	<i>Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets) per 100,000 population</i>

*An increase in the extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home*

*The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home*

## **6.6 Improving the life chances of disadvantaged children & young people**

This entails targeting effort and resources on those at most risk of under achievement and reducing the 'gap' between key groups and the wider population of children and young people. Good progress has been made during 2007-08 and 2008-09, and this will continue into 2009-10.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Increase attainment / achievement of key groups of Black and other Minority Ethnic Children and Young People by 50%
2. Increase attainment / achievement of Children in Care by 50%
3. Implement "Aim Higher for Disabled Children" and improve community and respite facilities
4. Provide a stronger focus on improving attainment / achievement in areas of deprivation using our Children's Centres to target young children at risk of under achievement
5. Engage Children and Young People, Parents and Carers in the development and design of services through implementing our participation strategy
6. Continue to develop and improve services to safeguard Children and Young People.

## **6.7 Improving School Buildings**

The Council has a proven track record in the delivery of new schools and substantial refurbishments. Our aim moving forward is to seek out resources to improve upon this record and provide the learning facilities that our Children and Young People deserve.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Complete review of secondary school provision and staff consultation on changes
2. Rebuild Writhlington School
3. Complete phase 2 build of Fosse Way School
4. Agree primary priorities and align capital grant to deliver these
5. Agree secondary priorities and align capital grant to deliver these
6. Promote early 'BSF' bid to the Government
7. Continue investment in Early Learning / Childcare and community facilities

To ensure this priority remains relevant within the context of the recession, possible actions include bringing forward some capital expenditure with a view to generating local employment and local confidence with investment in new schools.

<b>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</b>	<b>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</b>
<i>Attainment of the maximum score for the effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services</i>	<i>Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services</i>
<i>Increased services for disabled children</i>	<i>Services for disabled children</i>
<i>Less than 10% of looked after children with three or more placements during the year.</i>	<i>Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves</i>
<i>Increase Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups to 62%</i>	<i>Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups</i>
<i>Reduce the percentage of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17</i>	<i>First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17</i>
<i>Reduce the number of 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training to 3.7%</i>	<i>16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training</i>

## **6.8 Sustainable Growth**

Bath and North East Somerset lies within a growth area defined by government and articulated through the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. The Council wishes to contribute positively to the growth of the West of England whilst maintaining the distinctiveness of the places that make up the district. Bath and North East Somerset has been defining the unique added value that we can offer the sub region. The challenge is housing growth at a rate of more than three times historic provision within a constrained and designated built and natural environment. Economically the District is diverse but for each place economic diversification and sustainable growth is necessary.

The combination of employment diversification and housing provision has to address the infrastructure provision in order to reduce congestion, improve housing affordability and drive competitiveness. In addition, plans must take into account health improvement for the whole population and reducing health inequalities in particular. For growth to be truly sustainable the Council has committed to engage with communities and partners in regular dialogue to hear views before decisions are taken.

Over the next 3 years priority actions to deliver this improvement priority are:

1. Produce a Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan Document
2. Prepare Regeneration Delivery Plans for the urban areas that set out actions required to implement development and regeneration on key sites
3. Develop a sub regional Programme of Development which clarifies infrastructure requirements necessary to accommodate the housing growth
4. Complete a Business Growth and Employment Land Study that provides evidence about the current economy, identifies future land and premises requirements and identifies target growth sectors
5. Protect strategic employment sites and seek to allocate and deliver new employment space
6. Attract infrastructure funding and investment from developers, government and agencies that will enable and unlock growth (e.g. Growth Area funding)
7. Work with the Universities to maximise innovation and spin-off business opportunities to create new jobs
8. Collaboration with business support agencies, the business community and education providers to continue to provide business support to promote indigenous growth
9. Target key sectors (e.g. ICT and Creative Industries) through indigenous expansion and an Inward Investment Strategy (with sub regional partners)
10. Deliver a successful partnership with business groups through a City Centre Manager and Limited Company to deliver destination management improvements

*To ensure this priority remains relevant within the context of the recession, possible actions include promoting sustainable growth*

- *maintaining good awareness of strains in the local economy through dialogue with Business Support Partners plus specific research on likely local impact.*
- *Developing a referral link to those companies presenting themselves as having problems with Business rates to Business link who will offer support.*
- *As a partner on West at work co-ordinating intelligence on potential closures and redundancies and ensuring a co-ordinated inter-agency response. Part of this will be ensuring advice is on hand for employees that may be about to be made redundant*
- *Ensuring we get our growth plans and delivery arrangements in place to take advantage of opportunities when the recovery occurs.*
- *promoting business opportunities across the district*
- *providing advice to small businesses about how to cope with the credit crunch with our prime business support partner GWE Business West including raising awareness of the services and help available to companies experiencing difficulties.*

- *bringing forward some capital expenditure with a view to generating local employment and local confidence through investment in the public realm and new schools*

<b><i>Examples of what we will deliver over the next three years</i></b>	<b><i>As measured by performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement</i></b>
<i>A net increase of 1687<sup>4</sup> additional homes provided</i>	<i>Net additional homes provided</i>
<i>An increase in the supply of ready to develop housing sites to 94%</i>	<i>Supply of ready to develop housing sites</i>

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<sup>4</sup> This number was set as part of the 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement (LAA) before the credit crunch and recession. The Council will be reviewing this figure as part of subsequent refreshes of the agreement

## 7 Value for Money, Resources and Delivery

### ***Refresh 2009/10: Section 7 VfM, Resources and Delivery***

*The following sub-sections have been updated:*

- 1. Value for Money and Efficiency*
- 2. Financial Strategy*
- 3. Developing our workforce*
- 4. New Technology*

*Two new sections have been added*

- 1. Good Corporate Governance*
- 2. The Change Programme*

The Council's Corporate Plan relies on a robust and systematic approach to managing and using our resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

During the period of the Corporate Plan this will mean a significant step change to the way the Council works and how it is structured to ensure it is fit for the future.

This section explains in high level terms how the Council will do this

This will involve three high level themes –

- Sound and Strategic Financial Management;
- Strategic Commissioning and good Governance; and
- Effective management of natural resources, assets and people

The following sections detail how we will achieve these aims -

### **7.1 Value for Money and Efficiency**

The Council is assessed by the Audit Commission as already providing 'good' value for money in its key services by delivering relatively high performing and improving services while keeping its costs relatively low. Council Tax is also slightly below average for similar Councils.

The Council has also delivered £11 million of efficiency savings over the past 4 years and is planning for at least a further 3% efficiency improvement in each year of this plan totalling £9 million. The independent Audit Commission rates the Council as a 3 star (out of four) Authority which is improving well. This is being achieved in the context of the sixth lowest funding grant per head of population for unitary Councils. Our spending on services per head of population is in the lowest 25% of all Unitary Councils.

However, the Council is determined to improve its efficiency and value for money even more in the following ways:

- Better understanding its costs and drivers within the few high cost services it has, although in some instances higher costs may be related to local circumstances. In 2009/10 this approach will be developed through more detailed comparisons with neighbouring authorities.
- Developing a 4-5 year transformation programme to improve the quality and value of our services with a customer focus.
- Improving the effectiveness of medium term service & resource planning.
- Using one-off resources wherever possible to support efficiency and value for money gains in future years through 'invest to save' and 'invest to avoid' schemes.
- Improving our procurement and contract management arrangements working with neighbouring Local Authorities and regional improvement partnerships.

Effective partnership and joint working in both commissioning and service delivery including integrating our adults' and children's services with the Primary Care Trust to improve quality and value for money and over the period taking opportunities to share support services

- Building on our much improved project and programme management to manage projects on budget and on time.
- Continuing our review of schools to improve the learning environment and reduce surplus places.
- Significantly increasing the number of services achieving Charter Mark accreditation for excellence in customer services
- Ensuring that the Change Programme aligns with the efficiency and value for money agenda

## **7.2 Financial Strategy**

For 2009/10 the budget has been balanced with £2.8 million of immediate efficiency savings £2.5 million in increased fees and charges and £0.5 million of reductions in lower priority services within a net revenue budget of £118 million.

Going forward, the Council has developed 3 year Medium Term Service and Resource Plans which have identified many of the options to meet spending pressures in future. Further work is planned during 2009 to bridge the

remaining financial gaps, in particular to meet the challenges arising from expected increases in pensions contributions and the likely further squeeze on the growth in national public spending totals (and hence grants to local authorities) from 2011/12.

The Council's strategy to deal with these cost pressures is to:

- Use our approach to efficiency and value for money to continue to drive out efficiency savings of £3 - 4million per annum
- Continue to review fees and charges to ensure that costs are fully recovered. If our charges are out of line with other similar Councils or service providers we shall make appropriate adjustments. Clearly, this excludes services for which we cannot make charges by law or where government regulates fees and charges
- Continue to reprioritise resources from lower priority services to higher priority services
- Effective management use of any Council capital resources to lever in external funding to support corporate priorities wherever possible, working with partners as required.
- Keeping Council Tax rises under 4% for the 3 year period

The Council continually reviews financial risk and maintains a reserves strategy which over the 3 year plan period to 31 March 2012 maintains the level of risk-assessed general reserves at the current £10.5 million target. In addition the Council maintains an Exceptional Risk Reserve in respect of Spa Claims, Single Status and there is a proposed allocation for a Recession reserve in the 2009/10 budget.

Services are given a direction of travel in relation to future cost and performance. This direction is included in the Medium Term Service & Resource Plans and is determined by the indicators that the Council calls "squeeze, hold and drive". Implicit in all these is that all Services will investigate ways to improve productivity and those which are not squeezed in cost will need to drive up performance and productivity.

The Council's Service Planning process enables Services to focus on the changes needed to deliver the Council's Improvement Priorities within its financial constraints. It provides the means for Service Managers to work through with elected Members in the short and medium term the detailed implications for services, including implications on resources - workforce, technology and property as well as money.

### **7.3 Good Corporate Governance**

The Council has a strong governance framework in place as assessed through the recent CPA inspection and Use of Resources assessments.



Building on this the Council will look to support how it delivers its priorities through ensuring it has systems and processes which are fit for purpose and enable the right things to be done in the right way.

This strategy will look to support effective use and management of resources and will include strengthening our existing frameworks in the following areas:

- Demonstrating the principles of good governance detailed within our own Code of Corporate Governance
- Demonstrating a strong ethical framework and culture
- Embedding pro-active management of Risk and Opportunity
- Applying the principles and values of good governance to partnership working
- Ensuring that decision making processes are supported by sound and accurate information

#### ***7.4 Using our Assets More Effectively***

The Council owns considerable property assets worth at least £600 million. Many of these are used to deliver services directly to the public but others supplement service delivery by contributing to the revenue budget and/or capital programme. The proactive management of the Council's commercial estate, comprising mainly freehold ownerships in Bath, seeks to maximise total long term return to the Council to support service delivery across the area but in the context of ensuring the quality of the portfolio and the City itself is enhanced.

In addition, the Council aims to generate access to substantial capital resources over 5 to 15 years, to reinvest in the revitalisation of the area through the disposal and/or redevelopment of property assets and sites and by creating revenue headroom through income generation above inflation to fund prudential borrowing.

The Council, as part of its Change Programme, will be rationalising its current office accommodation by reducing the number of offices currently occupied from 12 to 4, effecting a 45% reduction in actual desk space used.

Increasing focus will be put on minimising the impact of climate change where the Council is building new facilities and otherwise adapting existing facilities to make them more energy efficient.

#### ***7.5 Working Effectively In Partnership***

The Council alone cannot address all the issues and priorities of the area. The new arrangements we have put in place for the area's Local Strategic Partnership put us in a good position to work even more effectively with our partners to address those issues. The key priorities of our major partners are strongly aligned with those of the Council.

The Council will also be working with the community and voluntary sectors to focus commissioning of services and improve the effectiveness of our relationships.

The Local Strategic Partnership will continue to set the overarching priorities and direction of travel for Bath & North East Somerset over the next 20 years through the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Community Strategy will be implemented through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Bath & North East Somerset - an agreement between the Council, its partners and central government, which is the performance framework for the Council working closely with its partners for 2008/09 – 2010/11. The LAA is important in that it reflects the key priorities for the area. This plan picks up the implications for the Council and the priorities of the LAA and sets the strategic framework for the delivery of the agreement by the Council.

By working at a sub-regional level, through the West of England Partnership, we are also better able to deliver the key priorities for the sub region - notably for sustainable growth, transport and housing - as contained in the Multi Area Agreement. The government increasingly encourages joint work at this level by promoting the agenda for core cities and allocating resources such as growth points funding at that level.

A wide range of partnerships that sit within the Local Strategic Partnership umbrella help the Council to deliver its objectives. It is recognised that the Council cannot work in isolation and needs to work with its partners, through established and well governed partnerships in order to provide better outcomes for the community it serves. Robust governance and performance management arrangements will ensure that the partnerships are delivering to their full potential.

We are working more closely with partner organisations at all levels to ensure better outcomes for the community. In particular the Council and the Primary Care Trust have an extensive partnership where many joint services are being developed.

## **7.6 The Change Programme**

*The Council has ambitious plans for the community and for the area and recognises that it needs to change to become the kind of organisation that is fit to deliver the Community Vision. As such it has set out a blueprint for what the future organisation will look like:*

- ***A common approach to public service***
- ***delivered through area and community based working***
- ***that has the right resources in the right place***
- ***to deliver customer excellence and value for money***
- ***and is recognised as community leader***

*The programme of projects that has been drawn up to deliver this blueprint is called the Change Programme. There are four key elements to the programme that will help us to deliver change. These are:*

- **Where we work** - such as reorganising Council offices and providing opportunities for flexible working through hot desking or working from home.
- **How we work** – such as putting a greater focus on neighbourhood working to bring our services closer to local residents and improving the culture of the organisation so that we work more effectively and are more focused on our customers.
- **Tools for the job** – such as improving technology and staff development
- **Better ways of doing things** – such as improving customer services through Customer Excellence reviews and Council Connect and working more effectively with our partners, particularly the local NHS.

### **7.6.1 Tools For the Job - Developing Our Workforce**

The Council's Human Resource strategy has successfully supported the delivery of the Corporate Plan over the last five years and we are now developing a workforce development strategy to ensure that the Council's workforce is aligned with service delivery needs and is 'fit for the future' to deliver its objectives and emerging priorities. Work has already started in several key services, notably Adults and Children's Services with the expectation that work will commence in other service areas in 2009-10. The strategy is a key building block which will build on existing good practices and introduce modern employment initiatives which reflect the changing demands of both customers and the workforce. It will provide the framework for the development of local, service based workforce plans. In its role as a community leader and thorough partnership working, the Council plans to work in collaboration with other local organisations to develop a consistent approach to identifying the workforce development needs of the local area and plans to address deficiencies and gaps.

### **7.6.2 Tools For the Job - New Technology**

The Council's transformation programme to delivery quality and value will depend on significant investment in new technologies and new ways of working. A business focussed Information Management Strategy supported by an IT investment Plan was approved in December 2008 and is to be implemented over the period of this plan and beyond. The aim of this strategy is to shape and evolve the delivery of information and services both within the Council and with its partners and to improve:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Partnership, Community and Area Working

- Decision Making and Service Delivery
- Value for Money

The aims of our strategy for information and technology include:

- Improving customer information and access to self-service facilities through the web.
- Supporting flexible working and local delivery of services.
- Maximising the value of existing systems, ensuring they are up-to-date and suitable for the needs of our customers
- Rationalising our systems and data collection to avoid duplication.
- Sharing systems and information securely across government and between partners.

### **7.6.3 Better Ways Of Doing Things - Customer Excellence and Lean Reviews**

'Lean' is a widely accepted approach to improve customer experience and eliminate waste. It seeks to improve operational performance in terms of cost, quality, delivery, and staff satisfaction by focusing on the customer and eliminating waste, variability and inflexibility.

A programme of lean reviews has been developed in support of the Transformation Programme's aims of providing excellent customer service and improving efficiency. The outcomes of a lean review will also help us to determine, for example:

- which services are best delivered through Council Connect;
- where it is appropriate for flexible working to be introduced leading to the completion of the new accommodation project ;and
- how we can best organise our back office to support Council and PCT Integration.

At a programme level the intended outputs and outcomes include:

- More convenient service hours to improve customer access
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Up to a 45% saving in desk space
- Improved energy efficiency in Council office accommodation
- Reduced carbon emissions

## 8 Glossary of Terms

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BSF	Building Schools for the Future – a government investment programme for improving school buildings
CIVITAS	City, Vitality, Sustainability – a European programme for sustainable urban transport.
Core Strategy	A Development Plan document setting out the long term (10+ years) spatial vision and strategy for the district. Includes the broad locations for housing, business, retail, leisure transport and other development needs.
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
LAA	Local Area Agreements – which provide a single framework through which government departments can allocate additional funding to local authorities and their partners. Their aim is to reduce and simplify funding streams and give more scope for local authorities to concentrate on local priorities.
Local Strategic Partnership	Partnership bringing together local people and agencies to work together more effectively and to set out a vision to help improve the delivery of local services through better planning. It involves representatives from public, private, business, community and voluntary sectors. The LSP will oversee the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the area.
Regional Spatial Strategy	Long term regional planning framework for housing and economy which sets the overall framework which Local Development Frameworks should conform to.
S106	Section 106 agreements – also known as Planning Gain. An agreement that is negotiated between the developer and the local planning authority, usually as a result of a planning application. Intended to make a development acceptable, which would otherwise be unacceptable in Planning terms.
Sustainable Community Strategy	An overarching plan for the area driven by the Local Strategic Partnership designed to improve the delivery and quality of services in local authority areas. The strategy should aim to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area and a vision for the future.
Voicebox	Resident’s survey undertaken by Bath & North East Somerset Council.
West of England Partnership	Sub Regional Partnership of the following four unitary authorities; Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire and a range of social, economic and environmental partners.