



NOTICE OF MEETING

**Environment, Culture and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Thursday 18 December 2008, 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell**

To: ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

Councillor Brunel-Walker (Chairman), Councillor Finnie (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Beadsley, Browne, Burrows, Finch, Mrs Fleming, Leake, Mrs McCracken, McLean, Mrs Pile and Mrs Ryder

cc: Substitute Members of the Committee

Councillors Mrs Barnard, Mrs Beadsley, Packham, Mrs Shillcock, Simonds, Turrell and Worrall

ALISON SANDERS
Director of Corporate Services

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Panel
Thursday 18 December 2008, 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House,
Bracknell**

AGENDA

Page No

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 22 September 2008.

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3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest and the nature of that interest, including the existence and nature of the party whip, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

To consider the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance as reported in the Performance Monitoring Report for the second quarter of 2008/09 relating to the Environment, Culture and Communities Department.

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Please bring the previously circulated Performance Monitoring Report to the meeting. Copies are available on request and attached to this agenda if viewed online.

BUDGET CONSULTATION

6. 2009/10 DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS

To consider key themes and priorities for the Environment, Culture and Communities Department as outlined in the Council's Draft Budget Proposals for 2009/10.

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OVERVIEW AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

7. THE BENEFITS SERVICE

To receive a report and presentation in respect of the Benefits Service. 153 - 186

8. A CLEAN SWEEP

To note the report of the review of street cleaning undertaken by a working group of this Panel. This report has been adopted by the panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission since the last panel meeting. 187 - 216

9. SUPPORTING PEOPLE WORKING GROUP

To consider an update report from the Supporting People Working Group. 217 - 224

10. UPDATE ON WORKING GROUPS

To receive a written update in respect of the Panel's working groups. 225 - 226

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

To note the report of the Assistant Chief Executive. 227 - 238

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

12. ATTENDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS

To consider a report relating to the attendance of Executive Members at overview and scrutiny meetings. 239 - 240

HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

13. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

To consider forthcoming items on the Executive Forward Plan relating to environment, culture and communities. 241 - 246

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**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND
COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
PANEL
22 SEPTEMBER 2008
7.30 - 9.08 PM**



Present:

Councillors Finnie (Vice-Chairman), Beadsley, Burrows, Mrs Fleming, Mrs McCracken, McLean, Mrs Pile and Mrs Ryder

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Brunel-Walker and Leake

Also Present:

Councillor Mrs Ballin, Executive Member for Planning and Transportation

Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Leisure, Corporate Services and Public Protection

Vincent Paliczka, Director of Environment, Culture and Communities

Simon Birch, Chief Officer: Planning and Transport

Mark Devon, Chief Officer: Leisure and Culture

Steve Loudoun, Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection

Simon Hendey, Chief Officer: Housing

Richard Beaumont, Head of Performance and Scrutiny

Colin Griffin, Community and Environmental Development Team Leader

Vice-Chairman in the Chair

16. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 23 June 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

Minute 6, Representative from the Tenants and Leaseholders Association

The Tenants and Leaseholders Association had been written to and advised that no external representatives would be co-opted onto the Panel. This decision and its reasons were accepted.

Minute 9, Bracknell Forest Homes

Bracknell Forest Homes had been asked about its protocol for complaints and concerns and, in response, advised officers that there was a protocol in place and a free phone line for residents to call if there were any issues. It was not felt necessary, at this time, to review protocols that were already in place.

Minute 9, Punctuality Improvement Agreement with First Buses

The Panel was advised that the agreement was now with First Buses to sign and that actions in the agreement were now being implemented.

Minute 9, Catering Contract

The Panel was advised that negotiations were ongoing for a catering contract covering the whole of the Authority. Officers would report back to a future meeting.

Minute 10, Housing Strategy Working Group

The Panel noted that the Housing Strategy Working Group had met on two occasions since its last meeting and a third was planned. Officer support was in place.

17. **Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

Councillor Mrs McCracken declared a personal interest as the spouse of the Executive Member for Leisure, Corporate Services and Public Protection.

There were no other declarations of interest made at the meeting nor indications that Members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

18. **Departmental Overview and Performance**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Communities gave a presentation in respect of departmental performance with reference to the Performance Monitoring Report (PMR) for the 1st Quarter 2008/09. The presentation outlined the Department's finances as at July 2008, highlighted variances on revenue and identified capital projects that would be carried forward. Staffing issues, changes to the Department following the Council restructure, key highlights and a forward look were also included. Members were advised that a final version of the report would be circulated following the meeting.

The Panel was advised that 17.95% of the Capital Budget had been spent and the anticipated year end spend was 99.47% with 0.53% being carried forward. Officers were being encouraged to look forward throughout the year so it was anticipated that all monies would be spent by the end of the year.

The Panel noted that because of the retirement of the Shire Horses, there was a £15,000 saving on the budget and land charges income had fallen because a number of people were carrying out their own searches, so there was a shortfall of £120,000. Furthermore, targets for Smart Connect had not been achieved, mainly because they had been set to an aspirational rather than realistic level, so there was a budget pressure of £100,000. There was a positive variance on Planning Delivery Grant and the Council had received £342,000 more than expected. Consequently, the revenue budget was forecast to be £107,000 in credit.

The Panel was advised that there was a potential budget pressure arising from Downshire Golf Course because due to adverse weather, there had been fewer visitors than predicted over the summer. Two positive issues providing cost savings were emerging from concessionary fares and the waste PFI and these would be reported on at the next meeting.

The Panel was advised that the staff vacancy rate was 8.91% and that it was not appropriate to compare this to previous quarters, at this stage, as the Department headcount had increased significantly following the re-organisation in April 2008. In

addition, the functions within each division were different. Sickness absences were being actively managed.

Key features of the last quarter featured the successful establishment of the new department, the 100% completion of staff appraisals by the due date, approval of the recommendation not to outsource leisure facilities, extensive work undertaken on trees, the first public health report being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the award of a grant worth £659,000 from the Government in recognition of performance in completing the core strategy and work relating to housing provision. A further highlight was the decision not to proceed with the government initiative of free swimming for over 60s and 16s and under. This decision had been discussed in depth with the Executive Member, and, although it was considered a positive initiative, the Council had a very large number of people of these ages swimming already, and the grant was only a third of what was required to cover the costs of running such an initiative. Consequently, had the Council participated, the additional costs would have had to be covered by the Council, and, therefore, the public.

The following points arose from Members' questions and comments:

- Due to economic pressures it was noted that housing delivery would be reduced, and this could prevent the Council from achieving a grant award from the HPDG. Members were advised that the target had been reduced in order to be more realistic in the current financial climate. Housing Strategy Initiatives had been delayed but officers were now looking at more creative approaches and how they could help support residents. The new Housing Strategy had been deferred to the Executive meeting in January.
- The Licensing and Safety Committee would be considering comments from the taxi trade at its next meeting following concerns raised about increasing taxi fares.
- The Vice-Chairman congratulated the Department on its successful restructuring and control of expenditure.
- The Director would circulate the estimated date of when the permanent community centre on Jennetts Park would be built.
- The street lights on Mill Lane and Bagshot Road had not worked for the whole of the summer raising concerns from residents. Members were assured that work would commence on Mill Lane in the next few weeks and Bagshot Road shortly after. The delay had been caused because it was more complicated than just changing the bulbs and the Council had to go out to tender for the works involved. The Director agreed to confirm the dates for this.
- Speed assessments on 'B' class roads were technical and Members would be consulted on any proposed changes, with the respective Ward Members consulted first.
- The compulsory purchase order had been agreed for the Town Centre. The Chief Executive would be meeting with BRP shortly to determine what impact, if any, the current credit crunch had on the Bracknell town centre development and its phasing.
- The figures on complaints were incorrect; there had been three stage 1 complaints in relation to planning processes, two stage 2 complaints and one ongoing stage 3 complaint.
- The Chief Officer: Leisure and Culture undertook to provide a note on the completion of the handover of Church Hill House.

19. **Climate Change and the Nottingham Declaration**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Communities introduced the report, pointing to the significant new legal requirements, and the very good progress being made by the Council. The Community and Environmental Development Team Leader gave a presentation on the work being carried out by the Council on Climate Change and the Nottingham Declaration. The report updated Members on progress to date and outlined the case for action resulting from the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme.

The Panel was reminded that the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in February 2007 and that the draft Climate Change Action Plan went to public consultation and finished on 12 September 2008. Comments arising from this had been positive and no changes were required to the proposed actions.

The Panel was advised of the key drivers for climate change and carbon management in local authorities. All councils had national indicators directly allocated to climate change and carbon management and these would become increasingly important under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) inspection regime

The Panel noted that any changes as result of the public consultation would be made and the Executive would be asked to approve this at its next meeting in October. It was noted that the Action Plan did not include any specific CO₂ reduction targets but included the Council's participation in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (LACMP).

The Panel noted that the Council would be required, from 1 October 2008, to display Energy Certificates (DECs) at 54 of its buildings. The Energy Manager was now trained and able to issue these but the first round had been carried out externally. Examples of the DECs, as well as the slides, would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The following points arose from Members' questions and comments:

- The Council would implement a number of projects to reduce emissions, such as provision of motorised pool covers at leisure centres, SAFED driver training, car share schemes, bike schemes, systems link energy management software and implementing a desktop printing strategy. Furthermore, the working group, consisting of representative around the Council, was looking at easy, simple and low cost ways of reducing emissions within departments.
- The Council was committed to taking part in the LACMP as there were financial incentives and rewards that could be gained from achieving positive results.
- The Environment Agency administered and monitored the programme on behalf of DEFRA.
- The Council had carried out energy audits of specific buildings. Recommendations had arisen from these reports which had not yet been implemented but were included in the action plan.

20. **Bracknell Forest Borough Local Development Framework**

The Panel received a report on progress being made by the Council with the Local Development Framework. Members noted that the Core Strategy had been very

successful and that a sixth Local Development Scheme (LDS) had been reported to the Executive on 18 September 2008 with a recommendation that it be accepted for submission to and approval by the Government Office for the South East.

The Committee noted that several documents were required to be submitted with the LDS, split between Development Plan documents and Supplementary Planning Documents and the report detailed progress in completing these. Members were advised that the preparation of the LDS and the necessary documents that resulted from this had been subject to examination by the Development Framework Steering Group prior to consideration by the Executive. Members were pleased to note that the Government Office for the South East had been advised of the emerging content of the LSD and had, so far, raised no objection.

The Chief Officer: Planning & Transportation undertook to provide an update on the Supplementary Planning Document.

21. Working Group Report on Road Traffic Casualties

The Panel noted that on 17 July 2008 the Overview and Scrutiny Commission had received the formal response from the Executive Member for Planning and Transportation to the report from the Working Group. Members were thanked for their work and confirmed its agreement that the Working Group be disbanded.

22. Working Group Updates

The Panel noted the updates from the Waste, Street Cleansing/Street Scene, Road Traffic Casualties and Housing Strategy Working Groups. Members noted that the final report of the Street Cleaning Working Group had been completed and this would be circulated to Members in due course.

23. Overview and Scrutiny Quarterly Progress Report

The Panel noted a report outlining the activities of all of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Commission.

The Panel asked about the status of the government's recent White Paper and was advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission was drafting a response to the consultation, which would be submitted by the end of October 2008.

Having questioned the status of the Supplementary Planning Document, Members would receive an update at a future meeting of the Panel.

24. Executive Forward Plan

The Panel noted items on the Executive Forward Plan relating to the Environment, Cultures and Communities Department. The Chief Officer: Planning and Transport undertook to clarify the purpose of the item in relation to the Refuse and Recycling.

CHAIRMAN

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Performance Monitoring Report

for

Environment, Culture & Communities

**Second Quarter 2008/09
July-September 2008**

Portfolio holders: Councillor Mrs Mary Ballin
Councillor Dale Birch
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes
Councillor Alan Kendall
Councillor Iain McCracken
Director: Vincent Paliczka

Section One: Executive Summary

The range and quality of services delivered by the department to the community remains significant and although the report attempts to describe what these are, it remains difficult to do justice to the work and the impact it makes. For example, the Director undertook two 'back to the floor' sessions in the quarter with Environmental Health and Forestcare. As ever, these usually reveal subtle but important elements of the services. For example, of the 250,000 calls taken by Forestcare each year, individuals can generate almost 2,000 calls perhaps just for a short chat. An initial query about value is soon dispelled by reflecting that talking to that vulnerable adult in their own home, who may simply be a little lonely, is not only better for them but saving many thousands in a residential care home package. Value indeed

The holistic approach the Council takes to improving and protecting the health of the community is amply described through the Borough's Public Health Report. This report details how the PCT, Council and other agencies work together to improve health and was lead by Environmental Health. The public health agenda is promoted through the Public Health Working Group which is currently chaired by Dr Angel a Snowling of the PCT, again demonstrating the strong partnership approach and the commitment to ensure that the health agenda for partners does not return to the more outdated notion of responding only to ill health or social care needs.

Another highlight to bring Members' attention to is the high performance of the Benefits Section which has undertaken work in preparation for a new inspection regime that is being introduced. This new regime is, as all inspections are, much tougher than previous and we are not anticipating retaining our 4-star status. Other developments in housing are progressing extremely well with many new ideas about how to improve our housing service being developed and implemented.

The community's practical response to climate change issues continues to impress and is well evidenced by the improvement in recycling rates and the reduction of waste going to landfill. The Council will make it even easier for residents to recycle when the 'blue bin' scheme becomes fully operational before Christmas.

There are capacity issues emerging within the Department relating to the huge demand from government related inspections and initiatives. The significance of this for the Department is that because we are focussed on public service delivery that is where we target our resources and we simply do not have support in the Department to carry out these arduous tasks. The Chief Officer: Performance and Resources is trying to quantify this pressure and DMT will consider a response in due course.

Moving to the exact opposite of the previous paragraph, it is becoming almost commonplace that we win an award in Britain in Bloom every year. Congratulations are extended to the Landscape Team for yet another success but of course more importantly for the fantastic displays of flowers in the town centre and surrounds. The contribution of the community to this success is also welcomed and a well attended awards evening was testament to all their efforts.

Section Two: Progress against Service Plan

Annex C provides details of performance against relevant National Indicators this quarter, where data is available. It is anticipated that increasing amounts of useable data will become available in future quarters as the new indicator set becomes established in practice. This will enable future performance monitoring reports to include better analysis of historical trends and progress towards performance targets.

The Environment, Culture & Communities Service Plan contains 68 detailed actions to be completed in support of the ten Medium-Term Objectives for 2008/09. Annex C also provides information on progress against each of these detailed actions; overall 59 actions are anticipated to be achieved or already have been achieved (✓), while three are not expected to be completed by the end of the year (✗). The three actions that are causing concern (✗) are:

Ref	Action	Progress
1.3.2	Prepare feasibility study to set out cost parameters and options for "park and ride" scheme.	Staff shortages in Transport Management continue to delay progress on this objective and the year-end target now looks at risk.
3.6.2	Purchase and implement an IT system for Choice-Based Lettings and strategic housing.	The IT solutions continue to be investigated with system demos taking place in October/November. The business will be holding customer focus groups to aid formation of the business requirements that the IT solution will need to support. This policy and operational documentation is taking longer than expected and the Go Live date for the new IT system has been moved by the Choice Based Lettings Project Board to June 2009. The 31 March 2009 target, therefore, will not be met.
10.1.3	Deliver housing in numbers and quality as required by Government to increase the Council Tax base.	The housing market has continued to deteriorate during Quarter 2, and meeting the increase in numbers desired by the end of March looks unlikely.

Annex C also provides an update on the operational risks identified in the Service Plan. There are no significant changes to the risks to our objectives this quarter. However, failure to recruit a Head of Spatial Policy the second time advertised, and the resignation of our remaining Area Manager in Landscape does slightly increase the risk that we may not be able to deliver, as well as giving us opportunities to look at managing these services in a different way.

Section Three: Resources

Staffing

Overall, the number of vacancies has increased by 11 compared to the last quarter. The increase has been most noticeable in Leisure, which has increased from 32 to 46 and Environment & Public Protection which has increased from 8 to 11 (mostly in the professional areas of Environmental Health and Trading Standards). The vacancy rate has increased from last quarter (8.91%)

The annual figure is not a true reflection of the department due to the restructure with effect from 1 April 2008.

Staff Turnover

There were 27 leavers during this quarter which is the same as last quarter. Of these leavers, 1 was as a result of a dismissal, 1 as a result of the end of a fixed term contract, 2 employees reached the end of their Modern Apprenticeships and the remaining 23 resigned.

With it being the summer period, recruitment was moderately quiet but appointments were made to the following key posts: Lily Hill Park Manager, Senior Engineer and Environmental Health Officer.

Sickness

There were 1,020 days' sickness during the quarter. 400 of these days were attributable to 12 employees on long term sickness. Of these employees: 6 are now back at work, 1 has been dismissed as a result of sickness absence and the 5 remaining cases are being managed through occupational health and performance improvement procedures.

The total number of days this quarter has increased since last quarter, but the short term absence is similar:

Total sickness: 1,020 days compared to 900 days
Long term sickness: 400 days compared to 288 days
Short term sickness: 620 days compared to 612 days

Please see Annex A for more detailed information.

Budget

See Annex B for more detailed information.

Complaints

Stage	No. rec'd Q2	Nature of complaints (bulleted list)	Action taken / lessons learned (bulleted list)
New Stage 2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaint re tall, ugly, messy, dangerous trees on boundary of property. 2. Alleged maladministration causing injustice. Re. planning application 3&4. Maladministration on injustice of planning application 5. Objection to Planning Application 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Satisfied that the Council has acted reasonably and take appropriate action. Do not intend to take any further action . Suggest proceed to stage 3 – still ongoing. 2. Letter sent and concluded. 3&4. Various correspondence and meetings to try and resolve issues on both complaints 5. Complainant unhappy with response.
New Stage 3	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regarding the building of house too close to Complainant at a new housing development 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Various correspondence and meetings to try and resolve issues
New Stage 4	Nil		
Ombudsman	Nil		

Internal audit assurances

(Where internal audit carried out with limited or no assurance)

Service area	Issues with limited or no assurance and remedial action to be taken

No internal audits resulted in limited or no assurance opinions during the quarter.

Section Four: Forward Look

Environment & Public Protection

Environmental Health

The Council will launch its own 'Scores on the Doors Scheme' as part of a national initiative to help provide customers with more information and to help maintain standards in food businesses. The scheme picks up the results of the last programmed inspection. This information then feeds into a national scoring system which is accessible via the web. Businesses are also able to promote their rating on the premises if they wish.

Feedback is expected from DEFRA on the draft Annual Air Quality report for the Borough. The final document will be reported to the Licensing and Safety Committee but it is not expected that it will raise any new significant local issues.

Work is expected to commence on commissioning a survey of the condition of the local housing stock. There is a requirement to review the stock condition regularly but the mythology options have changed enabling such information to be obtained much more easily and cheaply than in years past. Taking information from a number of sources it should be possible to provide what is required largely as a desk top exercise. The results will inform our emerging Housing Strategy which is scheduled to be adopted in 2009.

With the key posts now filled more time can now be given to dealing with the issues to be addressed as part of the Contaminated Land Strategy. The focus for the remaining year will be to gain sufficient detailed information to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary on both the high priority sites and those yet to be prioritised.

As part of the departmental 'Cleaner Borough' initiative, when inspecting premises more focus is to be given to checking their disposal arrangements. Some of the visits will be combined with other checks in relation to manual handling/safe storage and movement of goods. There will also be more enforcement activity in relation to fly tipping. CCTV surveillance equipment is now available. Whilst the level of fly tipping in the Borough is low, there are instances where there is a problem being caused by both residents and businesses alike.

In accordance with the service objective to facilitate the delivery of health and safety through promotional events, a workshop is being planned with Bracknell and Wokingham College to focus on hand dermatitis in the hairdressing industry.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Following a successful joint training exercise the Town Centre evacuation plan now requires finalisation and the taking on of learning. It has been a difficult process trying to engage and consult with Town Centre businesses and the intention is to use the help of the PCSOs in the process to engage with the local businesses and hand deliver the relevant evacuation zoning map.

The E-learning package is still to be completed and it is hoped that more progress will be possible in the next quarter. A number of exercises/seminars are also scheduled for the period. Follow up work should also be completed in respect of the Pitt review recommendations (in response to the summer floods) in time to help inform next years Service Plans.

Whilst progress has been made in updating the business continuity plans a business continuity planning group is now in place to progress this. The corporate plan cannot be reviewed until such time as departmental plans have been completed. In addition the crisis response protocol requires sign up and commitment by both Adult and Children's social care teams. Currently there is a difference between teams as to how this can be supported. A meeting has been arranged in November with the relevant Chief Officers when it is anticipated that this will be resolved, although some training requirements are likely to arise.

Highways

Works on site will begin shortly to renew the highway lighting systems along Mill Lane and Bagshot Road. Work to strengthen the underpasses beneath Bagshot Road will take place in the New Year.

The resignations of two essential members of the Highway Asset Management Group will inevitably have a negative effect on the team's ability to deliver the level of service achieved to date. There is an industry-wide (and local) shortage of suitably qualified, experienced highway engineers which makes recruitment of new staff members challenging.

Licensing

The Section will hopes to recruit to the vacant licensing officer post. The post has been empty since 1 October 2008 and this severely impacts upon the team's ability to deliver both proactive and reactive work. The period leading up to Christmas is normally a busy one for pubs, clubs and taxis and therefore incurs additional work for the section in terms of applications for licences, enforcement and responding to complaints from users of the services or residents affected by the increased activity.

An appeal on the review of the licence held by Shikaras nightclub, now trading as Olé Tapas was due to take place in October. This has now been withdrawn by the proprietor so the three month suspension issued by the Licensing Panel came into effect on 5 October.

Following the recent establishment of the Bracknell Licensed Taxi Forum to represent the interests of Hackney Carriage Owners it is hoped that officers will have access to a representative body of this important local trade. One of the issue they have raised is their desire to introduce a limit on the number of Hackney Carriage Licences issued within Bracknell Forest.

Operational Support

A new system to support the Street Cleansing NI195 is being planned within the team for the next quarter. It is hoped the new system will make this task part of the day to day operation, rather than requiring intense support at specific times of the year. A programme of cross training is also in place for the next quarter to offer a more robust support function.

Work is ongoing to set up SLAs with Team Managers to ensure across the board cover and support for the officers. A training session has also been arranged with the Emergency Planning service to enable the Operational Support team to provide assistance in the event of an emergency.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards again have a hard to fill vacancy. The recruitment process is expected to take a number of months but the prospect of attracting even qualified officers is remote. There is a period of work planned in relation to under age sales, in particular around the areas of alcohol, tobacco and knives. This will involve at least two officers in a programme of 10 days of test purchasing with children. A particular focus will be upon tobacco following a grant from the Department of Health to target this issue as part of the Public Health Agenda. The grant was applied for by Trading Standards South East Ltd (TSSEL), a limited company set up to support regional working across the South East and of which Bracknell Forest is a founder member.

A number of sampling exercises are planned for the next quarter to ensure that food sold within the Borough meets minimum quality standards. These will be looking at:

Value Foods - is there is a significant nutritional variation from premium products and does this have implications for Public Health?

Smoothies - are they as healthy as they are perceived?

Omega 3 Foods – do they contain Omega 3 and is its presence significant to the claims being made?

Salt in Restaurant Meals - are the levels high enough to cause concern for Public Health?

The Council has agreed to act as a pilot Authority for a new arrangement known as "Primary Authority" under a new Act passed this year. This new 'duty' which comes into force in April 2009 will impact predominately upon Trading Standards and Environmental Health Services and requires the Council to have a detailed working relationship with our major companies such as Waitrose, Panasonic, Dell and Hewlett Packard in relation to compliance with the relevant legislation. Trading Standards and Environmental Health will be working with Waitrose over the next six months to pilot this arrangement before full implementation in April 2009. It is expected that this new duty will require a significant increase in the resource that both services put into the area of business support. Where that resource might come from is not known.

The Trading Standards Institute runs a Consumer Awareness Campaign annually in November. This year it is looking at unsafe, counterfeit Christmas presents. It is expected that unsafe children's scooters seized by officers will feature in the local contribution to the campaign.

Cemetery & Crematorium

With the change of session there will be a range of landscaping activity in preparation for winter. In addition minor works will be effected to enlarge the Chapel hatch to facilitate larger coffins reflecting the change in demand and styles now in use.

Waste and Street Cleansing

Working as part of the Cleaner Borough initiative has made it become clear that the information on the location, condition and usage of our litter bins needs to be improved. A number of the bins are known to need replacement and using some one-off funding the intention is to target those in the worst condition/highest profile areas. The opportunity will also be taken to improve the signage and to promote the reporting of any problems direct to the contractor; a suggestion that came out of the Street Cleansing Working Group discussions.

In addition the programme to refurbish recycling sites will continue and will include new public information signage and larger litter bins. Whilst the recycling bins are no longer owned by the Council we do have the responsibility for the site and its cleansing. Following consultation we also hope to be able to find a location for a glass recycling site in Ascot, the only area of the Borough without a site. A new recycling site will be installed in Kelvin Gate (Met Office development) for glass and charity banks. This will bring the total of recycling sites in the Borough to 40.

A local foil recycling facility is being relocated at the Depot and should become fully operational. The feasibility for establishing a 'community repaint' scheme, scrap store, furniture refurbishment, and other small recycling initiatives is to be investigated working with Bracknell Day Centre "Green Machine" and the new "Headstart" project in The Broadway.

By Christmas it is expected that the commissioning of the Material Recycling Facility at Smallmead would be complete and the collection of mixed dry recyclables using blue bins will be implemented. No new green boxes will be issued to new residents but existing residents can continue to use their boxes. Surplus boxes will not be collected from residents but we are looking to make arrangements if we can, to collect any unwanted ones at Longshot Lane for reuse.

It is hoped that after two years hard work an audit of the schools waste will show good results. There is also to be a pre-Christmas food waste minimisation promotion and a further sale of green cones in November.

Housing

Homelessness Bed and Breakfast Reduction Plan

Executive will be asked to consider a policy change to support homeless households into the private rented sector as well as commissioning the procurement of existing properties by RSLs at their meeting on the 21st October.

Officers will be accelerating the Councils leasing scheme to provide more temporary accommodation for homeless households. The scheme will be advertised in Town and Country once again and promoted to existing contacts.

Officers will be meeting with Citizens advice bureau to discuss a coordinated response to the escalating debt issues and residents concerns over their homes.

Choice Based Letting

Over the next quarter the member officer steering group will consider the way in which the scheme will prioritise applicants , how properties will be advertised and how the bidding process will work. In tandem consultation responses will be gathered from the general contact with customers and in addition focus groups will take place to test the approach discussed by the steering group.

Housing Strategy

The rapidly changing market conditions have required the draft housing strategy to be reconsidered. In particular attention on access to home ownership is required. The Overview and Scrutiny working party will meet again in the quarter to consider proposed responses to the new demands evidenced in the housing market.

Forest Care

Forest care will take on additional work with Windsor HA lifeline monitoring sheltered and mobile response service, and Wokingham District Council mobile response service and carers emergency card scheme during the next quarter.

The draft business plan will be prepared by the end of November. The service will begin the work towards Telecare services accreditation as the annual inspection will take place February 2009.

Benefits

Benefits 4 You

The Benefits Service will be leading on a Corporate outreach service in the town centre provisionally booked for the 27th November. The purpose is to promote benefit take up but also provide housing advice and other related advice and assistance.

Benchmarking/Service Improvement

The Benefits Service has taken part in a benchmarking exercise run by the Chartered institute of Finance (CIPFA) as well as a mock inspection based on the new Audit commission Key lines of enquiry for the benefit service. Both exercises will lead to an improvement plan that will be delivered over the next quarter.

Leisure & Culture

Leisure

Facilities such as Bracknell Leisure Centre will move in to their busy period. Planning for the major Christmas maintenance facility closures will step up a gear. Within the Young People in Sport Scheme the TAG Rugby Festival will take place on 22nd October and at Edgbarrow Sports Centre an annual Fireworks Spectacular will take place on Sunday, 2nd November.

Libraries

The Library Service and Learn Direct are looking to increase sessions in Bracknell Library. The Library Service will introduce a pilot to start loaning MP3 spoken word discs and games in Wii and Xbox to monitor take up and help increase use of libraries.

Culture

Parks & Countryside Service

Grants

Volunteers from the local community will be working alongside contractors at Scott's Hill and Berrybank Copse, improving the sites through Breathing Spaces lottery monies.

Rights of Way

A Diversion Order Notice for Bracknell Footpath 15 is now complete and will be advertised from 16 October in the local paper, on site and at the Council offices at Time Square. If no objections are received by mid November, confirmation will be made by Bracknell Forest Council. Should objections be raised, the Order needs to be sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine.

Quotations have been sought for continued improvements to the byway and bridleway network to the north of the borough.

Parks Photo Competition

Winning images from the local parks photo competition will be on display at an extended exhibition on show at South Hill Park from 29 November 2008 until 25 January 2009. Many of these images are being used to promote the borough's open spaces in the new set of Parks & Countryside leaflets and on the Council's website.

Interpretation and Marketing

The new overarching parks and countryside leaflet is near completion and is due to be distributed borough wide by Christmas. This is one of the first leaflets to be produced as part of the Parks & Countryside Service's new look 'Discover' leaflet range. A new garden wildlife leaflet will also be distributed this autumn, providing tips on gardening for wildlife a garden wildlife survey section.

Information boards and signage for Wildmoor Heath are due to be installed by early November. This completes work regarding the Wildmoor Heath signage strategy using a Natural England Access Management Grant of £2,250.

Woodland Management

Following rhododendron management undertaken last winter, native shrubs are to be planted to enhance biodiversity and landscape value at Nine Mile Ride and Chaucer Woods.

Landscape Services

Grounds Maintenance

Autumn and Winter shrub pruning programme and general maintenance of shrubberies, trees and borders will be continuing.

Tree Service

Review of Tree Preservation Orders and Baseline Tree Survey will continue with cross service work being carried out in conjunction with the Forestry Commission to develop a tree and woodland strategy, include the bidding to the Forestry Commission for Woodland Grant Scheme funding.

Community & Environmental Development

Climate Change Action Plan

Subject to Executive approval in October 2008, the Climate Change Action Plan will be integrated into departmental service plans to commence implementation in 2009/10.

LA Carbon Management Programme

Priorities for the coming quarter are to quantify and prioritise identified carbon saving opportunities for the project team and produce a draft carbon management plan for Executive approval by March 2009.

Community Arts Development

Local Celebrations and Community Cohesion

Age to Age

A reminiscence, storytelling and song making project with St Margaret Clitherow, Birch Hill pupils and elderly residents of Ladybank will culminate with a shared performance on 11 November.

Northern Parishes Arts Week (October 2008)

The Northern Parishes Arts Week will be taking place from 27 October with events such as children's comedy at Brownlow and Carnation Hall; poetry at the libraries; and lantern making workshops for schools, community groups and youth groups across the northern parishes all due to take place. A cross generation choir project is also running in Warfield.

Networking

An artists networking event will be taking place at Reading Town Hall on 19 November with Sculptor Richard Wentworth and Bracknell based writer Steve Rock making a short presentation. The event is funded by Arts Council England and organised by Berkshire Arts: Local Authority Partners, of which Bracknell Forest Council is part.

Arts Strategy

The draft strategy is due to be circulated around the Arts Strategy Steering Group in October.

Performance & Resources

Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) team will work with Corporate HR to prepare to introduce Workforce Planning. Three of the team will work in the capacity of Assessors at the Management Development Centres. Workshops will be delivered in conjunction with Corporate Learning and Development including Safer Recruitment and Investigation Officer skills. All of this training has a high involvement from ECC HR as the aim is that the needs of ECC Managers will be met by making the sessions both practical and interactive.

More work will be undertaken in relation to aligning the HR support to Housing and Libraries with the rest of the department.

There are a number of complicated cases which we will progress.

The team will work with Senior Managers on recruitment in the challenging areas of professional staff in Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Engineers and Planners.

We will investigate where the department uses contractors and temporary staff within the department to inform HR, IT, Facilities and Finance who we have in the workplace and what they are costing us.

Business Systems

We will upgrade the IT system used by highway management, transport development, landscape and trees this quarter to meet the requirements of ETON5 (Electronic transfer of streetwork notices) under the Traffic Management Act 2004. We will work with Corporate IT to install the IT infrastructure for the roll out of mobile working to Environmental Health and Trading Standards. We will also issue the tender for our new supporting people IT system.

We plan to resolve the problems currently being experienced by the IDOX electronic document management system, that supports development control this quarter.

In October we will organise a technical workshop for the Corporate GIS and begin work on procuring a separate GIS test system. We will also start a review of the GIS Live browsers used by officers to look at GIS data as well as the data available on Local View, the 'Where you live' tool on the public website.

We plan to improve the library web pages to make them more attractive and informative following visits to the libraries this quarter. We will also complete the work on the Housing web pages.

Finance

The Finance Section will continue with their day to day duties for the current financial year alongside preparation of the revenue and capital budgets for 2009/10 which includes a project on the positively charged agenda on fees and charges.

Administration

The Document Imaging Team now receive applications electronically direct from the planning portal. This is a new method of receiving and preparing documents for indexing and during this quarter the team will get up to speed with the work. Once up to speed we will widen our workload to include extra Building Control work.

Community Cohesion & Engagement

In the next quarter the Chief Officer will work with managers to start preparing the 2008 Equalities Impact Assessments. We are also preparing a workshop to help managers with this process and preparing a new mechanism for monitoring the action plans under the various strategies.

We have agreed on a representative from Leisure and Culture to work with *Corporation* Services developing the new Community Engagement Strategy this quarter.

Health and Safety

In the next quarter we will finish our update of the Department's Health and Safety Policy to allow for the changes made to the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and the changes to the department following the restructure. We will also review the operation of this recently transferred service.

Performance Management

We will review the preparation of the first reporting cycle on the National Performance Indicators and make changes needed to speed up the process next time. We will make plans for the first sampling for National Indicator 14 about avoiding unavoidable contact.

Business Continuity

We will review the Department's Business Continuity arrangements in the quarter to ensure they address the needs of the merged department.

Contracts

We will investigate the background to all the issues surrounding the contracts listed in the Monitoring Officer report to Executive in October. We will review our department's contract arrangements including our contracts register.

e+ Smartcard Programme

We are currently awaiting the signed Site Licence from Blackburn.

A meeting with Squid Card will take place to explore the cost of introducing their prepaid debit facility on the e+ card.

An exploratory meeting with My Card and the Civic Trust will take place during this quarter.

The team are preparing an article for the January edition of Government IT.

Planning & Transportation

Development Management

The 1 October saw the introduction of revised permitted development rights for householders requiring the review of advice given out by the Council on both the web site and in leaflets. Initial contacts have been made with regular agents with a view to establishing an agent's forum for planning and building control.

Key tasks in the coming months are:

- Continuation of work to ensure the completion by Q3 of the electronic capture of planning micro-fiches.
- Extend new processes for S106 agreements
- Continued update of the planning web pages and letter templates arising from the changes outlined above
- Capture electronically the last outstanding planning documents (former Berkshire County records and Enforcement records).
- Continued involvement as one of 8 planning authorities in the CLG Development Management Project.
- Preparatory work for the introduction of new arrangement for householder planning appeals on the 1 January 2009.

On the development front the Bracknell Town Centre remains the key priority for the service but the activity is centered largely around proposals for a number of 3rd party sites. An appeal in respect of a major residential and commercial development at the TRL site is occupying much officer time with the Inquiry set to open on the 11 November and run for 5 weeks. At the same time officers will be engaged on preparing for an appeal in relation to 400 additional dwellings at the former RAF Staff College, this is scheduled for 2 weeks early in the New Year. Whilst the number of applications for new residential developments has dropped off significantly applications for significant educational facilities at Garth College and Edgebarrow School are due to be presented to the October Planning Committee.

Building Control

The team are currently undertaking further training in Part P to enable inspection of work in accordance with the new LABC guidelines for electrical inspection.

Bracknell Building Control is undertaking a programme of benchmarking for the Berkshire Group, Unitary Authorities and CIPFA 'family member' groups in Building Control.

It might be necessary to investigate electronic/on-line applications for Building Control over the coming months. The ability to deposit on-line Planning applications has led to more enquiries from architects about doing the same for Building Control as we are usually the next step on in the applications process. This pressure is also being felt in Building Control in a few other Berkshire authorities.

Spatial Policy

The Amen Corner Area Action Plan (Draft Submission) will be published in February 2009 for a six week period to which formal representations on its soundness can be made. Its Submission to the Secretary of State will follow in June with an examination in September. The Development Management DPD will be agreed by the Executive in January 2009 for consultation in February/March. This document will include more detailed Development Control policies and also identify sites for specific uses including employment and housing. The South East Plan is expected to be published early in 2009 containing policies about the level of growth including a housing allocation for Bracknell Forest. The Annual Monitoring Report will be published and submitted to GOSE in December 2008. The Council will progress the land North of Whitegrove and Quelm Park Area Action Plan (Public Participation on Options stage) which will be consulted upon in May 2009. Will be continuing to give help to colleagues trying to meet Development Management performance targets & in dealing with appeals against decisions to refuse planning permission

The Sustainable Resource Management SPD will be adopted in November 2008. The draft Streetscene SPD will be consulted upon in May 2009. A draft masterplan for the Great Hollands neighbourhood centre will also be prepared. The Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report will be published in December 2008. There will continue to be a significant input into the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum and related sub regional activity. There is another opportunity to re-negotiate the LAA housing targets to take account of the continuing economic situation this quarter. There is pressure on the Section to spend considerable time on a number of appeals.

Transport Management

Engineering and Adoptions

Following Executive Member approval of the Planning and Transportation Capital Programme 2008/09, construction will start on a number of schemes in the third quarter, including ;

- A new footway/cycletrack on the south side of Wokingham Road linking footway/cycletracks in London Rd (Popeswood Rbt) and Western Rd
- Safe Routes to School improvements at a number of high priority schools
- Signing improvements on the cycle network

Transport Implementation

- Tender evaluation and selection of operator for replacement of route 53/53A.
- Review concessionary fares scheme and publish draft scheme by end of November.
- Signing of Punctuality Improvement Partnership with First.

- Completion of station footbridge. Progress on other elements of the partnership.
- Transport model operational and available for use. May include commencement of work to look at impact of Wokingham LDF proposals and the development in Bracknell at Amen Corner.
- Launch of Car Sharing Scheme for residents.

Traffic and Safety Group

Casualty Reduction

Investigatory works will have been completed for the following local safety scheme:

- Mini-roundabout safety review.

Works will have been ordered for the following local safety schemes:

- A332 Windsor Road junction with Lovel Lane.
- Ringmead junction with Hanworth Road.

The following local safety schemes will have been constructed:

- A332 Swinley Road approach to Swinley Bottom Roundabout.
- Nine Mile Ride– Vehicle Activated signs.

Other Traffic Management Schemes:

Surveys will be on-going on the following scheme:

- 'B' Classified Roads - speed limit assessment

Reports will have been received from Consultants on the following schemes:

- Rackstraws Crossroads - traffic signal assessment
- Holly Spring Lane Bus Gate - improvements to operating system
- Maidens Green Crossroads - feasibility of traffic signals

Detailed Design work will have been completed on the following traffic management schemes:

- Crowthorne High Street - review of pedestrian facilities
- Works arising from the speed limit assessment of 'A' classified roads.

Construction work will have started on the following scheme:

- Harvest Ride - junction review

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO):

The latest on-street parking restriction TRO will have been completed.

Applications received for Disabled Parking Spaces will have been assessed for inclusion in the next phase.

Road Safety Education, Training & Publicity

The following Education, Training and Publicity activities will have taken place:

- 'Triple 'D' road shows - raising awareness of 'Drink and Drug Driving' to various businesses
- Saturday 13th Dec - Town Centre multi-agency 'Triple 'D' road show. Police, Fire Service and Road Safety practitioners in partnership to target shoppers
- Child Car Seat checks - two ½ day sessions at Bracknell Fire Station
- 'Tufty' Road Safety talks booked into primary schools.
- 'Be Safe Be Seen' colouring competition - open to all KS1 and KS2 pupils. 2221 entries to date
- Continuation of Road Safety talks and presentations to schools and colleges
- Driver Vision Screening - schools, colleges and businesses booked
- Development of 'Elderly' Road Safety resources/presentations

Annex A: Staffing information

Staffing Levels

	Establishment Posts	Staffing Full Time	Staffing Part Time	Total Posts FTE	Vacant Posts	Vacancy Rate
Directorate	11	10	1	10.68	0	0.00%
Environment & Public Protection	66	58	8	63.03	11	14.29%
Housing	63	56	7	59.13	11	14.86%
Leisure & Culture	430	214	216	308.78	46	9.66%
Performance & Resources	34	27	7	31.27	1	2.86%
Planning & Transportation	83	70	13	77.69	8	8.79%
Department Totals	687	435	252	550.58	77	10.08%

Staff Turnover

For the quarter ending	30 September 2008	3.97%
For the year ending	30 September 2008	19.11%

Total turnover for BFBC, 2007/08: 14.1% excluding schools and BFH
 Total turnover for local authorities in nationally 2006/07: 13.7%
 (Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development survey 2007)

Sickness Absence

Comparator data

Bracknell Forest Borough Council 07/08

All employees, average days sickness absence per employee

5.5 days

All sectors employers in South East 2006/07

7.8 days

(Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development survey 2007)

BVPI figure 07/08

7.52 days per FTE

Staff Sickness (1 July 2008 to 30 September 2008)

Section	Total staff FTE	Number of days sickness	Average per employee (FTE)	Annual average per employee (FTE)
Directorate	10.68	14	1.31	7.87
Environment & Public Protection	63.03	107	1.70	6.01
Housing	59.13	95.5	1.62	6.12
Leisure & Culture	308.78	663.5	2.15	8.52
Performance & Resources	31.27	8	0.26	1.02
Planning & Transportation	77.69	132	1.70	4.75
Department Totals	550.58	1020	1.85	6.85

The above figure of 1020 days includes 12 employees with long term sickness, which totals 400 days for the quarter. This included:

7 employees in Leisure and Culture - 259 days

2 employees in Housing - 45 days

2 employees in Planning & Transportation - 47 days

1 employee in Environment & Public Protection - 49 days

Annex B: Financial information

Revenue Budget Monitoring

The Committee's revenue budget for the year 2008/09 was set at £28,745,000. This is shown in more detail in Table 1, and also highlights the changes to the revenue budget in the period 1 July to 30 September, which together with the changes previously reported of £4,572,000 increases the overall budget to £33,727,000. A summary of these changes are shown below.

	£000
Easthampstead Park Conference Centre – A virement from the Structures Fund has been approved to provide additional conference facilities as part of the Price Waterhouse recommendations.	80
Housing – A budget relating to changes in empty property rates in respect of Enid Wood House is to be transferred to Corporate Services who now manage this property.	-38
Bus Contracts – The Section 106 monies for Tesco Warfield has now nearly been fully utilised therefore this amount needs to be transferred.	-18
Smart Card – As a result of a review in the method of apportioning these costs the recharge to this department has reduced.	-2
Refuse Collection – Sita have occupied additional areas at the Central Depot but it was agreed that part of this additional cost would be met by the service.	3
Street Cleansing – As a result of the new contract it was agreed not to charge the contractor for the use of the areas at the Central Depot.	21
Street Lighting – As a result of the energy contract being retendered with effect from October 2007 there was a reduction in costs.	-76
Reorganisation – As a result of the departmental restructure the net costs of this department have increased.	10
TOTAL	-20

A fuller explanation of these changes is given in Table 1.

Performance Against Approved Budget

There have been variances totaling -£37,000 in this period, a description of which is shown below:

	£000
Development Control – Notification of the HPDG for 2008/09 has now been received which was greater than that estimated.	-342
Land Charges – Income from searches has declined significantly as a result of the downturn in the housing market.	120
Smart Connect – The income target set for this scheme is not achievable.	100
Downshire Golf Complex – The decline in roundage on the main course has continued in 2008/09.	40
Street Cleansing - As a result of the new contract it was agreed not to charge the contractor for the use of the areas at the Central Depot. However, an income sum had been accrued for in 2006/07 & 2007/08.	32
Blocked Drains – Bracknell Forest Homes has now decided not to use the Council's contractor for this service.	13
TOTAL	-37

Capital Budget Monitoring

The Committee's capital budget for the year was set at £5,551,000. This included £2,672,000 of externally funded schemes, this has been reduced to £2,139,000 since £533,000 funding from the Department for Transport relating to the Mill Lane Footbridge scheme is included in the carry forward figure. A carry forward from 2007/2008 of £2,246,500 together with further transfers from Social Care & Learning, Invest to Save schemes at Bracknell Leisure Centre and the capital element of the Housing & Planning Delivery Grant, gives an available spend of £8,496,100 for 2008/09.

The capital monitoring statement including performance against budget is shown in Table 2

Cash Budget Revised 2008/09	Expenditure to date	Total Commitments For 2008/09	Amount left to spend	Estimated Total Funding Required for the Year	Cash Budget 2009/10	(Under)/Over Spend	(Under)/Over Spend Section 106
£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
2,214.9	683.2	843.6	768.1	2,214.9	80.0	0.0	0.0
3,008.3	1,246.3	642.9	1,119.1	3,008.3	-	-	-
2,539.8	675.8	97.0	1,869.0	2,539.8	102.0	-	-
157.3	0.0	-	227.3	157.3	70.0	-	-
323.8	82.4	3.4	238.0	323.8	-	-	-
8,244.1	2,687.7	1,586.9	4,221.5	8,244.1	252.0	0.0	0.0

Table 1

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES BUDGET MONITORING

Virements, Budget Carry Forwards

Total £'000	Explanation
80	Easthampstead Park Conference Centre A virement of £80,000 has been approved from the Structural Changes Fund in order to alter the toilet area on the first floor to provide additional conference facilities. This is the second of two schemes to help achieve the additional income to be generated towards the increased income target of £50,000 in 2008/09 aspired to in the Price Waterhouse recommendations.
-38	Housing - £38,000 was included in the 2008/09 budget build relating to changes to the empty property discount rate for long term voids resulting in higher council tax bills for the empty properties at Enid Wood House. This property is now managed by Corporate Property and as such the budget needs to be transferred to Corporate Services.
-18	Bus Contracts - The Section 106 Agreement for Tesco Jigs Lane Warfield (Agreement Number 6292) allows £210,000 to secure or operate Public and/or Community Transport Services (including Revenue Support of Services) and/or facilities and/or publicity. There is now only a sum of £3,000 remaining in this fund for the provision of this service, however a sum of £21,000 remains in the base budget therefore £18,000 now needs to be vired to reflect this.
-2	Smart Card - As a result of a review in the method of apportioning the costs of the smart card the recharge to this department has reduced. This was originally reported in May as being £44,020 but was in fact £46,580.
3	Refuse Collection - As a result of the expansion of the contract Sita have taken on additional area at the Central Depot that was previously empty. This will result in additional income of £5,964 to the Central Depot account but due the level of charges it has been agreed that Sita will pay £2,500 with this department funding the remaining amount, for which there is no budgetary provision. A virement of £3,460 is therefore requested between the two accounts.
21	Street Cleansing - When the new contract was assessed with Ringway in 2006/07 it was decided to only charge them a peppercorn rent for their use of the Central Depot, since if we charged them they would add their oncost rate to the sum and charge it back to the Council. The previous contractor was charged but no budgetary account was taken of the loss of income to the Central Depot account. A sum of £20,600 is to be charged to the Street Cleansing budget for 2008/09 to reflect this rental value, this sum therefore needs to be vired.
-76	Street Lighting Energy - The street lighting energy contract was retendered from 1 October 2007. The price per Kwh reduced to 6.7308p from 8.112p. The estimated annual consumption is 5,545,000 Kwh. The reduction in price of 1.3812p when applied to the annual usage delivers an economy of £76k against budget. The contract is due for retender from 1 October 2008, the results are not yet known.
10	Reorganisation - The savings resulting from the departmental restructure have now been allocated with £20,200 being attributable to Environment Culture & Communities. Corporate Recharges have also changed as a result of the reorganisation which has resulted in an increase to this department of £30,180.
-20	Total

Table 2

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD TO SEPTEMBER 2008/09						
	Net Original 2008/2009	Virements & Budget	Current Approved	Departments Projected	Variance Over/(Under)	Variance This
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Director of Environment, Culture & Communities						
Director and Support	176	0	176	176	0	
Training, Marketing, Research & Development	27	18	45	45	0	
	203	18	221	221	0	0
Chief Officer Leisure & Culture						
Archives	129	0	129	129	0	
South Hill Park	536	0	536	536	0	
Community Arts & Cultural Services	110	10	120	120	0	
Community Centres	89	0	89	89	0	
Parks, Open Spaces & Countryside	2,244	-217	2,027	2,027	0	
Environmental Initiatives	149	19	168	168	0	
Landscape Holding Account	-48	-20	-68	-53	15	
Sports Development & Community Recreation	112	11	123	123	0	
The Look Out	202	-1	201	201	0	
Edgbarrow / Sandhurst Sports Centres	210	-3	207	207	0	
Bracknell Leisure Centre / Coral Reef	960	-22	938	938	0	
Harmanswater Swimming Pool	23	-5	18	18	0	
Easthampstead Park Conference Centre	-294	95	-199	-199	0	
Horseshoelake Water Sports	33	-7	26	26	0	
Downshire Golf Complex	-155	-34	-189	-149	40	40
Libraries	0	1,800	1,800	1,800	0	
	4,300	1,626	5,926	5,981	55	40
Chief Officer Environment & Public Protection						
Waste Management	6,368	3	6,371	6,371	0	
Street Cleaning	1,062	21	1,083	1,115	32	32
Closed Circuit Television	103	0	103	103	0	
Highway Maintenance (Including Street Lighting)	4,411	-125	4,286	4,286	0	
On/Off Street Parking	-638	0	-638	-638	0	
Easthampstead Park Cemetery and Crematorium	-459	0	-459	-459	0	
Environmental Health (Including Pest and Dog Control)	900	-133	767	767	0	
Trading Standards (Including Licensing)	413	75	488	488	0	
Emergency Planning	106	0	106	106	0	
Bracknell Market	4	-4	0	0	0	
Other	125	67	192	205	13	13
	12,395	-96	12,299	12,344	45	45
Chief Officer Planning & Transport						
Transport Policy, Planning and Strategy	628	48	676	676	0	
Traffic Management and Road Safety	746	0	746	746	0	
Public Transport Subsidy including Concessionary Fares	1,446	231	1,677	1,677	0	
Building Control	9	0	9	9	0	
Development Control	492	64	556	214	-342	-342
Planning Policy (Including Local Transport Plan)	811	40	851	851	0	
Local Land Charges	-231	0	-231	-111	120	120
Other	144	-26	118	118	0	
	4,045	357	4,402	4,180	-222	-222
Chief Officer Housing						
Housing Options	0	299	299	299	0	
Strategy & Enabling	0	440	440	440	0	
Housing Management Services	0	56	56	56	0	
Forestcare	0	121	121	121	0	
Supporting People	0	155	155	155	0	
Housing Benefits	0	488	488	488	0	
General Grants, Bequests & Donations	0	17	17	17	0	
	0	1,576	1,576	1,576	0	0
Chief Officer Performance & Resources						
Departmental Management	528	0	528	528	0	
Departmental Support Services	886	183	1,069	1,069	0	
Departmental Personnel Running Expenses	85	1	86	86	0	
Departmental Office Services Running Expenses	178	9	187	187	0	
Departmental IT Running Expenses	224	1	225	225	0	
Smartcard	0	116	116	216	100	100
	1,901	310	2,211	2,311	100	100
Total Cash Budgets	22,844	3,791	26,635	26,613	-22	-37
Non Cash Budgets						
FRS17	485	68	553	553		
Corporate / Departmental Recharges	2,525	837	3,362	3,362		
Capital Charges	2,891	286	3,177	3,177		
	5,901	1,191	7,092	7,092		
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE SERVICES	28,745	4,982	33,727	33,705	-22	-37

Annex C: Performance against Indicators, Actions and Risks

PRIORITY ONE: A TOWN CENTRE FIT FOR THE 21st CENTURY				
Medium-Term Objective 1: Build a Bracknell Town Centre that residents are proud of				
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 1				
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 1				
		Due Date	Owner	Comments
1.2	Deliver 200 new homes in and around Bracknell town centre.			
1.2.1	Deliver a further 34 new affordable homes on sites on the periphery of the town centre.	Strata/ Celcius: Mar 09	ECC	✓ Six properties at the Met Office development are expected to be available in November. In total 68 units will be available from the Strata development following the Registered Social Landlord's successfully negotiating purchase of an additional 40 units. All units are expected to be available in December. Thus the target has been exceeded by 40 additional units.
1.2.2	Town Centre Development Agreement to be finalised.	Mar 2009	ECC	No progress to report in Quarter 2.
1.2.3	Conclude Planning Performance Agreement for dealing with town centre reserved matters application.	Apr 2008	ECC	✓ Work continues on the approach to dealing with applications for third-party sites which were received during Q2.
1.3	Improve access to the new town centre by providing extensive new parking facilities, a major package of junction improvements, and more bus lanes and a "park and ride" scheme.			
1.3.1	Provision of junction improvements and more bus lanes. Delivered through s278 agreements at locations around the town centre listed in the planning consent.	To developer's timescale until s278 agreement signed	ECC	No progress by applicant.
1.3.2	Prepare feasibility study to set out cost parameters and options for "park and ride" scheme.	Dependent on Town Centre consent	ECC	✗ Staff shortages in Transport Management continue to delay progress on this objective and the year-end target now looks at risk.
1.4	Construct and open a new Bracknell library, civic offices and a high quality "Jubilee Gardens".			
1.4.4	Provide pre-application advice for the Civic Hub.	Dec 2009	ECC	Request for advice not yet received.
1.4.5	Determine the Civic Hub planning application, including Jubilee Gardens.	Mar 2009	ECC	Application not yet received.
1.4.6	Progress detailed designs for Jubilee Gardens and public art plans for implementing the Public Art Strategy.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ Work in progress at RAF Staff College, Bracknell and Wokingham College and Wykery Copse.
1.4.7	Implement the actions in the Civic Hub project plan to achieve the opening of the library by the date specified.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ The latest developments in library design are being kept under review.

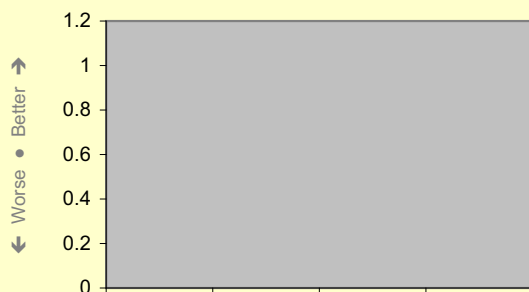
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 1		Owner	Progress on Mitigation Actions
1.5	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.	ECC	Failure to recruit a replacement Head of Spatial Policy at second time of advertising further increases the risk of missing some town centre targets although management are reviewing the role to look at covering the work in a different way. Revised/New Risk: None.
1.6	Political will/commitment. Mitigation: Good preparation, briefing and appropriate lobbying. Good consultation and forward planning.	ECC	Members fully briefed on all issues. Revised/New Risk: None.
1.7	Commercial financial market deteriorates. Mitigation: Establish financial monitoring system with BRP Monthly meeting of Steering Group monitors financial situation. Early briefing of Executive of any negative trends.	ECC	No change. Revised/New Risk: None.
1.8	Slow down in development may delay delivery of affordable homes. Mitigation: Monitor progress on sites through regular reports from RSLs.	ECC	No impact on sites that are currently in the development process. There will be delay in sites coming forward for development. Revised/New Risk: None.
1.9	Town Centre redevelopment delayed. May delay development agreement. Mitigation: Delivery of affordable housing identified as work stream within overall project. Progress will be regularly monitored.	ECC	Current economic climate is making a slow down in the Town Centre development more likely. Revised/New Risk: None.
1.10	Loss of key staff. Mitigation: Development work is shared between team members and is well documented to enable work to be covered should key staff leave. Work could be given to temporary/interim staff.	ECC	No change to the risk in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.

**PRIORITY TWO:
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Medium-Term Objective 2:
Keep our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities accessible and attractive.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 2

NI 9: Use of public libraries



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

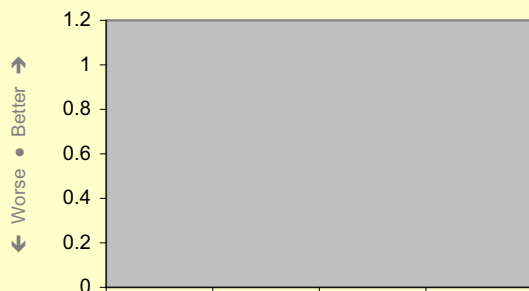
IPSOS Mori have been undertaking an Active People booster survey during the summer of 2008 to provide baseline data. Local data will be available for the number of physical and web based visits in June 2009.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Bob Hine

NI 10: Visits to museums and galleries



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

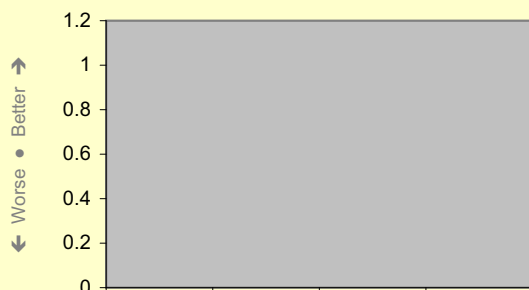
No baseline data will be available for this new indicator until the end of Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Lynne Dick

NI 11: Engagement in the arts



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No baseline data will be available for this indicator until the end of Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

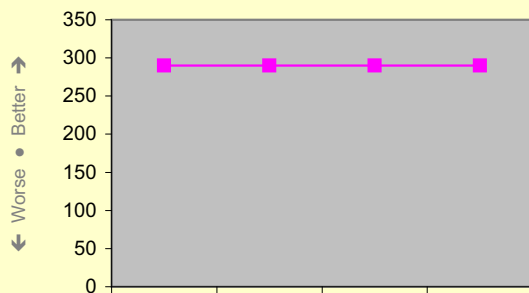
Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Lynne Dick

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 2		<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Comments</u>
2.1	Restore South Hill Park grounds.			
2.1.1	Appoint project team and start detailed design for South Hill Park grounds.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Project Manager appointed. Landscape architects appointed. Design work in progress.</i>
2.2	Prepare a Cultural Strategy to maintain and improve the quality of life in the Borough.			
2.2.1	Finalise the Cultural Strategy.	Jun 2008	ECC	✓ <i>Document launched on 25 September. Available on-line or in hard copy.</i>
2.2.2	Increase the use of libraries by improved marketing and promotion.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Local promotion between Libraries and Bracknell Leisure Centre achieved increase in take-up of the Summer Reading Challenge.</i>
2.3	Review management options for leisure sites in order to maintain quality and generate secured investment.			
2.3.1	Complete an options appraisal to look at potential future management options for Leisure Section facilities including Bracknell Leisure Centre, Coral Reef and Downshire Golf Complex.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>This work has been completed. The decision has been made to maintain current management arrangements.</i>
2.4	Prepare a new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.			
2.4.1	Prepare a new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓ <i>Preliminary draft available.</i>
2.5	Improve the quality of the countryside and open space by targeted projects and by engaging the voluntary sector.			
2.5.1	Implement programme of improvement projects in the parks and countryside.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>External investment secured for South Hill Park restoration from the Heritage Lottery Fund.</i>
2.5.2	Run countryside projects using volunteers.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Breathing Spaces grants received for Berry Bank and Scotts Hill with volunteers.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 2			<u>Owner</u>	<u>Progress on Mitigation Actions</u>
2.3	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	The resignation of the second Area Manager in Landscape, leaving all posts at this level of operational management vacant, increases the risk of the Landscape Service not providing all services to the optimal level. The post is out to advertisement at present. Revised/New Risk: None.
2.4	Political will/commitment with specific reference to the outcome of the options appraisal. Mitigation: Good preparation, briefing and appropriate lobbying. Good consultation and forward planning.		ECC	Members fully briefed and informed decision taken. Revised/New Risk: None.
2.5	Performance at centres deteriorates through the review. Mitigation: Ongoing and clear communication with staff. Involvement through Divisional Team Meetings of senior managers.		ECC	This work has now been completed and the decision made to maintain current management arrangements, so this issue is no longer a risk. Revised/New Risk: None.

**Medium-Term Objective 3:
Promote sustainable housing and infrastructure development.**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 3

NI 154: Net additional homes provided



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

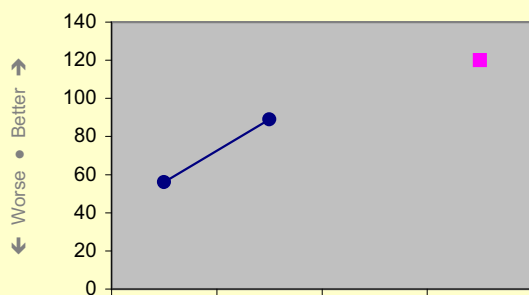
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	290	290	290
LAA Target	290	290	290	290
Last Reported	N/A			
Benchmark	N/A			
Current Quartile	N/A			

Unit: Number • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: John Waterton

NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

Department: ECC

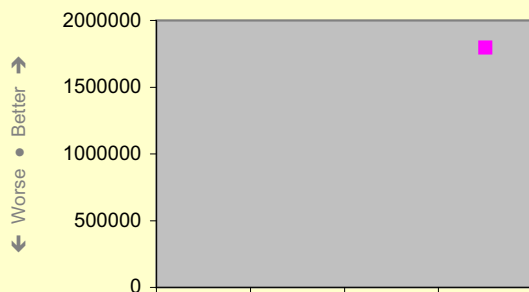
The quarterly outturns provided are cumulative, showing total progress across quarters to the 120 annual target. (56 homes were delivered in Q1 and 33 in Q2.)

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	56	89		
LAA Target	[annual]	[annual]	[annual]	120
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Paul Beetham

**NI 177: Local bus and light rail passenger journeys
originating in the authority area**



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

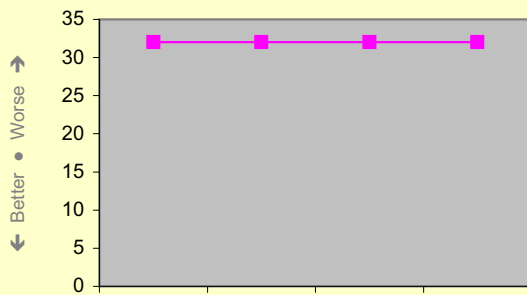
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A			
LAA Target	[annual]	[annual]	[annual]	1,795,000
Last Reported	N/A			
Benchmark	N/A			
Current Quartile	N/A			

Unit: Number • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

**NI 198.1: Children travelling to school – mode of transport usually used: (1) Children aged 5-10 years
(a) Travelling by car, including van or taxi (but excluding car share)**



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

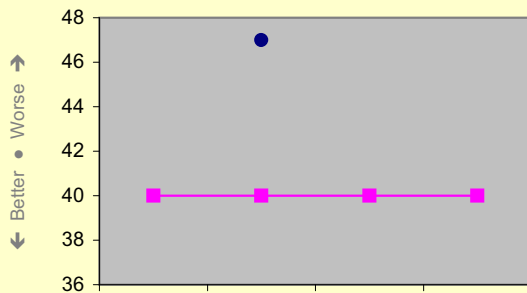
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A			
LAA Target	32.0	32.0	32.0	32.0
Last Reported	N/A			
Benchmark	N/A			
Current Quartile	N/A			

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

Department: ECC

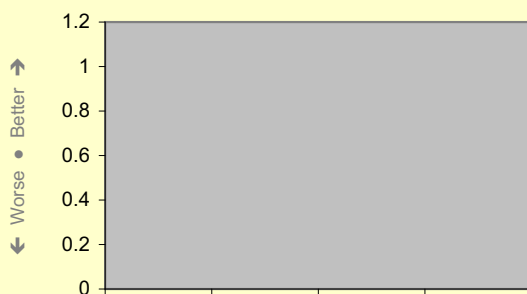
Temporary accommodation strategy approved by Executive on 21 October. This will lead to a reduction in the use of temporary accommodation.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	47		
Local Target	40	40	40	40
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Clare Dorning

NI 159: Supply of ready to develop housing sites



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

Department: ECC

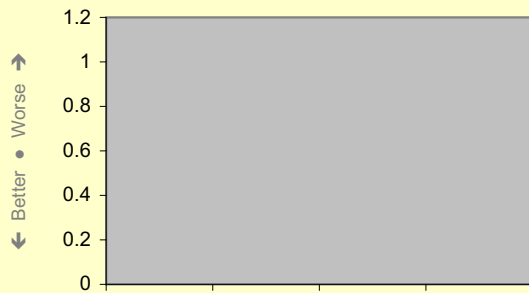
This is an annually monitored indicator.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	0.0		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Paul Beetham

NI 167: Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak



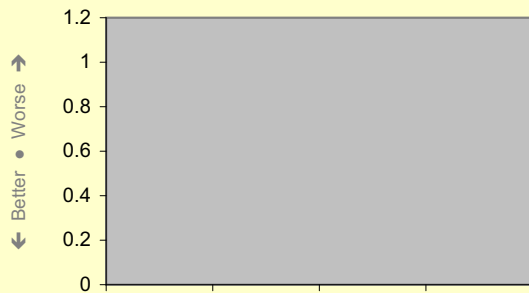
CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Year: 2008/09	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Current	N/A			
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A			
Benchmark	N/A			
Current Quartile	N/A			

Unit: Time • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

NI 168: Principal roads where maintenance should be considered



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

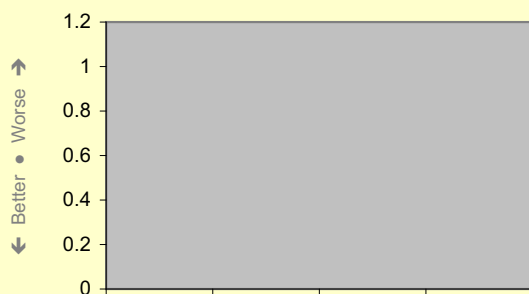
There is no currently reported data available. The figures are reported annually.

Year: 2008/09	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Anthony Radford-Foley

NI 169: Non-principal classified roads where maintenance should be considered



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

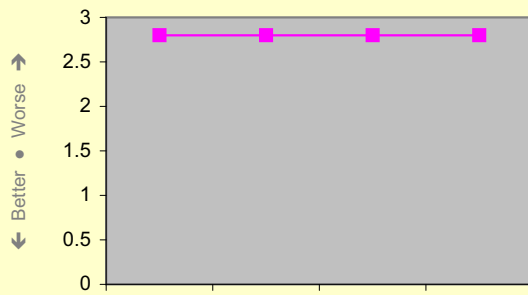
This information is available on an annual basis with the next reported data available June 2009.

Year: 2008/09	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Anthony Radford-Foley

NI 170: Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than five years



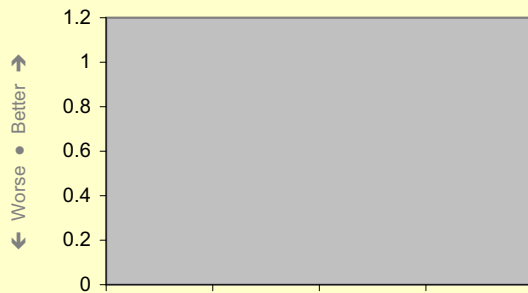
CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

This is an annually monitored indicator.

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Bev Hindle

NI 175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

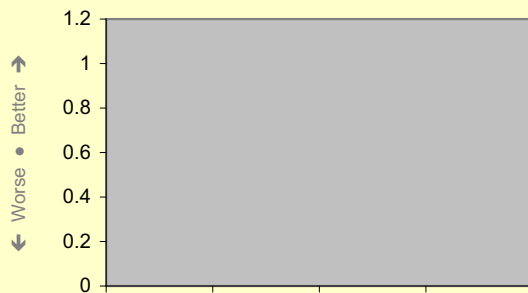


CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Varies • Polarity: Varies • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

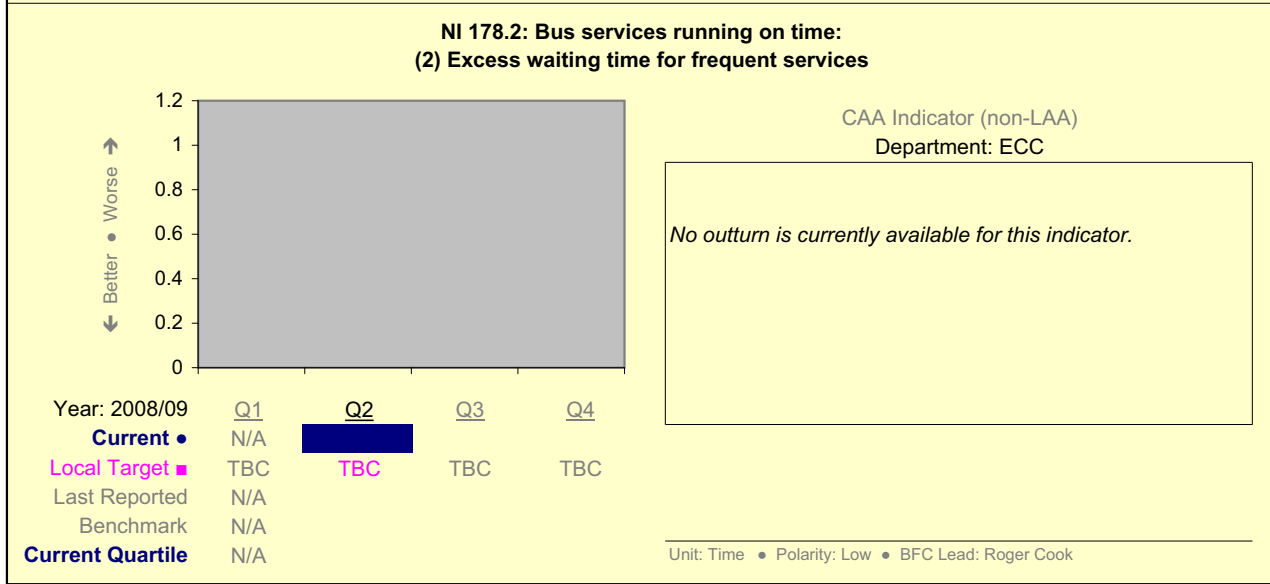
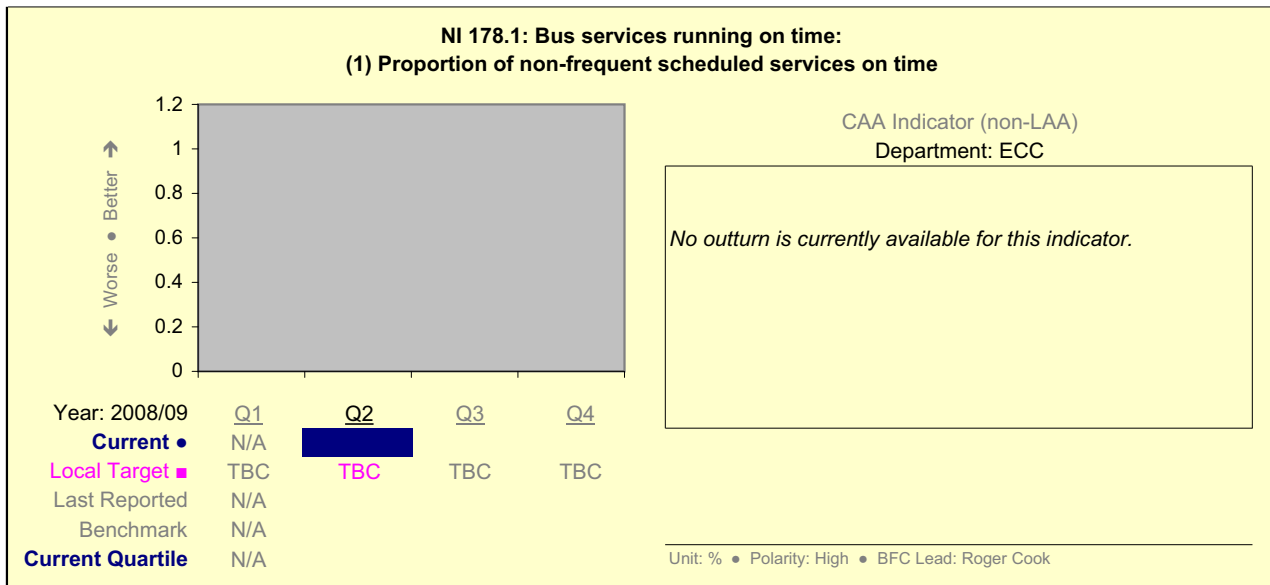
NI 176: Working age people with access to employment by public transport (and other specified modes)



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Roger Cook



ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 3		<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Comments</u>
3.1	Produce a Local Development Framework that protects the Green Belt and balances the demand for new housing with the need to protect the wider environment.			
3.1.1	Complete Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).	Jul 2008	ECC	✓ The revised programme in the LDS will result in Stages 6 and 7 being completed for consultation in February 2009.
3.2	Use the planning regime to ensure that all new housing developments are matched by appropriate investment in infrastructure.			
3.2.1	Complete Development Management Development Plan Document (DMDPD) – Housing and Commercial Policies – “Preferred Options” Stage.	Nov 2008	ECC	✓ The revised programme in the LDS will result in the PPD being consulted upon (Public Participation on Options) in February 2009.
3.2.2	Complete Amen Corner Area Action Plan “Submission” Stage.	Feb 2009	ECC	✓ The revised programme in the LDS will result in the Present Submission being published in February for a six week period for formal presentations.
3.2.3	Adopt and publish Sustainable Resource Management Supplementary Planning Document (SRMSPD).	Jun 2008	ECC	✓ Due for adoption in November 2008.

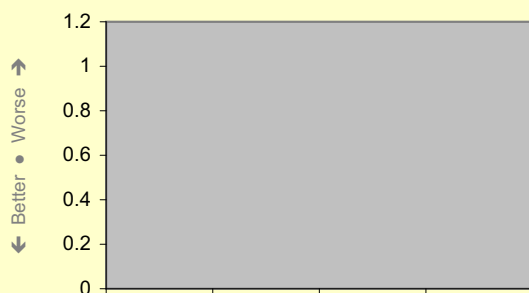
3.3	Implement a strategy to mitigate the impact of development on the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area.			
3.3.1	Complete another four mini plans for SPA mitigation. Start implementation of mini plans.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Work in progress on Ambarrow Court, Shepherds Meadows and Wicks Green.</i>
3.3.2	Review TBHSPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Draft report prepared.</i>
3.4	Implement the Local Transport Plan.			
3.4.1	Implement the Integrated Transport Elements through capital and revenue programmes.	Financial year	ECC	✓ <i>Programme being implemented.</i>
3.4.2	Review the Accessibility Strategy.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Officers are researching how this work may be undertaken and what the Council will focus its attention on. No risks at this time have been identified.</i>
3.4.3	Implement the Green Travel Plans.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓ <i>A Corporate Travel Plan has been placed on BORIS along with a Car Share database, and a bike "pool" has been put in place with availability to all staff.</i>
3.4.4	Encourage and assist all LEA schools to have a Travel Plan by 2010.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>In progress.</i>
3.4.5	Promote Workplace Travel Plans to local organisations, and monitor annually.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Ongoing.</i>
3.5	Transfer the Council's housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes.			
3.5.5	Complete update of stock condition survey and Housing Renewal Strategy.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓ <i>The private sector housing strategy will be updated following the publication of the Council's housing strategy in January 2009. The private sector stock condition survey will be undertaken in this financial year to support the new strategy.</i>
3.5.6	Set up monitoring system to assess performance of Bracknell Forest Homes and other RSLs.	Jul 2008	ECC	✓ <i>Following publication of the Council's housing strategy in January 2009 it is intended to undertake a review of preferred partner Registered Social Landlords to be complete by year end.</i>
3.6	Provide more choice for social housing applicants through the introduction of Choice-Based Lettings.			
3.6.1	Implement Choice-Based Lettings.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Officer/Member working group has met twice and agreed the work plan to implement the new scheme by June 2009. The group has also begun the consideration of the policy approach to be taken and received initial consultation feedback as well as setting the parameters for consultation with focus groups during November.</i>
3.6.2	Purchase and implement an IT system for Choice-Based Lettings and strategic housing.	Mar 2009	ECC	✗ <i>The IT solutions continue to be investigated with system demos taking place in October/November. The business will be holding customer focus groups to aid formation of the business requirements that the IT solution will need to support. This policy and operational documentation is taking longer than expected and the Go Live date for the new IT system has been moved by the Choice Based Lettings Project Board to June 2009. The 31 March 2009 target, therefore, will not be met.</i>

3.7	Increase the number of affordable houses in the Borough, including directly funding 100 new units.			
3.7.1	Review and introduce improvement plan on Housing and Council Tax Benefit amongst elderly and vulnerable groups.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓ <i>The Benefit Service is currently collating and analysing information around its customer base and the profile of Bracknell Forest.</i>
3.7.2	Hold quarterly forums with PSL to assist provision of accommodation to people on benefits.	Ongoing	ECC	✓ <i>Meeting with private sector landlords took place 15 October 2008.</i>
3.7.3	Produce a revised Supporting People Strategy.	Oct 2008	ECC	✓ <i>November meeting of Supporting People commissioning group will consider contracting and financial strategy as well as review of client needs. This will enable the strategy to be reviewed by the end of this financial year.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 3			Owner	Progress on Mitigation Actions
3.5	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	Failure to recruit a replacement Head of Spatial Policy at second time of advertising further increases the risk of missing some town centre targets although management are reviewing the role to look at covering the work in a different way. Revised/New Risk: None.
3.6	Political will/commitment. Mitigation: Good preparation, briefing and appropriate lobbying. Good consultation and forward planning.		ECC	Members fully briefed on all issues. Revised/New Risk: None.
3.7	Development Industry unable to deliver houses in sufficient numbers. Mitigation: Monthly monitor of completions for DMT. Work with House Builders Federation to identify blockages to delivery. Report to LDF Steering Group early indication of performance trend.		ECC	Housing completions are currently undertaken annually and there is no current resource dedicated or available to undertake this work. Spatial Policy are currently working to develop such a system but this will require redirecting resource to this activity. Revised/New Risk: None.
3.8	Government allocates too much additional housing in the Borough. Mitigation: Effective lobbying of GOSE and SEERA to reduce targets for housing numbers.		ECC	Objections will be made to the Proposed Modifications to the RSS which propose additional housing in the Borough. Revised/New Risk: None.
3.9	Residual Landscape staff unable to fulfil requirements after housing transfer. Mitigation: Enhanced performance monitoring. Review structures after 6 month operation.		ECC	No problems at present. Revised/New Risk: None.

**Medium-Term Objective 4:
Keep Bracknell Forest clean and green.**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 4

NI 185: CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

Department: ECC

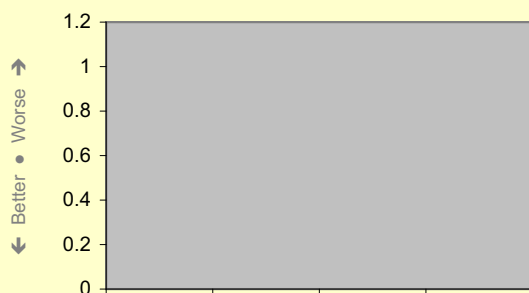
Data to calculate this indicator only available at year end.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
LAA Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

NI 187.1: Tackling fuel poverty – % of people receiving income-based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating: (1) Proportion of assessed households with a SAP rating < 3



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

Department: ECC

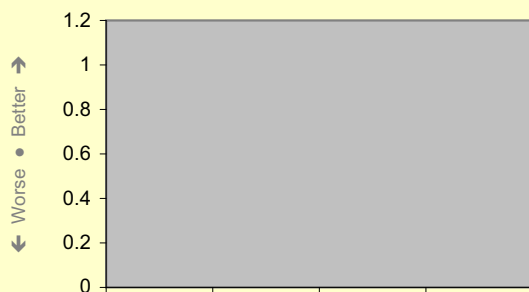
No data will be available until the end of November 2008 when the GOSE software will be provided.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
LAA Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Hazel Hill

NI 187.2: Tackling fuel poverty – % of people receiving income-based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating: (2) Proportion of assessed households with a SAP rating ≥ 65



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

Department: ECC

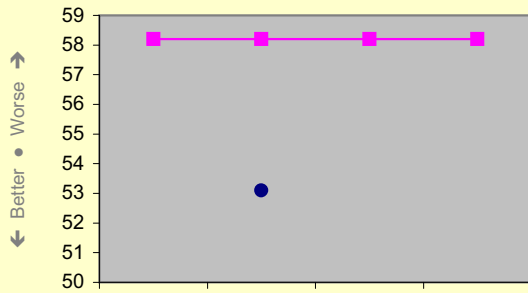
No data will be available until the end of November 2008 when the GOSE software will be provided.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
LAA Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Hazel Hill

NI 193: Percentage of municipal waste land filled



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

Department: ECC

The Quarter 2 figures will be confirmed in Quarter 3.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	53.10		
LAA Target	58.20	58.20	58.20	58.20
Last Reported	N/A	53.09		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current estimate is based on unvalidated current data. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowman

NI 186: Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

Department: ECC

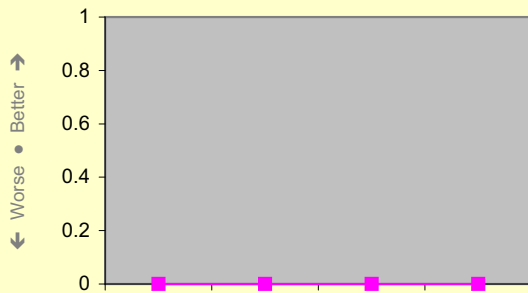
NI 186 is based on data collected centrally by DEFRA.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

NI 188: Planning to adapt to climate change



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

Department: ECC

Climate Change Action Plan submitted to Corporate for approval in October 2008.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	0	0	0	0
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot (self-assessment) target measured by self-assessment. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

NI 189: Flood and coastal erosion risk management



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

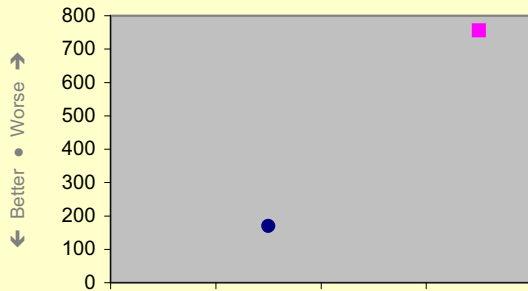
The data for this indicator is available annually with the next data publication due June 2009.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by self-assessment (action monitoring). No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Anthony Radford-Foley

NI 191: Residual household waste per household



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

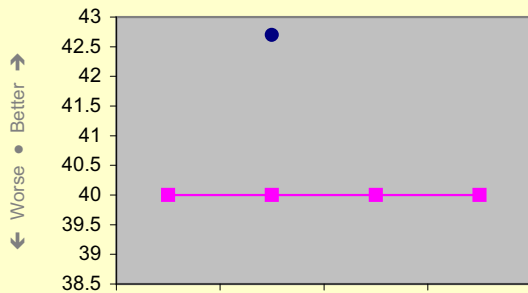
The total for the first two months of Quarter 2 is 113.08kg. This has been rounded up to give an estimate for the quarter by dividing by 2 and multiplying by 3.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	170		
Local Target	[annual]	[annual]	[annual]	756
Last Reported	N/A	175		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current estimate is based on latest available (incomplete) data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number (kgs) • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowlman

NI 192: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

Estimated for Quarter 2, will be confirmed in Quarter 3.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	42.70		
Local Target	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
Last Reported	N/A	42.90		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current estimate is based on unvalidated current data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Janet Dowlman

**NI 194.1: Air quality: % reduction in NOx and primary PM10 emissions through LA's estate and operations:
(1) Emissions of NOx**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

As per NI 185, this data is only available on an annual basis.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

**NI 194.2: Air quality: % reduction in NOx and primary PM10 emissions through LA's estate and operations:
(2) Percentage reduction in NOx emissions**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

As per NI 185, this data is only available on an annual basis.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

**NI 194.3: Air quality: % reduction in NOx and primary PM10 emissions through LA's estate and operations:
(3) Emissions of PM10**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

As per NI 185, this data is only available on an annual basis.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

**NI 194.4: Air quality: % reduction in NOx and primary PM10 emissions through LA's estate and operations:
(4) Percentage reduction in PM10 emissions**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

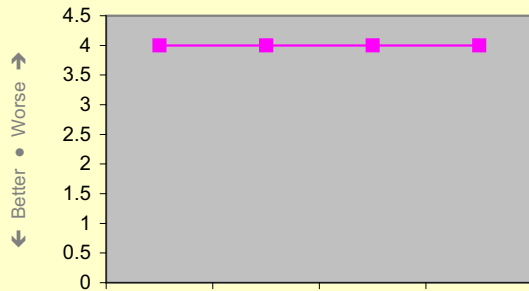
As per NI 185, this data is only available on an annual basis.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Colin Griffin

**NI 195.1: Improved street and environment cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting):
(1) Litter**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

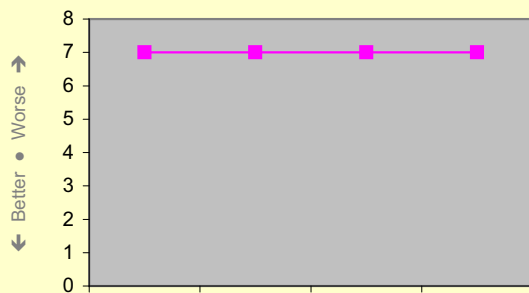
This is an annual indicator and therefore no data is available until Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	4	4	4	4
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowlman

**NI 195.2: Improved street and environment cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting):
(2) Detritus**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

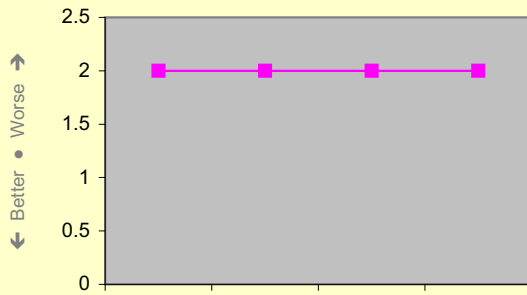
This is an annual indicator and therefore no data is available until Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	7	7	7	7
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowlman

**NI 195.3: Improved street and environment cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting):
(3) Graffiti**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

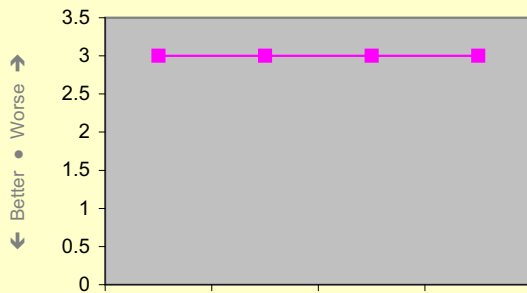
This is an annual indicator and therefore no data is available until Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	2	2	2	2
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowdman

**NI 195.4: Improved street and environment cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting):
(4) Fly-posting**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

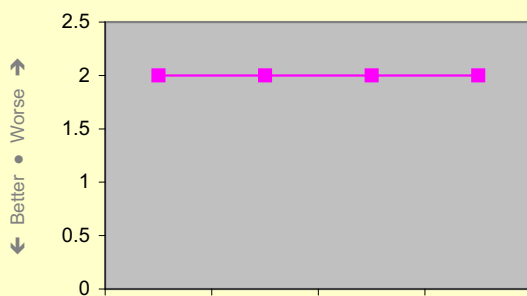
This is an annual indicator and therefore no data is available until Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	3	3	3	3
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowdman

NI 196: Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

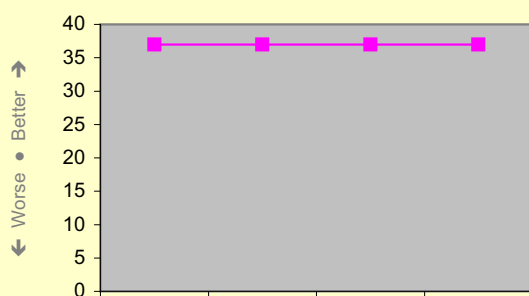
The data for this indicator is only available on an annual basis, and therefore there will be no data available until Quarter 4.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	2	2	2	2
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot (self-assessment) target measured by self-assessment. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Janet Dowdman

NI 197: Improved local biodiversity – proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

Data for this indicator will be available in Q4. Work during Q1 and Q2 has been prioritised on collating all the baseline information. This specifically includes identifying and targeting key landowners and the priority sites to support high performance alongside delivery of the BF Biodiversity Action Plan. Work includes on-site actions across the Borough.

No estimated outcome is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by data snapshot. No outcome for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
Local Target	37	37	37	37
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Marlies Fell

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 4		Due Date	Owner	Comments
4.1	Raise standards of landscape maintenance.			
4.1.1	Restructure Landscape Service and improve skills training.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ Work planned for autumn/winter.
4.2	Raise standards of cleanliness in our byways, pavements and streets.			
4.2.1	Increase the frequency of cleaning the main de-regulated road network in the Borough.	Apr 2008	ECC	✓ Option appraisal completed. All deregulated roads cleared during Quarter 1. Additional litter picking planned for Quarters 3 and 4 in high profile roads as required.
4.3	Keep satisfaction in the streetscene above 75%.			
4.3.1	Implement action plan that coordinates departmental activity in relation to litter, dumped rubbish, etc.	Apr 2008	ECC	✓ The plan is being tracked at monthly meetings of the Cleaner Borough Group and the ASB-P group is kept apprised of its progress.
4.4	Increase recycling rates to 50% through the RE3 initiative.			
4.4.1	Complete the building phase of the Re3 project.	C'brook: Jul 2008; S'mead: Dec 2008	ECC	✓ Work continues to progress within target. Issues with Lakeside do not impact on overall performance. Site to be opening before Summer 2009.
4.5	Establish a 'fast response' team and increase environmental enforcement activity to reduce the amount of litter in the Borough.			
4.5.1	Review the way the existing fast response teams established in the Ringway and ground maintenance contracts are targeted.	Jun 2008	ECC	✓ Complete. Ringway provide for this response on highway land, Landscape on the 'green' public open land, and Parks & Countryside on land under their management. All can be accessed via Customer Services. The enforcement work is being coordinated through the Cleaner Borough Officer Working Group (see 4.8.1).
4.6	Develop a local Climate Change Strategy by 2009, in line with the Nottingham Declaration.			
4.6.1	Write a Climate Change Strategy as part of implementation of commitments made under the Nottingham Declaration.	Feb 2009	ECC	✓ Strategy approved.
4.6.2	Review the role of the Environment Partnership in dealing with climate change.	Jun 2008	ECC	✓ Review completed.
4.7	Improve energy management in Council and school facilities.			
4.7.1	Establish Systemlink in all Council properties.	Jan 2009	ECC	✓ Being rolled out. Software installed. User training in progress.
4.7.2	Participate in the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management Programme.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ Work in progress.

4.7.3	Establish energy champions in Council buildings and schools.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>Pilot scheme in Time Square.</i>
4.7.4	Implement invest-to-save schemes.	Ongoing	ECC	✓	<i>Funding for pool covers and double glazing approved at BLC. SALIX scheme being investigated.</i>
4.8	Reduce the level of fly tipping in the Borough.				
4.8.1	Introduce a co-ordinated approach to fly tipping enforcement.	Jun 2008	ECC	✓	<i>Training of the use of surveillance cameras has taken place during the quarter and during the next period its use will be deployed at selected sites in the Borough to capture fly tipping offences. In-house training on waste enforcement will take place in December. A draft Fly Tipping Strategy and process/procedures notes have been produced and expected to come into use during the next period.</i>
4.9	Develop our joint Waste Strategy.				
4.9.1	Produce and adopt an Re3 Waste Strategy.	May 2008	ECC	✓	<i>Strategy agreed by the Joint Waste Board. Final draft to be presented to each Council in partnership for adoption in Quarter 3.</i>
4.9.2	Formulate and adopt a corporate strategy for recycling and waste minimisation in council offices, and adopt as far as possible a zero waste policy.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>A draft is being produced in the next quarter for consideration and promotion through the Climate Change Group.</i>
4.9.3	Establish a pilot scheme for recycling containers in Time Square.	-	ECC	✓	<i>Complete – containers now in place.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 4			Owner	Progress on Mitigation Actions	
4.1	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	No problems at present. Revised/New Risk: None.	
4.2	Failure of contractor to deliver contracted services or facilities. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of performance.		ECC	Discussion with our contractors indicate that the plant will be operational before 1 July 2009. Discussion in expected to commence in the spring as to how we may help facilitate commissioning by taking in some of our waste from then. Revised/New Risk: None.	
4.3	Impact of climate change on flooding. Mitigation: Strategic risk management assessment undertaken.		ECC	No change to the risk in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.	

**PRIORITY THREE:
PROMOTING HEALTH AND ACHIEVEMENT**

**Medium-Term Objective 5:
Improve health and well being within the Borough.**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 5

NI 8: Adult participation in sport and active recreation



Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	N/A		
LAA Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Last Reported	N/A	0.2		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

LAA INDICATOR (Local)

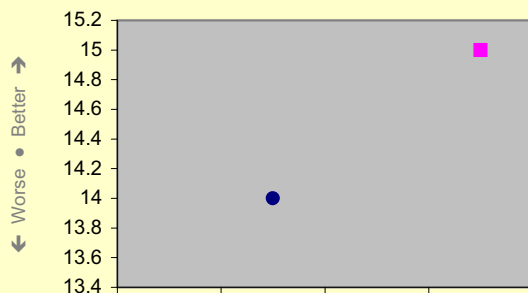
Department: ECC

The outcome of this NI is dependent on the Active People survey, the results of which will not be released until December 2009.

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This LAA(Local) indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. The 'last reported' figure is from Sport England Active People Survey (December 2006). Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Chris Vaal

NI 51: Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services



Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	14		
LAA Target	[annual]	[annual]	[annual]	15
Last Reported	N/A	14		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

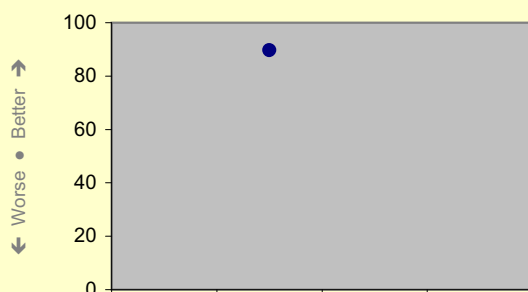
Department: SCL

This good performance is based on a self assessment completed by BFC as part of the annual CAMHS Mapping Exercise. The assessment, undertaken by the BF CAMHS Partnership, assesses performance in four proxy measures, each judged on a four point scale. Optimal performance is therefore 16. The next return will be submitted in February 2009.

The current figure uses validated final data. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a snapshot (self-assessment) target measured by self-assessment. The 'last reported' figure is from Annual Performance Assessment Dataset (OFSTED) (September 2008). Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Score • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Martin Gocke

NI 184: Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law



Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current	N/A	90		
Local Target	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

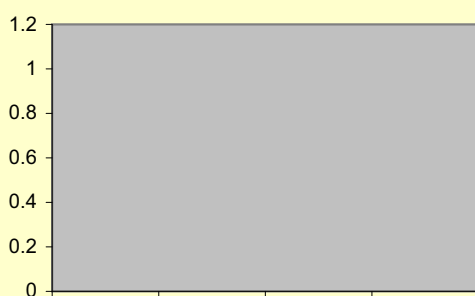
Department: ECC

The percentage of broadly compliant food premises of 89.74 is a percentage figure at any point in time and will change throughout the year as the system of rating food premises is constantly changing. We can at the end of March 2009 show the percentage of broadly compliant premises at the end of the financial year.

The current estimate is based on latest available (incomplete) data. This CAA indicator has a complex snapshot target measured by physical survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: David Steeds

NI 190: Achievement in meeting standards for control system for animal health



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

The final technical definition of this indicator has not yet been published by the CLG.

Year: 2008/09	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

Data will not be available for this indicator until its final technical definition is published by CLG.

Unit: TBC ● Polarity: TBC ● BFC Lead: Rob Sexton

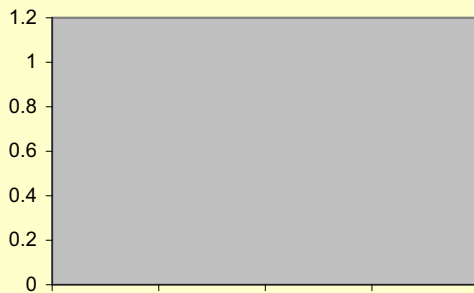
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 5		<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Comments</u>
5.1	Develop and implement a comprehensive health strategy for the Borough with partners, who identify their priorities and actions to address local health inequalities and to improve health and well-being.			
5.1.1	Implement and report on 2008/09 targets in the Health Strategy.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Work continues, but following discussion by Overview and Scrutiny the Strategy is to be looked at again to ensure that it includes more targets where possible.</i>
5.3	Focus on prevention, for example by increasing the number of adults participating in at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise per week.			
5.3.1	Maintain and promote services that will contribute to increasing the percentage of adults participating in 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport or physical activity on at least three days in any week (LPSA 2 target).	Mar 2009	ECC	<i>The percentage of the adult population participating in 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport or physical activity on at least three days in any week will be measured through Sport England's Active People survey, with results due in December 2009. In the meantime, the Leisure Section is mainstreaming a major promotional campaign based around the concept of 3 x 30.</i>
5.4	Produce an annual report on public health.			
5.4.1	Produce the first annual report to the Health and Social Care Partnership Board.	Jul 2008	ECC	✓ <i>Complete – report presented.</i>
5.5	Implement and monitor the ban on smoking in public spaces.			
5.5.1	Review the findings of the last 12 months experience on smoking in public places and reprioritise the allocation of resource according to need.	Apr 2008	ECC	✓ <i>Complete – review concludes that the impact has been marginal. The level of compliance is high and therefore resources are deployed accordingly.</i>

OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 5		Owner	Progress on Mitigation Actions
5.2	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.	ECC	No change in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.
5.3	Failure of parties to deliver health strategy obligations. Mitigation: Progress monitored and reported quarterly.	ECC	These services typically operate long daily opening hours over seven days a week. The challenge of delivering a consistent service with a very low incidence of unplanned closures is significant. Looking forward, the level of risk is related to the level of resources made available for planned preventative maintenance of these facilities. Work continues and progress is monitored via the Public Health Working Group. Revised/New Risk: None.
5.4	Loss of major Leisure sites. Mitigation: Implement operational service plans. Undertake planned preventative maintenance. Ensure robust business continuity plan.	ECC	These services typically operate long daily opening hours over seven days a week. The challenge of delivering a consistent service with a very low incidence of unplanned closures is significant. Looking forward, the level of risk is related to the level of resources made available for planned preventative maintenance of these facilities. Revised/New Risk: None.

Medium-Term Objective 6:
Improve the outcomes for children and families through the Children and Young People's Plan.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 6

**NI 199: Children and young people's satisfaction
with parks and play areas**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

The final technical definition of this indicator has not yet been published by the CLG.

Data will not be available for this indicator until its final technical definition is published by CLG.

Unit: TBC • Polarity: TBC • BFC Lead: TBC (interim: TBC)

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 6 Due Date Owner Comments

OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 6 Owner Progress on Mitigation Actions

Medium-Term Objective 7:
Seek to ensure that every resident feels included and able to access their services as they need.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 7

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 7 Due Date Owner Comments

7.2	Use innovative methods of engaging local residents in decisions that affect them, particularly targeting 'hard to reach' groups to listen to their views.			
7.2.15	Develop management development project – prepare preferred option consultation strategy.	Oct 2008	ECC	✓ Programme still being developed.
7.2.18	Introduce a programme of benefit surgeries to increase take-up amongst targeted vulnerable groups.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓ Benefit surgeries taking place at Sandhurst Town Council, Polish drop-in days and Great Hollands Community Centre, and we are currently reviewing other venues.
7.5	Implement a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, and implement the Council's Race Equality Scheme.			
7.5.7	Implement the Disability Equality Scheme, the Gender Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Scheme actions due for completion in 2008/09, and progress those actions due for completion in later years.	Mar 2009 and ongoing	CPS CXO ECC SCL	✓ CPS: All activities in plans are underway. CXO: The vast majority of actions have either been completed or are on track to be completed in the specified timescale. One action is outstanding: RES 2.4 Race equality performance indicators and targets to be developed. This action should be reallocated to the Performance and Partnerships team under the new CXO structure. ECC: All actions on target.

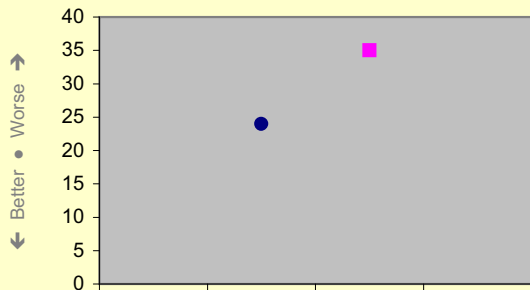
7.5.8	Conduct impact assessments on all new and revised policies and strategies.	Ongoing	CPS CXO ECC SCL	✓	<i>CPS: Impact assessment training has been and continues to be delivered to staff to ensure that assessments are completed on all new and revised policies and strategies. Progress has particularly been made in this quarter in completing assessments on Adult Social Care policies and strategies. CXO: An EIA has been completed on the Older People's Strategy. There are no other outstanding EIAs. ECC: Working with all managers to reassess all existing policies, strategies and functions by the end of December. There are several new housing policies in discussion which we expect to review in Quarter 4.</i>
7.6	Increase access to services by electronic means.				
7.6.4	Provide e-enabled access to leisure facilities.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>Members of Bracknell Leisure Centre, Downshire Golf Complex, and Edgbarrow and Sandhurst Sports Centres continue to make good use of the on-line booking system for a range of activities. In the second quarter 3096 on-line bookings were made.</i>
7.6.5	Complete microfiche project to provide the public with access to historic planning documents.	Dec 2008	ECC	✓	<i>Project on target for completion by the end of the current financial year.</i>
7.6.6	Implement actions of the Gazetteer and GIS Strategy due in 2008/09.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>The initial match of electoral registrations data to the corporate gazetteer was completed in July. The data is now with the electoral registration team for checking and correction of anomalies. The capture of the adopted highway extent on the Corporate GIS is nearing completion and a technical workshop will be held in October to determine the future roadmap for the Corporate GIS infrastructure and software.</i>
7.7	Improve community cohesion through culture and sport.				
7.7.1	Improve community cohesion through culture and sport (LPSA2 target).	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>Continuing to engage communities that would not otherwise take part in the areas. Trying to bring different communities together.</i>
7.7.2	Develop direct payments and other supporting people packages to enable vulnerable people to engage with cultural activities.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓	<i>Funding being made available direct to South Hill Park.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 7			Owner	Progress on Mitigation Actions	
7.6	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	No change to the risk in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.	

**PRIORITY FOUR:
CREATE A BOROUGH WHERE PEOPLE ARE, AND FEEL, SAFE**

**Medium-Term Objective 8:
Reduce crime and increase people's sense of safety in the Borough.**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 8

NI 47: People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents



LAA INDICATOR (Designated)

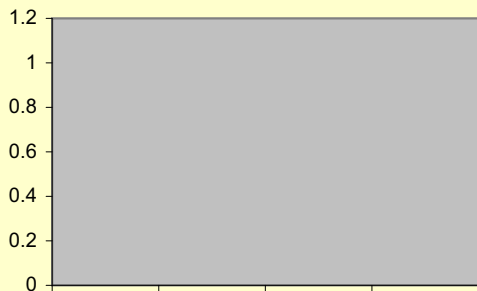
Department: ECC

The Quarter 2 figure represents performance for the rolling twelve months up to the end of July 2008. Current performance exceeds target.

The current estimate is based on latest available (incomplete) data. This LAA (Designated) indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

NI 12: Refused and deferred Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license applications leading to immigration enforcement activity



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

Department: ECC

The final technical definition of this indicator has not yet been published by the CLG.

Data will not be available for this indicator until its final technical definition is published by CLG.

Unit: TBC • Polarity: TBC • BFC Lead: David Steeds

NI 37: Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)

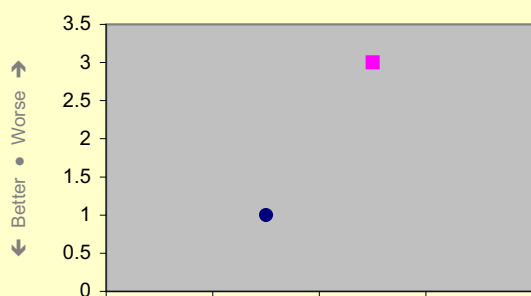
Department: ECC

This indicator will be measured using the new Place Survey, the first results of which will be available in Quarter 3.

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a snapshot target measured by survey. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: TBC • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: Louise Osborn

NI 48: Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents



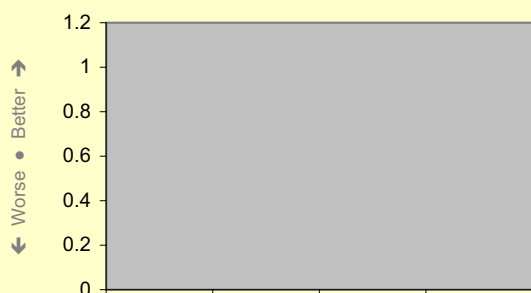
CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

The Quarter 2 figure represents performance for the rolling twelve months up to the end of July 2008. Current performance exceeds target.

The current estimate is based on latest available (incomplete) data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Roger Cook

**NI 182.1: Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulatory services:
NI 182 (Basic indicator)**

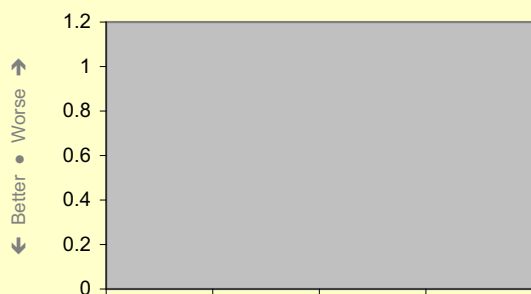


CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % • Polarity: High • BFC Lead: David Steeds

**NI 183: Impact of local authority regulatory services
on the fair trading environment**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

No outturn is currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number • Polarity: Low • BFC Lead: Rob Sexton

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 8		<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Comments</u>
8.4	Use the 'speedwatch' anti-speeding teams to reduce the incidence of speeding.			
8.4.2	Provide technical advice and support to Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums/Action Groups involved in the Community SpeedWatch initiative.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Continued support of neighbourhood forums and Parish Councils in conjunction with Thames Valley Police.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 8			<u>Owner</u>	<u>Progress on Mitigation Actions</u>
8.2	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	No change to the risk in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.

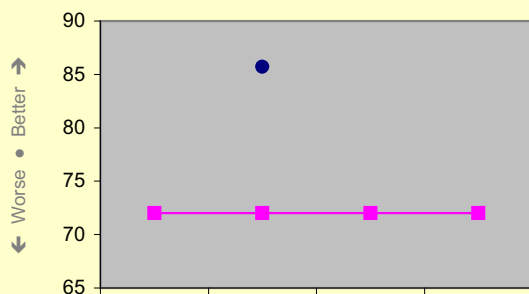
**PRIORITY FIVE:
VALUE FOR MONEY**

Medium-Term Objective 10:

Be accountable and provide excellent value for money.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MTO 10

**NI 157.1: Processing of planning applications:
(i) Major applications**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

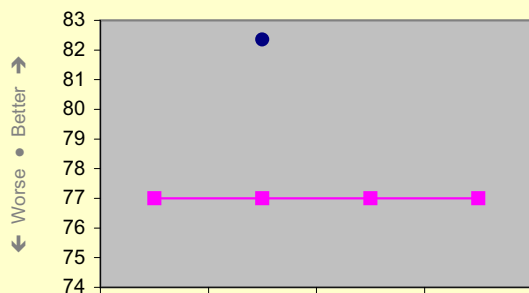
Target exceeded.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	85.71		
Local Target ■	72.00	72.00	72.00	72.00
Last Reported	N/A	80.00		
Benchmark	N/A	60.00		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. The 'last reported' figure was reported and published to Government (PS1/2) (July 2008). Quartile shows the position of the current figure within the 2008/09 figures for all local authorities in England. Benchmark information is not currently available.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Vincent Haines

**NI 157.2: Processing of planning applications:
(ii) Minor applications**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

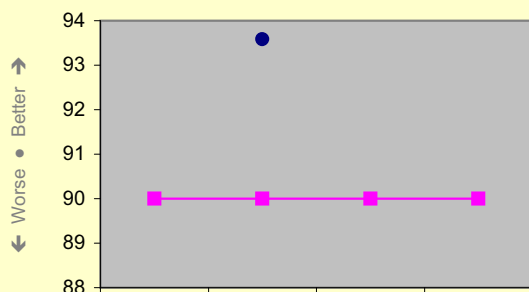
Target exceeded.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	82.35		
Local Target ■	77.00	77.00	77.00	77.00
Last Reported	N/A	84.78		
Benchmark	N/A	65.00		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. The 'last reported' figure was reported and published to Government (PS1/2) (July 2008). Quartile shows the position of the current figure within the 2008/09 figures for all local authorities in England. Benchmark information is not currently available.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Vincent Haines

**NI 157.3: Processing of planning applications:
(iii) Other applications**



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

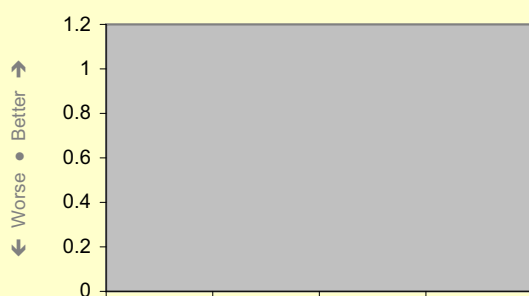
Target exceeded.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	93.58		
Local Target ■	90.00	90.00	90.00	90.00
Last Reported	N/A	95.17		
Benchmark	N/A	80.00		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. The 'last reported' figure was reported and published to Government (PS1/2) (July 2008). Quartile shows the position of the current figure within the 2008/09 figures for all local authorities in England. Benchmark information is not currently available.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Vincent Haines

NI 180: The number of changes of circumstance which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlements within the year



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

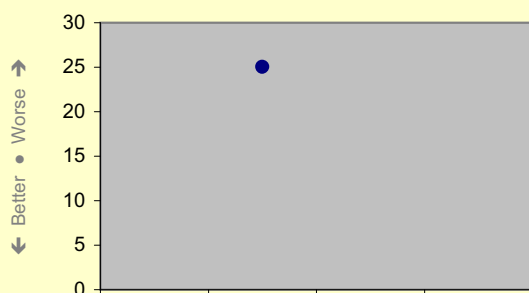
The Benefits IT system is currently unable to analyse the data produced; discussions are being held with software suppliers.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	N/A		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

No estimated outturn is currently available for this indicator. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: % ● Polarity: High ● BFC Lead: Shanaz Alam

NI 181: Time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events



CAA Indicator (non-LAA)
Department: ECC

Data in initial stages so no target set, no historic trend established.

Year: 2008/09	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Current ●	N/A	25.0		
Local Target ■	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Last Reported	N/A	N/A		
Benchmark	N/A	N/A		
Current Quartile	N/A	N/A		

The current figure uses validated final data. This CAA indicator has a complex cumulative target measured by data collection. No outturn for this indicator has yet been formally reported or published. Benchmarking and quartile information is not currently available for this indicator.

Unit: Number ● Polarity: Low ● BFC Lead: Shanaz Alam

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MTO 10		Due Date	Owner	Comments
10.1	Maintain Council Tax levels in the lowest quarter of all unitary authorities.			
10.1.2	Integrate S106 negotiation/monitoring with development management/monitoring.	Oct 2008	ECC	✓ Procedure being progressed.
10.1.3	Deliver housing in numbers and quality as required by Government to increase the Council Tax base.	Mar 2009	ECC	✗ The housing market has continued to deteriorate during Quarter 2, and meeting the increase in numbers desired by the end of March looks unlikely.
10.2	Implement a four year 'efficiency' programme to reduce spending to sustainable levels.			
10.2.9	Prepare and implement plans to generate income through transport model and downsizing the traffic model process.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ Transport model now in operation. However, downturn in development activity is restricting income from development proposals.
10.2.25	Collect 50% of all Housing and Council Tax Benefit recoverable debt.	Mar 2008	ECC	✓ The amount of Housing Benefit recovered during Quarter 2 against HB overpayments raised and deemed recoverable was 75.96%. This represents 23.75% of the total outstanding debt.

10.4	Work effectively with partners to improve the quality of life in the Borough.			
10.4.10	Hold consultation events with key stakeholders and private sector landlords to facilitate people in housing need accessing private rented properties.	Mar 2009	ECC	✓ <i>Second meeting of landlord forum held on 15 October, attended by just fewer than 20 individuals as well as the national landlords association. Consultation showed that the meetings will be supported in the future on a regular basis.</i>
OPERATIONAL RISKS TO MTO 10			<u>Owner</u>	<u>Progress on Mitigation Actions</u>
10.9	Having the staff with the right skills available to deliver tasks at the right time. Mitigation: Monthly monitoring of vacancies at DMT considered in terms of resources required to deliver agreed outcomes. Collective view of appointments at DMT. Sickness and absence monitoring reported to DMT quarterly. Annual appraisal and training.		ECC	Recruitment of an Accounts Receivable Clerk improves the chance of collecting our outstanding debt and reduced the risk in the quarter. Revised/New Risk: None.
10.10	Political will/commitment. Mitigation: Good preparation, briefing and appropriate lobbying. Good consultation and forward planning.		ECC	Members fully briefed on all issues. Revised/New Risk: None.
10.11	S106 capital funds are not spent. Mitigation: Establish list of achievable schemes in the Capital Programme. Monitor progress of spend on capital projects with DMT monthly.		ECC	Programme in executive work programme for approval. Revised/New Risk: None.

Annex D: Additional Departmental Progress Information

Environment & Public Protection

Environmental Health

A long recruitment process was completed during the period with the last vacant Environmental Health Officer post being filled in August.

The first Public Health report of the Council was presented to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Board in July. This document included the progress in relation to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. A progress report was also made to the same Panel on 4 September 2008 on behalf of the Public Health Working Group regarding the Borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Health and Social Care Partnership Board received a quarterly performance report from the Public Health Working Group (BFC/BE PCT Partnership) on 15 September 2008. The Board made comment on the report which was amended as necessary.

The Food Law Enforcement Plan 2008-09 was reported to the Executive Member for Leisure, Corporate Services and Public Protection on 22 July prior to its adoption. The Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan 2008-2009 was also reported to the Licensing and Safety Committee on 3 July prior to its adoption.

It was proposed to introduce the nationwide 'Scores on the Doors Scheme' in relation to the Borough's food businesses during the period but this has been carried over into the next quarter as a result of unforeseen work associated with its introduction. Launch of the scheme has been scheduled for 17 November 2008

The impact of the new smoking laws and the implications that may arise were assessed during the last period and reported to DMT, who concluded this has not been a major issue locally.

Pest Control

The summer period was comparable to the same period last year. Traditionally it is the period when the number of service requests for wasps keeps the officer extremely busy. All calls are dealt with on a first come basis but with there now only being the one operative, meeting all needs has been challenging and the efforts of the officer have been greatly appreciated. This is evidenced by the excellent feedback he continues to receive.

Dog Control

There has been an upward rise in service requests compared to the same period last year. It is too early to draw conclusions but the perception is that the Borough continues to enjoy the benefit of having many responsible dog owners. During the opportunity was taken to raise the profile of the service at several public events, an example being Bracknell Forest Dog Show "Paws in the Park".

Car Parks

Progress has been made in relation to the work to look at the current contract management agreement and the investment needs of the multi-storey car parks. Capital bids have been submitted for car park access, payment equipment and repairs. The pilot scheme to allow the high street car park to be used by electric cars is now in place for DHL and Ocean House staff. A dedicated parking area has been

marked out and charging facilities provided on level 4 of the High Street car park to be used by two electric pool cars. In addition bays have been set aside on level 4 of the car park for "parents and toddlers". The scheme appears to be popular and consideration is being given to extending it to Charles Square car park.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

This quarter started off with the delivery of the "How prepared are you" leaflet with the July edition of T&C. There was very little response to this and consideration needs to be given as to how to continue to deliver the warning and informing duty now imposed upon the Council by legislation.

The emergency planning framework has been reviewed at SRMG and signed off at CMT prior to hard copy re-issue. This framework document is supported by a number of underpinning emergency planning documents which are available on a secure area of the public website.

Work was also completed on one of the Thames Valley responsibilities, which was to review the strategy framework for delivery of humanitarian assistance across the region.

Highways

By the end of the quarter the annual capital highway maintenance programmes were largely complete. Routine highway safety inspection and bridge monitoring tasks continued as programmed.

The situation at the London Road landfill site remains unchanged. Whilst gas migration continues the volumes measured are currently showing no significant increases. The situation is being managed as required by the site licence and further options are being explored.

Licensing

The section had a busy summer period with frequent spot checks of licensed activity in the evenings and weekends. Where problems were found they were in the main dealt with by advice and warning by the officer. Two incidents resulted in warning letters being sent to the premises licence holder following breaches of legal requirements.

A newsletter was also prepared for the licensed trade and the taxi trade updating them on new provisions and giving them advice and assistance. An inspection to check for compliance with site licence conditions of a large caravan site within the Borough has been ongoing for a number of months and is unlikely to be finished by the end of this financial year. Some problems are being identified and raised with the site owners. Caravan Site licensing involves a great deal of officer time but it is not an area within which we can make a charge to recover our costs.

There have been four freedom of information requests in the last quarter in relation to data held by the section. Requests of this nature from businesses and researchers appear to be a growing trend with more being processed this quarter.

Operational Support

A new structure is now in place and Operational Support is becoming a strong multi-skilled team. The consolidation of support staff has allowed for cover to be effected over the holiday season in areas where there may previously have been

none. During this period vacancies have been covered by temporary staff; however the required staffing levels are now becoming clear and permanent appointments will be made in areas where there is a need.

Cemetery & Crematorium

This level of activity during the quarter was comparable with the same period last year. As reported before the standard of our rose give rise to the majority of the complaints about the gardens of remembrance. The problem is caused by the soil and not the lack of attendance.

Once again the open air Memorial Service was well attended despite the uncertain weather conditions on the day. Just over a thousand pounds was raised for the Mayor's charity with some excellent press coverage in the Bracknell News.

Trading Standards

The last few months have seen a significant increase in the amount of new legislation being placed upon the service. More protection was given to the consumer from unfair trading through a consolidation of existing Consumer Protection legislation, and the adding of further new provisions. Legislation in relation to the Energy Display Certificates for Public Buildings and rented accommodation also came into force on 1 October. New regulations were also introduced from 1 October to protect residents from high pressure selling carried out either at their home or place of work.

During the period the following specific enforcement action came to a conclusion:

- A caution was issued to Mr Rana of A-Z Bargain Centre, Bracknell for having children's scooters for sale which were found to be unsafe and counterfeit. This was discovered during a routine inspection of the store.
- Martin McColls were cautioned following test purchases of cigarettes from their stores at Harmans Water and Great Hollands by children aged 15. The Company agreed to improve their staff training and upgrade equipment in the store to prevent such sales in the future.
- The Designated Premises Supervisor of Shikara Nightclub was cautioned for selling a vodka mix drink (22% vol) as vodka (37.5% vol).
- A local estate agent received a warning for making a claim about a "branch" within a specific geographical area of the borough which was not located in that area.

Waste and Street Cleansing

A successful weekend sale of green cones was held in July and the complete stock of 1000 sold. A further order for 500 has been placed funded by government grant. The re³ home composter partnership with WRAP which commenced in April resulted in 186 composters being sold in the last 3 months which is more than the whole of the previous year.

There has been a significant reduction in Civic Amenity waste due to Longshot Lane restricted hours, but landfill waste at kerbside was also reduced by 3%. Bulky household collections have increased by almost 20% since the Longshot Lane restrictions came into force.

Two new recycling sites for glass have been installed at Wellington Business Park Car Park, Crowthorne and The New Leathern Bottle, Maidenhead Rd, Warfield. Recycling is currently around 42% (target 40%).

Housing

Housing

The official opening of the first phase of affordable housing on Jennetts Park took place on 15 September. The first phase comprised 90 units of the total 300 units of affordable housing when the scheme is complete.

There has been an 11% increase in the total number of applicants on the Council's housing register since the last quarter. There was a 17% increase in the number of homeless applications received in the quarter compared to the previous three months.

The average time that homeless households spent in bed and breakfast accommodation in the second quarter reduced to 10.37 weeks but this is still in excess of the 6 week target.

The charges to tenants of the Council's leased properties were reviewed and will be reset upon the properties being re-let so as to maximise income.

The member/officer Choice Based Letting Steering Group met during the quarter and agreed the model for the new scheme and work programme leading up to the scheme implementation.

Forest Care

There were 87,758 calls from lifeline customers in the second quarter compared to 85,399 in the first quarter and an average of 800 calls per month which were handled by Out of Hours.

Benefits

The Benefit Service took part in a benchmarking exercise with 18 other Local authorities. The comparator authorities were chosen on the basis of geography, caseload and operating systems. The outcome from the exercise was that the Bracknell Forest Benefits Service was a top performer in terms of performance and quality and average on cost. The detailed information will provide the data and contacts with other authorities to develop an improvement plan.

In addition, the Benefit Service commissioned a mock inspection of the based on the new Audit Commission key lines of enquiry. This inspection regime is more demanding than the benefit and fraud inspection under which the service gained the top score. Pilot inspections of other authorities that achieved the top score under the old regime have shown that they do not fair so well under the new model. The mock inspection identified strengths and weakness of the service and an improvement plan has been developed.

The average time for processing claims in the quarter was 24 days for new claims and 9 days for change in circumstances. The number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1000 caseload stood at 6.68 by the end of the second quarter and this is predicted to exceed the year target and top quartile performance.

Leisure & Culture

Leisure

For the second successive year the main feature of the summer quarter has been poor weather. Whilst this had an adverse effect on some facilities, others benefited as customers looked for indoor activities.

Bracknell Leisure Centre's usage was broadly similar to the previous year, with small fluctuations in certain areas. Although overall usage was marginally lower than 2006/07, there were no particular trends.

Edgbarrow and Sandhurst continue to provide an excellent service to their local communities. Overall usage was very similar to the previous year, but there was a fall in course attendance during the summer holidays.

The exhibition at The Look Out continues to perform well, with attendances up on the previous year. The 'Yucky Yuk' show proved very popular during the summer. Overall site visits were down due to a combination of the weather and the ongoing pipe works. At busy times car parking can be an issue.

Coral Reef showed an increase in usage of almost 6% on the previous year. This is thought to be a combination of the inclement weather and people staying at home rather than holidaying abroad.

Downshire Golf Complex is the one facility that has continued to suffer from the bad weather, with overall usage marginally down on the previous year. Downshire also appears to be suffering from the difficult economic position, which is beginning to take effect. Special promotions are planned to encourage more people to visit the complex.

Easthampstead Park continues to carry out important refurbishment works, particularly a new boiler system. The centre attracts a good mix of conferences, meetings and weddings.

Horseshoe Lake and Harmans Water Leisure Centre enjoyed good summers. Despite the poor weather Horseshoe Lake had excellent attendances on summer holiday courses. Harmans Water Leisure Centre absorbed some changes to their programme, which barely affected their usage.

Various schemes to make sites more accessible continue to do well. More customers are taking advantage of on-line bookings and use of the Leisure Saver Scheme remains steady.

The Young People in Sport Scheme ended the school year in fine style with Uplands Primary School winning the ASDA National Kwik Cricket final and Whitegrove finishing runners up in the ASDA National Girls Kwik Cricket final.

Libraries

More children than ever took part in Team Read, this year's Summer Reading Challenge. In the year of the Olympics and following the National Year of Reading's theme for August, Team Read encouraged individual children to read 6 books borrowed from libraries in Bracknell Forest over the summer and get an additional reward on completion with a free swim at Bracknell Leisure Centre.

In total 1116 children entered the scheme, the highest ever (for comparison) last year 854 took part. This year 69% completed and of those 67% were boys and 70% girls. 53% of youngsters heard about the scheme from their local library, 32% from their school and 18% from elsewhere. There was an excellent take up at all libraries, with almost all increasing their starters. Bracknell Library doubled its figures from last year, from 97 last year to 186 this year.

Other National Year of Reading events included a talk by football author Jim White with a 5 a side football tournament at Whitegrove Library and Youth Centre.

Other promotional activities have included a writers' workshop, stitching event and the introduction of baby signing, a way for parents to improve communication with their babies. In September, Bracknell Library was the venue for a multi sensory storytelling session with pupils from Kennel Lane organised by Story Go Round Tour Book Bags.

Culture

Cultural Strategy

The new Cultural Strategy for 2008 - 2012 was launched at a well attended presentation at Easthampstead Baptist Church on 25th September. The new strategy has three strategic themes:-

- Enhance town centres, villages and neighbourhoods
- Improve the sense of belonging and community spirit for all
- Continue to support and improve the range of high quality facilities and services

The mission statement is: 'To improve the look and feel of Bracknell Forest, attracting visitors and making it a stimulating and enjoyable place to visit and to contribute to a thriving community where all people are happy to live, work and achieve'.

The strategy describes the important role that culture plays in the Borough in the context of the people, the place and the facilities and services that are available. It reviews progress since the first strategy was produced in 2002 and considers local, regional and national trends. The refreshed strategy sets out an ambitious action plan as to how to make things happen through working together in the future.

The strategy is now available on line at www.bracknellforest.gov.uk/culturalstrategy Hard copies are available from Carol Billyard, 4th floor South, Time Square.

Parks & Countryside Service

Grants

South Hill Park

Further to the successful National Lottery grant bid by the Service for a multi-million pound renovation at South Hill Park, landscape consultants have been appointed for the South Hill Park Parks for People Project. Site surveys and designs are being drawn up prior to a second bid to fund implementation. A South Hill Park Friends group is also being formulated.

Caesars Camp

At Caesars Camp, the Service has secured £35,000 capital investment from Natural England towards footpath improvements, habitat management and interpretation. The project will be delivered over the next two financial years.

Shepherd Meadows

At Shepherd Meadows the Service has secured a contribution of £2,500 from the Environment Agency towards reducing flood risk to adjacent residential properties and enhancing the wetland habitat.

Access Management Grant Scheme 2008

The Service has applied for funding through the Natural England Access Management Grant Scheme (AMGS).

This is for Wildmoor Heath, jointly owned and managed by BFC and the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Of the sites total 92 hectares, approximately 42 are designated as Open Access under the CROW Act 2000. The site is also designated as a Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and also forms part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). It is therefore of considerable biodiversity importance in addition to being a popular site for informal recreation. A network of paths run across the site, including 7 public rights of way.

Funding under the AMGS will contribute to the Wildmoor Heath and Broadmoor Bottom Fire Prevention & Access Project which aims to reduce fire risk and protect the heathland from encroaching scrub over time. This project will enable the removal of over-mature gorse and emerging scrub and help reduce the maintenance requirements.

Rights of Way

The permitted path between Heathfield School and the old landfill site has been cleared greatly improving access, particularly at the London Road end.

Temporary Rights of Way closures (due to Pylon Works) particularly affecting Wildmoor Heath are ending in October 2008. Paths were only closed if absolutely necessary. Work has operated smoothly ensuring no public complaints were received.

Local Countryside Access Forum

At the last meeting of the Forum, Cllr Diana Pidgeon was re-elected as Chairman for a period of three years. Mike Gates (representing local path users) was elected as the new Vice-Chairman of the Forum for the same time period. Cllr Brossard and Cllr Simonds are the BFC representatives on the Forum.

Events and Activities

Hugely popular events at Lily Hill Park, Pope's Manor and Caesar's Camp took place as part of the Heritage Open Day programme, providing an excellent opportunity for community and volunteer involvement. Entertainment at Lily Hill Park alone included Morris dancing, birds of prey, an ancient tree hunt and circus performers.

Dogs and their owners were invited to the free Paws in the Park event at [Westmorland Park](#), Warfield in July. Attracting an audience of over 450, the event was bigger than in previous years with all manner of demonstrations, advice, display teams, competitions, charity stalls and stands from local canine-related businesses. This event helps to promote responsible dog ownership and gives something back to dog walkers, who are some of the most regular users of our parks and open spaces.

The Service took part in the 'The Big Day Out' at South Hill Park in July. This one day festival of music and performing arts presented an opportunity to inform the public about the future plans for the site following the successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund whilst recruiting members for a 'Friends Of' group. The team ran a 'Big Scavenger Nature Hunt' and a fun educational workshop for children.

Volunteers

Local community involvement continues to be integral to work undertaken on site and has provided in excess of 979 person hours during the last quarter. Key tasks undertaken by volunteers included:

- Footpath repairs by Bracknell Conservation Volunteers at Ashmore Lane (60 person hours)
- Hedging by the Youth Service at Englemere Pond (50 person hours)
- Water vole surveys on The Cut and Blackwater rivers, contributing towards the Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.

Biodiversity

As part of Bracknell Flowers 2008, "Blooming Biodiversity" signs sponsored by the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership marked a new trail around the roadside nature reserves in the town. A series of lunchtime walks were very popular with staff and raised awareness of the wildflower verges.

In August the National Trust met with Parks & Countryside staff to discuss work on Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) at Ambarrow Hill and Court, an excellent example of partnership working to improve local greenspaces.

In September, a mid term review of the Biodiversity Action Plan was initiated involving contact with all relevant partners and gathering data. The resulting report will be produced by December. Actions are being delivered by members of the Biodiversity Forum who met on the 1st October to share news on activities over the summer, which contribute towards achieving targets in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Greenspace Strategy

The first draft of the strategy is now complete and will shortly be distributed for consultation. This is to be done in two stages leading to the production of a final draft:

- 1) Liaison with greenspace providers and managers
- 2) Wider public consultation

The Strategy works towards protecting and enhancing greenspaces across the borough. Key themes include quantity, quality and use.

Landscape Services

Awards

Bracknell Flowers- Britain in Bloom

This year's Bracknell Flowers campaign has continued its success and was announced winner of the "Large Town / Small City" category, achieving a Silver Gilt Award. This was presented at the Royal Horticultural Society awards ceremony in Milton Keynes in September.

"Your Gardens" Competition

Following the record number of entries into the Council's annual "Your Gardens" competition (part of the Bracknell Flowers Britain In Bloom campaign), all entrants were invited to an awards evening at the Grange Hotel in September where the winners of the competition were announced. The event also celebrated the success of this year's Bracknell Flowers Campaign and representatives from the many community groups, sponsors and schools who contributed to the success were invited to join the celebration.

Bracken and Bramble Retire

Bracken and Bramble retired after 16 years' service on the 16th September. Their retirement was covered in both the local press and on ITV's local news bulletin 'Thames Valley Tonight'. The pair's final success was winning the heavy horse pairs class at this year's Henley Show before retiring to the Redwings Horse Sanctuary near Great Yarmouth in Norfolk.

Grounds Maintenance

Across the period Grounds Maintenance teams have settled into the changes brought about by the housing stock transfer and there is now a greater understanding on the ground regarding the changes to land ownership. However there are still some anomalies to be clarified and operational managers from BFC and Bracknell Forest Homes are meeting regularly to resolve any issues. Service delivery across the period has been solid and maintenance standards have on the whole been good.

The Visual Environment Upgrade Team (VEUT)

VEUT have completed the work identified for the Deep Cleanse project being conducted at neighbourhood centres and, working with Street Cleansing teams, have made vast improvements. Further replanting and landscaping works are continuing into the winter period.

Tree Service

TPO Review

The current review of Tree Preservation Orders continues and following changes to the legislation, adjustments to departmental processes have taken place.

Baseline Tree Survey

The baseline tree safety survey has continued and works identified from the survey are ongoing.

Community & Environmental Development Team

Community Development

A new temporary community centre has been opened in Jennett's Park, adjacent to the Peacock Farm Pub. On 20 September 2008, an event inviting residents to "come and meet your neighbours" was held at the Centre. Council officers and voluntary sector organisations attended to display and discuss the services available to residents of which 24 attended. Similar events are being discussed to attract new users to other community centres across the Borough.

Climate Change Action Plan

Public consultation on the Climate Change Action Plan ended on 12 September and Executive approval is expected in October 2008.

Local Authority Carbon Management Programme

The Council has been participating in the Carbon Trust's LA Carbon Management Programme since May 2008. The Climate Change Working Group was expanded to form the project team and a project board was established. Both are chaired by the Director Environment, Culture & Communities. Councillors Dorothy Hayes and Marc Brunel-Walker are members of the project board.

The programme, which runs till March 2009, establishes a reliable carbon dioxide baseline, sets reduction targets and produces an action plan to meet those targets. It also supports our Local Area Agreement performance indicator NI185: CO2 reductions from local authority operations.

A Climate Change and Carbon Management update was presented to Environment, Culture & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 22 September 2008

Community Arts Development

Local Celebrations and Community Cohesion

Crowthorne Carnival

The project was extremely successful and the evaluation report showed that participants felt an improved sense of belonging and a greater part of the local community as a result.

From Here to Maturity – Dance and Older People

The group has now moved to South Hill Park. Feedback from group members has been incredibly positive and includes comments such as: *"I feel more energetic"* and *"I feel in better health and more relaxed and enjoy mixing with other people"*

Young Carers

Following on from a six week drama taster held in the spring, the Young Carers project has reached out to involve younger members. The aim of the project is to build on key themes such as: confidence; communication; working together; creativity; drama skills; and most importantly for the young people to have a good time. In partnership with Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, plans are afoot to carry out a longer term project, applying for external funding to support future initiatives.

Creative Network

In October Robin Seaman, Chief Executive of Voluntary Arts England, gave a presentation to over 35 people who represented local arts groups, companies and societies, ranging from Bracknell Choral Society to Sandhurst and Crowthorne Arts Society.

Berkshire Arts: Local Authority Partners

David Powell Associates has been appointed to research funding models for arts organisations in Berkshire. This will involve working with Bracknell Forest's professional and amateur arts sector and with potential business and individual partners. The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) was involved in the interview panel alongside Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Council and the initiative is funded by Arts Council England.

Heritage

Architecture '08

In conjunction with Bracknell and Wokingham College, an art workshop took place in the Church road site on August 1 based on the architecture of the old building and the new building's design. Various media was used by families and individuals to produce pieces of work that will be displayed at a college open event on 22 November. An open discussion by the architects about the new building, oral histories and preserving memories linked with the old site took place in the evening.

The Big Draw '08

On 4 October Artist Jon Lockhart led a family workshop using Bracknell Forest boxes from the Museum of Reading. Participants brought in their own objects to draw which were subsequently placed on 'museum shelving' with accession labels to create a drawn museum collection, to go on display at Sandhurst Library.

Heritage Open Days 2008 11-14 September

A successful four days of events provided 29 opportunities to visit 13 sites and venues across the borough which included parks and countryside sites, churches and record offices. The Wellington College tour was sold out with over 60 visitors and the Rural Craft and Folk Day at Lily Hill Park attracted over 450 people of all ages.

The trailer was present in Charles Square all week prior to the events promoting the open days.

Performance & Resources

Human Resources

In the last quarter the Human Resources team has spent a large proportion of time working on the Required Car User scheme.

HR has started using IDOX, a scanning and indexing system, with the view of becoming a paperless office.

In conjunction with our team Learning and Development successfully delivered the first Safer Recruitment training to the most senior managers within Leisure. As a result the recruitment process has been tightened up and new guidelines put in place.

We introduced a revised sickness scheme and main BFC HR policies and procedures were introduced into Easthampstead Park Conference Centre.

During this quarter the team supported 8 disciplinary hearings resulting in 7 warnings and one dismissal.

Business Systems

Our Gazetteer and GIS Team completed the initial match of electoral registration's property address to the Corporate gazetteer. The team also completed all their mapping requests to business deadlines.

The Business Support Team continued to handle IT help calls to required targets even though there was a 28% increase in logged calls compared to the previous quarter. The team upgraded the IT systems supporting environmental health & trading standards as well as highway management, transport development, landscape and trees. The ICT Steering Group approved the business case and funding for the replacement IT system for supporting people and we held the first project board meeting.

The Web Team worked with the concessionary fares and e+ teams to improve information on the web. FAQs were also created for housing, leisure, roads and parking to enable the public to find answers to their questions more easily. Work started on creating a secure area on the public website for emergency planning documents. This will enable officers to access these documents in the event of a major failure of Council IT infrastructure.

Finance

During the quarter the team performed their day to day duties, budget monitoring, accounting advice and debt chasing. We appointed a new employee to work on our Accounts Receivable. This allows us to refocus our emphasis on debt recovery. We also started working on the revenue and capital budgets for 2009/10.

Community Cohesion & Engagement

In the last quarter we organised and carried out the first session to train all managers in preparing their Equality Impact Assessments.

Health and Safety

We consulted the department on the contents of the revised Departmental Health & Safety Policy ready for redrafting in the next quarter.

Performance Management

After completing the first Performance Management report of the new year we reviewed the process with the Assistant Chief Executive's department. We tested the technology for collecting the new national performance indicators as part of this report.

Administration

The Admin Section met all its regular targets, excluding 5 daily targets when the ldx scanning system was shutdown due to a major system error (addressed in the section). Minor office moves prompted the need to rationalise 9 crates of Tree preservation order files and this was completed within the quarter.

e+ Smartcard Programme

Bracknell has contracted with the London Borough of Hillingdon who has taken advantage of the recent SmartConnect Hosting and Maintenance Contract facility available to all local authorities who take out a licence with Bracknell for e+ SmartConnect.

SmartConnect has now been fully integrated with the Horizon library system and is working well. The integration work with the LeisureFlex system is still at the testing stage due to staff shortages at the Bracknell leisure centre over the summer. The 2008/2009 edition of the Discount Directory was published and distributed during September with the number of offers increasing again over previous years. The launch of the on line e+ enrolment had been delayed due to late improvements being made to the enrolment form to make it more accessible. These improvements needed User Acceptance Testing before they could be implemented. The implementation of the partial on line enrolment is now set for 20th October.

An entry has been submitted for the e – Government Awards citing the new single enrolment scheme as innovation in strategy at a local level.

Planning & Transportation

Building Control

The number of Building Regulations applications received this year remains slightly down compared to the same time last year, however, workload per surveyor remains high as we are yet to recruit to fill vacancies. Interviews for a Senior Building Control Surveyor are taking place in the second week of October which will hopefully reduce work load per surveyor to a reasonable level if we successfully recruit. However, any new member of staff is unlikely to start until the New Year representing a risk to saving on salary costs until Quarter 4.

Domestic Building Control fees have been increased by 10% as of September and will hopefully combat some of the fees lost due to falling application numbers, along with the saving on salaries.

The upgrade in Uniform has taken place to enable the Government led Building Control administration of building Energy Performance Certificates and Competent Persons Certificates.

Development Control

The 1 October saw the introduction of revised permitted development rights for householders requiring the review of advice given out by the Council on both the web site and in leaflets. Initial contacts have been made with regular agents with a view to establishing an agent's forum for planning and building control.

Spatial Policy

A significant amount of time has been spent on preparing the next stage documents for the Development Management DPD (Public Participation on Options) and the Amen Corner Area Action Plan (Draft Submission) including the establishment of their evidence base. The Development Plan Team has also had produce a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) to re-programme the formal document it will produce in light of regulation changes. Housing delivery remained low as the creditcrunch kicked in. A great deal of time has been spent on sub-regional matters helping to get the Berkshire Strategic Transport Board up and running and assisting with the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum in making progress on its agreed priorities. The Sustainable Resource management SPD was finalised ready for adoption and progress has been made of the Streetscene SPD. The Housing Character Assessments have been completed. Significant section resources have been diverted to fight a number of fast-tracked appeals. Section 106 activity remains high with 15 new cases in the last quarter and S106 payment contributions in this quarter were a record £1.9 million

Transport Management

Transport Implementation

Public Transport:

- Following the successful implementation of the new National bus pass scheme in April work has continued to improve communications with the public and the processes. The website has been reviewed to give more up to date and accessible information, opportunities introduced to enable in year transfer from rail cards to bus passes and the data base made available for data sharing as part of the National Fraud initiative. There are now about 10,500 valid bus passes in use.
- Contracted Services. Work to replace the contract for 53/53A has been undertaken. Future route planning has been influenced by Windsor and Maidenhead's unilateral action to withdraw funding from the part of the route between Binfield and Maidenhead. Tender documents were prepared for issue in October. Options include links to Wexham Park Hospital, Maidenhead and Wokingham.
- The Section 106 funded bus service to The Parks is now operated by First at a monthly cost of about £10,000 over the previous £6000. Despite marketing and a free travel week when First took over, patronage remains low. Funds will run out well before the development is complete. Options are being considered. This includes a temporary service suspension so that available funds can be concentrated on the provision of a bus service when greater penetration can be achieved and the development is nearer completion.

Travel Choice:

- Meetings held with two schools to discuss School Travel Plans and as a result work is now underway at these schools to produce STPs.
- Several pan-Berkshire meetings were chaired to finalise the awards for the School Travel Plan reward scheme. Awards to be presented to BF schools during October's Walk to School week.
- A criteria was devised for assessing and comparing school requirements for the Safer Routes to School Programme. A list of schools and possible schemes has now been passed to Highways Design and Construction for inclusion in their capital programme.
- Travel Plans have been received, and approved, from Travelodge and Tesco, Martins Heron.
- The annual Car Free Challenge was held in September. Five local companies took part with 500 commuters using sustainable means to travel to work. AVIS successfully defended their title.
- The Council's tax-free Bike to Work scheme was launched in July. To date 12 members of staff have taken up the offer.
- Preparations are being made for the launch of a car sharing scheme for members of the public.

Bracknell Station Improvement Work

- The partnership with Network Rail and South West Trains is delivering the new passenger footbridge with lifts to improve accessibility to the Reading-bound platform. Construction is in its final stages and it is due to open in December.
- Work continued on the detailed design of the Station Forecourt Improvements. Working drawings are in preparation. Works are proposed to follow the booking hall improvements in early 2009. Land assembly is nearing completion.

Transport Model

- Work continued on the development of the Transport Model with consultants WSP. Calibration and Validation of the model is completed for the AM peak virtually completed for the PM peak.
- At the same time WSP also continued to develop the necessary scenarios on the model in relation to the LDF to assist in the delivery of the LDF.
- Assessments undertaken of the TRL development.
- Senior Engineer, Richard Wilson appointed.

Wokingham LDF

- Advice given on the transport implications for Bracknell on the proposals for 13,000 dwellings new in the draft Wokingham LDF. 4000 of these are near the Borough boundary served by the A322/A329(M) corridor and will have implications for public transport provision and traffic growth.

Programmed Junction Improvements

- The detailed design plans for John Nike Way / London Road have now been signed off and handed over from the consultants. Work has now started on programming the scheme and consulting with various stakeholders and utility companies.

- Consultants have finalised the preliminary design of the Mill Pond and Peacock roundabouts incorporating pedestrian and cycle facilities to cope with the development at Peacock Farm.

Reading Transport Innovation Fund Bid

- Officers have attended the group set up by Reading BC and involving South Oxfordshire, West Berks and Wokingham to promote integrated transport initiatives within the sphere of influence of the regional centre of Reading.

Traffic and Safety

Casualty Reduction

The preliminary design work is underway on the following local safety schemes:

- A332 Windsor Road junction with Lovel Lane
- Ringmead junction with Hanworth Road

Investigatory works are underway for the following local safety scheme:

- Mini-roundabout safety review

Detailed design has been completed on the following local safety scheme:

- A332 Swinley Road approach to Swinley Bottom Roundabout.

Construction is substantially complete on the following local safety scheme:

- Nine Mile Ride – Vehicle Activated signs.

Other Traffic Management Schemes:

Consultants have been commissioned on the following schemes:

- Rackstraws Crossroads - traffic signal assessment
- Holly Spring Lane Bus Gate - improvements to operating system
- Maidens Green Crossroads - feasibility of traffic signals
- 'B' Classified Roads - speed limit assessment

The preliminary design work has been completed on the following traffic management schemes:

- Crowthorne High Street - review of pedestrian facilities
- Harvest Ride - Quelm Park roundabout junction review
- Works arising from the speed limit assessment of 'A' classified roads

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO):

The latest on-street parking restriction TRO has been formally advertised. At present, the objections received are being assessed. The TRO contains waiting restrictions at the following locations:

- Martins Heron and The Warren Area
- The Breech
- Napier Road, Crowthorne
- Disabled Parking Spaces (various Locations)
- Crowthorne Road North approach to Downshire Way Bus Gate

Construction has been completed on the new 30mph speed limit on Tilehurst Lane.

Road Safety Education, Training & Publicity

The following Education, Training and Publicity activities have taken place:

- Continuation of term-time Cycle Training in schools, plus 2 summer holiday courses - 288 pupils trained to date
- Road Safety talks to pre-school and primary pupils
- Pre-Driver Awareness presentations in secondary schools
- Provision of Road Safety resource boxes to nursery, primary and secondary schools
- Roadside Driver Education/Enforcement in partnership with Thames Valley Police/Safer Roads Partnership - providing education to drivers and passengers who exceed speed limits and/or do not comply with seatbelt and mobile phone legislation
- Promotion and provision of high visibility materials and clothing through schools as part of the 'Be Safe Be Seen' initiative
- Promotion of new Road Safety presentations to the business community

Engineering Projects and Adoptions Group

In the Safe Routes to School Programme:-

- Works were completed on providing an additional pedestrian phase on the northern arm of the existing Chavey Down/Forest Rd traffic signal junction.
- Investigation work has continued on a number of schools from the priority list to improve pedestrian approaches and cycling facilities.

In the Walking and Cycling Schemes Programme:-

- Works were started on providing a footway/cycletrack link along Lily Hill Road between London Road and Waldron Hill
- Works were completed on providing a footway/cycletrack off Avebury linking to the new footbridge over Ringmead
- Works were completed on footpath strengthening along sections of Nine Mile Ride.

In the Bus Stop Improvements Programme:-

- A further phase of raised height kerbs were completed on bus stops on the 191 and 159 routes, Harvest Ride and County Lane
- Work was started on the installation of the next phase of new Trueform bus poles and flags
- Design work continued on environmental improvements to Bracknell Railway Station Forecourt

In the Highway Capacity and Roadspace Allocation Programme:-

- Works were completed on the new roundabout at the junction of Broad Lane, Brants Bridge and Ralphs Ride.
- Further design work was carried out on the London Road dualling and London Road/John Nike Way junction improvement scheme. Discussions started with various utility companies to arrange diversion of their services.

In the Mobility Improvements Programme:-

- Works were completed on a number of pedestrian dropped kerb crossings to aid the mobility impaired.

Other Projects:-

- Various minor projects completed for Leisure Section

- Works were completed on improvements to Bull Lane Playing Fields as part of the Garth Hill School Redevelopment
- Works were completed to improve parking at Edgebarrow School
- Works were completed to improve Goaters Road car park for Winkfield Parish Council
- Outline design completed to extend the Broadway car park and a Pre-App submitted
- Fencing repairs were completed at Longhill Skate Park
- Design completed and EA approval sought for riverbank improvements at Shepherds Meadow
- Works were completed to provide additional playground area at Whitegrove School

In the housing delivery programme :-

- Jennetts Park A329 Roundabout and Spur Road - S278 design checks were started with a view to works now commencing in late 2009 to fit in with the Council's London Road Improvement scheme to avoid unnecessary disruption to traffic.
- Jennetts Park Ph 2 infrastructure roads were substantially completed
- Jennetts Park Building works have continued on various housing parcels and but these are slowing down due to slump in housing market
- RAF Staff College - Building works have continued on various housing parcels
- Two Orchards Development off Western Road – S278 Works agreed
- Various infill sites progressed with highway implications

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish. on Site	Comments if Applicable
DEMAND MANAGEMENT AND TRAVEL CHOICE							
Mobility Improvements	PT	Various	Programme of local improvements and removals of barriers to movement				Minor improvement works identified during course of the year
Car Share Database	SC	Various	Roll out BFC car share database to local business and residents	Detailed programme for launch under preparation	Pre Dec 08		
HIGHWAY CAPACITY AND ROAD SPACE ALLOCATION							
Peacock (Doncastle Rd) and Mill Pond (BMW) Roundabouts	SC	Bracknell Town	Design to construction stage	Preliminary design stage	N/A		Consultants have completed initial assessment of work involved. Further design work commissioned.
Three Legged Cross	PT	Warfield	Junction Improvement	Awaiting outcome of land purchase negotiations.	TBA		Detailed design shows unexpected need for additional land. Valuers instructed to enter land purchase negotiations. Works will now be pushed into next financial year. 2007/08 S106 funding due to be reallocated.
Plough and Harrow	PT	Warfield	Junction Improvement	Works substantially complete			Civils and signal work complete. Waiting on SEC to connect up new lamp columns

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish on Site	Comments if Applicable
John Nike Way/B3408 London Rd junction imp and dualling between Coppid Beech Rbt and John Nike Way	SC - PT	Binfield	Design and preliminary works	Detailed design stage			
Broad Lane Junction with Ralphs Ride and Brants Bridge	PT	Harmans Water	Design and construction	Works substantially complete	Jun 08	Oct 08	
A3095 Wildridings Roundabout / Mill Lane Roundabout – Phase 2	PT	Wildridings	Capacity improvement	Phase 1 complete			Phase 2 due after streetlighting renewal in Mill Lane completed in 2008/09
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT							
A321 Junction with A3095 Rackstraws Rd	NM	Sandhurst	Assessment of existing traffic signals	Consultants commissioned	Jan 09	Feb 09	
Crowthorne High St/Sandhurst Rd/Church Rd Pedestrian Facilities Imps	NM	C'wthorne	Review of pedestrian facilities	Preliminary Design	Feb 09	Mar 09	
Maidens Green Crossroads	NM	Winkfield	Feasibility into Traffic Signals at crossroads	Quotations being sought	Mar 09	Mar 09	

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish. on Site	Comments if Applicable
Maidens Green Crossroads	NIM	Winkfield	Vehicle Activated Signs	Complete	Aug 08	Aug 08	
Harvest Ride Speed Management - Phase 1	NIM	Warfield	Safety review of junctions	Detailed Design	Dec 08	Jan 09	
UTMC Development	NIM	Borough Wide	UTC feasibility work	Project Brief being prepared			
09 Easthampstead Road junction with /Old Wokingham Rd	NIM	Bracknell	Improvements to visibility at junction	Consultation with Land Owner	TBA		Negotiations with the land owner are underway
20mph speed limits	NIM	Various	Introduction of 20mph speed limits in residential areas	Member consultation	Sep 08	Oct 08	
Assessment of speed limits on A class Roads	NIM	Various	The assessment of the suitability of the existing speed limits on A class Roads	Surveys Complete.	Feb 09	Mar 09	
Assessment of speed limits on B class Roads	NIM	Various	The assessment of the suitability of the existing speed limits on B class Roads.	Project Brief being prepared.	Feb 09	Mar 09	Speed Surveys only this year

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish on Site	Comments if Applicable
On-street Parking Traffic Regulation Order	NIM	Various	Waiting Restriction TRO to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martins Heron & The Warren • The Breech • Napier Road • Downshire Way Bus Gate • Disabled Parking Spaces 	In progress	Jan 09	Feb 09	To be initiated on completion of the Martins Heron TRO
WALKING AND CYCLING							
Peacock Lane & Waterloo Rd	PT/SC	Great Hollands North	Peacock Farm off-site works - Road widening and footway/cycletrack	Complete			
Cycle Network	SC - PT	Various	Direction signing improvements	Detailed design complete			DfT approval being sought on new cycletrack sign designs
B3408 Wokingham Rd	PT	Binfield with Warfield	Footway/Cycletrack (Western Rd to Popeswood Rbt)	Detailed design completed	Nov 08	Jan 09	Member consultation stage
Nine Mile Ride	PT	C'thorne	Footway Improvements	Complete			
Avebury	PT	Great Hollands North	Footway/Cycletrack (link to Mill Lane Footbridge)	Works in progress	Sept 08	Oct 08	

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Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish on Site	Comments if Applicable
Lily Hill Rd	PT	Bullbrook	Footway/Cycletrack (Perry Oaks to Waldron Hill)	Works in progress	Sept 08	Nov 08	
Ringmead	SC-PT	Great Hollands North	Peacock Farm off-site works – Footway/Cycletrack link from Peacock Farm to new Toucan Crossing on Ringmead	Complete			
LOCAL SAFETY SCHEMES							
B3034 Forest Rd j/w Braziers Lane / Locks Ride	NM	Winkfield	Safety improvements including Vehicle Activated Signs	Complete			
A332 Swinley Rd Junction with A322 Bagshot Rd	NM	Winkfield	Safety improvements on the A332 approach to Swinley Bottom Roundabout	Works ordered	Oct 08	Nov 08	
Nine Mile Ride	NM	Crowthorne	Vehicle Activated Signs on bend	Complete			
Ringmead Junction with Hanworth Rd	NM	Bracknell	Safety improvements to junction	Detailed Design	Jan 09	Feb 09	
A332 Windsor Rd Junction with B3034 Lovel Lane	NM	Winkfield	Safety improvements to junction	Detailed Design	Mar 09	Mar 09	

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish. on Site	Comments if Applicable
Safety Improvements at Minor Roundabouts - Phase 1	NIM	Various	Review of safety at minor roundabout	Project Brief being prepared	Jan 09	Feb 09	
BUS AND RAIL TRAVEL							
Bus Stop Imps, Connecting Paths and Pole Upgrades Programme	SC - PT	Various	Various hard standing improvements, connecting paths and pole upgrades	Works in progress			Raised kerb work complete and new Trueform poles ordered
Route specific quality partnership works on the 194 Route	SC	Various	Scheme Development/Design				
RTPI	SC	Various	Completion and commissioning of RTPI on revised 190 route	Complete			
Replacement of Bus Priority Control System Phase 2	NIM	Bracknell Town	Phased replacement of Teletag system - Holly Spring Lane	Quotations being sought	Jan 09	Feb 09	
Bracknell Rail Station	SC - PT	Bracknell Town	Forecourt Improvements (Design Work)	Detailed design			
Satisfaction and Patronage	SC	Various	Implement measures and initiatives to improve	Meeting held with First and Courtney			

Annex E: Integrated Transport Schemes Progress up to 30th September

Subject	Team Leader Responsible	Town or Parish	Description	Current Status	Est. Start on Site	Est. Finish on Site	Comments if Applicable
			satisfaction with services and increase patronage	to discuss options			

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 18 DECEMBER 2008

DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2009/10 (Borough Treasurer)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Executive is being asked to agree the Council's draft budget proposals for 2009/10 at its meeting on 16 December 2008 as the basis for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, Overview and Scrutiny Panels and other interested parties. The consultation period runs until 27 January 2009, after which the Executive will consider the representations made at its meeting on 10 February 2009, before recommending the budget to Council.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel comment on the Council's draft budget proposals for 2009/10.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Attached to this report are the 2009/10 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme reports which were presented to the Executive on 16 December 2008. These reports are for information and background to assist consideration of the Council's draft budget proposals. In particular the Annexes to each report set out the budget proposals in detail. The index below sets out the relevant section for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Page numbers refer to those in the bottom right hand corner.

Social Care & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Title	Page Nos
Commitment Budget	14
Draft Revenue Budget Proposals	18-19
Capital Programme	58-61

Environment, Culture & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Title	Page Nos
Commitment Budget	14
Draft Revenue Budget Proposals	20-22
Capital Programme	51-57

Overview and Scrutiny Commission (Corporate Services/Chief Executives/Council Wide)

Title	Page Nos
Commitment Budget	14-15
Draft Revenue Budget Proposals	16-17,23
Capital Programme	49-50, 62-64

Background Papers

None

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 16 DECEMBER 2008

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2009/10
(Borough Treasurer)**

1. PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 26 November and established the Council's general grant allocation for 2009/10.
- 1.2 This report summarises the Government's provisional proposals and considers their impact on the Council's own budget for 2009/10. The Executive will need to consult on its detailed budget proposals with the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and other interested parties during the next six weeks.
- 1.3 All comments received on these budget proposals will then be submitted to the Executive on 10 February. This will allow the Executive to determine its final budget package and recommend the appropriate Council Tax level to Council, who will formally approve the 2009/10 budget and Council Tax on 25 February.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Approve the revised Commitment Budget at Annexe A;**
- 2.2 **Agree the draft budget proposals for 2009/10 as the basis for consultation with the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and other interested parties.**
- 2.3 **Approve the virements relating to 2008/09 budget as set out in section 10.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **The recommendations are designed to allow the Executive to consult on its draft budget proposals as required by the Local Government Act 2000.**

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The range of options being considered is included in the report and its Annexes.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

COMMITMENT BUDGET 2009/10 – 2011/12

- 5.1 Initial preparations for the 2009/10 budget have focussed on the Council's Commitment Budget for 2009/10 – 2011/12. This brings together the Council's existing expenditure plans, taking account of approved commitments and the ongoing effects of service developments and efficiencies that were agreed when the 2008/09 budget was set. The table below summarises the Commitment Budget position with base expenditure of £72.525m next year, before any new changes are considered in the light of the Provisional Finance Settlement. The commitment budget is shown in more detail in Annexe A.

Table 1: Summary Commitment Budget 2009/10-2011/12

	Planned Expenditure		
	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Base Budget	71,253	72,525	72,899
<i>Movements in Year:</i>			
Chief Executive / Corporate Services	35	21	83
Social Care & Learning (excluding schools)	444	-358	-10
Environment, Culture & Communities	184	396	7
Non Departmental / Common	609	315	0
<i>Total Movements</i>	1,272	374	80
Adjusted Base	72,525	72,899	72,979

- 5.2 A number of changes are proposed to the Commitment Budget since it was last considered by the Executive in July and are reflected in the above summary. The changes which affect the overall level of commitments are set out below:

- A sum of £5,000 has been included in the 2010/11 budget (and removed in 2011/12) to cover the costs associated with the freedom march to be organised by Sandhurst Town Council.
- Savings by departments arising from the capital invest to save schemes approved in 2007/08 (-£0.059m) and the loss of interest associated with the Invest to save schemes approved (£0.028m) have now been added to the Commitment Budget.
- Within the overall net savings of £3m it was recognised that there would be £1m of expenditure, previously charged to the HRA, that would now be funded by the General Fund. The impact of this was reduced in the first year after transfer because of services sold to Bracknell Forest Homes. These services can only be sold to Bracknell Forest Homes for a period of one year after transfer. A not her key element relates to Enid Wood House. Based on the current information it is likely that surrender of the lease will be achieved by September 2009.

- The Commitment Budget included a number of savings package items arising from the “Balancing the Budget” review last year. These were included in the Commitment Budget considered by the Executive last July and they have now been included as part of the overall savings package in Annex B. Therefore the total £0.367m has been added to the Commitment Budget for 2009/10 and £0.379m in 2010/11.
 - The schools music festival organised by Social Care & Learning is held every two years. £10,000 was added to the Commitment Budget for 2010/11. However the £10,000 was not removed from the budget profile in 2011/12, this has now been amended.
- 5.3 Taking account of these changes, Table 1 shows that base expenditure (excluding schools) is planned to rise by £1.272m next year before consideration is given to allowances for inflation and budget proposals identified by individual Departments in 2009/10. Of this total £0.975m relates to increasing costs of waste disposal, impact of capital programme and use of balances from 2008/09 and residual LSVT costs.

6 PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2009/10

National Perspective

- 6.1 The Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement was announced on 26 November. In respect of grant, the Council remains on the “Floor” and can only expect the minimum grant increase for the foreseeable future. It has been announced that this minimum grant increase will be 1.75% in 2009/10, 1.5% in 2010/11 and it is assumed to be 1.5% in 2011/12. This is below the overall national level of the settlement and below current inflation and growth pressures facing the Council. Therefore, Government support for 2009/10 will be £25.742m including a reduction of £0.033m to the 2008/09 base figure in relation to Student Finances reflecting the transfer of responsibility for the administration of student loans to the Student Loan Company.
- 6.2 The *Valuing People Now* consultation has led to a change in Government policy which from April 2009 requires NHS learning disability budgets and associated commissioning responsibility for social care for adults to be transferred to local authorities. This will ensure that the resources for commissioning learning disability services rest with the authority with lead responsibility. As Primary Care Trusts (PCT’s) will continue to receive money from the Department of Health for social care services until 2010-2011, the expectation is that transfers for the first two years will be made locally between PCT’s and local authorities with the amounts based upon spend in 2007/8 (with an uplift for inflation and any other factors to be agreed locally). PCT’s will need to pass the agreed level of funding to local authorities each year in April 2009 and April 2010. From April 2011 funding will be allocated directly to Council’s by the Department of Health on a national basis that has yet to be consulted on. The exact amount to be transferred in April 2009 is still subject to negotiation with East Berkshire PCT but will be in the order of £6m.

Council Tax

- 6.3 A surplus has been generated on the collection fund as a result of a reduction in discounts in the current year and the Council's share of this surplus is estimated to be £0.169m. Council Tax at current levels will generate total income of £3.431m in 2009/10. In addition a further £0.414m will be generated from the increase in tax base arising from the occupation of new properties during 2009/10.
- 6.4 The Government, in announcing the provisional 2009/10 settlement, made it clear that it expects the average Council Tax increase in 2009/10 for all Councils to be substantially below 5%.
- 6.5 The Executive at its meeting in February will recommend to Council the level of Council Tax in light of the final settlement, the results of the consultation and the final budget proposals. However, it is extremely unlikely that any increase in excess of 5% will be acceptable to the Government, no matter how well justified.

Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI)

- 6.6 The Council was notified in June 2008 that it had been awarded £0.447m for 2007/08 through the LABGI scheme and this was added to the general reserves. The scheme provides an incentive for local authorities to promote economic growth in their area based on retaining a share of the previous year's increase in Business Rates.
- 6.7 The current LABGI scheme has been reviewed by the Government and a significantly reduced revised scheme is proposed (total funding was £1.5bn over the previous three years now this has now reduced to £250m for 2009/10-2010/11). Council's will be rewarded depending on the extent to which they and other authorities in their sub region have increased the business rate base. Funding will be allocated on a regional basis and to each Council according to the size of its population. The Council could expect to receive around £0.1m in 2009/10 subject to the publication of the final details of the scheme.

7 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2009/10

Service Pressures and Developments

- 7.1 There remains a need to ensure that the Council continues to improve services and invest in the Borough, focussing on protecting front line services and continuing to invest to deliver the Medium Term Objectives. In preparing the 2009/10 draft budget proposals each department has evaluated the potential pressures on its services and these are set out in Annex B. The following table summarises the pressures by department.

Table2: Service Pressures/Development

Pressures	£'000
Chief Executive / Corporate Services	0
Social Care & Learning (excluding schools)	691
Environment, Culture & Communities	526
Corporate Wide	235
Total Pressures/Developments	1,452

These pressures largely respond only to changing demographic trends and the resultant increase in client numbers, the economic climate or additional requirements on the Council stemming from legislation. They do also support the Council's five overarching priorities and medium term objectives in the following way;

- Protect and enhance the environment of the Borough (£0.058m)
- Promote health & achievement (£0.070m)
- Create a Borough where people are, and feel safe (£0.571m)
- Deliver Value for Money (£0.040m)

In addition the Council continues to invest in the its priorities through targeted capital expenditure, details of which are contained in the capital programme report.

Service Economies /Balancing the Budget

7.2 In February 2007, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) were appointed to assist the Council in developing options to balance the forecast budget gap over the next three years. In order to achieve the medium term financial strategy to bring spending to a level that can be sustained by annually generated revenue, a range of economy measures have been sought alongside the identification of priority investment areas. As in previous years, these economies focus as far as possible on central and departmental support rather than on front-line services and this has been an important principle in the budget preparations over recent months. However, there are also some service modifications included in these proposals. Departments have been reviewing the practicality and deliverability of the "Balancing the Budget" options with leading Members. In addition other savings proposals have been identified by each department to help bridge the budget gap. Within this general framework, the potential changes which the Executive is considering for each Department are outlined in Annexe B and are summarised in the table below. Inevitably some of the saving proposals included in Annexe B will impact on service provision, although this has, as indicated above, been kept to a relatively low level.

Table 3: Summary Service Economies

	£'000
Chief Executive / Corporate Services	511
Social Care & Learning (excluding schools)	1,275
Environment, Culture and Communities	895
Council Wide	427
Total Savings	3,108

Key Decisions

- 7.3 The Council's constitution requires key decisions to be declared on the forward plan. It defines a key decision as being one over £0.400m and/or a major policy decision affecting more than one electoral ward. Consideration and approval of the budget is a major policy decision and is therefore a key decision. However the budget by its nature includes proposals which in themselves fall within the technical definition of a key decision. Examples of these are as follows:

Pressures

- Free swimming programme

Savings

- Collaborative procurement
- Forestcare
- Modernising accommodation based on older people
- Rationalisation of Estate
- Income generation

As the budget report is a policy document and is subject to six weeks consultation then the identification of these issues within the budget report fulfil the requirements under the Council's constitution. However some of the above issues have been or will be subject to further separate reports to the Executive where necessary.

Corporate Issues

- 7.4 Apart from the specific departmental budget proposals there are some corporate issues affecting all departments' budgets which need to be considered. The precise impact of these corporate budgets is likely to change before the final budget proposals are recommended. However the current view on these issues is outlined in the following paragraphs:

a) Capital Programme

The scale of the Council's capital programme for 2009/10 will impact upon the revenue budget and will itself be subject to consultation over the coming weeks. In recent years the Council has undertaken "internal borrowing" to fund its capital programme. In 2007/08 the Council transferred its housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes and received a significant capital receipt. This receipt was used to fund previously accumulated internal borrowing. All new spending on services will need to be funded from new capital receipts or borrowing from internal sources. The proposed capital programme of £9.65m for 2009/10 is in a separate report on tonight's agenda. After allowing for future capital receipts of £3m the additional revenue costs will be £0.175m in 2009/10 and a further £0.439m in 2010/11, if approved.

b) Interest

The current economic slowdown and the credit crunch has made it is very difficult to predict what will happen to interest rates over the coming year. The 2008/09 budget is based on an average interest rate of 5.5% and the forecast rate for 2009/10 is 5%. Improved cash flow in 2008/09, which is expected to be replicated in 2009/10, means that the effect of the reduction in interest rates will only be £0.273m. However this will be reviewed in light of the recent base rate cut of 1.5% and its impact on future investment policy and any changes will be included in the February Executive report. A 1% reduction in interest rates would add pressure of £0.545m to the General Fund.

c) Corporate Contingency

A sum of £0.256m is currently included in the base budget to meet the cost of unpredictable or unforeseen items that would represent in-year budget risks. However given the economic uncertainty the risk to the Council's budget has increased and the Borough Treasurer suggests that the contingency be increased by £0.408m. The Executive will need to make a judgement on the appropriate level of contingency at its February meeting, taking advice from the Borough Treasurer who will need to certify the robustness of the overall budget proposals in the context of the Council's remaining general and earmarked reserves, all of which will be reviewed to ensure that they are sufficient to manage the financial risks facing the Council in the coming years.

d) Provision for Inflation and Pay Awards

The Commitment Budget excludes the cost of inflation on both expenditure and income. With consumer price inflation (CPI) currently running at around 4.5%, inflation will clearly impact on budgets.

In past years, the Council has restricted the provision for inflation on prices as a general economy measure, to help address the underlying budget gap, although pay awards have been fully funded. In the context of the Council's overall financial position, it is again prudent to consider where the provision for inflation on prices can be limited as an economy measure, although some exceptions will be necessary to reflect actual increases that will not be containable without real service reductions and to meet contractual commitments.

At this stage the inflation provision is not finalised, although for planning purposes a sum of £2.25m, an increase of £0.282m on last year, needs to be added to the budget which is consistent with previous years. This will be achieved by making allowance for a non teaching staff pay award of 2%, limiting inflation were possible e.g. training, equipment, furniture, consultants, and increasing fees and charges by 5%.

The Executive will need to consider where it is appropriate and necessary to provide for inflation over the coming weeks so that the actual inflation provision can be added to the final budget report in February 2009.

e) Fees and Charges

The Council established a policy for the review of fees and charges when setting the 2001/02 budget. This requires each Department to consider the level of charges against the following criteria.

- Fees and Charges should aim, as a minimum, to cover the costs of delivering the service;
- Where a service operates in free market conditions, fees and charges should at least be set at the market rate;
- Fees and charges should not be levied where this is an ineffective use of resources, i.e. the cost of collection exceeds any income generated.

The Audit Commission published a report "Positively Charged" in January 2008. This report sets out a number of areas of best practice concerning charging for services. In particular improvements have been made to the fees and charges information presented to Members to make it more transparent for Councillors and to inform the decision making process. The proposed fees and charges presented to Members will now include the purposes of the charge, the likely budget to be generated by the group of fees and charges and how these charges contribute to the Council's overarching priorities.

It is estimated that most prices, where the Council charges users of services a fee for that service, will need to increase by around 5% to cover increases in costs from inflation and other pressures. Officers will prepare a report on the proposed Fees and Charges which will be presented for approval by the Executive in January.

Spending on Schools

- 7.5 The Schools Budget – both delegated school funding and centrally managed items such as Special Educational Needs placements made outside of the Borough- is funded by a specific Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) with any year end balance, either surplus or deficit, required to be ring-fenced within the Schools Budget. Therefore, use of this funding is outside the control of the Council.
- 7.6 However, Local Authorities have a legal duty to set the overall level of Schools Budget and individual budgets for each of their schools by 31 March. This must be no lower than the level of anticipated DSG, but can be higher, if the Council decides to add a top up. There is also a requirement to publish provisional budget data for each year of the prevailing spending review cycle which means to the end March 2011.
- 7.7 Based on guaranteed levels of per pupil funding and an estimate for pupil numbers, in February 2008 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) published indicative allocations of DSG for the duration of the spending review period. These were estimated at £60.896 million for 2009-10 and £63.199 million for 2010-11. This equates to confirmed increases in per pupil funding of 4.0% and 4.6%.

- 7.8 As the level of DSG is calculated from actual January pupil numbers, to meet the statutory publication deadline, the Schools Budget for each of the next two years will have to be set on the basis of the estimated level of DSG plus any accumulated balance. In estimating the level of DSG, latest pupil forecasts from individual schools will be used, rather than the more out of date DCSF forecast. The draft budget proposals therefore assume the Schools Budget is set at the level of DSG and that any accumulated deficit or surplus is managed to a nil balance by the end of the three year budget period.
- 7.9 Decisions around the final balance of the budget between spending by schools and that on pupil services managed by the Council is the responsibility of the Executive Member for Education and Libraries, although the Schools Forum must be consulted, and in certain circumstances, agree to spending increases on the services managed by the Council. The Executive Member will also agree the provisional level of Schools Budget for 2010-11 which will be subject to review prior to the commencement of the financial year, in order to take account of the most up to date data.

Summary

- 7.10 Adding the draft proposals to the Commitment Budget and taking account of the corporate issues identified above would result in total expenditure of £73.975m as shown in the table below.

Table 4: Summary of proposals:

	£'000
Commitment Budget	72,525
2009/10 Budget Pressures	1,452
2009/10 Budget Economies	-3,108
Capital programme	175
Reduced interest rate	273
Contingency	408
Inflation Provision (indicative)	2,250
Draft Budget Requirement 2009/10	73,975

- 7.11 The Council can anticipate income before any Council Tax increase of up to £69.806m. This arises from Government grants (£25.742m), Collection Fund surplus (£0.169m) and Council Tax at current levels (£43.895m). However, with the potential overall cost of the budget package being consulted on in the region of £73.805m, this leaves a potential gap of around £4.169m. As such, the potential economies outlined in Annexe B should be seen as a “core package” that may well need to be built upon.
- 7.12 Options to bridge the remaining gap are essentially the same as in all previous years. Members can choose to adopt any or all of the following approaches:
- a) increase in Council Tax, noting the comments by the Minister on capping;
 - b) limit the provision for inflation increases to essential services only;
 - b) an appropriate contribution from the Council’s Revenue balances, bearing in mind the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
 - d) deletion of identified service developments;
 - e) identifying further expenditure reductions.

8 BALANCES

- 8.1 The Council has an estimated £10.3m available in General Reserves at 31 March 2009. This is made up as follows:

Table 5: General Reserves as at 31 March 2009

	£m
General Fund	5.8
HRA Balance	4.7
LABGI	0.4
LPSA 2 reward grant	0.3
Under spending in 2008/09	1.2
Planned use in 2008/09	(2.1)
TOTAL Estimated General Balances	10.3

The Council has two investments with Icelandic banks totalling £5m which have now been put into receivership/administration. It is unclear as to whether the Council will get back the full amount invested. Ernst & Young, administrators for one of the banks, has said "in broad terms, the Administrators considered that the value of the book value of the assets of the business appeared to be of the same order of magnitude as the liabilities but that the recoveries for Local Authorities would be dependent on the final level of actual realisations." In announcing the provisional settlement the Government have proposed to make a regulation which will mean a provision in 2009/10 budgets for any possible loss will not need to be made. This will give Councils' time to adjust their medium term plans and be clearer about recovering the money before making decision which will affect the budget and potentially council tax.

- 8.2 Based on keeping the minimum prudent level of reserves of £4m there is £6.3m available to support future expenditure. In simple terms, balances can be used to help reduce the gap. However, bearing in mind the risks associated with the Icelandic Banks it would not be advisable to use all of the available reserves until the position on this issue is clearer. This cannot disguise the fact that projected expenditure, even after the potential reductions offered in the draft proposals outlined above, significantly exceeds the Council's current resource base. With the Council similarly affected by the grant floor in 2010/11, further major reductions would be needed next year with limited flexibility to use balances if the full amount is used to bridge the budget gap.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council's constitution requires a six week consultation period on the draft budget proposals. In this context, it is inevitable that, of the broad range of options proposed for consultation, not all will necessarily be included in the final package. It is also likely that some further issues will arise between now and February.
- 9.2 When the final settlement is known, the Executive can consider the prudent use of revenue balances and appropriate level of Council Tax to support expenditure in line with the overall medium term financial strategy along with further possible reductions to augment the "core package" in Annexe B. In doing this, it will be important to manage the budget process effectively so that the inevitable important service pressures can be responded to whilst, as far as possible, front-line services are maintained with minimal disruption and without creating long term problems for the Council.

9.3 It is suggested, therefore, that the Overview & Scrutiny Commission reviews the overall budget package and determines whether any specific issues should be considered further by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, at their meetings in January.

9.4 All comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Commission, Overview and Scrutiny Panels and others on the revenue budget proposals will then be submitted to the Executive on 10 February 2009. This will allow the Executive to determine the final budget package and recommend the appropriate Council Tax level to the Council on 25 February 2009.

10 BUDGET MONITORING 2008/09- VIREMENT REQUEST

10.1 A virement is the transfer of resources between two budgets but it does not increase the overall budget approved by the Council. Financial regulations require formal approval of the Executive of any virement over £0.050m. During 2008/09 a number of significant virements have been identified which require the approval of the Executive. Details of the virements are set out in Annex C and summarised below. The two most significant items relate to the allocation of residual housing costs and the transfer of services and savings associated with the departmental reorganisation.

	Residual Housing Costs	Reorganisation	Structural Changes reserve	Procurement Savings	Town Centre Reserve	Bus Contracts	Smart Card Recharges
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000
Corporate Services/Chief Executive's	1400	277	86	-213	134		97
Social Care & Learning	90	21,850	195	-6		231	-50
Environment, Culture & Communities	149	4,433	100	-79			-47
Social Services & Housing		-26,750					
Non Departmental Budgets	-1,639	190		298			
Earmarked reserves			-381		-134	-231	
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

11 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 11.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to set the level of the Council Tax by 11 March each year. It is impossible to achieve this without having agreed an affordable revenue budget for the year in question.

Borough Treasurer

- 11.2 The financial implications of this report are included in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 11.3 The Council's final budget proposals will potentially impact on all areas of the community. A detailed consultation process is planned in order to provide individuals and groups with the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals. This will ensure that in making final recommendations the Executive can be made aware of the views of a broad section of residents and service users.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 11.4 A sum of £0.256m is currently included in the base budget to meet the costs of unpredictable or unforeseen items that would represent in year budget risks. A further £0.408m is proposed to be added to contingency to reflect the current economic uncertainty. The Executive will need to make a judgement on the level of contingency at its meeting in February.
- 11.5 The Borough Treasurer, as the Council's Chief Finance Officer (section 151 officer) must formally certify that the budget is sound. This will involve identifying and assessing the key risk areas in the budget to ensure the robustness of estimates and ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage those risks, including maintaining an appropriate level of reserves and contingency. This formalises work that is normally undertaken each year during the budget preparation stages and in monthly monitoring after the budget is agreed. The Borough Treasurer will report his findings in February, when the final budget package is recommended for approval.

12 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 12.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission will be consulted on the budget proposals and may also choose to direct specific issues to individual overview and scrutiny panels. Targeted consultation exercises will be undertaken with the Bracknell Forest 1500, the Senior Citizens' Forum, Parish Councils and voluntary organisations. Comments and views will be sought on both the overall budget package and on the detailed budget proposals. A meeting with the local business community is also planned to obtain their views on the budget proposals. In addition, this report and all the supporting information are publicly available to any individual or group who wish to comment on any proposal included within it. To facilitate this, the full budget package will be placed on the Council's web site at Bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

12.2 The timetable for the approval of the 2009/10 Budget is as follows

Executive agree proposals as basis for consultation	16 December
Consultation period	17 December - 27 January
Executive considers representations made and recommends budget.	10 February
Council considers Executive budget proposals	25 February

Background Papers

None

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Commitment Budget 2009/10 to 2011/12

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Chief Executive / Corporate Services				
Approved Budget	16,381	15,892	15,927	15,948
Denominational transport		-40		
Community Event		-5		
Shopmobility		32		
BFVA		60		
Area Based Grant		21	21	
Borough Elections				70
Capital Invest to Save 07/08- Agresso refinancing (3 years-		-33		
Capital Invest to Save 07/08 - server refresh				13
Net Inter Departmental Virements	- 489			
Chief Executive / Corporate Services Adjusted Budget	15,892	15,927	15,948	16,031
Social Care & Learning				
Approved Budget	18,509	38,680	39,124	38,766
Suitability surveys (school sites)		20		
Foster Carers - training & development		30		
Schools Music Festival			10	-10
LPSA2- Attendance and Exclusion at School		-58		
Learning Disabilities (Transition clients/older carers)		176		
Services to Older People		70		
Effect of 2 Easters in 2007/08		24		
Children's System Integration		50		
Area Based Grant		132	-368	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	20,171			
Social Care & Learning Adjusted Budget	38,680	39,124	38,766	38,756
Environment, Culture and Communities				
Approved Budget	22,843	26,004	26,188	26,584
Landfill Tax / Waste Disposal PFI		337	159	13
Landfill tax increase		63	74	
Local Development Framework		-82	242	
Tree preservation orders		-25		
Planners Farm Income			10	
Capital Invest to Save 06/07 - Easthampstead Park		-1	-1	-1
LPSA2- Improve health & well being of adult residents		22	-42	
LPSA2- Community Cohesion (Sport)		0	-31	
Area Based Grant		-8	-20	
Commuted Maintenance(forest Rd)- to reversed 2012/13		4		
Smart Connect		-100		
Capital Invest to save 07/08- Edgbarrow Sports Centre		-13		
Capital Invest to save 08/09 - BSLC motorised pool covers		-7		
Capital Invest to save 08/09- BSLC windows		-6		
Sandhurst Freedom March			5	-5
Net Inter Departmental Virements	3,161			
Environment, Culture and Communities Adjusted Budget	26,004	26,188	26,584	26,591
Social Services & Housing				
Approved Budget	23,766	0	0	0
Net Inter Departmental Virements	-23766			
Social Services & Housing Adjusted budget	0	0	0	0
Total Service Departments	80,576	81,239	81,298	81,378

Commitment Budget 2009/10 to 2011/12

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Non Departmental / Council Wide				
Approved Budget	-10,246	-9,323	-8,714	-8,399
2008/09 capital programme (full year effect) -Interest		241		
2008/09 use of balances (full year effect)		58		
LPSA 2 funding from Earmarked reserves		36	73	
Area Based Grant		-145	367	
Commuted Maintenance(Forest Rd)- to be reversed 2012/13		-4		
LSVT Residual costs- cessation of SLA's/Enid wood house surrender		445	-125	
Additional interest		-50		
Invest to save - capital bids approved		28		
Net Inter Departmental Virements	923			
Non Departmental / Council Wide	-9,323	-8,714	-8,399	-8,399
TOTAL BUDGET	71,253	72,525	72,899	72,979
Change in commitment budget		1,272	374	80

For management purposes budgets are controlled on a cash basis. The following figures which are used for public reports represent the cost of services including recharges and capital charges:

	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Corporate Services	8,839	8,874	8,895	8,978
Social Care & Learning	45,819	46,263	45,905	45,895
Environment, Culture & Communities	33,096	33,280	33,676	33,683
Non Departmental/Council Wide	- 16,501	- 15,892	- 15,577	- 15,577
	71,253	72,525	72,899	72,979

Chief Executives/Corporate Services

	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Collaborative Procurement These procurement savings are based on the delivery of additional corporate contracts and further collaborative procurement opportunities developed by the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit. These savings targets are challenging as opportunities for further corporate contracts diminish over time.	-100	-70	
Alternative Cash Office Counter Service With the transfer of housing and the increased take up of direct debits the number of cash office visits continues to reduce. A new service will now be provided through post offices and retail outlets offering Payzone facilities across the whole Borough.	-16	-16	
Transport Function - Best Value Review and Berkshire wide procurement The savings in 2009/10 will be achieved by the centralisation of the Social Services based vehicles. Following centralisation there will be some rationalisation of vehicles resulting in increased utilisation of the remaining vehicles.	-50		-50
Internal Audit Fees The number of days allocated for internal audit will be reduced without increasing the risk to the internal control environment.	-25		
Legal Services – TUPE 2 Legal Services are tendering for provision of legal support to Bracknell Forest Homes. If the tender is unsuccessful then from 31 March there will be some staff who will transfer to Bracknell Forest Homes under TUPE reducing the costs to the Council.	-50		
Finance – Treasury Management The Council has reviewed its investment strategy. Longer term investment techniques and instruments, such as callable deposits, are now available to the Council without increasing financial risk.	-32		
Finance – Insurance The Council currently provides additional insurance cover to those schools that wish to purchase it. The cost of administering these insurances will now be included in the premiums charged to schools, which are not expected to increase as a result of this change.	-12		
Recharge to Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit (BPSSU) With the transfer of the BPSSU to Bracknell Forest this service will need internal support and therefore can be recharged with some of BFBC's fixed overheads. The BPSSU is fully funded from government grant.	-20		

Council Tax Benefit Subsidy The benefit subsidy for 2007/8 revealed a surplus of grant. This arises because the grant exceeds the costs incurred in recovering overpayments. This over recovery of grant can be reflected in the 2009/10 budget.	-30		
Council Tax Court Costs Costs recovered from Council Tax payers have increased.	-27		
Commercial Property Maintenance A planned reduction in non essential maintenance.	-5		
Democratic and Support Services - Additional Income A detailed review of budgets has identified several small sources of ongoing income (ceremonies, NAGs, Neighbourhood Forums and the LGA) that can now be included in the 2009/10 budget.	-13		
IT Services – Contracted Services and Consultants Fees A detailed review of the 2007/8 outturn has identified budgets which can now be reduced – including positive action taken to consolidate service contracts resulting in savings.	-25		
Cross Departmental – Supplies and Services A detailed review of departmental budgets has identified a range of supplies and services where savings can be achieved. These include furniture and equipment budgets, subscriptions and licence fees.	-106		
Net Proposed Budget Movement	-511	-86	-50

Social Care and Learning

	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
<p>Purchasing Plan – Adults A purchasing plan has been developed to forecast the future social care needs of adults. This takes account of forecast changes in demographics, known transfers from Children's Services to adults, people with learning disabilities who are currently supported by family members who are themselves ageing, other known changes to existing care packages and changes in external income.</p>	571	670	648
<p>South Bracknell Youth As a result of the stock transfer, capital resources have been made available to enhance provision for young people in South Bracknell. A revenue budget is required to compliment the capital development to allow for the provision of on-going activities.</p>	20	50	
<p>Carer allowances for looked after children and related allowances Recent case law, supported by counsel's opinion, has determined that LAs are acting unlawfully in paying foster carers who are relatives or friends, and who would under current BFC procedures be considered as kinship carers, a lower rate than their standard fostering rate. The case judgement requires that fostering allowances are used as the starting point when calculating special guardianship and adoption allowances.</p>	80		
<p>Public Law Outline Increased court fees are now being charged to LAs in child care cases (£4k compared to £150). In addition, where previously expert assessments were always jointly instructed and the costs shared between parties, the new Public Law Outline requires the LA to complete assessments before applying to court. This means the cost falls entirely to the LA (at £5k per psychological assessment).</p>	20		
<p>Learning Disability Initiatives This 'project' combines a number of initiatives to reduce the cost of placements and the way in which support is commissioned. Projects are on target and will be achieved.</p>	-32	-60	
<p>Modernising Accommodation Based Older People Services This is a complex project expected to deliver medium to long term financial benefits. A full options appraisal exercise will be undertaken to identify potential areas for modernisation.</p>	-60	-100	-100
<p>Modernise In-house Home Care The organisational change regarding In House Home Support focussing on Specialist Services is progressing well and on target.</p>	-75	-64	

<p>LAC transport now to be part funded from Schools Budget Transport costs can be high for children looked after who need to be maintained at their previous school. The Schools Forum has previously accepted the educational benefits from stability of local placement and has agreed to part fund the additional transport costs as a Combined Services Budget that supports the Every Child Matters Agenda.</p>	-30		
<p>Former Vulnerable Children's Grant. A number of the activities formerly funded by this grant are now being funded from alternative sources, or based on previous spending patterns, funding levels can be reduced. This most notably relates to the Traveller Education Service which is now funded from the Schools Budget.</p>	-40		
<p>LAC placement costs Significant cost reductions have been achieved through pro-active management of cases. This has been possible from a more stable and experienced workforce, which is less reliant on agency staff and improved commissioning that has substantially reduced the average cost of placement. Of equal importance has been a steady reduction in the number of children in care. The level of saving proposed can be achieved if the current caseload does not increase. This is a high risk budget, where weekly placement costs per child can be between £4-5k for complex needs cases.</p>	-994		
<p>Departmental budgets A number of Departmental operational budgets have been reviewed based on historic spending patterns. This relates to reduced spending on staff training and supplies and services, increasing a small number of charges for services to schools, reducing spending on Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education and recharging a greater share of costs to external grants.</p>	-44		
<p>Net Proposed Budget Movement</p>	-584	496	548

Environment, Culture and Communities

	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
South Hill Park Grounds It is a condition of the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant that this additional maintenance for South Hill Park is provided.			80
Housing IT The Housing Service formerly used the housing rents system for all its work. All licences and running costs for this system were charged to the HRA. The new Strategic Housing Division is purchasing a system for Choice Based Lettings, temporary accommodation, housing rents and the waiting list. This bid is for the maintenance and licensing of these new systems and is net of the licence budgets for the current waiting list system.	40		
Smartcard purchase Due to changes in the Concessionary Fares schemes demand for e+cards has increased, it is estimated that an additional £13,000 will be required to purchase more cards.	13		
Library Stock Fund The core offer of the Library Service is the lending of materials which has declined over recent years. The budget for purchasing materials has been significantly reduced from £324,000 in 2004/05 to £219,000 in 2008/09.	50		
Land Charges Income from searches has declined significantly in the current financial year due to the economic climate, unless the housing market picks up this reduction will continue. It is assumed that the market will pick up gradually over the following two years.	120	-60	-60
Smartconnect PWC Savings income target for sales of the smartconnect licence to other authorities is wholly uncertain	200		
London Road Landfill Site London Road landfill site requires more day to day management, the additional resource needed is estimated at £50,000. This additional cost would be shared between the Berkshire Unitaries, Bracknell Forest's share would be £8,000	8		
Downshire Golf Course Roundage on the main course has declined over the last two years, a pressure of £30,000 was reported in 2007/08. Use in the current financial year has continued to decline and an additional pressure of £30k is currently predicted for 2008/09. The trend of usage of the Golf Course suggest there will be a continued decline in use.	30		

<p>Free Swimming Programme A Bracknell Forest Council scheme for free swimming for Bracknell Residents in the age groups 60 and over and under 16 is under consideration which could start on 1 April 2009</p>	50		
<p>Supporting People IT provision The replacement of the adult social care IT system has led to the need to replace the existing supporting people system. There is a £86,000 budget in Environment, Culture and Communities capital programme in 2008/09 for the cost of the replacement for the supporting people system. This pressure is for server and on going maintenance costs of £5,000.</p>		5	
<p>Demographic pressures – property As the number of properties increase therefore the direct costs of providing services to each of those properties such as refuse collection increase. The Council also takes on responsibilities for new roads in housing developments.</p>	15	20	35
<p>Forestcare Work is on going to establish a business plan for Forest Care. The main risk to achieving this is the impact of BFH tendering the service in 2009/10. A business plan targeted at achieving these savings will be available by Nov 2008.</p>	-15	-30	-40
<p>Housing Enabling Grant Capitalise Existing staff will charge time against the capital scheme each year based on a 0.6% fee on the average £3.4 million capital spend each year. Future capitalisation will depend upon the ability to recycle the receipt proceeds otherwise it will become a revenue cost.</p>	-20		
<p>Traffic Modelling A level of income has already been assumed in the business plan. The slow down in house completions could affect the use of the model.</p>	-30		
<p>General Running Costs The ECC department centralised its support service budgets several years ago under the management of the Performance and Resources Division. Since then expenditure has consistently fallen. This saving includes the reduction in licences for the Uniform system.</p>	-20		
<p>LDF commitments Review of 5 year rolling budget projection.</p>	-25		
<p>Cemetery and Crematorium Income It is proposed to increase charges above inflation.</p>	-25		
<p>Housing and Planning Delivery Grant It is assumed that the overall grant will continue at around £400k of which a third has to be spent on capital schemes. This represents the increase over and above the current budget provision for the revenue part of the grant.</p>	-150		

Concessionary Fares This reflects the current demand in 2008/9 for the new concessionary fares scheme	-230		
Smartcard As a result of changing the provider there is a reduction in the Management Service costs.	-60		
Waste Management Re-measurement of Waste recovered by the RE3 partner authorities will lead to a reduction in BFBC costs	-190		
Homelessness The proposal is to establish the Council's leasing scheme on a self financing basis as well as introduce homeless prevention measures and new supply to achieve an average of 15 homeless households in temporary accommodation during 2009/10.	-100		
Additional Income Potential additional income £10k cemetery & crematorium, £20k licensing. Early indications are that this is being repeated in 2008/09 however it must be emphasised that there is always a risk.	-30		
Net Proposed Budget Movement	-369	-65	15

Council Wide

	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Pay award 2008 This represents the full year cost of the 2008 pay award that may be settled in excess of the budget provision of 2.2%. It is assumed that the final pay award will be around 2.7%. Any variation from this figure will result in either an additional pressure or an economy.	150		
Job evaluation scheme The current job evaluation scheme has been in use for many years and there is evidence of inequality of pay across several groups of staff, exposing the Council to potential equal pay claims. This budget will enable the Council to review its existing job evaluation scheme and assess the financial impact of implementing a new scheme, should it wish to do so.	50		
Service Efficiency Programme The recent Service Efficiency Strategy identified a process, together with a range of projects capable of delivering efficiency savings in each of the next three financial years.	-50	-50	-200
Customer Services – consolidation After the Customer Services Section was established it was proposed that customer interface operations delivered within Departments should be transferred into Customer Services at the time of moving into the new Civic Hub. Savings of £105k were identified by the consultant's report which formed the basis of establishing Customer Services. However since that time savings of £45k have been achieved in 2008/9 and savings of £32k are proposed over the next two years as a result of the closure of the Cashiers Office and merger of customer reception desks.			-28
BPR Service Review This is a cross cutting project covering all Directorates and includes the extension of restructuring and service reviews, CRM and IT projects.		-50	
Travel Plan Improvements These result from the review of essential user allowances. Protection will be offered to all staff over three years. This proposal is currently being considered in the light of the results of staff consultation.	-142	-133	-53
Rationalisation of Estate Corporate Property will identify options for the Council to dispose of property surplus to requirements for an estimated value of £2m. The sale of any land will be subject to the market.	-150	-50	
Income Generation PWC have been appointed as consultants to help develop options on the generation of additional income across the Council.	-50	-50	
Net Proposed Budget Movement	-192	-333	-326

CORPORATE SERVICES / CX OFFICE

Virements

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	LSVT Virements
-261	Reduction in Expenditure Budgets A reduction in expenditure budgets resulting from lower levels of work previously supporting the HRA. This is analysed between lower insurance premiums (£0.200M) and savings from Surveyors (DSB £0.034M) and Customer Services (DSB £0.027M).
-365	SLA Income SLA income from BFH has been budgeted for in this financial year and this virement allocates the income budgets to the services undertaking the work.
-20	Savings The loss of the HRA has reduced the requirement in IT licenses (-£0.010M) and Internal Audit days required (-£0.010M).
208	Non Transferring Services The budgets relating to the former HRA central services (such as the post room) outside the LSVT and transferring to Corporate Services. These services are currently under review and it is proposed to transfer the DSB budgets to Customer Services and the other budgets to Office Services within DSS until the review is completed.
-72	Commercial Rents The HRA included rental income budgets for a number of flats above shop premises. These budgets are transferring to Property Services - Commercial Properties.
250	Enid Wood House The property is now vacant pending the redevelopment of the Town Centre. The transfer over to Property Services will transfer responsibility for rental payments and Council Tax Void property payments.
1,660	Non Cash Budgets - Recharges This virement reflects loss of recharge income chargeable to the HRA following the LSVT.
	Reorganisation
17	DSB Funding re Reorganisation A net increase in DSB is required as a result of grading reviews of Senior Officer salaries within the Department (£0.033M) less the removal of the change managers budget which is no longer required (-£0.016M).
1	Bracknell Market The transfer of the service from ECC Department to Property Services requires the transfer of £0.001M net budget. This budget represents a small budgetary shortfall of income compared to the budgets for Business Rates, externally managed service running the site, repairs and maintenance, electricity and cleaning.
-23	Transfer of Energy Manager The transfer of this post to ECC Department will require the transfer of £0.09M DSB budget, £0.03 expenditure budget and £0.019M Energy Commission income budgets.
116	Health & Safety Team The transfer of the Health & Safety Team from ECC Department to Human Resources will require the transfer of £0.106M DSB and £0.010M expenditure budgets.
-117	SmartCard The Smartcard schemes are being transferred to ECC Department. This requires the transfer of £0.088M DSB and £0.220M expenditure budgets from CX. The National Smartcard scheme will require a transfer out of £0.191M income budget.

CORPORATE SERVICES / CX OFFICE

Virements

Total	Explanation
268	Non Cash Budgets - Smart Card A £0.268M virement transfers non cash budgets as part of Smartcard and National Smartcard schemes transferring to ECC Department.
15	Area Based Grant Grant funding for Extended rights for free travel is currently allocated to SCL Department but is to be transferred to Finance - Transport.
	Town Centre
134	Town Centre Reserve Allocation A transfer of £0.134M is required from the reserve to fund the 2008/09 work programme.
	Structural Changes
53	Structural Changes Reserve Requests Three requests for funding from the Structural Changes Reserve are being made this month 1) Service Efficiency Strategy £0.009M - Consultancy support for the Director of Corporate Services to develop a service efficiency strategy which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State the council's service efficiency vision. • Describe the agreed strategy to achieve that vision, including drivers, priorities, approach, timescales and resources required. • Outline the action plan required to achieve the strategy. 2) Valuer Support £0.025M - Funding to recruit to the vacant Valuer post earlier than planned to achieve the PWC savings timescale. 3) Hay Group Review Residual costs £0.019M - Three invoices have now been received concerning outstanding work relating to the senior pay advice, senior job evaluations and a competencies presentation workshop.
20	Unified Training Budget (Human Resources) Structural Changes funding is required for the settlement of an Employment Tribunal case for Unfair Dismissal that has recently been made.
13	Structural Changes Reserve Funding Funding for a compromise agreement relating to a termination of contract with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, is required from the Reserve.
	Procurement Savings
-200	Procurement savings Following the insurance retender insurance premiums are lower and therefore a procurement saving can be made.
-13	Procurement Savings - Building Cleaning Contract The full year impact of the saving is an additional saving of £0.013M, from Time Square, Easthampstead House and New Hope Centre.
	Smart Card Recharges
95	Non Cash Budgets - Smart Card A review of the usage of Smartcard requires changes to the recharges to services resulting in an increase in recharges to Economic Development (under Corporate Property) of £0.095M with a corresponding decrease in charges to ECC and SCL Departments.
2	Smart Card In the transfer of smart card to ECC some of the recharges were incorrectly transferred. This has now been corrected.
1,781	TOTAL

Social Care and Learning Virements

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	<u>Allocation of LSVT costs</u>
-128	As part of the LSVT process, certain costs of the Council have changed and a number of budget adjustments have now been agreed.
215	This is the non cash amount relating to above.
	<u>Council re-organisation</u>
26,750	The 2008/09 approved Social Services & Housing Budgets which need to be reallocated.
-3,317	The new Council structure, effective from April, requires a number of budget adjustments, the most significant of which relate to transferring Library and Sustainable Community budgets to Environment, Culture and Communities Department.
-109	Final budget adjustments relating to the new Council structure, effective from April, have now been agreed.
284	Following agreement to revised cash budgets relating to the new Council structure, effective from April, related recharge budgets have also now been agreed.
-1,755	This is the non cash amount relating to above.
	<u>Procurement Savings</u>
-6	Savings from a new contract for building cleaning came into effect last year. The resultant full year savings of £6k respectively have now been deducted.
	<u>Structural Changes Fund</u>
93	Two allocations have been agreed from the Structural Changes Fund. £53k has been awarded to fund one-off redundancy costs associated with the Assistant Director - Learning, Achievement and Libraries with £40k allocated to support the PwC project to review services to adults with learning disabilities.
54	£11.45k has been requested to fund one-off redundancy costs associated with the termination of a fixed term contract at the conclusion of a project. £42.3k has been requested to fund one-off redundancy costs associated with Assistant Director; Learning, Achievement and Libraries.
48	£48k one-off redundancy costs associated with the modernisation of day care have been agreed by the Employment Committee and funding is now requested from the Structural Changes Fund.
	<u>Smartcard recharge</u>
-50	Following review, Smartcard recharges for cashless school meals catering have been reduced.
22,079	Total

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES

Virements

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	<u>LSVT</u>
149	As part of the LSVT process, certain costs of the Council have changed and a number of budget adjustments have now been agreed- mainly relating to applicant services, for estate and landscape.
	<u>Reorganisation</u>
4,423	Virements as a result of the departmental restructuring including transfer of libraries to Social Care & Learning
10	Reorganisation - The savings resulting from the departmental restructure have now been allocated with £20,200 being attributable to Environment Culture & Communities. Other charges have also changed as a result of the reorganisation which has resulted in an increase to this department of £30,180.
	<u>Structural Changes</u>
20	Research & Development - A virement has been approved to engage consultants to look at income generation across the Council to see if there are additional opportunities to enhance income levels.
80	Easthampstead Park Conference Centre A virement of £80,000 has been approved from the Structural Changes Fund in order to alter the toilet area on the first floor to provide additional conference facilities. This is the second of two schemes to help achieve the additional income to be generated towards the increased income target of £50,000 in 2008/09 aspired to in the Price Waterhouse recommendations.
	<u>Procurement Savings</u>
-3	Procurement Saving - As a result of a contract let for building cleaning part year savings were achieved in 2007/08 this is the full year effect of these savings
-76	Street Lighting Energy - The street lighting energy contract was retendered from 1 October 2007. The price per Kwh reduced to 6.7308p from 8.112p. The estimated annual consumption is 5,545,000 Kwh. The reduction in price of 1.3812p when applied to the annual usage delivers an economy of £76k against budget. The contract is due for retender from 1 October 2008, the results are not yet known.
	<u>Bus Contracts</u>
-38	Bus Contracts - The Section 106 Agreement for Tesco Jigs Lane Warfield (Agreement Number 6292) allows £210,000 to secure or operate Public and/or Community Transport Services (including Revenue Support of Services) and/or facilities and/or publicity. As a result of re-tendering bus contracts last year the cost of these services have reduced by £38,000, therefore an on-going virement can now be made to reflect this reduction.
214	The Section 106 Agreement for Peacock Farm, agreement number 6367, allows for bus services to be provided between this area and the Bracknell bus and rail stations. A contract was let for the annual sum of £213,516, this service commenced on 22 October 2007, a virement is therefore required to reflect this. Under the terms of this agreement it is necessary to claim the cost of this service from the developer at specified intervals, this is being carried out.
73	The Section 106 Agreement for the Staff College site, agreement number 6366, allows for bus services to be provided to and from this development. A contract has now been let for the annual sum of £72,680, this service commenced from 1 December 2007, a virement is therefore required to reflect this.
-18	Bus Contracts - The Section 106 Agreement for Tesco Jigs Lane Warfield (Agreement Number 6292) allows £210,000 to secure or operate Public and/or Community Transport Services (including Revenue Support of Services) and/or facilities and/or publicity. There is now only a sum of £3,000 remaining in this fund for the provision of this service, however a sum of £21,000 remains in the base budget therefore £18,000 now needs to be vired to reflect this.

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES

Virements

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	Smart Card Recharges
-45	Smart Card - As a result of a review in the method of apportioning the costs of the smart card the recharge to this department has reduced.
-2	Smart Card - As a result of a review in the method of apportioning the costs of the smart card the recharge to this department has reduced. This was originally reported in May as being £14,020 but was in fact £46,580.
4,638	Total

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
16 DECEMBER 2008

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010 - 2011/2012
(Borough Treasurer)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 Under the Council's Constitution, the Executive are required to issue their budget proposals for consultation for a minimum period of six weeks prior to making their recommendations to full Council on 25th February 2009. The capital programme forms an important part of the overall budget proposals and a key means by which the Council can deliver its medium term objectives. This report draws together each service's proposals so that the Executive can agree a draft capital programme for 2009/10-2011/12 as the basis for consultation. In compiling the draft programme the main focus is inevitably on determining the requirements for 2009/10, although future year's schemes do form an important part of the programme.
- 1.2 The financial implications of the recommendations in this report are reflected in the subsequent reports on the Council's draft revenue budget. Any revisions to the proposals put forward by each service would also need to be reflected in these reports which will also be published as the basis for consultation following the Executive's meeting.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Endorses Bracknell Forest Borough Council's Capital Strategy 2008 as set out in Annex A.**
- 2.2 **Approves, for consultation, an initial General Fund capital programme of £9.65m for 2009/10 summarised in Annex B, including the schemes listed in Annexes C – F.**
- 2.3 **Approves the £100,000 of funding allocated in the Primary Capital Programme for 2009/10 to be brought forward into 2008/09 as set out in paragraph 5.12.**
- 2.3 **Approves for consultation, the inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for Invest to Save schemes.**
- 2.4 **Approves the allocations within Environment, Culture and Community Directorate for resources approved in 2008/09 as set out in paragraphs 5.16 – 5.17**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The alternative options are considered in the report.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Capital Strategy

5.1 Bracknell Forest's first capital strategy was prepared in 2001 and has been updated and amended on several occasions to reflect updated guidance from Government and the Council's changing requirements. This latest version has been updated to make the document reflect more closely the Council's current requirements and provide the basis for developing and managing future year's capital programmes.

5.2 The latest version of the strategy is organised into the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Background and Characteristics of Bracknell Forest
3. Framework for Bracknell Forest's Capital Strategy
4. Approach to Prioritising Investment
5. Capital Receipts
6. Resources
7. Monitoring Progress
8. Managing Assets – Asset Management Group
Annex A. Invest To Save Schemes

Whilst all sections have been updated, attention is particularly drawn to the following highlights:

- The strategy is intended to be an overarching document that provides the framework for the capital investment plans set out in individual service strategies.
- Services bidding for external support need to ensure that funding is 'cash backed', as schemes funded by supported or unsupported borrowing will have an adverse impact on the Council's revenue budget. This is because there is no immediate increase in central government funding whilst the Council's Formula Grant remains set at the floor.
- The Council's policy is to treat all capital receipts as a corporate resource, enabling investment to be directed towards those schemes or projects with the highest corporate priority, is confirmed. The only exemptions are where legislation specifies otherwise or where the Executive agrees to an exemption.
- The introduction of the Members Initiative Fund to direct resources to small scale projects identified by individual Members across their wards. This mechanism for delivering investment at the local level contributes towards the "Community Call for Action" as laid out in the recent Local Government White Paper and the move towards Participatory Budgeting.
- Continued funding of works identified as Priority 1 within the property condition surveys is confirmed, recognising that this will have an impact on the maintenance backlog by only dealing with the most urgent works. In addition schools are required to finance Priority 1 works from within their own resources. Whilst it is expected that the majority of these works will be met from their devolved formula capital there will be instances where the grant received does not match the cost of the works that need to be undertaken.

- Annex A to the strategy sets out how the 'Invest To Save' budget will be managed.

Capital Resources

- 5.3 Each year the Council agrees a programme of capital schemes. In the past these schemes have been funded from three main sources:
- the Council's accumulated capital receipts
 - Government Grants
 - other external contributions
- 5.4 The Local Government Act 2003 brought in radical changes to the financing of capital expenditure including the "pooling" of housing capital receipts from 1 April 2004. From that date, the Government no longer issued borrowing approvals. Instead, under a new "prudential framework" Councils can set their own borrowing limits based on the affordability of the debt.
- 5.5 The Council's estimated total usable capital receipts at 31st March 2009 are zero. The impact of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area has meant that the opportunity to dispose of Council property and generate further capital receipts has been severely curtailed over recent years. The impact of the "Credit-Crunch" and the substantial deterioration in the property market is unlikely to improve opportunities for disposal at optimal prices for the foreseeable future.
- 5.6 As a result of the LSVT Transfer of the Council's housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes in 2008 the Council will benefit from a share of future Right-to-Buy sales and from the VAT Shelter that was set up at the time of the transfer. It is estimated that this will deliver an annual capital receipt of approximately £3m over the next ten years, although this is expected to be lower in the short-terms as a result of the recession and credit-crunch.
- 5.7 In previous years the Council has been able to borrow funds "internally" to support its capital programme as a result of the complex relationship between the HRA and the General Fund. However it was still required to make a revenue contribution towards these "internal borrowing costs" and as such there was a real revenue cost to be paid in relation to this investment. Following the capital receipt from the housing LSVT, the "internal borrowing" was effectively paid off and as such there is a corresponding reduction reflected in the General Fund from 2009/10 onwards. However the Council will return to a position of internal borrowing until its current level of investments are exhausted, which is expected to be within the next 3-5 years. Thereafter the Council will need to borrow externally.
- 5.8 The proposed capital programme for 2009/10 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of £3m of capital receipts, Government grants, other external contributions and some internal borrowing. The financing costs associated with the General Fund Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans which appear on tonight's agenda.

New Schemes

- 5.9 Within the general financial framework outlined above, Service Departments have considered new schemes for inclusion within the Council's Capital Programme for 2009/10 - 2011/12. Given that capital resources are under pressure, each

Department has evaluated and prioritised proposed schemes into the broad categories, set out in the Council's Corporate Capital Strategy. This includes schemes within the previously approved programme for 2008/09, some of which are re-phased to reflect current information and priorities.

Unavoidable (Including committed schemes)

This category covers schemes which must proceed to ensure that the Council is not left open to legal sanction and includes items relating to health and safety issues, new statutory legislation etc. Committed schemes are those that have been started as part of the 2008/09 Capital Programme. By their nature, schemes in this category form the first call on the available capital resources.

Maintenance (Improvements and capitalised repairs)

The Council is responsible for a significant number of properties and assets. As part of the established capital planning process, property condition surveys are carried out and updated annually to assess the overall maintenance needs. The bids put forward this year by Departments will ensure that the most urgent works required by each service can be carried out.

Rolling programmes

These programmes cover more than one year and give a degree of certainty for forward planning schemes to improve service delivery. They make an important contribution towards the Council's Medium Term Objectives and established Asset Management Plans.

Other Desirable Schemes

In addition to the schemes identified in the above categories, each service has requested funding for other high priority schemes that meet the needs and objectives of their service and the Council's Medium Term Objectives. The net cost of schemes which attract partial external funding are included in the schemes put forward.

Participatory Budgeting

A sum of money is set aside in order that individual Members can allocate resources to smaller projects that have been identified based on local ward priorities or in conjunction with partners and other stakeholders. These individual Member budgets can be pooled to provide larger schemes where appropriate. This mechanism of delivering investment at the local level contributes towards the "Community Call for Action" as laid out in the recent Local Government White Paper and the drive towards Participatory Budgeting.

Invest To Save Schemes

These are schemes where the additional revenue income or savings arising from their implementation exceeds the additional revenue costs. The Council's approach to Invest to Save schemes is included in its Capital Strategy and in accordance with the Capital Strategy it is proposed that a further £1m be included in the 2009/10 capital programme for potential Invest to Save schemes.

- 5.10 A detailed list of suggested schemes within the draft capital programme, together with a brief description of each project, for each service is included in Annexes C – F. As indicated above, in some cases, the schemes within the proposed

programme modify previously agreed programmes to reflect the latest available information on the phasing of expenditure and revised priorities. A summary of the cost of schemes proposed by Departments is set out in the table below and in Annex B. This shows that the total net funding requested is £9.65m in 2009/10.

Capital Programme 2009/10-2011/12				
Annex	Service Area	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
C	Corporate Services	253	128	33
D	Environment, Culture and Communities	5,650	7,392	6,993
E	Social Care and Learning	1,511	1,703	1,123
F	Council Wide	2,236	1,904	1,549
	Total request for Council funding	9,650	11,127	9,698
Externally funded projects are excluded from the above.				

- 5.11 Included within the Environment, Culture and Communities total in 2009/10 is £1.15m for new affordable housing directly as a result of the Housing transfer that took place in February 2008. The Council gave a commitment to spend 75% of the available receipt on new affordable housing and the 2009/10 – 2011/12 programme includes an allocation of £5.7m. The remainder of the receipt will be used in subsequent years. A sum of £0.5m (with an additional £0.5m in 2010/11) has also been included within the Social Care and Learning total for new youth facilities in South Bracknell that the Council also committed itself to from the transfer receipt.

Early release of funding for Primary Capital Programme

- 5.12 As part of the Government's Pre-Budget Report the Chancellor announced that he would bring forward £3bn of capital spending from 2010/11 to 2009/10 with up to £800m within Education. Combined with the substantial levels of investment already announced this will result in significant levels of investment in 2009/10. In order to ensure that the Council can effectively plan, recruit and tender for this work (in a market where neighbouring authorities will also be looking to compete for contractors/staff) and deliver the programme within realistic timescales it is recommended that the Council release in the current year £100,000 of the total allocation requested above.

Externally Funded Schemes

- 5.13 A number of external funding sources are also available to fund schemes within the capital programme, allowing the Council to plan a programme that is significantly greater than the £9.65m that is proposed. External support has been identified from two main sources:

Government Grants

- 5.14 A number of capital schemes attract specific grants. It is proposed that all such schemes should be included in the capital programme at the level of external

funding that is available. Examples include Building Schools for the Future and Local Transport Plan funding

Section 106

- 5.15 Each year the Council enters into a number of agreements under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 by which developers make a contribution towards the cost of providing facilities and infrastructure that may be required as a result of their development. Usually the monies are given for work in a particular area and/or for specific projects. The total money available at present, which is not financially committed to specific projects, is £6 m.

Officers have identified a number of schemes that could be funded from Section 106 funds in 2009/10. Under the constitutional arrangements, the Council must approve the release of such funding. However, this does not preclude the Executive bringing forward further schemes to be approved by the Council to be funded from Section 106 funds during the year.

Annexes C - F also include details of all schemes that will be funded from the various external sources in the next year.

Allocation of funds approved for 2008/09

- 5.16 The Social Services & Housing capital budget for 2007/08 included a sum of money (£86,200) for ITC replacement. This budget has been carried forward into the Environment, Culture and Communities 2008/09 capital programme. It is requested that this allocation be now used to replace the existing Supporting People ICT system as a result of the replacement to the Adult Social Care IT system.
- 5.17 The Housing Planning Delivery Grant of £647,509 is required to be split 67.5% Revenue and 32.5% Capital. The capital element (£210,440) has yet to be allocated to projects. As such it is requested that it be allocated to the following projects.
- A Spatial Policy system (£38,000) will provide a hosted web solution with easy to use full interactive public access for all consultations, document design and production capabilities as well as comprehensive reporting facilities. The annual running costs can be met within the LDF budget projection and savings arising from the existing system.
 - The remaining £172,440 will be spent on “pump-priming” of Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS) enhancement works. To date, developers have had to wait 9 months whilst the Council enhances open space in line with the agreed SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy in advance of occupation of new dwellings. Allocating capital funds to the SANGS work will encourage development in the Borough to come forward more rapidly, which may help the Council meet the LAA target for housing delivery during these economically challenging times.

Funding Options

- 5.18 There are a number of important issues concerning the long term funding of capital expenditure. As a result of the LSVT Transfer of the Council’s housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes in 2008 the Council will benefit from a share of future Right-to-Buy sales and from the VAT Shelter that was set up at the time of the transfer. It

is estimated that this will deliver an annual capital receipt of approximately £3m over the next ten years. Any additional capital receipts are unlikely to be significant in 2009/10 due to the continued impact of the SPA and the general decline in the economy.

- 5.19 The proposed capital programme for 2009/10 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of £3m of capital receipts, Government grants, other external contributions and some internal borrowing. The financing costs associated with the Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans.
- 5.20 Should any capital receipts be generated in 2009/10 the interest earned on these will be used to mitigate the revenue cost of the capital programme.
- 5.21 In practice it is unlikely that the Council will need to resort to external borrowing as it will be able to utilise revenue resources held internally. The Capital Finance Regulations, however, require the General Fund to set aside an amount which would be broadly equivalent to the amount the Council would need to pay if it borrowed externally. If any amendments are made to the capital programme the revenue consequences will need to be adjusted accordingly. Executive Members will therefore need to consider the impact of the capital programme as part of the final revenue budget decisions.
- 5.22 The reduction in available capital receipts has placed greater emphasis on the capital programme and its impact on the revenue budget. Following the introduction of the Prudential Borrowing regime local authorities are able to determine the level of their own capital expenditure with regard only to affordability on the revenue account. In practice this represents the amount of borrowing they can afford to finance, and will necessitate taking a medium-term view of revenue income streams and capital investment needs.
- 5.23 To achieve its aim of ensuring that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, the Local Government Act requires all local authorities to set and keep under review a series of prudential indicators included in the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Capital Programme recommended in this report can be sustained and is within the prudential guidelines. Full Council will need to agree the prudential indicators for 2009/10 to 2011/12 in March, alongside its consideration of the specific budget proposals for 2009/10 and the Council's medium-term financial prospects.
- 5.24 Given the known revenue budget gap, Members will need to carefully balance the level of the Capital Programme in future years against other revenue budget pressures and a thorough review, including the prioritisation of those schemes planned for 2010/11 onwards, will need to be undertaken during next summer.

Meeting the Council's Medium Term Objectives

- 5.25 The integrated budget package prioritises resources according to the five overarching priorities of the Council and continues to invest mainly through targeted capital expenditure, in services designed over the next three years to:

Medium Term Objective 2 - Protect and enhance the environment of the Borough, through spending;

- £3.4m on highways infrastructure maintenance
- £1.1m on new affordable housing
- £1.6m on other measures to protect and enhance the environment

Medium Term Objective 3 – Promoting health and achievement in the Borough through spending;

- £0.5m on new youth facilities
- £0.4m on improving and maintaining leisure and community facilities
- £0.6m on promoting achievement and learning
- £0.3m on other investment priorities

Medium Term Objective 4 - Create a borough where people are, and feel safe by investing in;

- £0.15m on a new number plate recognition system
- £0.2m on other initiatives

Medium Term Objective 5 - Provide value for money through spending on:

- £0.7m on continued investment in Information Technology
- £0.5m on other investment priorities.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The authorisation for incurring capital expenditure by local authorities is contained in the legislation covering the service areas. Controls on capital expenditure are contained in the Local Government Act 2003 and regulations made thereunder.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications are contained within the report.

Impact Assessment

- 6.3 None arising directly from this report, although impact assessments on the specific schemes within the capital programme will need to be undertaken before work commences.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The most significant risk facing the Council is the impact of the capital programme on the revenue budget. In a full year financing costs represent approximately 10% of the capital investment. The additional revenue costs for a General Fund Capital Programme of £9.65m, after allowing for future capital receipts of £3m will be £0.175m in 2009/10 and a further £0.439m in 2010/11. This effect is compounded by future year's capital programmes. As revenue resources are limited it is clear that a capital programme of this magnitude is not sustainable in the medium term without significant revenue economies. The generation of capital receipts in future years may mitigate the impact on the revenue budget, but as the timing and scale of these receipts is uncertain their impact is unlikely to be significant.

- 6.5 There are also a range of risks that are common to all capital projects which include:
- Tender prices exceeding the budget
 - Planning issues and potential delays
 - Uncertainty of external funding (especially when bids are still to be submitted or the results of current bids are unknown)
 - Building delays due to unavailability of materials or inclement weather
 - Availability of staff with appropriate skills to implement schemes and IT projects in particular.

6.6 These can be managed through the use of appropriate professional officers and following best practice in project management techniques.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission will be consulted on the budget proposals and may also choose to direct specific issues to individual overview and scrutiny panels. Targeted consultation exercises will be undertaken with the Bracknell Forest 1500, the Senior Citizens' Forum, Parish Councils and voluntary organisations. Comments and views will be sought on both the overall budget package and on the detailed budget proposals. A meeting with the local business community is also planned to obtain their views on the budget proposals. In addition, this report and all the supporting information are publicly available to any individual or group who wish to comment on any proposal included within it. To facilitate this, the full budget package will be placed on the Council's web site at Bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

7.2 The timetable for the approval of the 2009/10 Budget is as follows

Executive agree proposals as basis for consultation	16 December
Consultation period	17 December - 27 January
Executive considers representations made and recommends budget.	10 February
Council considers Executive budget proposals	25 February

Background Papers

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CAPITAL STRATEGY 2008

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Capital Strategy is a key element of Bracknell Forest's medium term financial strategy and planning process. It describes how the investment of capital resources will contribute to the achievement of the Council's priorities and is intended to be an overarching document that provides the framework for the capital investment plans set out in individual service strategies, details of which are included in departmental Service Plans. As such it is a key document for demonstrating how the Council integrates financial planning with the strategic and service planning process on a medium to long-term basis.
- 1.2 Whilst there are many service strategies the most significant are likely to be the Housing Strategy Statement, Local Transport Plan and Education Asset Management Plan Local Policy Statement. The Capital Strategy has been endorsed by the Corporate Management Team and the Council's Executive.
- 1.3 The Capital Strategy will describe how the deployment of capital resources contributes to the achievement of the Council's goals. It will also help to ensure that issues around property and other assets are reflected in the Council's corporate planning process and responds to the investment requirements of the Borough.
- 1.4 This is Bracknell Forest Borough Council's fourth Corporate Capital Strategy and is reviewed when circumstances require.

2. Background and Characteristics of Bracknell Forest

- 2.1. Bracknell Forest is located in the heart of the Thames Valley, 25 miles west of London. One fifth of the Borough is forest and another fifth is protected for its high wildlife value. There are six parishes within the Borough, each with different characteristics. Bracknell Town consists of eleven residential neighbourhoods, three industrial areas and the town centre, for which there are ambitious redevelopment plans.
- 2.2. Bracknell Forest Council serves a population of around 110,000 and employs around 3,500 staff. The Council aims to provide services of the highest quality at a cost that is acceptable to Council Tax payers and users of services. A significant emphasis is placed on the needs of customers and on being cost conscious and efficient.

3. Framework for Bracknell Forest's Capital Strategy

- 3.1. The Council's vision for Bracknell Forest is:

"To make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive; living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment."
- 3.2. It is a Government requirement under the Local Government Act 2000 that all local authorities prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of their area. The third Sustainable Community Strategy for Bracknell Forest is an overarching strategy for the Borough. It sets out a long-term vision for the future which reflects community needs and aspirations. The Sustainable Community Strategy acts in two ways. First, it acts as a business planning tool for public service providers, aligning funding and service delivery based on everyone working towards a common goal and engaging the local community within the overall financial planning process. Second, it acts as a public summary of partnership priorities. The Strategy is structured in three sections to reflect the Borough's key priorities:

Section 1: A Thriving Population

- Priority a. Opportunities for everyone
- Priority b. Nurturing the Next Generation
- Priority c. Supporting the Older Generation
- Priority d. People who require Additional Support

Section 2: A Desirable Place

- Priority a. Sustainable Development
- Priority b. Protecting the Environment
- Priority c. Travelling around the Borough

Section 3: Cohesive Communities

- Priority a. Engaged & Empowered Communities
- Priority b. Enjoying Life
- Priority c. Being & Feeling Safer
- Priority d. Sustaining a Vibrant Economy

- 3.3. In May 2007, the Council developed a set of new Medium Term Objectives under five priorities. These form the basis of the work of the Council for the next few years. They are

- Priority one:** A town centre fit for the 21st century
- Priority two:** Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Priority three:** Promoting health and achievement
- Priority four:** Create a borough where people are, and feel, safe
- Priority five:** Value for money

- 3.4. Departmental Service Plans take the Council's Medium Term Objectives and break them down into a detailed set of objectives and actions which form the basis for Individual Performance Appraisals. These Service Plans contribute to the Council's strategic approach to asset management ensuring that asset management plans are fully integrated within the corporate and strategic planning process.
- 3.5. A robust performance management process is completed by regular monitoring through Performance Monitoring Reports and a Corporate Performance Overview Report to senior officers and members. These include regular progress reports on the implementation of schemes within the Capital Programme.

4. Approach to Prioritising Investment

- 4.1. Capital expenditure is defined as all expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of tangible fixed assets and is set out in The Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
- 4.2. The Capital Programme forms an integral part of the Council's overall budget package. The Council has adopted a rolling three-year Capital Programme that includes schemes according to the priorities set out below:

Unavoidable – to meet statutory and legislative requirements in the provision of services. It includes specific items such as asbestos management, water hygiene and fire safety. By their nature, these schemes form a first call on available resources.

Maintenance – the Council is responsible for a significant number of properties and infrastructure assets. As part of the established capital planning process property condition surveys are carried out to inform the maintenance needs. These ensure that assets are protected and at the same time contribute to the continuous improvement of the environment. (see paragraphs 6.5 to 6.7 for further detail)

Rolling Programmes – these programmes cover more than one year and give a degree of certainty for forward planning of schemes to improve service delivery. This area will include investment to enhance Council property to improve the sustainability and suitability of services such as library, leisure and community centre refurbishments.

Other Desirable Schemes – these include high priority schemes that meet the Council's needs and objectives and enhance the quality of life for those living and working within the Borough.

Invest to Save Schemes – these are schemes where the additional revenue income or savings arising from their implementation exceeds the additional revenue costs. These schemes will contribute to the efficiency savings target set for the authority. Further details of how the Invest to Save process works are set out in Annex A to this Strategy.

Members Initiative Fund – a sum of money is set aside in order that individual Members can allocate resources to small projects that have been identified based on local ward-level priorities, or in conjunction with partners and other stakeholders. These individual Member budgets can be pooled to provide larger schemes where appropriate. This mechanism for delivering investment at the local level contributes towards the "Community Call for Action" as laid out in the recent Local Government White Paper and the move towards Participatory Budgeting.

Schemes which have been approved and started as part of the capital programme and will take more than one year to complete are treated as ongoing commitments.

- 4.3. Schemes attracting partial external funding, such as grants for private sector housing, are included within the above categories and assessed accordingly. These schemes are only included within the capital programme if they meet the Council's needs, objectives and priorities. Schemes attracting 100% external funding are included automatically within the capital programme. Such schemes are usually supported by Capital Grants, or receipts from agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 4.4. In all instances external funding needs to be 'cash backed' to avoid any adverse impact on the Council's revenue budget. Opportunities to take up supported borrowing will not be pursued as there is no immediate increase in central government financial support whilst the Council's Formula Grant remains set at the floor.
- 4.5. At the start of the capital planning process in late August/early September each department will submit its capital proposals using a standard Project Appraisal Sheet, which includes the following:
 - Description of the project
 - Project outcomes, (including how it supports the Council's key objectives)
 - Key dates and milestones
 - Alternative options
 - Analysis of options
 - Cash flow forecasts
 - Revenue implications
 - Options for business process re-engineering
 - Partners
 - Energy management issues
 - Risks
 - Detailed financial proposal using pay back and net present value techniques, where appropriate.

- 4.6. These proposals are submitted to Corporate Management Team for further consideration. The outline timetable for the approval of the capital programme is as follows:

Date	Action
Aug/Sept Sept /Oct	Departmental Management Teams develop initial bids Corporate Management Team review initial bids alongside resources available
Oct/Nov	Schemes reviewed/revised taking account of available resources
Dec	Executive agree draft capital programme for consultation
February	Executive considers the consultation responses and recommends final capital programme to Council
March	Council approves capital programme

- 4.7. The proposals drawn up in the Capital Programme are consulted upon with partners and stakeholders as part of the broader consultation exercise on the Council's annual budget. This is done through both face-to-face consultation with partners as well as an opportunity to comment on the proposals via the Council's web site. This ensures that partners, local residents and the business community are fully engaged with the investment priorities identified by the Council and given an opportunity to discuss and contribute to the future plans of the Council.

5. Capital Receipts

- 5.1. The Council is a debt free authority and has not been reliant on external borrowing to finance its Capital Programme. To date funding for the Capital Programme has been provided from three main sources:

- Accumulated capital receipts
- Government grants
- Other external contributions

- 5.2. The Council's policy is to treat all capital receipts as a corporate resource, enabling investment to be directed towards those schemes or projects with the highest corporate priority. This means that individual services are not reliant on their ability to generate capital receipts to fund investment although there are certain exceptions to the general policy, particularly where legislation specifies otherwise. The most notable example being Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 regarding the disposal of school land, which stipulates that any proceeds should be used for the improvement of sports facilities and the refurbishment/replacement of schools.

- 5.3. Further exceptions to the general policy of treating capital receipts as a corporate resource can be made, but only with the specific approval of the Executive.

- 5.4. The Council, as part of its approach to risk management, ensures through its Corporate Property department that the impact of market conditions on asset values are fully considered in any decision regarding the disposal or acquisition of assets.

- 5.5. Disposal proceeds are used to support the revenue budget by investing the capital receipt unless the disposal is linked to a specific sale-and-invest capital project. The disposals programme is monitored by the Asset Management Group as outlined later in this document.

6. Resources

- 6.1. As a result of the transfer of the Council's housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes in February 2008, a significant capital receipt was achieved. The Council committed itself to spend 75% of the

available receipt to fund new affordable homes over the following 5 years. It also pledged an extra £1m to go towards new Youth facilities in South Bracknell.

- 6.2. In addition to this one-off receipt the Council will also receive an on-going share of the VAT Shelter and Right-to-Buy agreement made with Bracknell Forest Homes. This is estimated to amount to £3m per year over the next 10 years. These receipts are available to support future capital investment priorities.
- 6.3. Capital expenditure over and above the £3m will need to be funded from borrowing, however the Council will not need to resort to external borrowing given the level of internal investments. It is likely that internal borrowing will be sufficient to fund the capital programmes over the next two years, however Local Government accounting regulations will require the Council to set aside the "real" costs of this internal borrowing which must be met from within the General Fund. This cost of internal borrowing will be considered as part of the General Fund budget process.
- 6.4. For planning purposes a Council funded Capital programme of £9.65m for 2009/10 has been assumed as part of the overall Budget preparation process.
- 6.5. Historically the Council has funded all Priority 1 maintenance works identified within the property condition surveys. These represent the works that are necessary, within the next 12 months, to maintain the buildings in beneficial use through the prevention of closure, dealing with health and safety items and potential breaches of legislation. The latest property condition surveys identified Priority 1 works of £1.185m. The 2009/10 capital programme allocates £0.95m towards this requirement, with the balance being met by revenue planned-maintenance budgets.
- 6.6. It is, however, unlikely that expenditure at these levels will continue to freeze the maintenance backlog because of the growing liability for the replacement of services, plant and external building fabric. To ensure that the capital programme remains affordable schools will be required to finance their Priority 1 works from within their own resources. Whilst it will be for schools to decide how to finance these works it is anticipated that the majority will be met from their devolved financial capital.
- 6.7. A £5m expenditure requirement has been identified for works classified as "essential within 2 years" to prevent further significant deterioration or remedy defects that would threaten continuity of service delivery. This is significantly above the resources likely to be available over this time period and as such the Council will need to keep this closely under review and to address it as part of its on-going investment plans.
- 6.8. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives disabled people the right to challenge service provision if they feel they are not receiving the same level of service, in the same manner, as others. Access difficulties to buildings may place the Council at risk of legal action. The Council will, therefore, include within its unavoidable schemes a programme of access improvements identified through a range of access audits. The programme will cover schools and other corporate buildings. Over 50% of the Council's buildings which are open to the public are suitable for and accessible to disabled people (as defined by BVPI 156). By the end of 2008/09 this figure is expected to rise to 80%.
- 6.9. The Local Government Act 2003 had the effect of replacing the current system of Local Government Capital Finance with a new one, known as the 'Prudential Regime' from 1 April 2004. In the Prudential Regime, instead of the historical practice of local authorities only being able to borrow in line with central government prescribed limits, each local authority must decide its own borrowing limits. These must take account of the authority's financial situation, medium term plans and in particular affordability, as funding capital expenditure has an ongoing revenue cost which must be met from Council Tax. CIPFA has developed a Prudential Code of Capital Finance in Local Authorities which specifies those indicators that the Council must consider as a part of its budget setting process. These are included in the annual budget report to Council and will become

an increasingly important aspect of the budget process when the Council commences external borrowing.

7 Monitoring Progress

- 7.1 Officers monitor implementation of the Capital Programme with reports being submitted monthly to Departmental Management Teams. The Council's Corporate Management Team and Executive Members receive a more formal quarterly progress report, which enables them to adopt a more strategic approach. In addition the Executive Member for Finance, Resources and Assets is consulted widely on all issues relating to the Capital Strategy.
- 7.2 Financial performance is fundamental to the monitoring process, although this has been extended to ensure that the Council's objectives are achieved in full. Developments include service related targets and targets for scheme delivery.
- 7.3 A major challenge for the Council is to ensure that schemes included within the three year Capital Programme have realistic cash flows in order to improve the overall percentage of budget spent and to avoid crowding out schemes that could realistically commence during the year. This can also affect the level of external funding, especially from government departments, in future years. In developing the proposals put forward in the capital programme the Council seeks to identify the whole life transaction costs and the main factors that influence these as well as developing robust project cash flows for each major scheme.

8 Managing Assets - Asset Management Group

- 8.1 The Asset Management Group was established in 1998 and has evolved in line with the strategic needs of the Council. It is chaired by the Council's Chief Officer - Property and meets every three months. The group is attended by representatives of each department along with Finance, Legal and Planning representatives. Its terms of reference are comprehensive and include the following.

- **Strategic Property Planning**

In consultation with service and operational departments to jointly identify and annually review corporate property aims and objectives and to provide information to the departments of the Authority to assist in the development of long term strategies and plans.

- **Data Management**

Through regular reviews, to ensure that the Authority's property databases match requirements for asset management purposes and are comprehensive, accessible and accurate.

- **Property Performance**

To establish a robust property performance monitoring system in line with the principles of Best Value.

- **Individual Property Reviews**

To establish and annually review a five year rolling programme of reviews for every interest in landed property held by the Council.

- **Under-used Assets**

Where properties have become vacant or have been identified as no longer meeting the Council's service, administrative or financial requirements, to carry out comparative option appraisals with recommendations for the future use or disposal of the properties.

- **Disposals**

To oversee the Authority's acquisition and disposals programme.

- **Corporate Asset Management Plan**

To co-ordinate the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan.

- **Generally**

To undertake the role of Corporate Landlord for all operational properties held by the Council and seek to optimise service department's utilisation of property assets in terms of service benefits and financial return.

INVEST TO SAVE SCHEMES

Introduction

Invest to Save schemes are those where the additional revenue income or savings arising from their implementation exceed the additional revenue costs (including borrowing costs associated with any capital investment). Examples might include an investment in an energy efficient boiler resulting in lower annual running costs, or an investment in a new car park generating an additional income stream.

Experience of operating the Invest to Save process has shown that some worthwhile schemes may be excluded because they do not meet exactly the above criteria. Typically, these are schemes that generate non cashable efficiency savings. Examples might include more effective working arrangements (bringing two teams together in a single location) or where an immediate capital investment will avoid longer term revenue costs (such as disabled access works reducing the cost of care packages or out Borough placements).

Whilst such schemes are clearly beneficial to the Council's longer term financial position, because there is no immediate additional revenue income or savings associated with the capital investment they would not be able to proceed under the above criteria. In future, therefore, if Directors can identify alternative cashable revenue savings or additional revenue income such schemes should be allowed to proceed.

The scheme is to be expanded to include those schemes that will benefit the Council from a combination of financial benefits and environmental savings. The eligibility terms are still under consideration and will encompass the requirements of any future carbon-trading scheme that is likely to become mandatory for local authorities.

Process

- Each year the Council will include £1.0m in its three year capital programme for potential Invest to Save schemes.
- There will be no requirement to specify the exact nature of the schemes at the time the capital programme is approved. The inclusion of this item will not affect the impact of the capital programme on the revenue account as approval to spend will not be granted unless the financing costs are met from savings or additional income.
- At any time during the course of the financial year Directors may submit proposals to the Borough Treasurer who will review the robustness of the financial estimates (both for capital expenditure and revenue savings/additional income) and associated risk assessment before recommending to Corporate Management Team the release of funding from the Invest to Save budget.
- Priority will be given to those schemes making the greatest return over and above the cost of financing the capital expenditure, which will depend upon the estimated life of the asset.
- The cost of financing the capital expenditure will be calculated on the assumption that the amount borrowed will be repaid over the life of the asset together with interest at the rate of 6% p.a. The appropriate asset life will be determined by the Borough Treasurer, but the following table sets out indicative asset lives:

Type of Asset	Asset Life	Annual Repayment as % of Capital Sum
IT Equipment	4 years	31%
Vehicles & Plant	7 years	21%
Infrastructure	20 years	11%
Buildings	50 years	8%

- All decisions made by CMT will be reported through the Corporate Services Performance Management Report.
- Once agreed the Borough Treasurer will implement the necessary virements, which will be reflected in future revenue budget monitoring reports.
- Any savings or additional income in excess of that required to meet the cost of financing the capital expenditure can be retained by Departments as a part of their future budget savings.
- No individual scheme must exceed £400,000 as this represents a Key Decision which must be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Exceptions

Schools will be permitted to participate in Invest to Save. School budgets will not be adjusted to reflect the cost of financing capital expenditure, as outlined above. Instead, schools will be required to pay the Council the financing costs associated with money advanced from the Invest to Save budget.

SUMMARY GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10

	Corporate £000	ECC £000	SC&L £000	Council Wide £000	Total £000
Committed	0	1,150	596	500	2,246
Unavoidable	0	2,450	290	916	3,656
Maintenance/Capitalisation	33	973	523	400	1,929
Rolling Prog/Other Desirable	220	1,077	102	0	1,399
Participatory Budgeting	0	0	0	420	420
Total Council Funded	253	5,650	1,511	2,236	9,650
Externally Funded	0	3,882	36,769	0	40,651
Total Capital Programme	253	9,532	38,280	2,236	50,301

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CORPORATE SERVICES / CHIEF EXECUTIVE

	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Committed			
None	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Unavoidable			
None	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Maintenance			
Improvements and Capitalised Repairs - Corporate Buildings	<u>33</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>33</u>
	33	33	33
Rolling Programme/ Other Desirable			
Financial Systems Version Upgrade	55	55	0
Registrars Electronic Booking Office	15	0	0
Number Plate Recognition	150	0	0
Starters and Leavers Process	<u>0</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>0</u>
	220	95	0
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u><u>253</u></u>	<u><u>128</u></u>	<u><u>33</u></u>
Externally Funded			
None	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u><u>253</u></u>	<u><u>128</u></u>	<u><u>33</u></u>

Capital Programme 2009/10 – Corporate Services

Committed	£'000
None	0

Unavoidable	£'000
None	0

Maintenance	£'000
Improvements & capitalised repairs – Corporate Buildings	33

Rolling programme and Other Desirable	£'000
Financial Systems Version Upgrade	55
To upgrade the existing Agresso financial system from Version 5.4 to Version 5.5. Agresso have released a new version of their financial system which is in the process of being implemented in a number of authorities. Agresso will no longer support Version 5.4 once Version 5.6 is released. Whilst there is no definite date for the release of Version 5.6 it is widely anticipated that this will be within the next 18 to 24 months.	
Registrars Electronic Booking Office	15
The installation of a software programme that provides a booking service for the Registration Office. This project would improve the efficiency and quality of the services offered by the Registration Service. The Service needs to modernise in line with rising customer expectations generally and to respond to the General Register Office's modernisation agenda.	

Number Plate Recognition	150
The Borough does not have in place an electronic Number Plate Recognition system, and as such results in a significant area within the County that cannot track vehicles by the Police or related services.	

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES

	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Committed			
Housing Stock Transfer - New Affordable Housing	1,150	1,280	3,290
	<u>1,150</u>	<u>1,280</u>	<u>3,290</u>
Unavoidable			
Highways Maintenance & Integrated Transport Measures	1,640	1,801	1,801
LTP Top Up Funding (capitalisation of revenue)	250	250	0
Roads & Footway Resurfacing (capitalisation of revenue)	200	200	200
London Road Gas Migration Controls	25	15	0
Cemetery & Crematorium Safety of Memorials	15	0	0
Disabled Facility Grants - Mandatory	200	200	200
#South Hill Park Grounds Restoration Project	100	408	349
Car Park Access & Payment Equipment	0	440	0
New Telephone Systems for Coral Reef & Downshire Golf Complex	20	0	0
	<u>2,450</u>	<u>3,314</u>	<u>2,550</u>
Maintenance			
Improvements & Capitalised Repairs	595	595	595
Improvements & Capitalised Repairs (Street Lighting)	28	28	28
Equipment Replacement - Downshire Golf Complex	35	35	35
Maintenance of Leisure Sites	150	150	150
Coral Reef Main Pool Re-tiling Base	85	0	0
Car Park Structure & Repairs	80	50	0
	<u>973</u>	<u>858</u>	<u>808</u>
Rolling Programme/ Other Desirable			
Junction of John Nike Way/London Road & Dualling on London Road	470	0	0
Cemetery & Crematorium Memorials for Cremated Remains	45	10	0
EPCC Computer Booking Package	45	0	0
Play Areas Rolling Programme	50	50	50
Refurbishment of Public Conveniences	80	0	0
Land Drainage	60	60	60
Library Refurbishment Rolling Programme	50	50	50
Community Centres Refurbishment Rolling Programme	50	50	50
Plasma Screens for Marketing at the Look Out, Edgbarrow & Sandhurst			
Sports Centres	27	0	0
Residential Street Parking	100	100	100
Car Park Extension	100	0	0
Subway Refurbishment of Anti-Graffiti Coating	0	35	35
Bracknell Leisure Centre Minor Pool	0	225	0
Cemetery & Crematorium Mercury Abatement	0	1,000	0
Worlds End Footbridge Repainting Programme	0	360	0
	<u>1,077</u>	<u>1,940</u>	<u>345</u>
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u><u>5,650</u></u>	<u><u>7,392</u></u>	<u><u>6,993</u></u>

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES

	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Externally Funded			
Local Transport Plan (Highways Maintenance)	400	0	0
Local Transport Plan (Integrated Transport)	315	319	319
Road Safety	44	43	43
Waste Infrastructure Capital Fund	219	80	
Section 106 Schemes (LTP)	750	750	750
Section 106 Junction of John Nike Way/London Road & Dualling on London Road	930		
Section 106 Schemes (Leisure, Culture & Visual Environment)	250	250	250
Section 106 Schemes (Bullbrook Community Centre)	250		
#South Hill Park Grounds Restoration Project (Heritage Lottery Fund)	209	1,158	1,158
Disabled Facilities Grants	300	300	300
Contaminated Land (Piggy Wood) DEFRA	215		
	<u>3,882</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,820</u>
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u>3,882</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,820</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u>9,532</u>	<u>10,292</u>	<u>9,813</u>

Capital Programme 2009/10 – Environment, Culture and Communities

Committed	£'000
Housing Stock Transfer – New Affordable House	1,150
Commitment given in LSVT Offer Document to allocate 75% of the available receipt to invest in new affordable housing.	

Unavoidable	£'000
Highways Maintenance & Integrated Transport	1,640
LTP Top Up Funding (capitalisation of revenue)	250
Roads & Footway Resurfacing (capitalisation of revenue)	200
London Road Gas migration controls	25
To keep the gas migration under control pending any more permanent solution it is necessary to keep existing boreholes functional and to put in new measures to reduce volumes of landfill gas migration beyond the site boundaries. Failure to do so puts us in breach of the Environment Agency site licence. There is a joint liability for this site with the other Berkshire Authorities.	
Cemetery & Crematorium – Safety of Memorials	15
Easthampstead Park has a range of memorials available for the bereaved to remember the deceased or to dispose/store cremated remains. This provides an income for the service in excess of £100,000 per annum. The project is to ensure the safety of these memorials.	
Disabled Facilities Grant	200
To provide sufficient funding to enable the administration of mandatory disabled facilities grants to continue during 2009 -2010. There is a mandatory requirement to provide disabled facilities grant to persons who are deemed to be disabled in appropriate circumstances and in addition there are new rules that are relevant to the decision-making. Where a grant is mandatory the Council should continue to prioritise them within its budget.	
South Hill Park Grounds Restoration Project	100
Bracknell Forest Council has been successful in securing grant aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Parks for People Programme. £209,000 has been awarded to fully develop proposals to restore this historic landscape (Stage 1). HLF funding in excess of £2m has been ring-fenced for implementation (Stage 2), subject to successfully completing Stage 1. The capital allocation is essential in drawing down HLF investment. The capital project will run until March 2012. Works directly support Council objectives; specifically Priority 2 Protecting and enhancing our environment.	

New telephone Systems for Coral Reef/Downshire Golf Complex	20
The telephone systems at Coral Reef and Downshire Golf Course were purchased using capital money in 2001. Both sites have been advised by the supplier that the central control units will become obsolete later this year and locating spare parts will become problematic and eventually impossible. Corporate IT have recommended that the telephone systems at Coral Reef and Downshire Golf Course be moved to the Corporate IP telephone system to standardise on one platform for the Council.	

Maintenance	£'000
Improvements & capitalised repairs	595
Improvements & capitalised repairs – Street Lighting	28
Equipment Replacement – Downshire Golf Complex	35
Downshire golf complex generates an income of circa £1.8 million per year returning a net operating surplus of around £140k. In order to maintain this income stream it is necessary to maintain the course to a standard commensurate with the fees charged. In order to do this specialist plant/equipment/machinery is required. This project is to replace two existing machines which are eight to ten years old.	
Maintenance of Leisure Sites	150
This £150k fund provides for a minimal rolling programme of facility/site refurbishment and replacement of plant/equipment/machinery across 9 Leisure sites. These sites include complex facilities containing sophisticated plant and equipment and represent a significant investment for the authority. Sites include a listed mansion, one of the largest indoor/outdoor wet/dry centres in the region, a state of the art leisure pool with many innovative features, an interactive science centre, a water sports centre, three centres located on school sites and a golf complex. Current levels of customer visits to these sites is around 2.3 million/year.	
Coral Reef Main Pool – Re-tiling Base	85
To provide 870 square meter tiled surface to the base of the pool flooring, covering the present badly stained marbleite surface	
Car Park Structure and Repairs	80
The car parks are known not to have wall ties in all elevations to a standard that would be expected. This means there is a greater risk of partial collapse should there be a failure of the few that are there. Structural surveys in the past have been commissioned and this issue has been identified and partially addressed. The car parks are by their age and design prone to high levels of wear and weathering. With continued uncertainty around the future of the town centre it is proposed to commission structural works and complete an anticipated programme of identified necessary repairs	

Rolling programme and Other Desirable	£'000
Junction of John Nike Way / London Rd & Dualling on London Rd	470
The scheme was established in the programme as the means of providing the highway capacity needed to allow planned commercial development along Cain Road, and has been part of the Council's published programme for some years. The scheme was included as a planned project in consultations with businesses in the Western Business Area several years ago. A window of opportunity now exists for construction of the scheme before planned road works on the parallel Berkshire Way are started. If missed, the scheme would be delayed until at least 2010	
Cemetery & Crematorium Memorials for Cremated Remains	45
Existing provision exists for the storage of cremated remains. At present uptake this is likely to be exhausted early in 2009. There is a need to put in place new provision to meet demand. The present arrangements include the gardens of remembrance and Sanctum 2000, which is an after cremation memorial which holds two sets of cremated remains and gives a focal point for the bereaved. Whilst this has been a successful provision there is evidence that demand for this type of memorial is declining and consideration should be made of other products on the market.	
EPCC Computer Booking Package	45
The computer booking package at Easthampstead Park Conference Centre is of paramount importance to the management and efficiency of the business. Every piece of business that the centre generates (whether conferences, events, weddings or bar sales) goes through the booking package in some form. The current system was installed over 10 years ago and at this time the centre was generating less than £500,000 of revenue per year. The centre is now on the verge of surpassing £2,000,000 of annual revenue and needs a computer booking package that is designed specifically for a conference centre, in order to improve efficiency and take the business to the next level.	
Play Areas Rolling Programme	50
Currently, there are 25 equipped play areas that are owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council. Many of these have been provided through the planning process, either through funding contributions and / or as part of land transfers secured through Section 106 Agreements. Capital monies are needed to refurbish sites as part of a rolling programme. Sites are prioritised on the basis of factors including level of use, condition, play value and market need / demand.	
Refurbishment of Public Conveniences	80
The 4 public conveniences are owned by Bracknell Forest Council and were last refurbished between 1995 and 1999. They are well used and scheduled cleansing, routine maintenance and repairs are managed within the Council's Street Cleansing function. The cost of the day to day work (apart from the bus station) is now recharged to Bracknell Town Council and Crowthorne Parish Council following budget decisions of years past.	

Land Drainage	60
There is a continuing need to improve land drainage and watercourses throughout the Borough to reduce the risk of flooding to properties and roads. Operational experience indicates that the risk of flooding in both rural and urban areas has increased. Preliminary investigations indicate that a number of sites would benefit from local (often modest) improvements reducing the risk or frequency and severity of flooding incidents.	
Library Refurbishment Rolling programme	50
Following local government re-organisation in 1999, a rolling programme of refurbishment of the public libraries was initiated. Recent budget pressures have meant that the last partial refurbishment of a branch library was Whitegrove in 2004. In order to encourage borrowing and visits, it is important to ensure that the internal and external appearance of libraries is maintained to a high standard as this encourages new and existing customers to use the service and maintains a welcoming and professional atmosphere in the libraries. It is recommended that the rolling programme of refurbishment be re-introduced in order to maintain the Borough's libraries to a high standard. Binfield, Birch Hill, Harmans Water and Ascot Heath libraries are particularly in need of improvement work.	
Community Centres Refurbishment Rolling programme	50
The Council owns 14 community centres throughout the Borough. These are managed by local community associations under a lease and management agreement with BFBC. Under the terms of the management agreement, BFBC is responsible for maintaining the structure and utility of the building while community associations are responsible for the décor. Property Department conducts an annual condition survey to determine planned maintenance priorities for community centres. Energy efficient heating systems and building elements are installed when replacement becomes necessary. However, planned maintenance does not provide for the modernisation of community centres or modifications to suit the needs of different user groups. This programme is necessary to ensure that community centres remain fit for purpose in meeting current and future community needs.	
Plasma Screens for Marketing at Look Out/Edgbarrow and Sandhurst Sports Centres	27
To provide plasma screens at Edgbarrow & Sandhurst leisure centres and The Look Out so they are able to display and promote their activities in a professional and visible way to the public	
Residential Street Parking	100
Parking is a real and growing problem throughout the borough as car ownership increases. The Council receives many letters each year from residents and Members requesting that additional parking spaces be provided. Where possible funding would be used to bring residential streets up to a reasonable parking standard by carrying out various improvement schemes such as vehicle crossovers, providing disabled persons parking spaces and constructing additional residential car parking spaces	

Car Park Extension	100
<p>There is scope to enlarge some of the Council's surface car parks by removing the adjacent grass area and replacing it with macadam (subject to planning consent). Opportunities to develop and extend these car parks in partnership with local organisations will be sought and priority allocations will depend on the availability of land, demand and availability of partnership funds.</p>	

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - SOCIAL CARE & LEARNING

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000
Committed			
Housing Stock Transfer - New South Bracknell Youth Centre	500	500	0
Capita One (EMS) upgrade	70	40	50
Adult Services Computer Software	26	50	0
	596	590	50
Unavoidable			
Schools Disabled Access (SENDA & DDA Legislation)	250	250	250
Safety Glazing (Safety Glazing Regulations)	40	40	0
	290	290	250
Maintenance			
Improvements & Capitalised Repairs (Schools)	200	500	500
Improvements & Capitalised Repairs (excl Schools)	323	323	323
	523	823	823
Rolling Programme/Other Desirable			
Carers Accommodation Strategy - Feasibility	42	0	0
College Hall Security	60	0	0
	102	0	0
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	1,511	1,703	1,123
External Funding - Primary Capital Strategy for Change			
Ascot Heath Infants	55	385	tbc
Ascot Heath Juniors	725	340	tbc
Holly Spring Infants	475	295	tbc
Holly Spring Juniors	115	690	tbc
Great Hollands	40	120	tbc
Crown Wood	555	590	tbc
Sandy Lane	155	590	tbc
Rolling Programme - Outdoor Classrooms	50	50	tbc
Rolling Programme - ICT Upgrades	148	176	tbc
Jennetts Park Primary School	42	4,239	tbc
North Bracknell Review	1,415	1,395	tbc
S106 Projects	160	160	tbc
Family Tree Nursery	5	5	tbc
Extended Schools & Childrens Centres	1,120	905	tbc
	5,060	9,940	0

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - SOCIAL CARE & LEARNING

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000
External Funding - Other Items			
Schools Devolved Formula Capital (excl VA schools)	1,506	1,446	tbc
Modernisation Funding (Grant)	367	809	tbc
Targeted Capital Fund - 14-19 Diplomas - Garth Hill	800	0	0
Targeted Capital Fund - 14-19 Diplomas - Other Schools	950	2,250	0
Targeted Capital Fund - Kennel Lane Rebuild Phase 1	250	3,750	tbc
Section 106 Contributions	90	90	250
ICT Harnessing Technology	284	288	tbc
ICT Mobile Working for Social Workers	10	10	10
Garth Hill - Building Schools for the Future	27,000	6,600	1,000
Garth Hill - Building Schools for the Future - S106 Contributions	174	0	0
Extended Schools	48	27	0
DOH Funding - Mental Health	70	70	0
DOH Funding - Social Care	22	23	0
Aiming High Grants	73	171	0
Youth Capital	65	65	0
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	36,769	25,539	1,260
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	38,280	27,242	2,383
Primary Capital Strategy for Change - Breakdown of Funding			
Primary capital programme	3,000	5,380	tbc
Modernisation	170	370	tbc
S106	550	2,900	tbc
Children's Centres	510	300	tbc
PVI funding	490	490	tbc
Extended schools	120	60	tbc
Maintained schools DFC	80	140	tbc
School Development Grant	20	30	tbc
Other school contributions	120	270	tbc
	5,060	9,940	0

Capital Programme 2009/10 – Social Care and Learning Bids

Committed	£'000
Housing Stock Transfer – New South Bracknell Youth Centre	500
Commitment given in LSVT Offer Document to release £1m of the proceeds to invest in new Youth facilities in the South of Bracknell	
Capita One (EMS) Upgrade	70
Five year programme by Capita to migrate ONE software from outdated Powerbuilder environment to .net technology. ONE is the Education database which supports the work of many teams within SCL directorate. In order to maintain support and maintenance it is necessary to upgrade the software.	
Adult Services Computer Software	26
Replacement of SWIFT Care Management and Supporting People systems following the review of the SWIFT upgrade from version 21.02 to Version 23 - Web Forms / Oracle 10g - significant change to the infrastructure and product deployment.	

Unavoidable	£'000
Schools Disabled Access	250
A rolling programme of disabled access works to meet the Council's obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act. Works are prioritised in favour of specific individuals' needs for physical access to school buildings and facilities.	
Safety Glazing	40
A rolling programme of window filming works to school establishments in accordance with the Safety Glazing Regulations. Window film is applied to high risk areas such as corridor doors, low level glazing and windows in sports halls.	

Maintenance	£'000
Improvements & capitalised repairs - Schools	200
Improvements & capitalised repairs – Non-Schools	323

Rolling programme and Other Desirable	£'000
Carers Accommodation Strategy – Feasibility	42
There are four elements with potential capital/ accommodation	

<p>requirements:</p> <p>1) Obtaining accommodation for the new Carers service – comprising day services accommodation and accommodation for overnight respite</p> <p>2) Obtaining suitable accommodation for the Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities. The current short term plan involves the relocation of the team to Time Square but alternative accommodation will be required in the longer term</p> <p>3) Making effective use of existing property and assets.</p> <p>(4) Divesting or finding alternative use for the leased property at Easter Road</p>	
College Hall security	60
<p>Physical security works to the College Hall site including motorised gates, access control, two way speech, lighting, window grilles. Works required following threats to pupils on site and a subsequent risk assessment undertaken with Thames Valley Police. All staff and pupils at the PRU will benefit. Project addresses the security of pupils which is a health & safety issue. The College Hall PRU is responsible for meeting the educational needs of those secondary age children who are unable to sustain a mainstream school place either on a temporary or permanent basis.</p>	

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - COUNCIL WIDE

	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Committed			
Time Square Refurbishment - Boilers, Chillers & Roof	500	0	0
	<u>500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Unavoidable			
Asbestos Management	180	0	0
Water Hygiene (prevention of Legionellosis)	60	60	60
Fire Safety (Fire Precautions Regulations)	50	50	50
Desktop Refresh	200	200	200
Server Refresh	124	124	124
ICT Infrastructure Development	95	95	95
Mobile and Flexible Working	107	50	0
Access Improvement Programme (DDA legislation)	100	200	200
	<u>916</u>	<u>779</u>	<u>729</u>
Maintenance			
Further Capitalisation of Buildings, Highways and ICT Infrastructure/Project Management	400	400	400
	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>
Rolling Programme/ Other Desirable			
Civic Hub/Time Square - Combined Heat & Power	0	305	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>0</u>
Participatory Budgeting			
Members Initiatives	420	420	420
	<u>420</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>420</u>
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u>2,236</u>	<u>1,904</u>	<u>1,549</u>
Externally Funded			
None	0	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u>2,236</u>	<u>1,904</u>	<u>1,549</u>

Capital Programme 2009/10 – Council Wide

Committed	£'000
Time Square – Refurbishment of Boilers, Chillers and Roof	500
Feasibility studies into the refurbishment of Time Square identified the need to replace the boilers and chillers as the plant was reaching the end of its useful life. The total cost is estimated to be £750,000. Works are due to commence in the current financial year for which provision of £250,000 was made in the 2008/09 Capital Programme.	

Unavoidable	£'000
Asbestos Management	180
This will enable Type 2 surveys to be completed on all Council operational properties identifying any potential asbestos hazards. Where required, remedial works will also be undertaken. Based on past experience the budget should be sufficient to complete the full programme of surveys and essential works in 2009/10.	
Water Hygiene (Prevention of Legionellosis)	60
Testing of water systems will be undertaken in Council operational properties to identify potential hazards arising from the legionella bacteria. The budget also allows for the cost of undertaking any remedial works together with regular essential testing once complete.	
Fire Safety (Fire Precautions Regulations)	50
Surveys of Council operational properties to comply with the fire safety legislation. The budget also allows for the completion of follow up works arising from the fire safety risk assessments. The assessment will also be made available to the 'responsible person' to ensure all necessary management arrangements are implemented.	
Desktop Refresh	200
Refresh of all desktop PC's that fall out of warranty during 2009/10. This will ensure all desktop PC's are within warranty to maintain supportability and service.	
Server Refresh	124
To refresh the servers that will become over five years old in 2009/10. This will ensure that all servers remain within warranty and are supportable.	
ICT infrastructure Development	95
To cover a number of ICT network infrastructure upgrades and developments ensuring that equipment is both current and supportable. Specific works include website redesign, e-forms replacement and Customer Management System.	

Mobile & Flexible Working	107
To establish a formal Programme for mobile and flexible working with appropriate resource and funding to support the business case and project developments and engage with service departments. A Programme Manager is required to oversee the delivery of the framework and support and drive the change within the departments. 3 projects have been identified to begin this work, Environmental Health, Housing benefits and CSC Over 11's. Without appropriate resourcing and robust management the programme will not be sustainable.	

Access Improvement Programme	100
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives disabled people the right to challenge service provision if they feel they are not receiving the same level of service, in the same manner as others. Access difficulties to buildings may place the Council at risk of legal action. Further works, identified through independent access audits, are programmed across a range of service areas.	

Maintenance	£'000
Further Capitalisation of Buildings, Highways and ICT Infrastructure/Project Management	400

Rolling programme and Other Desirable	£'000
None	

Participatory Budgeting	£'000
Members Initiative	420
A sum of money is set aside in order that individual Members can allocate resources to small projects that have been identified based on local ward-level priorities, or in conjunction with partners and other stakeholders. These individual Member budgets can be pooled to provide larger schemes where appropriate. This mechanism of delivering investment at the local level contributes towards the "Community Call for Action" as laid out in the recent Local Government White Paper and the move towards Participatory Budgeting.	

ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 18 DECEMBER 2008

BENEFIT SERVICE BENCHMARKING AND MOCK INSPECTION AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

(Director of Environment, Culture and Communities)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides members with the result of a benchmarking exercise that the Benefit Service took part in to compare performance and cost as well as a mock inspection of the benefit service against the new Audit Commission inspection regime for the benefit service. Following recommendation from the mock inspection an improvement plan has been developed which members are asked to consider.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note that Bracknell Forest Benefit Service performance against CPA performance grade in 2007/8 is benchmarked as above average.
- 2.2. Members are asked to note that the Benefit Service cost per weighted caseload is calculated at £ 70.92 which is £ 8.08 per case below average.
- 2.3 Members are asked to note that the mock inspection results indicate that the current Benefit Service would score fair with promising prospects for improvement.
- 2.4. Members are asked to consider the improvement plan for the Benefit Service as at appendix C.
- 2.5. Members are asked to agree to establish a working party to monitor the implementation of the improvement plan.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Benefit Service achieved a score of 4 under the Benefit and Fraud Inspection (BFI) score in 2006 against the DWP performance standards. This contributed to the Council's overall CPA score of 4.
- 3.2. The BFI inspection regime has now been replaced with a harder test administered by the Audit Commission. This new regime has been tested against 9 authorities. One of those Authorities scored 4 under the old regime but achieved one star under the harder test.
- 3.3. In preparation for the new harder test a benchmarking exercise has been undertaken followed by a mock inspection.

4. BENCHMARKING

- 4.1. Bracknell Forest has participated in a CIPFA benchmarking study against 18 other Councils. The comparator Councils were selected on the basis of like case load (DWP grouping) geography and similar operating systems in terms of ICT.
- 4.2. Appendix A contains the summary of the benchmarking exercise. Firstly, there is a scatter graph which plots the position of Bracknell forest benefits service against others in terms of cost per weighted case and also performance. There is only one other Council that can demonstrate comparable performance at the same level of cost Bracknell Forest performance against the un-rounded performance standards grade is 3.9 out of 4 compared to the average of the benchmarked authorities of 3.36.
- 4.3. The benchmarking also identified the direction of travel of the service over the last two years. The second sheet of Appendix A contains a comparison of performance across a range of performance indicators compared against the average in 2006/7 and 2007/8. The scatter graphs show that in 2007/8 the Benefit Service in Bracknell Forest performed the average performance in all bar one indicator. The only indicator where performance was below average was new claims decided in 14 days where the performance over the two years had declined from 89% of all claims being decided in 14 days to 85% decided in 14 days in 2007/8.

5. MOCK INSPECTION

- 5.1. An independent company was commissioned to undertake a mock inspection of the benefit service against the new Audit Commission key lines of enquiry for Benefit Services. A full copy of the report is included at Appendix B.
- 5.2. The assessment was that under the new regime the Bracknell Forest Benefit Service would currently score 2.41 out of 4 for how good the service is and 2.44 out of 4 for the prospects for improvement. This would equate to a fair and promising prospects for improvement score.
- 5.3. The mock inspection concluded that the service had the following strengths and weaknesses:
 - 5.3.1 Strengths:
 - Strong history of delivering customer care to required specifications
 - Improvement in customer's satisfaction of the quality of the service
 - The service's track record in delivering improvement
 - Value for money through income maximisation through overpayment recovery
 - Strong history of improving performance indicators
 - 5.3.2 Weaknesses:
 - Customer focus needs to be realigned with Audit Commission model
 - Demographic sectoring of customers and staff
 - Designing the service based on customer needs
 - Evidence of the commitment of leadership to the management and monitoring of the service
 - Long-term planning (as defined by the Audit Commission)
- 5.4. Accordingly the report made 6 recommendations as follows:
 1. The service needs to consider building the service around customer needs;

2. The service should consider a centralised library of procedures, training notes, policies, minutes etc., together with assigning the responsibility for the maintenance of such a library;
 3. The service should work with other services to be clear on its links with the Local Area Agreement;
 4. The service should consider better ways to benchmark in VFM areas. The service should identify VFM indicators and encourage benchmarking group members to adopt the measures;
 5. The service has difficulty in demonstrating the recognition of the effectiveness of councillors in managing the service;
 6. The service should ensure its defective claim analysis produces positive service outcomes for the customer.
- 5.5 In response to the recommendations an improvement plan has been drafted which is included in this report at appendix C. The improvement plan is short term taking the service to March 2009. The Benefit Service will have three months notice of an inspection and so it is important to make progress and then review the improvement plan and establish a plan for the next financial year. Members are asked to consider the plan. At March the plan will be reviewed and a new improvement plan for the next financial year established.
- 5.6 It is recommended that a working party of members is formed to monitor and steer the improvement plan.

Background Papers

Benefit administration benchmarking club 2008 CIPFA
Benefits KLOE report - Meritec October 2008

Contact for further information

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**Benefits Administration Benchmarking Club
2008**

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

compared with

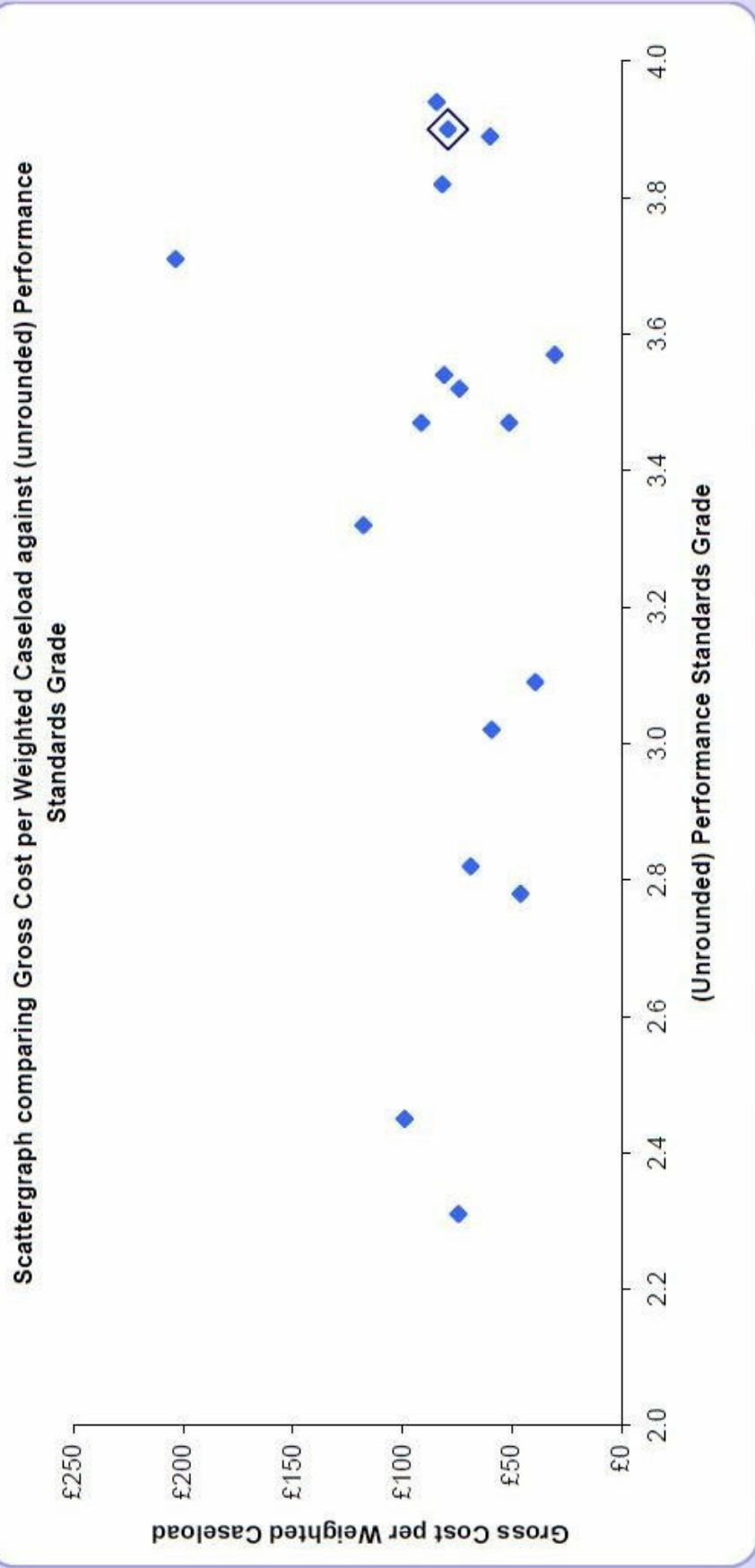
Bracknell Forest
Havering
Macclesfield
Reading
Solihull
South Lakeland
Sutton
Torbay
Winchester
Wrexham

East Hampshire
Herefordshire
Oxford
Slough
South Gloucestershire
South Staffordshire
Swindon
West Berkshire
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12/09/2008

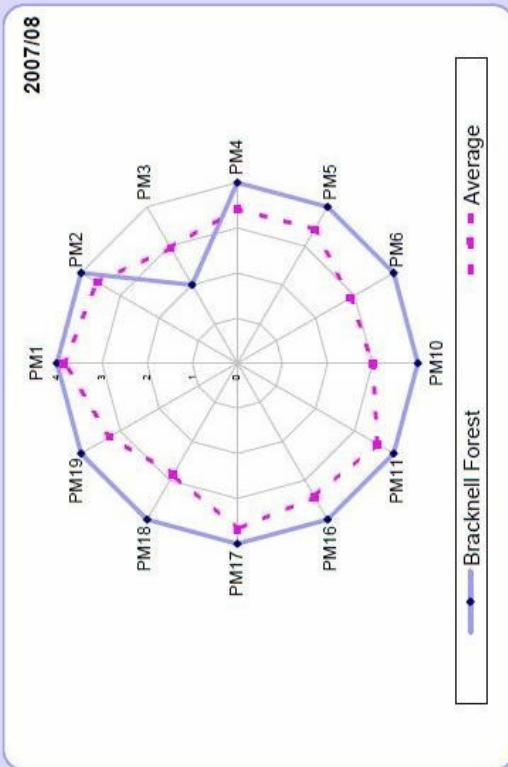
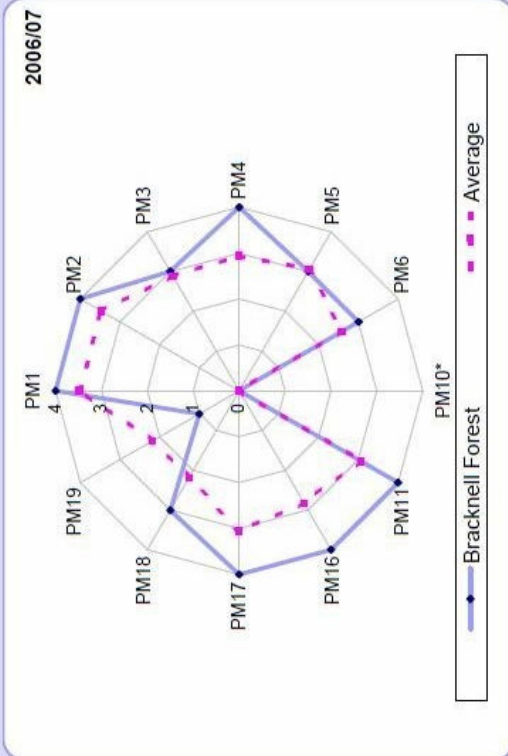
Performance vs Cost



Each dot displays the data for an individual authority.
Bracknell Forest's data is highlighted by the hollow diamond.

HB and CTB Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2006/07			2007/08			Changes		
	(units)	Value	Avg	Value	Avg	Score	Value	Avg	Score
PM1 Speed of Processing Claims	days	27.9	31.0	4	3.5	4	28.0	25.6	4
PM2 New claims outstanding over 50 days	%	0.0%	9.8%	4	3.5	4	1.0%	6.7%	4
PM3 New claims decided within 14 days	%	89.9%	83.4%	3	2.9	2	75.0%	85.2%	2
PM4 Rent allowance claims paid on time or within 7 days	%	96.0%	84.2%	4	2.9	4	95.0%	90.6%	4
PM5 Speed of processing changes of circumstances	days	17.8	14.0	3	3.1	4	9.0	11.0	4
PM6 Calculation of the amount of benefit due	%	99.4%	97.2%	3	2.6	4	100.0%	97.6%	4
PM7 HB overpayments recovered as a % overpayments identified	%	68.3%	66.1%				57.2%	64.8%	
PM8 HB overpayments recovered as a % overpayment debt outstanding	%	18.6%	24.7%				17.5%	24.1%	
PM9 HB overpayments written off as a % overpayment debt outstanding	%	0.7%	5.1%				0.2%	6.7%	
PM10 Reductions completed	%						114.2%	90.6%	4
PM11 Data-matches resolved within 2 months	%	100.0%	90.5%	4	3.1	4	93.0%	93.3%	4
PM16 Successful sanctions per 1,000 caseload	/1000			4	2.8	4			4
PM17 Applications for reconsideration/revision actioned and notified	%	79.0%	69.1%	4	3.1	4	90.0%	75.4%	4
PM18 Appeals submitted to the Appeals Service in 4 weeks	%	60.0%	46.4%	3	2.2	4	75.0%	58.2%	4
PM19 Appeals submitted to the Appeals Service in 3 months	%	80.0%	73.2%	1	2.2	4	100.0%	86.8%	4



*PM10 was not used for 2006/07 but this has been left in to make comparisons easier with 2007/08.

Bracknell Forest

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Benefits KLOE Report

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SUMMARY OF REPORT

The key findings of this piece of work may be summarised as follows:-

KLOE scoring at a glance

Description	Score*
Judgement 1 - How good is the service?	2.41
Judgement 2 – What prospects are there for improvement?	2.44
These 2 judgement are informed by the following questions;	
Question 1. What has the service aimed to achieve?	Context
Question 2. Is the service meeting the needs of the community and users?	2.12
Question 3. Is the service delivering value for money?	2.70
Question 4. What is the service track record in delivering improvement?	2.38
Question 5. How well does the service manage performance?	2.27
Question 6. Does the service have the capacity to improve?	2.66

* Where 1 is poor and 4 is excellent

Strengths

- Strong history of delivering customer care to required specifications.
- Improvement in customer's satisfaction of the quality of the service.
- The service's track record in delivering improvement.
- Value for money through income maximisation through overpayment recovery.
- Strong history of improving performance indicators.

Weaknesses

- Customer focus needs to be realigned with audit Commission model
- Demographic sectoring of customers and staff.
- Designing the service based on customer needs.
- Evidence of the commitment of leadership to the management and monitoring of the service
- Long-term planning (as defined by the Audit Commission)

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTACT DETAILS

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Audit Commission's new Key Lines of Enquiry for Benefit Services.

Key Lines of Enquiry have been used on other Council Services, but as the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) previously evaluated Benefit Services, the Audit Commission never developed KLOE specific to benefits. The abolition of the BFI has now prompted the Audit Commission to provide Specific KLOEs for Benefits from 1st April 2008.

1.2 Contacts

Any questions should be addressed in the first instance to

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2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Definition

The Audit Commission are an independent public body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently, and effectively in the areas of local government, housing, health, criminal justice and fire and rescue services.

Their mission is to be a driving force in the improvement of public services. They promote good practice and help those responsible for public services to achieve better outcomes for citizens, with a focus on those people who need public services most.

Their strategic objectives underpin all that they do:

- To raise standards of financial management and financial reporting.
- To challenge public bodies to deliver better value for money.
- To encourage continual improvement in public services so they meet the changing needs of diverse communities and provide fair access for all.
- To promote high standards of governance and accountability.
- To stimulate significant improvement in the quality of data and the use of information by decision makers.

The Audit Commission has the power to inspect Local Authorities. The goal of the inspections is to arrive at a judgement of the Authorities' performance in certain areas.

Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) are detailed questions that help to inform the inspection judgements. They are used by the inspection teams, but KLOEs are also published to help audited and inspected bodies with their own assessments.

From 1st April 2008, the Audit Commission took over responsibility from the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) for inspection of Local Authority Benefit Services using newly developed KLOEs.

2.2 Benefit Service Inspections

Housing and Council Tax Benefit (HB and CTB) services make a vital contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of an area and to local authorities' strategies to protect vulnerable people by addressing poverty, deprivation, homelessness and unemployment.

The focus of benefit inspections will be on the effective and efficient delivery of better outcomes for local people: benefit customers and council tax payers. The AC approach will assess how well customer-care and value for money is being delivered and improved within the context of delivering statutory duties in a very complex legal framework. All AC judgements will be underpinned by assessing how well the council gets the right benefit payments to the right people at the right time.

The inspection process and scoring methodology is completely different from that used by the BFI where assessment against the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) performance standards was undertaken. The KLOE approach is not a replacement of the performance standards. The new regime means that benefit services will be assessed against more challenging criteria. Benefit Managers familiar with BFI's approach will, understandably, see the new benefit inspection as a 'harder test'.

2.3 KLOE

Every council that administers the benefit scheme has a responsibility to pay the right benefits to the right people at the right time. This fundamental responsibility and the legal requirements of the national benefit scheme therefore underpin all benefit assessments.

The KLOE descriptors have been developed in consultation with local authorities, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Local Government Association, London Councils, the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy and our pilot authorities.

The benefit service descriptors for Judgement 1 (How good is the service?) key lines of enquiry (KLOE) are designed to help us assess the standard of service provided for local people. The inspectors will refer to relevant regulations and orders to assess and make judgements about the extent to which local policies and practices meet statutory requirements.

The Commission's inspection approach also focuses on service outcomes; the service's contributions to area-based priorities such as tackling poverty and inequality, and reducing worklessness; and the perspectives of local citizens and people who use services.

The Judgement 2 (What prospects are there for improvement?) KLOE and descriptors are used for all service inspections. These help the Commission assess the prospects for future improvements.

There are three headline questions asked for Judgement 1 and need to be evidenced. The questions and KLOE for Judgement 1 are;

- Question 1. What has the service aimed to achieve?
- Question 2. Is the service meeting the needs of the community and users?
- Question 3. Is the service delivering value for money?

Judgement 2 – What prospects are there for improvement?

- Question 4. What is the service track record in delivering improvement?
- Question 5. How well does the service manage performance?
- Question 6. Does the service have the capacity to improve?

The KLOEs related to the judgement and questions are looked at in greater depth in this reports's findings.

The Commission will look for evidence related to KLOE and have produced documentation with suggestions on the type of evidence that would be suitable.

3. INSPECTIONS

3.1 Pilots

The Commission has undertaken nine pilot inspections to develop criteria for judgement and to work out how best to apply the existing service inspection approach to benefit services. The focus of the inspections will be on the effective and efficient delivery of better outcomes for local people: benefit customers and council tax payers. The Commission approach will assess how well customer care and value for money is being delivered and improved within the context of delivering statutory duties within a very complex legal framework. All the Commission's judgements will be underpinned by assessing how well the council gets the right benefit payments to the right people at the right time.

The Commission are very grateful for the support that the following councils gave them in the pilot inspections:

- Blaby District Council;
- Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council;
- Chester-le-Street District Council;
- Derby City Council;
- London Borough of Merton;
- London Borough of Newham;
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets;
- Slough Borough Council; and
- Wokingham Borough Council.

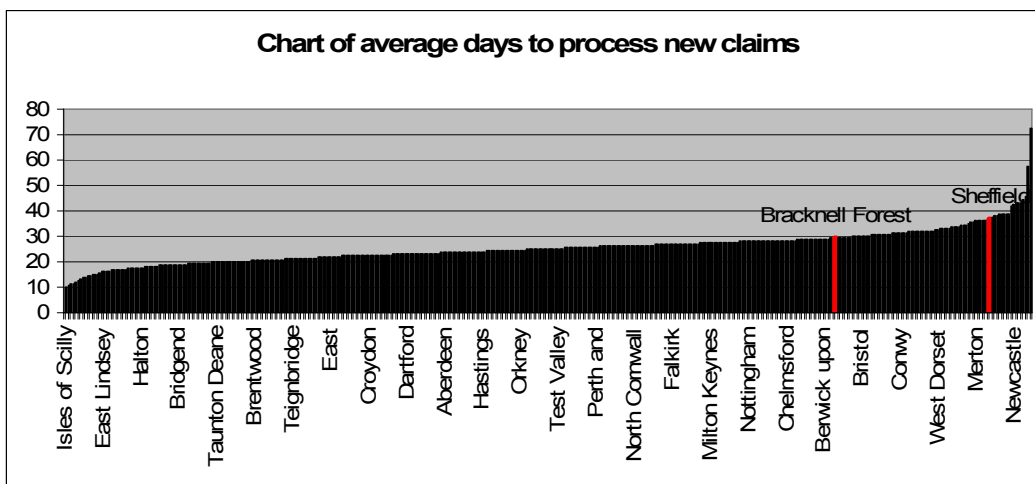
The Commission will not publish the reports as they represent the pilot working and the 'scores' will not form part of any formal Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) or benefit service assessment process.

3.2 2008/2009 Inspections

The Audit Commission have made it clear that they will target the 35 most 'poorly' performing Authorities for inspection. Although they have supplied the sources of information they will use to determine 'poorly', the actual mechanism is still unknown, possibly even to the Audit Commission itself. Having said this, they have indicated that particular attention will be paid to last years performance in the area of PM1 (days to process new claims) and PM5 (days to process changes of circumstances).

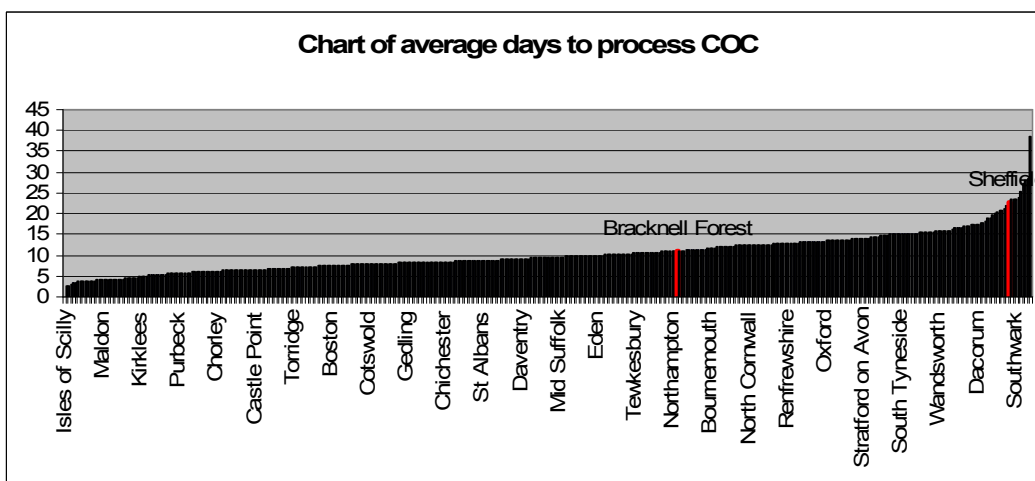
South Staffordshire was the first Local Authority Benefit Service to be inspected on 9th June 2008. The second site was Sheffield on 23rd June 2008.

By looking at Sheffield's performance, we can gain an insight into the inspection selection criteria. The chart below orders all authorities from the best performance in the reported September 2007 figures, to the worst in terms of days to process new claims.



Sheffield is at the bottom of the fourth quarter while Bracknell is in the bottom of the third quartile. In fact Sheffield is in the bottom 20 worst performers.

The table below has the same comparison, but looks at the change of circumstance indicator.



In this table we can see that Bracknell is between in the third quartile, while Sheffield is 13th from bottom.

It is interesting to note that the Sheffield manager believes that they were selected for inspection because their supplier (Liberata) made a processing error that caused them to exceed their threshold. While the Commission have stated emphasis will be on PM1 and PM5 performance for 07/08, they have also said that subsidy can be a factor. With this in mind, it is no surprise that Sheffield have been selected for the first inspection.

It is tempting to assume that the bottom 35 performers from the tables above will be selected for the 2007/2008 inspections. However, while there are certainly a number of authorities in the bottom 35 in both tables, not all Authorities in the bottom 35 of the PM1 table are in the bottom 35 of the PM5 table, and vice versa. Thus we can see why other criteria are important in the selection process.

3.3 Inspection Methodology

Once an Authority is notified of inspection, the inspectors will send a questionnaire designed to be a self-assessment. This questionnaire will help the inspector focus on issues while on site. Before the site visit, the inspectors will request documentation which will be informed by local knowledge, performance statistics and the questionnaire.

While on site, the inspectors will interview key personnel and this will usually lead to more requests for documentation. While this resembles the BFI methodology, there will be greater emphasis on triangulation.

Triangulation is the Commission's term for the process of verifying that strategies, policies and processes are not only documented but are adhered to. In simple terms the Commission will check that an authority actually does what it claims to do.

Emerging findings are readily discussed with the management team and there is ample opportunity to challenge results and provide further evidence.

Ultimately, the reports will be published on the web.

In terms of Local Authorities or indeed any other organisation predicting their Benefit Service score, it will be difficult to exactly mimic the inspection process. Other than the experience and resource required, a key issue is the Commission's reluctance to provide a scoring matrix for Local Authorities to assess themselves against. This is probably because it is exactly what the Commission wants to move away from.

When looking at the KLOE it at first seems relatively simple, as the responses are either 'yes' or 'no'. Unfortunately, the questions are so broad, they are very subjective. While it is possible to reason with an inspector on-site, it is difficult to do this if you are not being inspected. Add to this the fact that the Commission have only published details of score definitions for scores 2 and 3, and then self-assessment becomes difficult. However, what can be done is an assessment in terms of these two score definitions. For example, if a self-assessment is done with reference to the two score definitions and it is felt that the Local Authority performs below the score of 2 in most instances, then an assessment of 1 can be inferred.

4. SELF-ASSESSMENT

As highlighted earlier, a full assessment designed to mimic the Audit Commission would be expensive and also unlikely to be totally accurate. Therefore a risk based approach should be adopted.

4.1 Self-assessment aims

The aim of the assessment is to provide an objective view of the Benefit Service in terms of the Audit Commission's KLOEs. It will produce an assessment of where the Authority is using the Audit Commission's KLOE as a frame of reference.

The assessment will highlight areas that are met and areas that are not met. A probable score will be produced and a table of strengths and weaknesses drawn up.

4.2 Self-assessment methodology

The proposed timescales and budget prohibit a full assessment. The assessment will therefore concentrate on interviews with key members of the Benefit Service Management Team (BSMT).

The KLOE will be explored with the BSMT in terms of identifying recognised strengths and weaknesses.

The BSMT will then help the assessor to score the Authority using a scoring matrix developed for the task.

Finally, the assessor will report on the findings, giving the Authority results together with recommendations on priorities.

4.3 Self-assessment findings

KLOE 1 sets the context for the subsequent KLOE. This question looks for evidence in areas like the Community strategy or Business Plans. The Bracknell Forest website holds the Bracknell Forest Sustainable Community Plan (SCP). There are a number of documents available elsewhere that are held electronically.

The Corporate Plan's title is 'Living together working together' and outlines eight priorities; Promoting learning and training for all ages, Protecting and enhancing the environment, Improving health and well being, Providing decent and affordable housing, Developing a town fit for the 21st Century, Improving travel and transport, Promoting community safety, and Improving community engagement. The SCP was written in 2005 and its long-term scope is three years.

Also available is the Annual Report Review of 2006 to 2007 and Plans for 2007 to 2008. This document is linked to the SCP and the underlying priorities. The more up to date Annual Report Review of 2007 to 2008 and Plans for 2008 to 2009 is not available on the website but is available on request on the Housing Benefit counter.

The Corporate Plan does not specifically identify the Housing Benefit team but this is quite a common trend. The BVPI are listed along with all other BVPIs for the council. In the 2008/2009 plans, no targets have been set as yet for the 2 Housing Benefit indicators of 'Right Time' and 'Right Benefit'

KLOE 2 concerns the needs of the citizens and users, and whether the service is meeting these. In order to assess if the needs are being met, the Authority needs to understand what the needs are.

KLOE 2.1 asks if the needs are at the heart of the design of the service. The service shows particular strength staff embedding a customer focus in all their work and meeting standards set out in legislation. There is a 'right first time' ethos and customer care training is regular and well attended. The effects of this care can be seen by the lack of complaints received by the service.

There is some uncertainty over who frontline staff are. On visiting the main office you are first directed by a receptionist to the benefit counter. The staff on the counter are corporate customer service staff who can take evidence, but more complicated queries are dealt with by passing the customer over to a benefit specialist. The Audit Commission seem to prefer having the least amount of contacts before a query is dealt with. In this model, a claimant with a complex benefit query would need to speak to three people before their query is answered. On a positive note, this model ensures that a complex query will be answered.

The Authority undertook a survey of customers for Best Value indicators in 2006. The results can be summarized as follows;

BV 80a – Overall I am satisfied with the ways I can contact the local Benefits office = 73% strongly agree or agree (75% in 2003)

BV 80b – Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the local benefit office = 74% strongly agree or agree (73% in 2003)

BV 80c – Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service provided by my local Benefit office = 65% strongly agree or agree (71% in 2003)

BV80d – Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in my local Benefits office = 73% strongly agree or agree (75% in 2003)

BV 80e – Overall I am satisfied with Housing / Council Tax benefits form = 56% say they strongly agree or agree (57% in 2003)

BV 80f - Overall I am satisfied with the speed of the service = 62% say they strongly agree or agree (47% in 2003)

BV 80g – Overall satisfaction = 71% (67% in 2003)

The trend is difficult to analyse. Overall there has been improvement, but of the 6 elements, only two have improved since the last survey. The biggest impact is in the satisfaction of the speed of service.

The results in themselves are good but there is little evidence to suggest that results were used to design the service. It is clear that the service's efforts to design the service around the customer have had a positive outcome (concentrating on speed of service). The next KLOE focuses on the next step – actually proactively establishing what the customer needs are.

KLOE 2.2 asks if the service is based on a robust understanding of local need. The authority may argue that the BVPI survey helped to understand local need, but the survey asked about satisfaction and not what the customer felt they needed.

The service takes full account of the legal framework and there are good outcomes for the customers. Basic information is available about the community and this can be seen in the SCP and other documents. Part of the corporate priorities is to engage with the community and the service participates in surgeries and uses basic information to engage minority groups such as the Polish Community. The service promotes take-up of benefits by working with the Pension Service and sending out take-up leaflets with the council tax bills. However, the service is operating as a fair service in these areas because the community profiling and use of that data is not systematic and used to target those most in need systematically.

The service ensures information about its accessibility is promoted by using the internet website and placing advertisements in the local paper. However, there are other media routes that can be exploited.

The service works collaboratively with partners such as Bracknell Homes, CAB, Pension Service and the Homelessness Forum to improve the service to the customer.

Overall the service should receive a solid level 2 score for this KLOE.

KLOE 2.3 asks if service standards are clear and comprehensive and if users have been involved in setting them. The service has its own service standards that are based on the Corporate Standards. It is unclear if the standards are available to customers. There is a list of standards on the website. One set of standards is for 'Housing and Benefits' and for the benefits part the standard is 'We will provide you with information about any welfare benefits which may be available to help you secure housing'. This appears to be related to the Housing Service. Even if the Housing Benefit service standards are available in hardcopy, the service does not involve the user in setting the standards.

The service should score between level 1 and level 2 for this KLOE.

KLOE 2.4 asks if there are suitable arrangements for consulting with users and non-users. The service has a customer feedback, complaints and compliments system, but does not use this information to improve services.

The service works hard to ensure that communication with stakeholders is regular and effective. It also works hard to ensure that the customer is aware of the consequences of making false claims or not reporting changes by sending anti-fraud leaflet with every notification, and placing the leaflets in doctors' surgeries and other key locations.

The service should score between level 2 and level 3 for this KLOE.

KLOE 2.5 asks if the Service embraces equality, diversity to ensure fair and equal access. All Councils must submit the level of Equality Standard they operate at, where Level 1 is the lowest and Level 5 is the highest. Bracknell is currently operating at Level 2 and plan to reach Level 3 by March 2009. At level 2, an authority is judged to be fair.

There are many strengths in this KLOE as the service ensures all staff attend regular Equality and Awareness training. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are suitably used and staff aware of the fund. In fact, DHP have been targeted to those most in need by targeting homeless customers under 19 years old.

The service ensures it is compliant with Disability regulations and access to e-services is enabled through public access terminals in public buildings.

In order to move from a 'fair' to a 'good', the service needs go beyond meeting requirements. For example, the service does not ensure that equality performance is monitored in contract staff. It is difficult for the service to reach diverse communities if it does not systematically analyze its customer base and look for diversity.

The service should score a level 2 for this KLOE.

KLOE 2.6 asks if the service is delivering what it promised to. The service has set itself aims and objectives and has achieved these in the past. While the service is pleased with its performance, the Audit commission has set high standards for 'good' authorities. In particular the Audit Commission would expect a 'good' authority to effectively progress all work in less than 7 days. So while the service produce accurate decisions and make appropriate payments, the service must be operating in upper quartiles in order to achieve a level 3.

The most current performance tables available are those on the DWP Hobod site. The figures for 2007/2008 put Bracknell ranked as 259 of 408 (where 408 is the worst) for change in circumstances.

The authority should score a level 2 for this KLOE.

KLOE 2.7 asks if the service is effective in meeting local, regional and national objectives. This KLOE is really about Performance Indicators. The service generally does very well in this KLOE as this KLOE is most comparable to the old Performance Standards. As such, Bracknell meets most performance requirements. The service proactively ensures incorrect payments are minimized by checking high payments and visiting all high risk cases. Anti-fraud activity is comparatively good.

The KLOE asks about Local Area Agreements (LAA) and asks about the authority's positive impact on them. A common weakness around LAA is evidencing the Benefit Services focus on the LAA. Addressing this weakness should help the service attain a level 3 score for this KLOE, but it should currently score at level 2.

KLOE 2.8 asks about the customer's satisfaction of the quality of the service. An analysis of the BVPI satisfaction survey was done in KLOE 2.1. The Audit Commission would class overall satisfaction of 80% and over as 'good'. Therefore the service would score a level 2 for this KLOE.

Question 3 concerns value for money (VFM). Evidence for VFM is linked to costs, budgets, benchmarking, business plans and subsidy claims.

KLOE 3.1 asks how the organisation's cost compare to others. A strength is the collation of cost per claim information and benchmarking this against other authorities. Strengths also include budget monitoring and subsidy submission. The weaknesses were concerned with evidencing understanding the differences in cost as compared to other authorities, and using cost data to improve services. Arrangements are underway to meet with an identified 'similar' authority to get a better understanding of the differences in cost. The service should score between level 2 and 3 for this question

KLOE 3.2 asks how VFM is managed. Similarly to the 3.1, the service has ample evidence on how VFM is managed as the service is very aware of costs and the relationship between costs and quality.

There are many strengths in this KLOE as costs are closely monitored. This means that the service should score between a level 2 and level 3 for this KLOE.

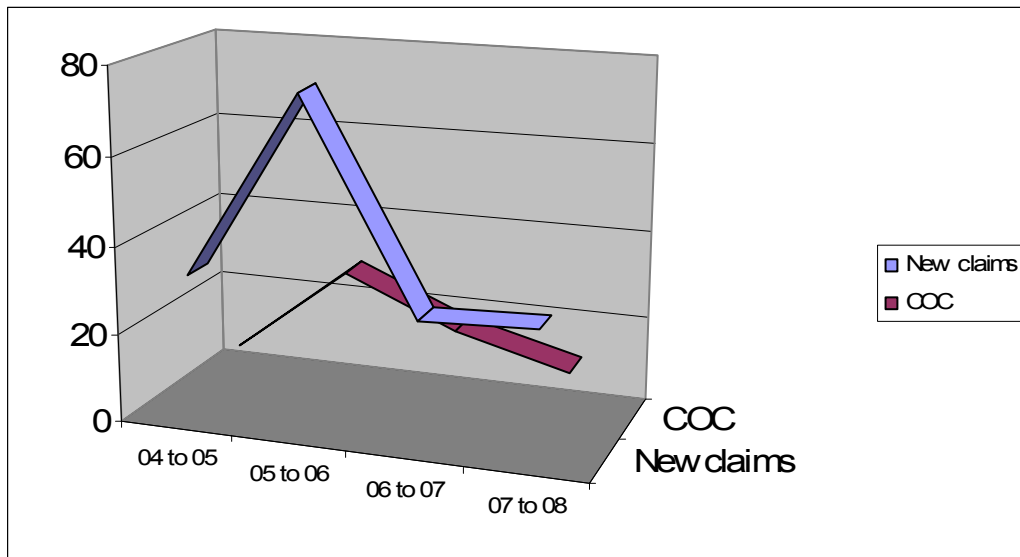
The weaknesses that prevent the level 3 are to do with evidence around how the service has contributed in reducing evictions. Another area of weakness is the services lack of clear policies and processes for reviewing and improving value for money.

Question 4 concerns the service's track record in delivering improvement.

KLOE 4.1 asks if the service can evidence a record of effective implementation of change that lead to improvement. The service misses out on a level 3 for this KLOE because although there is ample evidence of effective change implementation (welfare take-up, LHA etc) most evidence is reactive. The service needs to establish evidence of pro-actively focusing on the most disadvantaged.

KLOE 4.2 asks if the service can show that it has delivered significant improvements in outcomes and key performance indicators that would be experienced by users. There is no doubt that the Authority has delivered improvements (see graph 4.2 below) and this KLOE should score at a level 3.

KLOE 4.3 asks what the direction of travel of key performance indicators over the last three years have been. The table below shows the performance over the last three years in terms of new claim and change of circumstance 'days to process'.



While the overall trend is steady improvement in COC, the performance in new claims suffered slightly in 07/08 despite significant improvement since 2005. However, performance is still in the lower quartiles. This is tempered by the evidence in improvement of customer's satisfaction (KLOE 2.8).

A level 2 score is most likely for this KLOE.

KLOE 4.4 asks if the capacity and track record demonstrate improving value for money over time. The service can demonstrate a steady improvement in VFM. It can demonstrate long-term VFM decisions by its procurement of Pericles. The service has officers and members who show some awareness of VFM but has difficulty in evidencing VFM in strategic and day-to-day management and review. The service needs to consider how it can evidence VFM decisions in the short, medium and long-term.

The service scores a level 2 for this KLOE.

Question 5 concerns how well the service manages performance.

KLOE 5.1 asks how good the service's improvement planning is. There is strong evidence in the area of the service's planning. There are numerous examples of projects that have been well planned. However, this particular KLOE is split in to three more questions.

KLOE 5.1.1 asks if aims and priorities for the future are clear, challenging and robust. Is the service aiming to improve the 'right' things – the things that matter most to users and communities – and to address service weaknesses? Once again, the needs of the user feature heavily. There is weakness in long-term planning as the Commission defines long term here as 5-10 years. Many practitioners do not consider this practical in the Benefit Service. Once again the recurring weakness of understanding the needs and views of the user surfaces in this KLOE. However the focus on short/medium term and an understanding of challenges facing the service secure a level 2 score.

KLOE 5.1.2 asks if aims and plans are coordinated, robust and deliverable. Does it have clear and robust proposals for meeting efficiency targets and improving value for money? Once again, the needs of the user and their engagement feature in this KLOE. There are links to Corporate Aims to the Benefit Service. This 'golden thread' is a strength with this service despite there being few direct links to the service. Although basic service planning is taking place, there are some weaknesses around the engagement of users. Another weakness is not including forthcoming legislation such as ESA into the service aims. The service should score between level 1 and level 2 for this KLOE.

KLOE 5.1.3 asks if the service has clear and robust proposals for meeting efficiency targets and improving value for money. Targets are set and they are geared towards providing a value for money service. As this is the main thrust of this KLOE, the service scores a Level 3.

KLOE 5.2 asks if there are arrangements and a culture in place to support continuous improvement. This KLOE is split into another 4.

KLOE 5.2.1 asks how effective the leadership of the service is. Leadership in this instance refers to lead officers, executive officers and Councillors. There is a mixed quality and calibre of leadership and the service may need to work on ensuring that they can evidence that the staff recognise the support provided by the leadership. It does not actively ensure that the leadership is representative of the community profile. This means it has a level 2 score.

KLOE 5.2.2 asks if effective performance management arrangements are in place to drive and monitor progress, and review impact. A solid level 2 is attained by having a transparent and easily evidenced activity in the area of performance. The service is not afraid to review aspects of the service when it feels performance has worsened. The

score may feel a bit disappointing but the service falls short due to the user focus aspect and in particular the weakness around user involvement.

KLOE 5.2.3 asks if effective performance management arrangements are in place to drive and deliver improved value for money. Over the years, costs of the service in terms of Cost per Claim was collated, reported and benchmarked. More recently this measure has fallen out of favour because of the wildly varying operational practices. More relevant has been Performance Standards. However, this KLOE is looking for evidence that the service is using service costs as a key component of performance management. The service scores a level 2 because while the service understands the benefits of comparing services, and has indeed benchmarked cost per claim, it needs to provide the service's leadership more information on costs and encourage challenging exchanges around these.

KLOE 5.2.4 asks if the service learns from high performing and other providers, user feedback and its own experience. The service has an understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The service needs to ensure that the mechanism in place for complaints and compliments is well publicized. This applies to the service standards. Involvement of users and partners in setting targets is a recurring weakness. A KLOE score of between level 2 and level 3 is most likely in this instance.

Question 6 concerns the service's capacity to improve.

KLOE 6.1 asks if the service has access to the appropriate skills, tools and finances to deliver improvement. The service is dedicated in investing in people and is committed to providing quality training. Staff are encouraged to remain with the service. The service is systematic in long term planning. However, ICT needs to be used more in the area of user and non-user access to the service. This last point means the service narrowly misses out on a level 3 score, attaining a strong level 2.

KLOE 6.2 asks if there is evidence of effective financial and human resource planning. There is a lack of evidence about staff feeling valued. The training is fully evaluated in terms of effectiveness across all levels of staff, but could be stronger in the area of member training evaluation. The service has difficulties in evidencing consideration of Equalities and human rights issues in all aspects of the service, although there has been some activity in this area recently. This KLOE scores a level 2.

KLOE 6.3 asks if there is a robust, modern procurement strategy to apply best practice to achieve improved value for money in priority areas, including working with partners. The service scores well here with no apparent weaknesses. The service has a robust procurement strategy and is encouraged to consider VFM and partnership working.

The service should score a level 3 for this KLOE.

KLOE 6.4 asks if the service/ organisation is investing, and attracting inward investment, appropriately to deliver improvement. There is no doubt that the service attracts funding to deliver improvement when available. The service secured 3 PSF bids that should help it move towards a level 3 score. The service needs to work on evidencing the VFM outcomes from these bids to secure the level 3 score for this KLOE.

4.4 Inspection Themes

It is important to remember that the descriptors are not meant to be a checklist. Additional comparisons against known inspection findings can help identify additional strengths and weaknesses not already uncovered by descriptor scoring.

Defective claims

Some of the pilots were criticised about their policies and procedures around defective claims. While maximizing performance is a good thing, the Audit Commission suggested that authorities analysed defective claims to see why they become defective. Authorities were then advised to redesign aspects of the service to address the reasons for defective claims. This would lead to a positive outcome for the customer.

The service has started to monitor this issue but it is too early to draw any conclusions.

Overpayments

The Audit Commission often see a corporately disjointed approach to recovery of debt. Often, authorities have recovery staff in several departments. Moreover, HB overpayments and CTAX recovery functions are usually separate. The Audit Commission suggest to some authorities that it would be better value for money to foster an environment where the skills of both teams could be used in harmony.

The Audit Commission also criticize the practice of levying the maximum allowable repayment from future benefit for Income Support claimants, while allowing non-benefit recipients to repay benefits under this minimum level.

A linked criticism is not ensuring underlying entitlement is calculated wherever possible. More stringent checks in this area should ensure lower overpayments.

The service is running a refresher course next month on overpayments and underlying entitlement. The compliance officer does home visits and identifies potential underlying entitlement.

There is a £5 pound limit on invoices. Pericles limitations mean that all invoices are produced and manual extraction is needed, which in itself is costly.

The service is looking at having a debt policy for the service. Examples have already been secured from other Local Authorities and are being considered. The service needs to review procedures on write-off since the new financial officer came into post.

There is a difference in invoicing cycles depending on whether or not the customer is still in receipt of benefits. Once again Pericles limitations make it difficult to address this issue. However, a new release is imminent and should address this weakness.

Appeals

The Audit Commission criticized authorities with a poor track record in getting appeals to tribunal. They recommend an analysis of delayed submission in order to establish the causes, and then the development of procedures in order to alleviate the problem.

Appeal performance in the last year has been 'good'. Appeal leaflets go out with every notification and the leaflets are technically correct.

Benefit take-up

The Audit Commission criticise poor take-up and recommend effective campaigns that are evaluated and built into future team plans.

This authority's benefit take-up is much like any other Local Authority's and ensures a take-up leaflet accompanies yearly Council Tax bills. The problem with benefit take-up is analyzing how truly effective a campaign has been. The service needs to develop a system for measuring the effectiveness of any take-up related strategy or procedure.

Last Pension credit exercise sent 120 targeted take-up letters, but received no replies. The previous campaign got 20 applications. This shows an appropriate level of analysis. The latest disk is being evaluated in light of these results.

Fraud Awareness

The Audit Commission have criticized authorities for not ensuring staff have regular fraud awareness training. The service has fraud awareness provided every year by Fraud manager. Referral feedback is given individually and in team meetings.

Awareness extends to the customer by having both leaflets and posters in reception that support the 'no ifs, no buts' campaign.

Fraud performance in general is excellent. The fraud team's performance last year was about 28 sanctions for 5,000 caseload. This translated to a CPA 4.

There is a comprehensive set of procedures for staff to follow which sets down in detail what staff need to be aware of when checking the evidence provided to support an application form. A series of checks are conducted to ensure that the evidence provided is correct and genuine.

The website contains information about claiming benefit, reporting benefit fraud and how to contact the benefits service. There is also a link to a benefits calculator to help customers calculate how much benefit they are entitled to.

4.5 Self-assessment conclusions

The scores and areas of weaknesses can be summarised in the following table:

Category	Ref	score	Weaknesses	Priority	Area
Judgement	1	2.41			Performance
Question	1	N/A			Service aims
KLOE	1.1	N/A			
KLOE	1.2	N/A			
KLOE	1.3	N/A			
Question	2	2.12			
KLOE	2.1	2.00	Design around user needs	High	
KLOE	2.2	2.25	Needs of communities	High	
KLOE	2.3	1.50	Available service standards and performance against	Low	
KLOE	2.4	2.50	Regular consultation with users	High	
KLOE	2.5	2.10	Reaching diverse communities	High	
KLOE	2.6	2.00	Performing not in upper quartiles	Medium	
KLOE	2.7	2.62	Links with Local Area Agreement	Medium	
KLOE	2.8	2.00	Average satisfaction survey results	Low	
Question	3	2.70			Value for money
KLOE	3.1	2.70	Cost data being benchmarked to improve services	Medium	
KLOE	3.2	2.70	Clear review policies for VFM	Medium	
Judgement	2	2.44			Prospects
Question	4	2.38			Track record in Delivering improvement
KLOE	4.1	2.00	Focus on most disadvantaged	High	
KLOE	4.2	3.00			
KLOE	4.3	2.00	Performing not in upper quartiles	Medium	
KLOE	4.4	2.50	VFM focus in day to day management	Medium	
Question	5	2.27			Improvement planning
KLOE	5.1	2.28			
KLOE	5.1.1	2.00	Long term plans and user needs	High	
KLOE	5.1.2	1.83	Aims include legislative changes, user needs	High	
KLOE	5.1.3	3.00			
KLOE	5.2	2.26			
KLOE	5.2.1	2.25	Demographic representative staff/leadership	Medium	
KLOE	5.2.2	2.30	Long term plans and user needs	High	
KLOE	5.2.3	2.00	Reporting of VFM	Medium	
KLOE	5.2.4	2.50	Users setting performance measures	High	
Question	6	2.66			Capacity to improve
KLOE	6.1	2.50	ICT providing info on non-user perception	Medium	
KLOE	6.2	2.65	E&D performance monitoring	Low	
KLOE	6.3	3.00			
KLOE	6.4	2.50	Evidence of funding for VFM	Low	

In addition to the table, additional theme weaknesses can be summarised as follows;

Theme	Weakness	Priority
Defective Claims	Analysis of reasons	High
Overpayments	Review debt and write-off policy	High
Take-up	Variety of campaigns and subsequent analysis	Medium

Certain themes can have an effect throughout most KLOE. One of these is the area of Customer needs. The Commission feel it is important for the service to base itself around what the customer needs. In order to establish this, the service needs to engage with the customer and ask the customer what it wants from the service. It may be that the customer wants what is already being delivered, but without being asked, the service is trying to second guess the customers' needs.

If the service wants to aspire to a higher score than level 2 in both judgements, it needs to address the issue of customer needs as soon as possible. This is because what the customer says will have an affect on the service.

Most high priority weaknesses are linked directly to the customers needs. Other high priority weaknesses have a direct effect on the customer's perception of the service. Overall addressing the high priority weaknesses give the service direction and improve customer perception of the service.

4.6 Self-assessment recommendations

4.6.1

The service needs to consider building the service around customer needs

- The service should produce an analysis of its customer base and use the analysis to help ensure a representative response from any consultation.
- The service should consult its customers and stakeholders on what they want and need from the service.
- The service should analyse customer and stakeholder consultation and agree value for money service changes with members.

4.6.2

The service should consider a centralised library of procedures, training notes, policies, minutes etc, together with assigning the responsibility for the maintenance of such a library.

4.6.3

The service should work with other services to be clear on its links with the Local Area Agreement.

- The service should consider ways it can help the Authority meet LAA priorities.
- The service should build links into the business plan and actively encourage all staff to be aware and work towards the priorities.

4.6.4

The service should consider better ways to benchmark in VFM areas. The service should identify VFM indicators and encourage benchmarking group members to adopt the measures.

4.6.5

The service has difficulty in demonstrating the recognition of the effectiveness of councillors in managing the service.

- The service should actively seek to include the leadership in its KLOE action plan
- The service should consider creating a focus group on service development that includes service staff of all levels up to Councillor level.
- Positive and negative feedback from the leadership about the services performance should be cascaded to all staff as part of an ongoing communication process, and recorded appropriately.

4.6.6

The service should ensure its defective claim analysis produces positive service outcomes for the customer.

- The service should consider ways it can help customers provide evidence more readily.
- The service should test the effectiveness of any service changes through engagement with relevant customer groups.

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Draft Improvement Plan 2008/9

Recommendation	Action	By when	Lead officer	Outcome	Resources
1. Build service around customer needs	1a Analyse benefit client group via interrogation of existing system by working age , ethnicity and disability	Dec 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Information to target publicity/ promotion activity	Existing resources
	1b Use mosaic data base to analyse potential client data base	Dec 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Information to target publicity/ promotion activity	Existing resources
	1c Establish customer review programme based on complaints and compliments	Dec 08	Rosie Corah	Service improvements based on programme of change based on response to customers	Existing resources
	1d Consultation programme with 600 current benefit customers	Dec 09	Shanaz Alam	Customer stasfaction and service improvement recommendations	£ 2,200 plus staff resources
	1e Hold benefits 4 you outreach event	Jan 08 (subject to date confirmation)	Improvement plan focus group	Face to face engagement with community to promote benefit service	£ 500 plus staff resources
	1f Establish benefit customer focus group and hold first meeting by April 2009	Dec 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Customer input into service improvements	Existing staff resources

Draft Improvement Plan 2008/9

Recommendation	Action	By when	Lead officer	Outcome	Resources
	1g Develop programme of out reach surgeries including joint surgeries with RSL and pensions service	Complete	Lead improvement plan officer	Increased take up of benefits	Existing staff resources
	1h Develop mystery shopper programme in partnership with neighbouring LA's	Jan 09	Lead improvement plan officer	Independent verification of service quality	Existing staff resources
	1i Develop reception improvement plan based on customer consultation	Jan 08	Reception improvement project group	Improved customer experience and improved access to services	£ 4,000
	1j Publish existing service standards and then work with focus group to develop customer focused revised standards	Jan 09	Lead improvement plan officer	Established customer sensitive service standards	Existing staff resources
	1k Complete equality impact assessment of benefit service and publish	Dec 08	Shanaz Alam	Equality improvement action plan	Existing staff resources
2. Establish centralised library of procedures, training notes etc	2a Programme of review of procedures to be established	Dec 08	Shanaz Aam	Consistent , standardised procedures	Existing staff resources
3. Establish and clarify links with Local area agreement	3a Review LAA priorities	Dec 08	Shanaz Alam	Identified links to LAA priorities	Existing staff resources
	3b Establish service contributions to LAA targets e.g. NI 142	Dec 08	Shanaz Alam	Identified contributions to targets	Existing staff resources

Draft Improvement Plan 2008/9

Recommendation	Action	By when	Lead officer	Outcome	Resources
	3c Benefit service planning exercise	Dec 08	Simon Hendey	Service plan based on full staff engagement and ownership	Existing staff resources
4. Establish better ways to benchmark and prove VFM	4a Establish benchmarking club from CIPFA and Meritec inspection data	Dec 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Improved value for money	Existing staff resources
	4b, Establish joint working with neighbouring LA's to benchmark VFM	Dec 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Improved service delivery and VFM in a local context	Existing staff resources
5. Establish organisational leadership/ challenge of the service	5a, Report to Environment, culture and communities Over view and scrutiny committee to gain involvement in improvement plan	Dec 08	Simon Hendey	Member endorsed and supported improvement plan	Existing staff resources
	5b Develop programme of staff focus group activity to implement improvement plan recommendations	Oct 08	Lead improvement plan officer	Staff engagement and ownership of improvement plan	Existing staff resources
	5c Review communication strategy with staff and undertake consultation exercise on staff satisfaction	Dec 08	Simon Hendey	Plan to improve two way communication with staff and recognise staff contributions	Existing staff resources
	5d Identify staff satisfaction survey results 2007 for the benefit service and develop improvement plan	Dec 08	Shanaz Alam	Improved responses from 2009/10 satisfaction survey	Existing staff resources

Draft Improvement Plan 2008/9

Recommendation	Action	By when	Lead officer	Outcome	Resources
6. Ensure defective claim analysis produces positive outcomes for customers	6a Establish defective claim position	Complete	Sharon Okonkwo	More benefit take up and quicker processing as well as identification of vulnerable groups	Existing staff resources
7. Review and update improvement plan	7a Review improvement plan and update for future plan	March 09	Simon Hende	New improvement plan for 2009/10	Existing staff resources



A Clean Sweep

**Review of Street Cleaning in Bracknell Forest
by a Working Group of the
Environment, Culture & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel
in partnership with**

Pride in Binfield



Binfield Parish Council



Crowthorne Parish Council



Sandhurst Town Council



October 2008

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Acknowledgements

The Working Group would like to express its thanks to the following officers from Bracknell Forest Council for their co-operation and time. All those who have participated in the review have been thanked for their contribution and provided with a copy of this report.

Steve Loudoun	Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection
Helen Tranter	Head of Culture and Visual Environment
Stuart Ballantine	Street Cleansing Manager
Steve McKenna	Landscape Manager
Colin Griffin	Community and Environmental Development Team Leader
Louise Robertshaw	Head of Communications and Marketing
Richard Beaumont	Head of Performance and Scrutiny
Andrea Carr	Policy Officer (Scrutiny), Chief Executive's Office

1. **Foreword by the Lead Member**

The cleanliness of our Borough streets is a matter of great concern to many of our residents. Unfortunately, much of the litter on our streets is the result of inconsideration by some of our residents. In carrying out this review, it has become very apparent the majority of our residents are proud of their Borough and want to live in a litter free community.

This review is the result of an investigation by Borough, Town and Parish Councillors associated with Bracknell Forest Borough and we have had excellent co-operation and assistance from Borough Officers and contractors working for the Borough. It was very beneficial to involve Town and Parish Councillors with their knowledge of their areas.

I hope that this review will illustrate the concern the Borough Council has for comments by residents with regard to litter. Unfortunately, we live in an age where control of local council expenditure has never been so great so we are restricted in what we can do. However by working together, I hope that we can achieve a community that we enjoy.

I am certain that there will be suggestions from many people as to how we can improve and I look forward to receiving these and can assure you that all comments will be carefully considered.

My grateful thanks to all who have assisted in this review.

1.1 The Working Group comprised:

Borough Councillor Finnie (Lead Member)
Borough Councillor Finch
Borough Councillor Mrs McCracken
Sandhurst Town Councillor Mrs Cupper
Binfield Parish Councillor Leake
Crowthorne Parish Councillor Mrs Thompson

2. Background

- 2.1. Street cleansing is a very important part of making Bracknell Forest an attractive place to live. This is of relevance to everyone who lives, works and travels through the Borough. The need to keep our environment clean is a strong theme in the Council's long term vision for the Borough (to make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive: living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment) and its supporting priorities (protecting and enhancing our environment) and Medium Term Objectives (to keep Bracknell Forest clean and green). The scale of the task is very large (see Appendix 1), for example the Borough has 447 kilometres of roads and 700 kilometres of footpaths and cycleways needing to be kept clean.
- 2.2. Bracknell Forest Council's (the Council's) former Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered a list of potential themes to be reviewed in detail by working groups of the Panel during 2007/08 to complement its ongoing work such as performance monitoring. Having considered the relative merits of seven suggested review topics, the Panel, which has subsequently been re-structured to form a large part of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, decided that its 2007/08 work programme would consist of reviews of the following topics by working groups:
 - Street cleaning
 - Strategic review of waste
 - Reviewing Road Traffic Casualties Rates
 - Contributing to the development of the Community Arts Development Plan

This report records the outcome of the Working Group established to undertake the review of street cleaning in the Borough of Bracknell Forest.

- 2.3. The Working Group welcomed undertaking a piece of work in respect of street cleaning as the visual features of the street scene and littering were often raised by Borough residents and neighbourhood action groups.
- 2.4. The main purpose of the Working Group has been to review the standard of street cleansing throughout the Borough with a view to identifying measures to reduce the amount of litter, detritus and graffiti etc. Consideration of the wider environmental aspects of the street scene in order to pursue possible improvements was identified as a possible second stage to the review and the Working Group has addressed this to a limited extent.
- 2.5. Key objectives of the review have been to establish the level of litter and detritus etc. in the Borough with reference to national standards and identify any problem areas; to become familiar with the provisions of the street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts; to ensure that contracts have been sufficiently monitored and provide value for money; and to identify methods of improving street cleansing services within existing financial constraints.
- 2.6. The scope of the review has been the management and monitoring of the street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts; the use of legislative powers; initiatives to educate and encourage the public and businesses to minimise littering; public expectation of the standard of street cleanliness; impact of the smoking ban; and identification of best practice at town and parish level.

- 2.7. An aspect largely excluded from the review has been Landscape Services other than where its contractual provisions impact on street cleansing e.g. litter in flower and shrub beds and on grass verges.

3. Investigation, Information Gathering and Analysis

Scoping Meeting with the Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection

- 3.1 By way of briefing and to assist the Working Group to scope its review, the Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection gave a presentation in respect of street cleaning / scene in the Borough. This featured the conclusions of the Audit Commission inspection of Bracknell Forest's Streetcare Service in October 2004, the scale of the Borough's highway network, the scope of the Streetcare Service, relevant legislation, related budgets and possible questions which the Working Group might address. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 The Working Group was advised that the Audit Commission's most recent inspection in 2004 had concluded that Bracknell Forest's Streetcare was a fair service with excellent prospects for improvement and its attention was drawn to sections of the Commission's report which highlighted positive features and weaknesses of the service.
- 3.3 The Chief Officer reported the positive results of a Best Value User Satisfaction Survey in 2006 of some 1,300 residents concerning the cleanliness of the Borough. Bracknell Forest's performance in relation to street cleaning was in the upper quartile nationally, at 66%.
- 3.4 The benefits of educating the public and businesses to reduce littering were highlighted and the Working Group was advised that a 'think tank' with the police in Great Hollands had revealed that children found litter picking demeaning.

Presentation from the Street Cleansing Manager

- 3.5 The Street Cleansing Manager gave a presentation to the Working Group in respect of street cleansing services in Bracknell Forest. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix 2 to this report. The presentation gave an overview of required works and outlined service enquiries from April to October 2007, contract specification, scheduling requirements, benefits of sweeping and litter picking methodology, improvement areas, resource allocation and the way forward.
- 3.6 The Working Group was advised that, in the past, weed killing and street cleansing had been delivered through separate contracts. However, when these contracts expired, the Council reconsidered its approach and entered into a comprehensive contract with Ringway in April 2006 to provide all street cleansing services. This involved moving away from a cyclical approach where roads were cleansed in accordance with a set schedule to more reactive cleansing of variable frequency to match need. The problems associated with dumped rubbish and fly-tipping were of particular concern although compared to other councils the scale of the problem was relatively small. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 defined the cleansing standards to be achieved which varied according to the nature of the zone to be cleaned. The Act did not require cyclical cleansing and focused on standards of cleanliness. Cleansing scheduling requirements varied according to the nature of use of the different parts of the Borough.

- 3.7 The sweeping and litter picking methodology consisted of cleansing on a ward by ward basis with a scheduled resource in the area to be cleaned. Sweeping and litter picking teams worked together to maximise performance. A pragmatic approach was adopted and if a scheduled area did not require cleaning the resource would proceed to another locality that did. An early notification system to alert ward councillors and parish clerks of areas to be cleaned and obtain information relating to any associated issues had been introduced. Courtesy / activity notification boards had been used in the past but were abused.
- 3.8 The new contract featured a change in contract shift patterns to provide 7 day and extended period cover whilst reducing costs and affording the service greater visibility to the public. Revised work patterns also enabled a more flexible and pragmatic approach to cleaning. In addition to routine and random inspections, Masternaut tracking equipment in street cleansing vehicles recorded when and where cleaning took place and facilitated contract monitoring. Income from re-chargeable works for third parties was cost coded and utilised to support the street cleansing budget.
- 3.9 The Working Group was informed of the resource allocation in terms of the nature of crews and equipment undertaking the different types of street cleansing works. At the time of the meeting, the monthly street cleansing cost was £89,545 exclusive of some works.
- 3.10 Officers felt that the new methodology had positive results and further improvement was envisaged. Attention was drawn to ongoing operational reviews to maintain optimum productivity that had resulted in changes such as the fitting of steel brushes to all cleansing vehicles and thermal lancing of kerb channels on high speed roads to tackle weeds. Enforcement featured the recovering of costs associated with illegal advertising on the highway and two successful prosecutions for fly-tipping and rubbish dumping. Regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre would bring additional works and highway adoptions.
- 3.11 Sweeping and litter picking into green areas was carried out as far as reasonably practical by the Ringway staff as they undertook the cleansing of the highway land. Many complaints regarding littering / rubbish were received in respect of land outside the Council's ownership and control such as balancing ponds and ditches. There were cost and health and safety issues associated with the contractor cleaning such areas that were outside the scope of the Council's contract. Areas prone to littering were repeatedly cleaned within available resources as the presence of litter was found to encourage littering.
- 3.12 Performance was measured against Best Value Performance Indicators on three occasions per annum and at the time of the meeting Bracknell Forest was graded B+ on a scale from A to D. A litter pick some months previously in the Folders Lane area had found that litter was blown onto adjoining land from the nearby recycling area. Garage blocks often suffered from fly-tipping, rubbish dumping and graffiti and had been cleaned under the contract at an additional cost to the Council's Housing section prior to the transfer of the housing stock. Garage blocks were now the responsibility of Bracknell Forest Homes. Unadopted roads were outside the Council's contract.

Presentation from the Landscape Manager

- 3.13 The Landscape Manager advised the Working Group that Landscape Services were responsible for maintaining 609 acres of grass areas, on a 14 day cycle

during the summer time, and 19 hectares of shrub border etc. The grounds maintenance contract had previously operated on a cyclical basis involving grass cutting every two weeks from March to October and, although this generally met acceptable standards, it was not always appropriate. The present contract concentrated on standards rather than the number of grass cuts.

- 3.14 The Service had one driver with a vehicle to collect litter who covered a route of fourteen days duration except in the case of areas prone to litter which were cleaned more frequently, often on a weekly basis. The associated cost was £25k per annum at the time of the meeting which included disposal costs. The number of enquiries / litter complaints dealt with during the year was 50 and represented a 50% reduction on the previous year. Shared software between Landscape and Street Cleansing Services informed each of the others' activities and enabled work to be allocated to the appropriate Service or a joint response in cases of excessive littering / rubbish. A pragmatic approach was adopted and Landscape Services' operatives would clean areas falling within the Street Cleansing contract if there was a need in the vicinity where they were working to avoid the need for another team to be called out. Drivers were instructed to pick up litter before grass cutting except where littering was severe and would take an hour or longer to clear, in which case they were instructed to cut another area and then return to the original area following cleansing. There was not a facility to store collected litter on the grass cutting vehicles. In the event that grass grew particularly rapidly, a resource would be transferred to the area for cutting, weather allowing. Littering trends showed a reduction during school holidays which enabled resources to be transferred from school routes to other areas.
- 3.15 Litter in flower beds, shrub borders and on grass could be an issue as, although litter on the edge of borders was easy to retrieve, that deeper within beds and borders was less accessible. Where planters were concerned there was a joined working arrangement between grounds maintenance and street cleansing. In Crowthorne the maintenance of planters requires investigation.
- 3.16 Since the introduction of changes in June 2007, it was felt that the Service had improved and was expected to continue to do so. A combined team of a grass trimmer, grass cutter and litter picker operated together to maximise efficiency. The Landscape Services contract was flexible and enabled a rapid response within existing resources.
- 3.17 It was explained to the Working Group that although Litter Notices could be served on those caught littering, the mechanics for service of the notices were complex. Changes in legislation resulted in more stringent traffic management requirements in the interests of health and safety which would increase costs associated with work on arterial roads. Those requirements varied according to the speed of traffic on roads. The teams therefore co-ordinated works to ensure that landscaping, street light works and cleansing took place at the same time as far as possible on such roads.
- 3.18 Litter initiatives such as the 'Britain in Bloom' competition in Bracknell town took account of environmental quality in the Borough such as litter, graffiti and the street scene etc. and the Council had achieved praise and a good score in the competition which included unannounced visits during the year. Public perception was identified as an issue as the public perception of littering was thought to be exaggerated.

Educational / Promotional Activity to Discourage Littering

- 3.19 The Head of Culture and Visual Environment advised the Working Group that, in addition to the need to educate children not to drop litter, action should be taken to discourage people from throwing litter from car windows. It was felt that people were more disciplined where there was a visible police presence and that many did not recognise their own failing and often only saw it in others. Encouraging shops to resist issuing merchandise in plastic bags was a means of reducing litter.
- 3.20 Although there had been little promotional work undertaken by the Head of Culture and Visual Environment's team during the past year other than the Eco-Schools project due to staff vacancies, the relevant post in the Community and Environmental Development Team had been filled and further work would be undertaken. The Working Group was advised that consistent culture-generating promotional work would be more effective than one-off initiatives.
- 3.21 The Community and Environmental Development Team Leader provided the Working Group with information on the promotional activity undertaken by the Environment, Culture and Communities Department in relation to environmental management relative to the street scene.
- 3.22 The Working Group was advised of the 'Big Green Spring Clean' initiative which had been held three years previously but had not attracted much participation and had not been repeated. The introduction of the neighbourhood forums and 'Take Pride', a campaign run jointly by the Council and Thames Valley Police to encourage and support voluntary groups to tackle issues of concern in their own neighbourhoods, had generated more public interest. The range of activities currently included in 'Take Pride' were crime awareness patrols, graffiti removal, litter picks, speed watch and watercourse clearance. Residents were able to organise themselves to litter pick in their own areas with support and health and safety advice from the Council which provided groups with litter picking equipment, graffiti packs and associated equipment funded through the Local Public Service Agreement 2. New groups were contacting the Council and providing feedback on their work. The graffiti packs were most effective on smooth non-porous surfaces which did not absorb paint. It was noted that subways in the Borough were finished with an easy to clean surface and that it was beneficial to decorate surfaces as graffiti artists tended to respect this and not treat them as a clean canvass on which to create 'art'. Arrangements for the removal of abusive graffiti were made without delay. Although graffiti packs were allocated to voluntary groups and not individuals, residents were able to make their own arrangements locally.
- 3.23 It was acknowledged that late night food outlets and sale of alcohol caused some littering and anti-social behaviour. Whilst there had been an increase in outdoor smoking owing to the smoking ban, this had not had an impact on the street scene as landlords had made provision.
- 3.24 The Social Care and Learning Department advised that educational / promotional activities to discourage pupils from littering varied between schools. As part of the curriculum pupils might undertake project work related to the school and local environment and discuss such issues as part of their work in citizenship and Personal and Social Education lessons. They might also include this as part of their work on sustainable development within geography.

As schools had flexibility in this area there was no common provision for all pupils.

- 3.25 Nineteen of the Borough's schools, mainly primaries, were registered with the Eco-Schools project which provided environmental education and an environmental management system for the school addressing energy, waste, water, litter etc. to improve the environment around the school. The project was of a long term nature and the impact on litter may not yet be apparent in the broader community.
- 3.26 The Working Group received a summary of litter research undertaken by ENCAMS, the Environmental Campaigns charity which sought to achieve a litter free sustainable environment. Research undertaken in 2001 segmented members of the public according to their attitudes towards litter and their litter dropping behaviour. This research was repeated in 2006 to update the information held on each of the littering groups to see if attitudes and litter trends had changed.
- 3.27 The key findings of the 2006 research revealed that 48% of the general population admitted to dropping litter and people felt that some forms of litter were more acceptable than others. Some teenagers had casual attitudes towards littering and a propensity to drop litter. This behaviour was strongly entrenched among teenagers and school culture made little difference.
- 3.28 Over the past six years there had been a significant change in people's attitudes and behaviour towards litter. There was more awareness of litter in 2006 than in 2001 and more people felt guilty about dropping litter. There had been a significant increase in the amount of dog owners who cleaned up after their pets had fouled in a public place and by 2006 it had become generally socially unacceptable for dog owners not to clean up such mess.
- 3.29 As the segmented groups of people found different excuses for their littering, many varying promotional activity approaches would be required to prevent littering. It was found that people were less likely to litter in clean streets / areas and there was a need for correct locations of bins and information about alternative disposal options in the event of a bin not being available. Education and awareness raising campaigns could challenge attitudes towards litter and needed to be backed up by effective enforcement.
- 3.30 ENCAMS had found that although smokers' materials and chewing gum were the two biggest components of litter, car and fast food litter levels were increasing.
- 3.31 Feedback from the Head of Communications and Marketing indicated that, other than the work of the Community and Environmental Development Team and the support offered to neighbourhood action groups and the 'Take Pride' campaign, Bracknell Forest did not run any anti-litter campaigns as such as a council. More recently, the Working Group noted that in September 2008, residents have been invited to take part in the 'Big Tidy Up' national campaign to keep the country clean.
- 3.32 It would be possible to include anti-litter information in the Borough's 'Town & Country' publication in the event that the Council was undertaking an anti-litter campaign and this would be at no additional cost. However, there was no budget for running a specific communications / information campaign that

involved posters, web information, press information, direct information to residents etc. A campaign that would change people's behaviour would take significant staff resource in addition to the cost of marketing materials and would need to be put forward as a priority in the next year's budget as growth. Such a campaign to capture the attention of local people was estimated to cost in the region of £20k.

- 3.33 Identified alternatives were to promote anti-littering via the Council's website, which would have limited impact, or to rejuvenate and consolidate work carried out under the 'Take Pride' campaign umbrella.

Town and Parish Council Approach to Tackling Litter

- 3.34 The Working Group was advised that Sandhurst Town Council had a graffiti pack and litter pick equipment and had organised a litter pick in the Greenway project / Sandhurst School site area in November 2007. The Town Council also had its own Sandhurst Pride team that litter picked around the area and this extra effort helped keep the vicinity clean. Members of the Town Council visited schools and addressed pupils of all ages on the subject of littering and promoted its work locally. The Town Council sought sponsorship for litter picks.
- 3.35 Although the majority of residents did not litter and it was not a particular problem in Binfield, there was ongoing work to tackle litter. The Parish Council employed a part time handy man / ranger who did some work of this nature. Residents were reported to have commented on the untidiness of the street scene, particularly in the spring and autumn. Binfield also benefited from the efforts of the local horticultural clubs who planted and maintained a number of borders and planters.
- 3.36 The standard of cleanliness in Crowthorne was felt to have deteriorated in recent years and more regular cleansing was sought in place of spot cleaning. Local litter picks were organised in the area and the Parish Council had a graffiti pack to use as it wished.
- 3.37 Winkfield Parish Council had been given a graffiti pack by the Council to use in its own area as required.

Further Information from the Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection

- 3.38 High speed roads attracted litter thrown from car windows and presented a challenge to cleaning owing to the high cost associated with the necessary safety measures. The 2008/09 budget included a sum of £100k for an environmental improvement programme, some of which could be utilised for cleaning such roads that often made the first impression on those visiting or passing through the Borough. Whilst fly tipping was not currently a major problem, the temporary closure of Longshot Lane civic amenity site could have an impact that would be monitored. The Working Group was advised that the forthcoming re-structuring of the Council provided the opportunity to consolidate some of the key related areas and to enable the Chief Officer to direct an increased resource towards tackling littering and rubbish dumping etc. Bracknell Forest had ordered two sets of surveillance equipment to be used to gain the evidence to prosecute those who were dumping rubbish. It was acknowledged, however, that the cost of pursuing action against offenders

could sometimes be disproportionately high compared to the amount of the fine paid although the benefit of securing the conviction made the effort worthwhile.

- 3.39 The Chief Officer advised that half of the one-off environmental improvement programme in the neighbourhood centres, funded by the additional £100k in the 2008/09 budget, had been delivered to date and it was anticipated that it would be completed before the end of the summer. Details of all the neighbourhood centres to be cleansed had been circulated and included the main paved areas in the retail regions of Sandhurst and Crowthorne. A collective approach was being adopted which featured power washing of paving and painting of street furniture where necessary. Additional funding had been identified to enable the replacement of some litter bins as part of the programme. Compartmentalised litter bins to cater for recycling were being considered where appropriate.
- 3.40 The object of the programme was to improve the appearance and perceptions of the street scene of the treated areas and feedback from retailers and the public had been very positive.
- 3.41 It was likely that future bids for funding would focus on cleaning high speed roads in the spring and autumn when they were most affected by litter and debris such as fallen leaves. More extensive cutting back of grass verges in the spring and creating verge areas wide enough to accommodate litter pickers would facilitate litter picking without the need for road closures. The Chief Officer would be seeking the further release of funds to allow for such work in the spring as the next phase of the programme.

Departmental Environmental Amenity Action Plan 2008-2011

- 3.42 Part of the Working Group's role has been to contribute towards the Environmental Amenity Action Plan which has been developed by the Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection, as an operational tool to help meet two of the Council's five priorities and new national performance indicators. The two priorities are 'Protecting and enhancing our environment' and 'Creating a Borough where people are, and feel safe'. The new national performance indicators seek improved street and environmental cleanliness in terms of reducing levels of litter, detritus, graffiti, fly-posting and fly tipping.
- 3.43 The development of the Action Plan has taken account of the Working Group's deliberations and is regarded as a 'living' document for on-going refinement and updating.
- 3.44 The Working Group felt that the Plan would need to cover littering by school children outside school grounds. Members were advised that intelligence-led data drawn from Council and police computer systems via the Community Nuisance and Disorder Information System (known as CADIS) supported by the increase in the number and training of Police Community Support Officers would assist in this area.
- 3.45 Littering from vehicles on fast roads required particular measures to allow for safe clearance and new clearance technology was to be considered to see if it would assist in that regard. Many of the problems had been made worse by the reduction in the amount of vegetation cut back each year along such roads.
- 3.46 Officers had asked fast food retailers and street traders to discourage their customers from littering and warned them of the need to clear away litter. The

Council did not shrink from using its enforcement powers as appropriate and had recently taken legal action against someone to successfully recover the costs of removing their rubbish, together with the Council's costs. Increasing use was to be made of surveillance cameras, though there were legal restrictions which had to be complied with. Equipment had been ordered in order to deal with fly tipping and would be utilised in 'hot spots' to collect evidence of unlawful rubbish dumping to facilitate prosecution and to educate through enforcement.

- 3.47 Residents' perception of street cleanliness took into account the wider visual appearance of the environment which had been affected by the curtailment of bulb and flower planting in recent years due to budget pressures. Funding sources such as 'Keep Britain Tidy' were identified and accessed as far as possible. Joint working with partners was an important dimension to the street care service. For example, the work by Environmental Health over the years in respect of abandoned vehicles had greatly reduced the incidence of car fires, saving cost to the fire service.
- 3.48 A review of the organisational structure was included in the Action Plan and an outcome of a review of the street cleansing contract had been to transfer the management of the contract from the Highways Section to the Waste and Recycling Team. The transfer was already showing early benefits and the head of section was developing a good working relationship with the contractor and all would be taking steps towards securing contractual enhancements as added value.

Street Cleansing Performance

- 3.49 Bracknell Forest's Street Cleaning Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) outturns relating to performance for 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08 are set out in Appendix 3 to this report. The performance indicators concern incidents and enforcement actions associated with fly-tipping and the percentage of relevant land and highways that are affected by combined deposits of litter and detritus, graffiti and fly-posting of unacceptable levels, as well as residents' satisfaction with the area. The overall picture from these Performance Indicators is positive for the Borough, both in absolute terms and in comparison to the average performance of other councils across England.
- 3.50 In its latest Comprehensive Performance Assessment of the Council, published in February 2008, the Audit Commission rated the Council's Environmental Services as '3' out of a maximum of '4', i.e. a service consistently performing above minimum requirements. The Audit Commission also commented that the Council's Standards of Street Cleanliness compare with those of the best councils.

4. Conclusions

From its investigations, the Working Group's overall conclusion is that the standard of street cleaning in the Borough is good and the service is well run, and improving.

- 4.1 There is a natural tendency for anecdotal feedback to concentrate on problem areas, and for the many positive aspects of street cleaning to be under-recognised. Nonetheless, it is clear from both the Performance Indicators – particularly residents' high level of satisfaction overall – comments from the Audit Commission, and from direct observation that the Borough enjoys a high standard of cleanliness, better than many others around the country.
- 4.2 The Council has made innovative and productive changes to contractual and other operational arrangements to create a more integrated, efficient and effective street cleaning service.
- 4.3 Measuring and comparing performance against national indicators and benchmarking figures will enable monitoring of the Borough's achievements in improving street and environmental cleanliness in terms of levels of litter, detritus, graffiti, fly-posting and fly-tipping.
- 4.4 The Departmental Environmental Amenity Action Plan 2008-2011 will assist in achieving environmental cleanliness and improvements in the Borough.
- 4.5 As the presence of litter encourages more littering, continued focus should be given to those areas prone to littering which should be cleaned regularly.
- 4.6 School routes are prone to litter, the amount of which significantly reduces during school holidays. Although schools encourage pupils to litter pick in school grounds, children tend to find litter picking demeaning and some still drop litter once outside the grounds. As a lot of littering is caused by children, it is important to educate them to desist from littering. There may be merit in exploring activities undertaken by secondary schools in the Borough to discourage littering.
- 4.7 The Working Group concludes that educational and promotional work should focus on teenagers, who have a propensity to drop litter, and car drivers, however, extended or focused and intense campaigns will be costly. As people tend not to recognise their own littering and only see it in others, promotional activity will raise awareness and needs to be backed up by enforcement action.
- 4.8 Although a pro-active balanced approach between education and prosecution is considered appropriate, more resources could be put into catching those that litter and some high profile prosecutions would highlight the consequences of littering.
- 4.9 There is no overall anti-litter campaign (paragraph 3.31). More effort can be made across the Borough to educate and promote against littering such as regular inclusion of anti-littering promotional material in the Borough's 'Town and Country' publication.
- 4.10 The role of uniformed regulatory officers such as parking attendants and the dog warden could be reviewed with a view to expanding their roles where practical to include wider environmental enforcement duties.

- 4.11 The increase in outdoor smoking since the smoking ban has not had the anticipated adverse impact on the street scene as landlords have made provision on site by way of smoking shelters / areas in appropriate places.
- 4.12 The Environmental Protection Act places a litter duty of care on manufacturers and retailers and the Council should look to explore working with them to encourage them to help minimise littering.
- 4.13 Street trading consent powers enable a means of regulation over local litter-related problems. The powers in the legislation enable conditions to be included and enforced by the licensing in respect of litter picking and the provision of litter bins for customers. Officers are encouraged to continue to use these powers and to ensure that there is effective ongoing liaison between the respective service areas to ensure the early resolution of problems.
- 4.14 The 'Take Pride' initiative is currently fragmented and there is potential for better co-ordination to strengthen and unify the campaign to encourage more voluntary litter picking to improve the street scene. Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action has indicated that it has a role in some of the co-ordinated elements of 'Take Pride'. A church group has undertaken litter picking with the assistance of the Council and this could be co-ordinated to extend to further groups.
- 4.15 All town and parish councils could be encouraged to tackle littering and fly-tipping etc. at a co-ordinated local level involving communities. Sandhurst Town Council's 'Clean Team' is a prime example of best practice in tackling littering. The 'Clean Team' operates under the umbrella of 'Sandhurst Pride' which has been in existence for eight years.
- 4.16 This review has benefited from the active and willing involvement of Town and Parish Councillors. This underlines the value of partnership working and a similar joint approach should be considered for future Overview and Scrutiny reviews, as appropriate.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended to the Executive Members for the Environment and Education & Libraries that:-

- 5.1. The balance of resources deployed between preventing littering occurring and dealing with littering after the event should be reviewed, as the presence of litter generates more littering, and prevention is generally better than cure.
- 5.2. Implementation of the Departmental Environmental Amenity Action Plan 2008-2011 be the subject of report to the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel at each year end; (paragraph 3.42)
- 5.3. The additional funding of £100k for the environmental improvement programme continue to be included in the consideration of the general revenue budget provision in future years as such an annual programme will facilitate consistent improvements to key areas each year;
- 5.4. The measuring and comparing performance against national indicators and benchmarking figures relating to street and environmental cleanliness in terms of levels of litter, detritus, graffiti, fly-posting and fly-tipping continue to be reviewed through the Performance Monitoring Reports;
- 5.5. 'Take Pride' and similar local campaigns be rejuvenated and co-ordinated to encourage more voluntary litter picking to improve the street scene;
- 5.6. Regular articles appear in 'Town and Country' to promote anti-littering and advertise related campaigns;
- 5.7. Consideration be given to identifying effective methods of educating and encouraging against littering, particularly in relation to teenagers, other secondary school pupils and drivers on fast roads;
- 5.8. More severe cutting back of grass verges in the spring and creation of verge areas wide enough to accommodate litter pickers be undertaken to facilitate litter picking without the need for road closures;
- 5.9. Ward Members be provided with information concerning waste dumping 'hot spots' in their wards to facilitate monitoring of dumping;
- 5.10. In due course, the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel be consulted on the Supplementary Planning Guidance seeking to bring the three strands of street scene, planning policy and highway engineering together and featuring a departmental multi-disciplinary approach involving planning and asset management etc;
- 5.11. Thames Valley Police be asked to encourage their officers to use their powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of littering more vigorously; and
- 5.12. Consideration be given to equipping grass cutting vehicles with a facility to store collected litter (paragraph 3.14).

It is recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission that:

- 5.13. The involvement of Town and Parish Councils should be considered for future Overview and Scrutiny reviews, as appropriate, (paragraph 4.16)

Presentation by Chief Officer, Environment and Public Protection

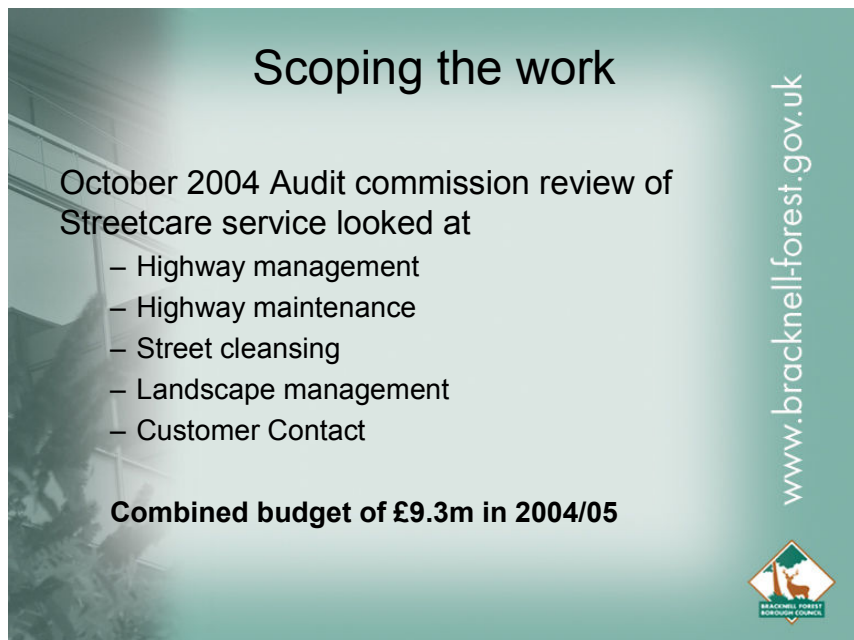


Overview and Scrutiny
29 October 2007

Street cleansing/street scene

Steve Loudoun

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk




Scoping the work

October 2004 Audit commission review of Streetcare service looked at

- Highway management
- Highway maintenance
- Street cleansing
- Landscape management
- Customer Contact

Combined budget of £9.3m in 2004/05

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Audit Commission conclusion

“The Council faces many challenges because of its new town inheritance. These adversely affect the streetcare service because of the borough's ageing infrastructure. However, the council is now committed to delivering improvements, it has allocated additional financial and human resources, and plans are in place to drive improvement”

A ‘fair’ service with ‘excellent’ prospects for improvement – audit commission Oct 2004

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Legislation

Duty e.g.

- Environmental Protection Act

Powers e.g.

- Cleaner Neighbourhoods Act
- Refuse Disposal Amenity Act
- Environmental Protection Act

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Scale

The highway network comprises some

- 447 kilometres of roads
 - 700 kilometres of footpaths and cycleways
 - 75 Subways,
 - Bridges and pedestrian ramps
 - Town and local shopping centres
 - Empty 700+ public rubbish bins
- plus
- fly-posting/ graffiti/ dumped rubbish/ cars

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Budgets

• Street cleansing	£939k
• Highway repairs	£599k
• Footway repairs	£313k
• Bridges	£86k
• Gully emptying	£143k
• Drainage	£42k
• Winter maintenance	£264k
• Lighting (inc electricity)	£1.1m
• Weed killing	£60k
• Landscape	£126k
• Trees	£16k
Highway maintenance via LTP	£2m

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Questions

- Have we improved since 2004?
- What are the expectations - how can we measure?
- Are we targeting the right priorities?
- Where are our weaknesses?
- Where are the next pressures?
- How might we address them within the constraints?

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Presentation by Street Cleansing Manager



Overview of Required Works

- Roads: 472.5 km of roads to cleanse and 945 km of kerb line.
- Footpaths: Similar length, probably more
- Cycle lanes
- Subways: 80
- Town Centre
- Neighbourhood Shopping centres and adjacent recycling areas:18
- Public Litter Bins: over 700
- Public Conveniences:4, daily requirements to each
- Areas prone to litter and high frequency areas:
- Parks and playgrounds 16,168 Sq Metres
- Dead Animals.
- Dog fouling.
- Reactive works, Fly tipping, dumped rubbish and extra litter bin emptying (increase since ABC), graffiti, from horse legs to Hazardous waste
- Other 3rd party works
- Supermarket trolleys



Service enquires Apr 07 Oct 07

- Dead Animals 143
- Dog Fouling 57
- Dumped Rubbish 518
- Fly-Tipping 336
- General Sweeping 409
- Graffiti / Fly-posting 74
- Hypodermics 22
- Litter Collection 95
- Overflowing Bins 87
- Public Conveniences 14
- Service Provision 31
- Supermarket Trolleys 21
- **Total = 1807 or approximately 12 per day.**



Contract Specification

- **In line with EPA (Litter Code of Practice).**
- **Legal obligation on BFBC to maintain EPA standards.**
- **Defined response times.**
- **Frequency based schedules.**
- **Resource concentration in areas likely to experience high levels of littering.**



Scheduling Requirements

- **Daily presence/continual cleanse – Town Centre**
- **Daily cleanse – e.g. Neighbourhood shops**
- **Weekly cleanse – e.g. other high amenity areas (parks, playgrounds, public litter bins, subways, cycle lanes etc.)**
- **Variable frequency Cleanse – e.g. Housing estates and third party requirements.**
- **Daily Responsive works & 3rd Party Requirements**



Benefits of Sweeping & Litter Picking Methodology

- **Operational support, sweeping & litter picking teams working together in wards, on a ward by ward basis.**
- **Effective use of resources.**
- **Scheduled Method and neighbourhood cooperation including advance notice of works.**
- **High Profile Presence in Wards during cleansing operations.**
- **Positive, high impact & measurable results**



Improvement areas

- **Shift Patterns adjusted to provide 7 day cover and extended periods.**
Reduction in costs and improved visibility & public perception.
- **Management control procedures.**
Engineer & contractor monitor jointly. Daily whereabouts, routine and random inspections, Masternaut in vehicles.
- **Work patterns.**
Revised methodology with more flexibility built in within crews and works, a more pragmatic approach is being used.
- **Rechargeable works income**
To support Borough Street Cleansing Budget.



Resource Allocation

Crew

- Town Centre Crew
- Crew 1-Cage Tipper
- Crew 2-Cage Tipper
- Crew 3-Cage Tipper & Trailer Jetter
- Crew 4-7-Cage Tipper
- Large Sweeper
- Compact Sweeper 1-3

Work Type

- Town Centre and adjacent Subways.
- Neighbourhood Centres.
- Parks, Playgrounds and Public Litter Bins.
- Emergency Response, Graffiti & Areas Prone to Litter.
- Scheduled works and Prone Areas.
- Primary/Secondary Routes as per schedule.
- Scheduled Works and emergencies.



£89,545 per month

- **Schedule cost for Standard Specified Cleanse (subject to RPI adjustment) .**
- **Not including extra works for 3rd Parties or non standard works road closures on arterial routes.**



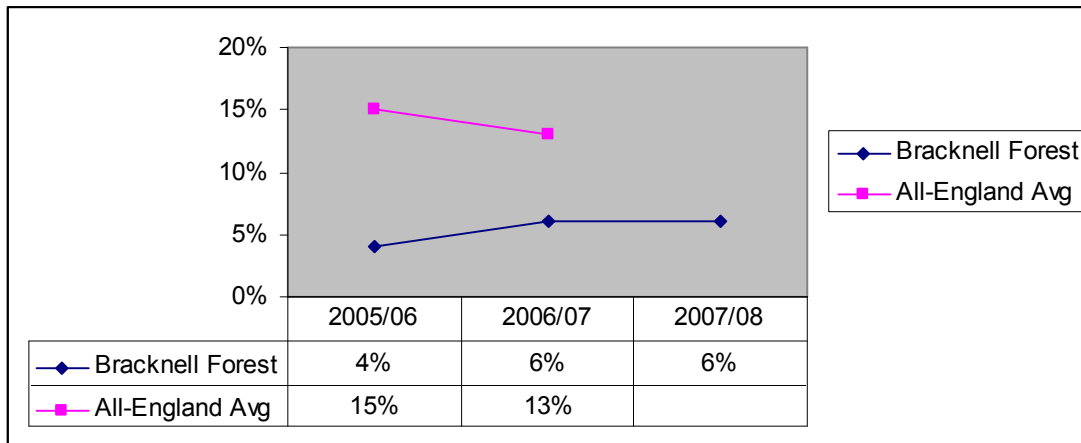
The way Forward.....

- **New methodology appears to have had positive results.** Long term positive effect and further improvement is envisaged.
- **Continual operational review to maintain optimum productivity and results.** Examples of this have been steel brushes fitted to sweepers and thermal lancing of kerb channels on high speed roads to assist with the weed control operation which is now encompassed in the works.
- **Employees have been taken on at new rates, and with revised shift patterns.** TUPE conditions accepted by majority of team , improved productivity and morale.
- **Enforcement** Improvements have been made in relation to enforcement and education activities, although greater focus on both is required to further assist.
- **Regeneration, additional works & adoptions of roads.** Needs to be monitored with respect to extra resource requirements.

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – STREET CLEANING

BVPI 199a

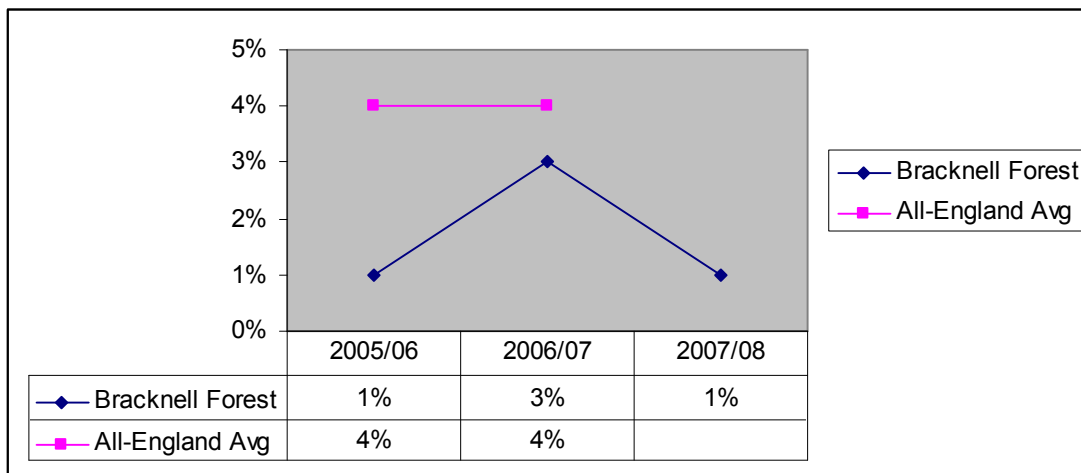
The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level



The graph shows that Bracknell Forest's levels of litter and detritus are at a consistently low level and significantly better than the average for all councils across England. (National comparator data is not yet available for 2007/08.)

BVPI 199b

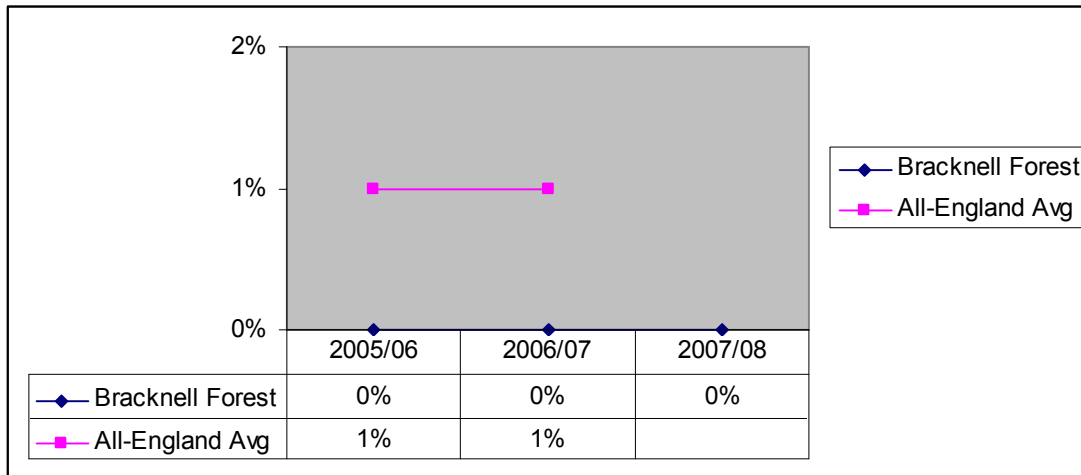
The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible



The graph shows that despite a rise in graffiti in 2006/07 which was corrected by 2007/08, graffiti in Bracknell Forest is consistently at a lower level than the average for all councils across England. (National comparator data is not yet available for 2007/08.)

BVPI 199c

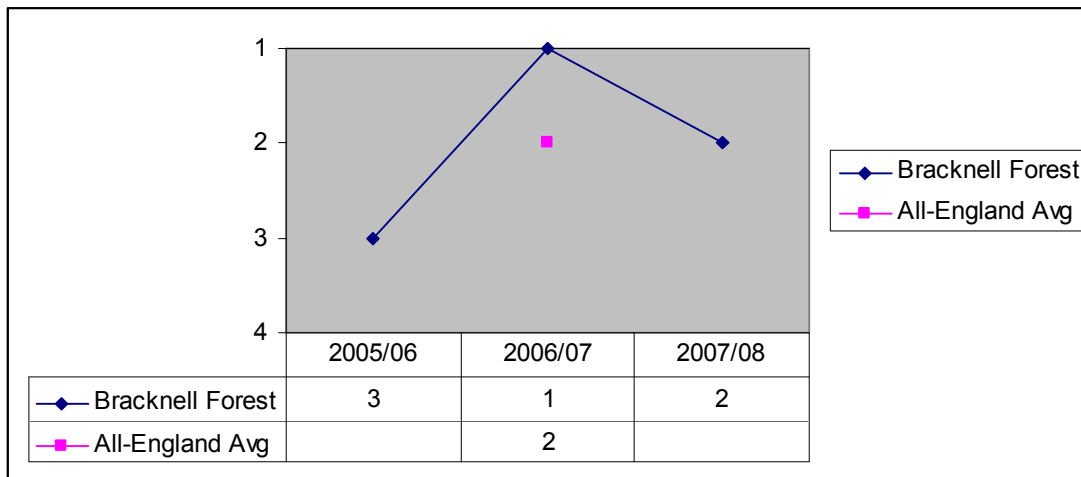
The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible



The graph shows that since 2005/06 fly-posting has been visible from less than 0.5% of Bracknell Forest land and highways, better than a consistent national figure of around 1.0%. (National comparator data is not yet available for 2007/08.)

BVPI 199d

The year-on-year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with ‘fly-tipping’



The graph, which shows grade assessments for effectiveness of actions to combat fly-tipping, indicates that Bracknell Forest’s performance in this regard has been changeable, rising between 2005/06 and 2006/07 from Grade 3 (“Good”) to Grade 1 (“Very Effective”), and then falling back to Grade 2 (“Effective”) in 2007/08. (An all-England average figure is only available for 2006/07 as data was not reported nationally in 2005/06 and no data is yet available for 2007/08; the average in 2006/07 was Grade 2 – “Effective”).

BVPI 89***The percentage of people satisfied with the cleanliness standard in their area***

This indicator is measured every three years through a survey last undertaken in 2006. In the last survey, 66% of Bracknell Forest residents were either “very satisfied” or “fairly satisfied” with cleanliness in the area, compared to averages of 67% for all English local authorities and 64% for all English unitary authorities.

Source for all data: Audit Commission.

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**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
18 DECEMBER 2008**

**SUPPORTING PEOPLE WORKING GROUP – UPDATE REPORT
(Lead Working Group Member)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report covers the attached update report of the Working Group of this Panel monitoring the implementation of the Supporting People programme.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That the Supporting People update report be noted and the recommendation contained therein be agreed.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Supporting People Working Group met on 30 September 2008 to undertake its annual review of progress against the implementation of the Supporting People programme. An update report describing the outcomes of this review is attached for the Panel's consideration.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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'Supporting People' Programme

**Update report by a Working Group of the
Environment, Culture and Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

December 2008

DEFINITION:

The '**Supporting People**' programme is a Government funded, currently ring fenced initiative, which requires local authorities to provide housing related support, enabling people with specified and assessed need to live independently in their own accommodation.

BACKGROUND:

In 2005 an Audit Commission inspection of the '**Supporting People**' programme was very critical of most aspects of our work including the effectiveness of the Commissioning Body, a lack of understanding of who our clients should be and the need to tighten up the eligibility criteria.

A concern that a loose eligibility criteria meant that support was being given to individuals who were able to access other resources meant that those who should have been receiving support were reduced in number. There was also insufficient clarity around who was eligible for supporting people services and which services were not eligible.

Following this very critical report the Executive Portfolio holder asked the then Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel to monitor the changes and action plan. Councillors Bob Edger and Anne Shillcock agreed to carry out this monitoring role and over a period extending throughout 2006 and part of 2007 they met regularly with the officers and produced two reports updating the former Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the progress being made.

Councillor Edger had to stand down and there has been a short break in monitoring. Recently, Councillor Mrs Anne Fleming agreed to join Councillor Mrs Shillcock and this report covers our recent discussions with Clare Dorning, Head of Housing Strategy & Needs.

It was decided in early 2007 that more urgent action needed to be taken to progress the changes and service improvements that were recommended by the Audit Commission and Bracknell Forest Council employed for a period of one year an interim manager, Alka Damania, who had considerable experience in '**Supporting People**'.

Councillors Anne Shillcock and Anne Fleming met with Clare Dorning, Head of Housing Strategy & Needs in September 08 in order to discuss the progress made since early 2007.

OVERVIEW:

- **Structure and Governance Arrangements**

Significant progress has been made since 2006. Accountability has been clearly defined with the restructuring of the lines of management. The Commissioning Body which has overarching responsibility for the '**Supporting People**' programme is now chaired by the Executive Portfolio holder for Adult Services, Health and Housing, Councillor Dale Birch, and has a membership which includes the Primary Care Trust, Probation Services and Adult Social Care services. The Commissioning Body's responsibility is to have a strategic oversight of the whole programme and includes decision making powers. Reporting directly to them is the Core Strategy Development Group whose membership includes representatives from Key Partners; their

responsibilities include; driving the programme forward and making recommendations to the Commissioning Body.

The Inspectors are now satisfied that the responsibilities of the Commissioning Body and the Core Strategy Development Group are clearly defined and are working effectively.

- **Eligibility**

The eligibility criteria has been overhauled and now defines accurately those services eligible for '**Supporting People**' funding. It also outlines activities which are not eligible, to ensure that the criteria is appropriately implemented – this document is available on the '**Supporting People**' pages of the Council's website (www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk).

During our meeting Clare Dorning provided us with a copy of the eligibility criteria and a breakdown of the financial spend on each of the groups currently being supported. See Appendix 1: **Supporting People Spend 2008/09**.

- **Floating Support**

One of the criticisms raised by the Inspectors was that in their view too much emphasis was placed on accommodation based schemes. To address this, a new Floating Support service has been established and is designed as a person centred support system to assist individuals with issues such as setting up tenancies, application for benefits and making rent payments and to provide support to enable successful living within the community. Currently this service is supporting about 60 people to maintain independent living and this more efficient system has enabled us to offer support to additional groups for example a small number of very vulnerable families. This has been very successful.

- **Move On Strategy**

The "Move On" strategy (moving from supported housing to independent living) is still in draft form and is yet to be implemented. The biggest single difficulty is lack of suitable accommodation. This requires co-operation with the Housing Associations within the Borough and discussions are taking place around this issue. The need for a supply of nominations to ensure move on from supported housing is being considered within the context of the allocation policy review which is underway as part of Choice Based Lettings.

- **Performance Monitoring**

Performance monitoring is much more rigorous than in the past and is a standard item on the agenda of the Commissioning Body meetings. It includes monitoring of statutory work book returns that are completed by all service providers and monitored on a quarterly basis and other key performance indicators relating to the '**Supporting People**' service. Performance indicators quickly highlight areas of weakness and action is then taken.

- **Funding**

The '**Supporting People**' programme budget for 2009 consists of grants totalling £2.043 million. This is being targeted across the range of client groups as shown in Appendix 1: **Supporting People Spend 2008/2009**.

There is an expectation that grant funding will be reduced by 12% over the next 3 years and this will provide serious challenges. The funding will not be ring fenced from 2009/10 but will be subsumed within the general budget and it will be important to ensure that **'Supporting People'** does receive its full allocation.

- **Contracts**

All **'Supporting People'** provider contracts have been awarded on a 3 year basis and will expire in November 2009, this will present challenges but it also offers opportunities to make adjustments if appropriate – a tendering time-table is in place.

- **Improvements**

The Working Group were informed about a number of important new initiatives in both working with key partners and involvement with service users. These include two multi-agency panels – the Young Peoples Accommodation Panel (to assist those under 25 years of age) and the Adult Accommodation Panel. Membership of these Panels include the Council, Mental Health Services, The Youth Offending Team and the Probation Service.

Links with clients include Service User Forums, which meet quarterly, Service Reviews and an Inclusive Forum Planning Group. It was recognised that there might be benefits for a **'Supporting People'** staff member to be represented on the Learning Disabilities Strategic Partnership and Clare Dorning undertook to look into this.

One of the productive ways in which clients and key agencies come together is the **'Supporting People'** Conference organised by the local authority which was held in May of this year and the Working Group attended – it was a really valuable exercise in information exchange between customer and provider. High levels of satisfaction were reported informally to the Working Group members by the clients it met.

SUMMARY

The Inspectors visited and monitored the progress being made rigorously and we are happy to note that in November 2007 they felt confident enough in the progress being made to allow the Council to continue without the constraints of continuous supervision. It is important to note that this significant improvement has been made with a very small number of staff. Working under Clare are two officers with provision for a third – a Strategy Manager – recruitment is currently under way for this post.

CONCLUSION

We recognise that considerable strides have been made since 2006 and that the Inspectors support the view that we provide a good service to our clients. There are considerable challenges ahead particularly with regard to funding and the tendering process which will take place next year.

RECOMMENDATION

We feel it is important that Councillors remain aware of all the issues and so would recommend that a small working group remains to meet on an occasional basis with the **'Supporting People'** staff. In this way the Councillors can both offer support to the staff and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

APPRECIATION

Councillors Anne Shillcock and Anne Fleming would like to record their thanks to Clare Dorning and Andrea Carr for their time and support given in compiling this report.

Councillor Anne Shillcock
Councillor Anne Fleming

Documents to view:

- *Supporting People Spend 2008/2009 (attached at Appendix 1)*
- *Notes of meeting held with Clare Dorning on 30 September 2008*
- *Supporting People Presentation by Clare Dorning to the May 2008 Conference*
- *The Supporting People Eligibility Criteria*

Please contact Andrea Carr for any of these documents.

Appendix 1

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 18 DECEMBER 2008

WORKING GROUPS UPDATE REPORT (Lead Working Group Members)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the progress achieved to date by the Working Groups of the Panel reviewing collection, recycling and disposal of waste; street cleaning; the Borough's Housing Strategy; and implementation of the Supporting People programme.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That this update report be noted.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Waste Review Working Group

- 3.1 The draft report of the Waste Review Working Group is nearing completion and will be circulated for initial feedback from Members and officers shortly. It is anticipated that the Working Group will wish to meet again to discuss the draft report and identify any further areas it wishes to investigate before concluding its review.

Street Cleaning Working Group

- 3.2 The report of the Working Group reviewing street cleaning, which appears elsewhere on this agenda for noting, has been agreed by the Panel and adopted by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission via e-mail. An Executive response to the report has been prepared and will be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 16 December 2008.

Housing Strategy

- 3.3 The purpose of this Working Group is to respond to the consultation in respect of the Borough's draft Housing Strategy which will be agreed by the Executive early in 2009, for consultation. The Working Group has met on four occasions to date to be briefed on the current working draft of the Housing Strategy, a substantive strategic document relating to housing priorities across the Borough, and consider in particular the use of the capital receipts generated as a result of the transfer of the Council's housing stock and the five priorities for action included in the current draft of the Strategy. A further meeting has been arranged for 12 January 2009 to consider the draft Strategy.

Supporting People Programme

- 3.4 The Working Group monitoring the implementation of the Supporting People programme met on 30 September 2008 to review progress and its resulting update report appears elsewhere on this agenda for the Panel's consideration.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 18 DECEMBER 2008

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT (Assistant Chief Executive)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity over the period August to October 2008.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

- 3.1 The O&S work programme for 2008/09 was approved by the O&S Commission on 17 July. The Executive endorsed the work programme on 16 September, which has now been published.

Overview and Scrutiny Working Groups

- 3.2 The table at Appendix 1 sets out the current status of the 13 O&S Working Groups, along with lists of completed and prospective reviews. This continues to represent a heavy and ambitious programme, demanding on member and officer time.
- 3.3 Three Working Group reports were finalised and published in the quarter, on Road Traffic Casualties, Support for Carers, and the Review of the Local Area Agreement.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 3.4 The O&S Commission continues to meet on a two-monthly cycle, with its last meeting on 11 September. At the Commission's November meeting, the main items will include: the Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Overview Report, the Internal Audit half yearly assurance report, appointing a new Parent Governor Representative to the Social Care and Learning O&S Panel (subject to Council approval), noting the Commission's response to a Government consultation on local accountability, and considering the reports by two O&S Working Groups which reviewed street cleaning in the Borough, and the implications for Schools of English as an Additional Language.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 3.5 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its September meeting, the Panel received a report on the work surrounding Climate Change and the Nottingham Declaration, an update on the Council's Local Development Framework, noted the Executive's response to the recommendations of the Working Group on Road Traffic Casualties, and considered the quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report. The main work of the Panel is being progressed through the working groups (see attached), which are progressing well. The Panel's next meeting is on 18 December.

Health O&S Panel

- 3.6 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its September meeting, the Panel appointed representatives to the South Central Health O&S Group, considered the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and received an update on the development of the Local Involvement Network. The Panel also received an update report on the Borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and subsequently wrote to the Executive Member to raise some concerns on it. Working Groups are making progress, as attached. Panel Members made a visit to Wexham Park Hospital in October. The Panel's next meeting is on 8 January at Heatherwood Hospital, when the main items will include an update on infection control, and considering the Working Group Report on Extended Services and Children's Centres.

Social Care and Learning O&S Panel

- 3.7 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its September meeting, the Panel received a presentation on Adult Social Care, considered a report from the Working Group on Support for Carers, and received an update on their Working Groups. The quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report was available after the meeting and was considered separately by Members. The main work of the Panel is being progressed through the working groups (see attached), which are progressing well. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 17 December and an additional meeting has been arranged for 12 November, due to the number of reports to be considered.

Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee

- 3.8 This Committee, now serviced by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, continues to meet broadly on a three-monthly cycle, rotating between the three Councils' venues, with the next meeting on 17 December in Slough. At its last meeting, the Committee decided on Co-Optees, it received updates on the 'Right Care Right Place' programme and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, a briefing on assisted conception policy, and considered its standing orders and work programme. The Committee continues to be represented on the Berkshire East Primary Care Trust's Strategy Implementation Group.

Other issues

- 3.9 In October, the O&S Commission, in consultation with the Corporate Management Team, formulated Bracknell Forest Council's response to the Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG's) consultation 'Communities in control: real people, real power improving local accountability'. Subject to the outcome of the consultation and Parliamentary approval, the legislative changes will be progressed through the planned Community Empowerment, Housing and Economic

Regeneration Bill (CEHER Bill), which CLG say will be introduced during the 2008-09 Parliamentary session. Developments on this are being monitored, meanwhile it can be noted that Bracknell Forest Council's O&S arrangements already cover many of the CLG's proposals.

- 3.10 The recruitment of another Parent Governor onto the Social Care and Learning O&S Panel/O&S Commission has been successful, and Council will be asked to make an appointment at their next meeting on 26 November.
- 3.11 New arrangements commenced this quarter to obtain feedback on the quality of O&S reviews. The responses to the first three feedback questionnaires have been very positive (Appendix 2).
- 3.12 Training for Overview and Scrutiny Members on Budget Scrutiny has been commissioned, for delivery in November, in readiness for the consultation on the Council's budget proposals for 2009/10.
- 3.13 External networking on O&S in the last quarter has included presentations on the work of O&S to Members and officers of Wokingham BC and Slough BC, at the request of those Councils. Wokingham BC has also invited O&S representatives from Bracknell Forest to meet their new O&S Management Committee in the New Year.
- 3.14 Quarterly review meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Commission and the Panels. Agenda-setting meetings continue to be held, usually in combination with the review meetings.
- 3.15 Officer support for O&S has been restructured consequent on one part-time Policy Officer leaving the Council for a year, a full time junior officer having commenced on a fixed term contract, and the Head of Performance and Scrutiny role changing to Head of Overview and Scrutiny. In terms of overall capacity, this increases the dedicated officer support for O&S from 2 to almost 3 Full Time Equivalents.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUPS – 2008/09

Position at 29 October 2008

Overview and Scrutiny Commission								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Scrutiny of Local Area Agreement	Edger (Lead), Beadsley & McLean	Victor Nicholls/Claire Sharp	Richard Beaumont	√	√	√		Awaiting responses from the Bracknell Forest Partnership Board and the Executive Member

Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Strategic Review of Waste	Brunel-Walker (Lead), Mrs. Angell, Beadsley, Mrs. Ryder, Wade (Crowthorne), Allen (S'hurst & Ms Healy (Warfield)	Steve Loudoun / Janet Dowlman	Andrea Carr	√	Being drafted			The Working Group has consolidated the information received to date and the review report is being drafted. The drafting process will identify any gaps in coverage.
Street Cleaning	Finnie (Lead), Finch, Mrs. McCracken, Leake (Binfield),	Steve Loudoun	Andrea Carr	√	√	√		Awaiting response from the Executive Member

	Mrs. Thompson (Crowthorne) & Mrs. Cupper (S'hurst).							
Community Arts Development Plan	Mrs. Fleming, McLean & Finnie	Helen Tranter	Andrea Carr	N/A				The Working Group gave input at a meeting on 26.3.08. The draft strategy is expected later in 2008.
Supporting People	Mrs. Shillcock (Lead) & Mrs. Fleming	Simon Hendey / Clare Dorning	Andrea Carr	√	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	The Working Group met on 30.09.08 to monitor progress against implementation of the Supporting People programme and will report to the Social Care and Learning O&S Panel in December 08.
Housing Strategy	Mrs. Fleming, Finnie and Finch	Clare Dorning	Richard Beaumont	√				Fourth meeting arranged for 3 December

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Patient Focus	Leake (Lead), Mrs. Mattick, Virgo, Mrs. Angell	Glyn Jones	Katie Dover	√				Meetings have been held, including PCT Director of Commissioning. Chairman has suspended work pending a decision on future work for the group
Extended Services & Children's Centres (Joint with SC&L OSP)	Leake (Lead), Mrs. Birch, Mrs. Angell, Mrs. McCracken, Burrows, Beadsley	Graham Symonds / Karen Frost	Katie Dover	√	Draft report written and awaiting Members' comments			Met 8 times since September 07. Visited Children's Centres, Area Steering Groups, and primary schools. Visited Portsmouth L.A.

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Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Hospital Discharge Procedures	Baily, Coad (Slough BC), Napier (RB W&M)	N/A	Andrew Scott (RB W&M) [Katie Dover to liaise]	√				Met twice Work is ongoing this Autumn.

Social Care and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Carers	Mrs. Shillcock (Lead), Simonds & Turrell	Glyn Jones	Andrea Carr	√	√	√		The report has been submitted to the Executive Member and a response is expected at the Social Care & Learning O&S Panel meeting on 17 December 08.
Care Homes	Browne (Lead), Baily & Blatchford	Glyn Jones	Andrea Carr	√				This Working Group has been put into abeyance for the time being.
Social Care Modernisation Agenda	Leake (Lead), Mrs. Shillcock & Virgo	Glyn Jones	Andrea Carr	√				Information gathering almost complete. A meeting with the Head of Learning

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								Disabilities at Oldham is being arranged before the Working Group meets to consolidate information received and plan the drafting of the ensuing report.
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Mrs. McCracken (Lead), Burrows, Ms Whitbread & Mr. Sharland	Tony Eccleston	Andrea Carr	√	At advanced draft stage			The review report is being drafted for submission to the Social Care & Learning O&S Panel on 12 November 08.
Extended Schools & Children's Centres (Jointly with HOSP)	See Health O&S Panel							

Completed Reviews

Publication Date	Title
December 2003	South Bracknell Schools Review
January 2004	Review of Adult Day Care Services in Bracknell Forest (Johnstone Court Day Centre & Downside Resource Centre)
May 2004	Review of Community & Voluntary Sector Grants
July 2004	Review of Community Transport Provision
April 2005	Review of Members' Information Needs

November 2005	The Management of Coronary Heart Disease
February 2006	Review of School Transfers and Performance
March 2006	Review of School Exclusions and Pupil Behaviour Policy
August 2006	Report of Tree Policy Review Group
November 2006	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – Review of the ASB Strategy Implementation
January 2007	Review of Youth Provision
February 2007	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2006
February 2007	Review of Library Provision
July 2007	Review of Healthcare Funding
November 2007	Review of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy
December 2007	Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives
March 2008	2007 Annual Health Check Response to the Healthcare Commission
April 2008	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08
May 2008	Road Traffic Casualties

Prospective reviews in work programme to be considered when resources are available

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Review of the Council's Reorganisation
To review the delivery of the Council's reorganisation from three Service Departments to two in April 2008. |
|----|--|

SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Care Homes
To resume the work of the working group on Care Homes in the Borough. |
| 2. | 14-19 Years Plan
To review the implementation of a major element of the plan (to be determined). |
| 3. | Transport
A strategic review of the procurement and provision of transport used by the Social Care and Learning Department. |

ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Residential Parking
To review issues concerning residential parking in the Borough, and to contribute to the formation of new policy. |
| 2. | The Council's Housing Functions
Depending on the outcome of the review of the Housing Strategy (7 above), and consequent on the transfer of the Council's housing stock, to review the Council's housing role, including the interface with Registered Social Landlords and addressing the Borough's needs for Affordable Housing. |

3.	<p>Climate Change and the Nottingham Declaration</p> <p>To review progress on implementing the actions flowing from the Council signing the Nottingham Declaration and in applying the new performance indicators set by government.</p>
4.	<p>Section 106 Arrangements</p> <p>To review the arrangements for securing and applying receipts from Section 106 agreements.</p>
6.	<p>Road Traffic Casualties (Part 2)</p> <p>The May 2008 report of the working group on the review of road traffic casualties has recommended that the panel consider, as a low priority, reviewing the operational issues connected with the reduction of road traffic casualties in the Borough.</p>

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL	
1.	<p>Maternity Services</p> <p>To review the quality and operations of maternity services in the Borough, with reference to the latest Healthcare Commission's assessment that Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust give a 'fair performing' service.</p>

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports

Note – Departmental Link officers on each review were asked to score the key aspects of each O&S review on a scale of 0 (Unsatisfactory) to 3 (Excellent)

	Road Traffic Casualties	Review of the Local Area Agreement	Support for Carers
PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	3	3	3
Were your comments invited on the scope of the review, and was the purpose of the review explained to you?	3	3	3
CONDUCT OF REVIEW Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption?	3	3	3
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	3	3	3
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	3	3	3
REPORTING Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	3	3	3
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	2	3	2
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2	3	3
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	N/A	3	3

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 18 DECEMBER 2008

ATTENDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS (Director of Corporate Services – Legal)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Commission and its Panels have frequently found the attendance of Executive Members to be of assistance. By the same token, Executive Members have found attendance at such meetings beneficial. This report proposes a mechanism that will allow Executive Members to continue to attend Commission and Panel meetings without there being placed in jeopardy of complaints that they are in breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Panel require each Executive Member to attend its meetings whenever the agenda of the meeting includes a matter which falls within the relevant portfolio of the Executive Member, unless the Chairman shall have confirmed that there are no matters which require the Executive Member's attendance.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Paragraph 11 of the Code of Conduct for Members is in the following terms:-

“You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where

- (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees, and
- (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.”

Paragraph 12 of the Code requires (subject to an exception which is not relevant for present purposes) that where a Member has a prejudicial interest in a matter they must withdraw from the Council Chamber.

- 3.2 Read literally, a combination of paragraphs 11 and 12 preclude Executive Members from remaining in the Council Chamber when the Commission (or one of the Panels) considers an Executive decision which they made or which was made at a meeting of the Executive which they attended. Whether or not those responsible for drafting the Code intended that to be the effect is a moot point but in any event it appears that they overlooked a provision in the Local Government Act 2000. Section 21(13) of the 2000 Act provides that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or a sub-Committee) “must require Members of the Executive.....to attend before it to answer

questions". It can be seen that there is a conflict between the Code and the Act. In these circumstances the Act prevails.

- 3.3 In order to allow Executive Members to attend Overview & Scrutiny meetings it is proposed that the Commission (and each of the Panels) should issue a standing direction to Executive Members to attend whenever a matter concerning their portfolio is to be considered. The Executive Members will then be able to attend and answer questions but would not participate in the debate of the Committee. Obviously, there may be occasions when Executive Members could not attend and in those circumstances the Committee would receive the apologies of the Executive Member.

Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

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Doc Ref

Aj/f/reports/Overview and Scrutiny Commission – 20.11.08

Agenda Item 13

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME: Environment, Culture & Communities

REFERENCE	I012331
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TITLE: Annual Progress Report (APR)

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve the Council's reporting of the Local transport Plan from 2006-2008 (2 years).

FINANCIAL IMPACT: No financial implications.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Planning & Transportation

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Internal Officers.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Letter and meeting(s) with interested parties.

DATE OF DECISION: 12 Dec 2008

REFERENCE	I013262
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TITLE: Overview & Scrutiny Report on Street Cleansing

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To determine the Executive's response to the recommendations in the report by the Environment & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Panel's working Group on Street Cleansing.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Not applicable. The report is a response to a joint Borough/Town/Parish Working Group.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 16 Dec 2008

REFERENCE	I013436
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TITLE: Home Ownership Initiatives

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To develop a range of initiatives that will help first time buyers buy a home. The current economic circumstances have moved house purchase prices within the reach of more first time buyers but ironically the lack of mortgage finance and the need for larger deposits means they are finding it difficult to buy a home.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Contained within report

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: RSL's

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) operating in Bracknell Forest were consulted at a management forum on 13 November 2008.

DATE OF DECISION: 16 Dec 2008

REFERENCE	I013488
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TITLE: Bracknell Forest Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve the Annual Monitoring Report document for Submission to the Government Office for the South East.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Planning & Transportation

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Not applicable.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 29 Dec 2008

REFERENCE	I013639
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TITLE: S106 Parks and Countryside

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve a programme of enhancement works to Parks and Countryside areas.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: All costs will be funded from existing S106 monies.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Leisure, Corporate Services and Public Protection

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 12 Jan 2009

REFERENCE	I013622
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TITLE: S106 Bullbrook Community Centre

PURPOSE OF DECISION: This report seeks approval for the release of S106 funds to undertake extension and major improvements to Bullbrook Community Centre.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The cost of the works is estimated at £230,000 and this money is available from within existing S106 funds.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Leisure, Corporate Services and Public Protection

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Bullbrook Community Association

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Discussions with the Bullbrook Community Association.

DATE OF DECISION: 12 Jan 2009

REFERENCE	I011050
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TITLE: Development Management - Housing and Commercial Policies and Sites

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To endorse the Preferred Options and Final Sustainability Appraisal for consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Divisions and Sections in Service Provision Departments.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: To be determined.

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Jan 2009

REFERENCE	I011065
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TITLE: Amen Corner Area Action Plan

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To endorse documents for submission and consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Central Government grant - meeting LDS milestones affects housing and planning delivery

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: All those consulted that responded in previous consultation phases plus statutory consultees and land owners

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Letter and meeting(s) with interested parties

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Jan 2009

REFERENCE	I013519
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TITLE: Bracknell Railway Station Forecourt Improvements

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve the release of of £500,000 of S106 contributions.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Central Government Grant/S106 funding

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Jan 2009

REFERENCE	I013081
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TITLE: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve consultation draft review of the Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None at this time.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Key stakeholders.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: 4 week consultation.

DATE OF DECISION: 10 Feb 2009

REFERENCE	I013358
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TITLE: Housing Strategy

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To agree the draft consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Contained within report - At a minimum the transfer receipt, which will equate to £18m plus external funding

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Community bodies

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Consultation with community bodies

DATE OF DECISION: 10 Feb 2009

REFERENCE	I011069
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TITLE: Bracknell Forest Streetscene Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve a draft Streetscene SPD to go out for public consultation and to approve the consultation process proposed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: To be determined

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: To be determined

DATE OF DECISION: Before 14 Apr 2009

REFERENCE	I013083
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TITLE: Thames Heath Basins Special Protection Area Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To adopt reviewed Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None.

DATE OF DECISION: Before 9 Jun 2009

REFERENCE	I010577
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TITLE: Housing Strategy Consultation

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To consider the Housing Strategy, key issues and future plans.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Members

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Not applicable

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Jan 2009