



Committee: COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Date: THURSDAY, 26 JUNE 2008

Venue: MORECAMBE TOWN HALL

Time: 4.30 P.M.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes**

Minutes of meeting held on 24th April, 2008 (previously circulated).

3. **Items of Urgent Business Authorised by the Chairman**

4. **Declarations of Interest**

5. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

6. **Policy Framework - Annual Report 2007/08** (Pages 1 - 39)

Report of the Corporate Performance Manager.

7. **Consultation on moving the date of English Local Government elections to the date of the European Parliament elections in 2009** (Pages 40 - 46)

Report of the Chief Executive

8. **Protocol on Publicity for Complaints of Breach of the Code of Conduct made to the Standards Committee** (Pages 47 - 52)

To consider any recommendations from the Standards Committee at its meeting on 19th June – the report to Standards Committee is attached and a further report to this Committee will be published following the meeting of Standards Committee.

9. **Attendance at Training Courses and Developmental Conferences and Seminars** (Pages 53 - 59)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

10. **Member Development Strategy Review** (Pages 60 - 70)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services.

11. **Special Council Meeting 2008** (Pages 71 - 74)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

12. **Appointments to Committees and Changes to Membership**

The Committee will consider any appointments to committees and changes to membership.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

(i) Membership

Councillors Rob Smith (Chairman), Evelyn Archer, Susan Bray, Geoff Knight, Karen Leytham, Joyce Pritchard and Morgwn Trolinger

(ii) Substitute Membership

Councillors June Ashworth, Abbott Bryning, Chris Coates, Jean Dent and Janie Kirkman

(iii) Queries regarding this Agenda

Please contact Gillian Noall, Head of Democratic Services - telephone: 01524 582060 or email gnoall@lancaster.gov.uk.

(iv) Changes to Membership, substitutions or apologies

Please contact Members' Secretary, telephone 582170, or alternatively email memberservices@lancaster.gov.uk.

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Published on Tuesday, 17th June, 2008

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**Policy Framework – Annual Report 2007/08
26th June 2008****Report of Corporate Performance Manager****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To approve the Council's Annual Report.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Annual Report be approved for publication on 30th June 2008.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Report together form the statutory Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and are part of the Council's Policy Framework. The Corporate Plan was agreed by Council at its meeting of 16th April 2008 (Minute Number 146) and sets out the Council's medium term aspirations.
- 1.2 The content of the Annual Report is prescribed by Government and looks back at the Council's performance for the last full financial year and will be subject to external scrutiny for compliance with statutory requirements by our auditors KPMG.
- 1.3 Extensive changes to the nationally prescribed performance framework, means that this is a year of transition for local government. Provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 remove the requirement for best value authorities to compile and publish an annual BVPP.
- 1.4 However, for the last 10 years the BVPP has been the key mechanism through which authorities report their outturn performance and removing the duty to publish may well leave a gap in public reporting of performance. Further Audit Commission guidance on the annual Use of Resources (UOR) judgment published in March 2008 clarifies the position somewhat. Authorities should continue to publish an Annual Report and may be only excused the duty to publish in future if they have canvassed the views of stakeholders and established that they do NOT wish the council to produce one.

2.0 Content of the Annual Report

- 2.1 The UOR guidance also includes a new duty for authorities to publish information and analysis about its environmental footprint. Members will see that this has been included in our Annual Report for the first time.
- 2.2 2007/08 was also the last year for collection of the familiar Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's). From 1 April 2008 these have been replaced with a new set of statutory National Performance Indicators. To avoid confusion in this transitional year, only BVPIs and a small number of local indicators will be reported in the Annual Report this year.
- 2.3 Similarly, whilst it has previously been our custom to include three years of future targets, the significant changes to the national framework mean that for the sake of clarity, future targets have not been included in this report for this year only.

3.0 Approving the Plan

- 3.1 The Council is obliged by the terms of the Local Government Act 1999 to publish its BVPP by 30th June every year. The document must be approved by Members prior to publication.
- 3.2 On 7th February 2007, the responsibility for approval of the Annual Report was delegated to Council Business Committee to enable the Council to meet its statutory requirements in a straightforward manner.
- 3.3 Members should note that the financial information (p33 onwards) is incomplete. This section will be considered by Audit Committee (26th June 2008) and approved as part of the process for the close-down of the Council's year-end accounts. This information will be incorporated into this document immediately thereafter.
- 3.4 The Annual Report is due to be considered by the Budget and Performance Panel at its meeting on 15 July 2008.

4.0 Details of consultation

- 4.1 The Annual Report will be available on the Council's website and will be available for public comment after 30th June 2008.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK
The Corporate Plan and Annual Report are an integral part of the Council's Policy Framework documents.
CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)
None arising directly from this report

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Adequate budgetary provision has been made within the Corporate Management budget from which the cost of producing the Annual Report will be funded. The 2007/08 Statement of Accounts will be considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 26th June 2008 and the detailed financial outturn will be considered by Cabinet on 8th July 2008. There are no further financial implications as a result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a statutory duty in relation to Best Value within the terms of S6 of the Local Government Act 1999 to produce the information that it is suggested to include in the Annual Report

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minute 146 of Council meeting 16th April 2008

Contact Officer: Liz Stokes – Corporate Performance Manager
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Contents

Introduction

About Our District

- Things you might not know about the district

About the Council

- Lancaster City Council's environmental footprint
- Connecting residents to the council and its services
- Things you might not know about the council

Our Achievements

- Deliver value for money, customer focussed services
- To make our district a cleaner and healthier place
- To reduce crime and the fear of crime
- To lead the regeneration of the district
- To support sustainable communities
- To continue to improve the council

How well are we improving?

Future plans, monitoring and ensuring success

Performance Data 2007/08

Ensuring the council's high standards

Our financial performance

How to contact the council

Introduction

This Annual Report gives an overview of Lancaster City Council and the district it serves as well as a snapshot of some of our initiatives and achievements in the year 2007/08. It shows how we performed against the targets set nationally for our services and the locally important goals we set for ourselves. It looks back at another successful year for the council and forward to the challenges of the year to come. It provides information on our key priorities in the coming year (outlined in our Corporate Plan) and satisfies our statutory duty to publish an account of our performance.

2007/08 was a GOOD year for Lancaster City Council – and that's official! Our continued improvement and achievements have been recognised by Local Government's independent watchdog. We are delighted to report that the Audit Commission has rated the council as a 'GOOD' authority – the second best category out of five - following an inspection in October last year.

The inspection report recognised that the council has made impressive progress since it was last inspected in 2003, when it was rated as 'fair', and can be proud of its "significant achievements" including leading the physical, social and economic regeneration of the district.

We are ambitious for our communities and have clear plans to help us improve our services to them. However, changes to the nationally prescribed performance framework will provide big challenges for all of local government in the coming year. Central government has deleted the current set of Best Value Performance Indicators and replaced them with a new set of National Indicators which place an even greater emphasis on improving the lives of our communities and working ever more closely with our partners.

We are determined to rise to this particular challenge. As Community Leaders we are committed to working with all stakeholders who can help us to have a positive impact upon life in this district, such as the police, fire, education, health, private companies, voluntary organisations and community groups through the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

We hope you will find this document interesting and informative, we are a listening council and it is important that our residents have a real say in how their council is performing, so we welcome your comments on this report and its contents or any aspect of council services.

About our district

Lancaster district sits on the most northerly edge of Lancashire, outside the central Lancashire City Region. Its diverse and compelling mix of city, coast and countryside, makes it the natural centre of the Morecambe Bay area, which includes South Cumbria as well as Lancashire.

It combines the City of Lancaster, which has played a significant role in the history of this country for more than a thousand years, the seaside town of Morecambe, currently undergoing a renaissance featuring the redevelopment of the famous art deco Midland Hotel, and some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain, including two areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Our communities may be diverse, they expect a lot from public agencies and are not afraid to say what they think. People here tend to identify strongly with the place they live, care about it passionately and have an appetite for still more opportunities to shape the future of their communities.

We're a place of contrasts – in every way imaginable; we have areas of great affluence and others of extreme poverty, so there are some parts of the district which need our particular care and attention. But on the whole, the combination of our location, fantastic quality of life, unusual mix of both the district and the diverse community it attracts, makes us a popular centre for employment, business development, education, health, shopping, leisure, tourism and culture.

We lie at the centre of a major communications and transport network offering superb access to road, rail, sea or air. That's not to say we don't have local transport issues, our residents consistently tell us improving traffic congestion would make the single biggest positive difference to our district.

Over the centuries, the district has been at the heart of national and international trade and today is home to service-based industry, major exporters and an emerging ICT market. With a population of around 143,000 ours is one of the fastest growing areas in Lancashire and an increasingly popular location to live and work.

This district delivers some outstanding economic performance, contributing an estimated 10% of Lancashire's economic output (GVA). It is an area where brains and beauty make a perfect match, where business capitalises on globally acclaimed knowledge and research.

Lancaster University is one of the country's top-ten educational research establishments and a world class centre of excellence in many spheres with research facilities and incubation space for ICT (InfoLab21) and environmental technology (Lancaster Environment Centre) while the 6-star Management School is home to the Northern Leadership Academy. The recently established University of Cumbria also has a campus in the District, contributing to the range of graduate skills available,

Unsurprisingly then, the district is a knowledge based one, with one of the most highly skilled workforces in the country, more than 26% of the population is educated to NVQ level 4 or equivalent. Our academic community continues to develop its research and commercial skills and forge partnerships with business – locally, nationally and internationally – to create a lasting impact.

Increasingly, companies recognise the district as an accessible, attractive business location – and a credible alternative to the major Northwest conurbations. Global businesses and homegrown entrepreneurs, among them Cannon Hygiene, British Energy and Axa Direct, power the area's expanding economy. What's more

extensive regeneration activity and private sector investment is stimulating an influx of ambitious businesses eager to capitalise on the area's world class academic and research resources, complemented by, affordable property and labour costs, high skill levels and outstanding quality of life.

Things you might not know about the district

- Lancaster district is geographically the second largest district in the County of Lancashire, second only to Ribble Valley, but is the largest in terms of population
- The district, which includes the seaside resort of Morecambe, historic City of Lancaster, and rural areas including the Lune Valley, has over 6,500 bed spaces and a wealth of tourist attractions and events
- The Midland Hotel on the promenade in Morecambe recently re-opened to a blaze of national publicity. Now beautifully and meticulously restored, the Midland is an Art Deco-inspired luxury hotel with 44 modern 30s-inspired rooms, 6 rooftop suites, a top-notch restaurant and ultra-stylish bar. Morecambe's modernist masterpiece has regained its rightful place as the crowning glory of the North West coast.
- Carnforth will forever be famous for being the film location for the David Lean's classic film 'Brief Encounter'. Today the Carnforth Station Visitor Centre displays a fascinating permanent exhibition on the filming of Brief Encounter and the town of Carnforth in general. The tearooms are an exact replica of the refreshment rooms used in the original film.
- Although the curtain is not yet ready to rise on a permanent basis - Morecambe's Winter Gardens Theatre is ready for anything, with an extra wide door and the strongest stage in Britain re-inforced to take the weight of performing elephants!
- The Forest of Bowland is not a wood! The word 'forest' is derived from an old English word meaning 'hunting ground'.
- The famous Lancashire Witch Trials took place in Lancaster. In 1612, ten men and women were hanged in Lancaster Castle for the crime of witchcraft. The Pendle Witches, as they became known, were believed to have been responsible for the murder by witchcraft of seventeen people in and around the Forest of Pendle. Our Tourist Information Centre will advise you how to walk in the steps of the Lancashire Witches.

About the Council

Lancaster City Council's aim is to achieve lasting opportunities for all in a safe and healthy district that's proud of its natural and cultural assets.

In the coming year our 12.6% share of the overall council tax bill will give us a budget of around £23m. Around 991 staff provide a whole range of quality services including rubbish and recycling collection, planning and building control, community safety, housing and homelessness, environmental health, car parking, leisure and sport, economic development, tourism events and festivals, licensing, council tax collection and support for the community and voluntary sector and lots more.

We have 60 elected councillors who collectively agree the council's policies and budget. Decisions within this framework are made by a PR Cabinet with representation from all five of its political groups. An Overview and Scrutiny Committee holds Cabinet to account and can challenge the decisions they make. There are also a number of other committees such as Planning, Audit, Licensing and Personnel.

The council is committed to open governance and so has an 'open door' policy which means that all our meetings wherever possible, are open to the public and agendas and decisions are posted on the website.

For more information about the council, and a full A-Z listing of council services, visit our website www.lancaster.gov.uk

Lancaster City Council's Environmental Footprint

Tackling climate change is a key issue for Lancaster City Council. Although the climate of the Earth is always changing, in the past it has altered as a result of natural causes.

Nowadays, however, the term climate change is more often used when referring to changes we've seen over recent years including regular flooding and higher winter temperatures. These changes, and those which are predicted over the next 80 years, are thought to be mainly as a result of human behaviour rather than due to natural changes in the atmosphere. It is the extra greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), which humans have released which are thought to pose the strongest threat to our environment; this is known as the greenhouse effect.

Lancaster City Council is working hard to meet the challenges presented by the changing climate. Taking action on climate change is one of our Corporate Plan priorities. The Council has signed both the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and the North West Climate Change Charter. These are clear public statements of this council's commitment to work locally, regionally and nationally with all our partners to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

As community leaders we believe we must set a strong example within the district, so we have already adopted an In-House Climate Change Strategy, with targets to reduce the council's environmental impact whilst ensuring local residents continue receive the high quality responsive service they expect. As a baseline we have developed a table estimating the Carbon Footprint of Lancaster City Council. This is represented in the table below:-

CO ₂ Emissions	2007-2008 (estimated)	2006-2007	2005-2006*	2004-2005
Total Carbon Footprint (tonnes of CO ₂)	3905.49	4041.33	3748.21	3361.73
Tonnes of CO ₂ from buildings	2409	2494.06 (62%)	2208.42 (59%)	1875.2 (56%)
Tonnes of CO ₂ from transport	1504.52	1504.52 (37%)	1496.61 (40%)	1443.35 (43%)
Tonnes of CO ₂ from waste	43.18	43.18 (1%)	43.18 (1%)	43.18 (1%)

* Revised figures for 2005-2006 include emissions estimates for Salt Ayre Leisure Centre

As you will see, our carbon footprint has been reduced in 2007/08 and we will use our climate change action plan to ensure our carbon footprint continues to decrease year on year.

In some places we are doing very well, our council homes are some of the most energy efficient in the country, but elsewhere there is much to improve. Our two Town Halls, represent a particular challenge. Built in the early 20th Century, they were not constructed with the present need for energy efficiency in mind. However, our buildings managers continue to investigate ways to increase the energy efficiency of our important listed buildings whilst ensuring we can retain the special character of these historic landmarks. In addition, our vehicle managers are exploring ways to lower the carbon emissions from our Council vehicles.

As a coastal authority we understand that tackling climate change must be at the centre of our vision. This is why mitigating and adapting to climate change is a key feature in the future development of this council and the Lancaster district as whole.

Connecting residents to the Council and its services

Lancaster City Council is ambitious for its communities and believes local people should be at the forefront of decision making. Our work in the last year and our future plans, clearly show our commitment to enabling local people to play a fuller role in shaping their communities.

That's why in the coming year we will continue to develop our approach to Neighbourhood Management in the district. Based on our successful experience in Poulton and the West End of Morecambe and following consultation with councillors representing rural wards, a pilot of Neighbourhood Management in the rural parish of Ellel is well underway. In the pilot evaluation, the views of the community will be used to determine how Neighbourhood Management techniques will bring benefits to other parts of the district.

As well as shaping the future of their communities, our resident's views help us to deliver improved services. The Corporate Plan for 08/09 was developed following extensive consultation with the public and partner organisations. These views help to make sure we are focusing on the right things, shape our priorities and improve where we need to. That's why we regularly test public satisfaction on a whole range of council services. We aim to reach every part of our diverse and geographically distinct communities and understand that some people may be 'hard to reach' and need our particular attention.

In the last year, we have looked again at the internal processes which support all our public consultation and appointed a Consultation Officer whose over-arching role is to co-ordinate all the council's consultation activity, delivering a more consistent and robust approach.

Key developments in the past year include:

- The launch of new public consultation pages on the council's website which provides detail of all the council's consultation activity with clear guidance on how the public can get involved.
- A new electronic consultation management system supported by a network of trained 'consultation champions' in every service.
- Refreshed the list of people in the district who are interested in being consulted.

- Published an annual consultation plan to keep our customers informed and help to identify opportunities of joint working.
- Re-established a county-wide group of officers to share best practice and related community engagement information.

In the coming year, a new Place Survey is due to take place in Autumn 2008. The survey will be carried out every two years and replaces the previous Best Value Satisfaction Surveys. The purpose of the survey is to measure quality of life in local communities and the results will be used by the Council and other LSP partners to shape future policy decisions. Lancaster City Council plans to carry out this survey in collaboration with the County Council and other District councils. A postal questionnaire will be sent to a random selection of households in all districts.

If you want to know more about our approach to consultation and community engagement, please visit our website <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/consultation>

Things you might not know about the council

- Since the district was granted the status of a cycling demonstration town in October 2005, Lancaster City Council has opened up in excess of 20km of additional safe travel both on and off road for cyclists. For all you need to know about cycling in the district visit www.celebratingcycling.org.
- Over the last seven years, Lancaster City Council's Business Development Scheme has provided grants totalling £193,000 to 54 local businesses to help encourage a thriving local economy. 211 new jobs have been created, 60 have been safeguarded and 93% of supported businesses have survived for two years or more.
- We are proud to be a Fairtrade District!
- As from April this year, residents living in an average Band D property are paying just £3.52 in council tax to the city council. This is the same as many people pay each week for newspapers and wouldn't even buy you two cups of coffee at some coffee shops.
- Lancaster City Council offers a Household Bulky Waste collection for items such as white goods, furniture and carpets, for more information or to arrange a collection call – 01524 582491
- Did you know there are 1,390 listed buildings in the district, more than any other part of the County? Of that figure, 25 are grade 1 listed (like Lancaster Castle) which means that they are buildings of more than local or regional significance. A further 68 are grade 2 starred including the Midland Hotel, Skerton Bridge and the Moor Hospital.
- Lancaster Town Hall will celebrate the centenary of its opening on 27th December 2009. The final cost of the complete works including the Ashton Hall, the redevelopment of Dalton Square and the statue of Queen Victoria was £155,000!

Achievements against medium-term objectives

In 2007/2008 the council set Six Medium Term Objectives, set out below are our achievements against each.

1. To deliver value for money, customer focussed services

Delivering sound financial management and efficiency, high quality services and the roll-out of Customer Service Centres in Morecambe and Lancaster:

- **Top Performing Revenues Service** – Our Revenues and Benefits service is one of the top performers nationally with the majority of statutory indicators in the top quartile, rightly reflecting the excellent service which is provided to our customers.
 - the average time for processing new benefits claims is now 19 days (top quartile figure 24 days)
 - the average time for processing change of circumstances is now 7 days (top quartile figure 7.1 days)
 - Revenues and Benefits have also maintained an excellent score of 4 in a self assessment against DWP Performance Standards for 2007/09, this is particularly pleasing as it has a strong focus on customer experience

Revenues and Benefits pioneered the use of an electronic document management system which has delivered real benefits in capacity efficiency and transparency. This has since been rolled out to Planning and Council Housing following the successful pilot as part of our corporate strategy for Information Management.

- **Direct Debit** - In April 2007, the Council announced the introduction of two additional payment dates for those paying Council Tax by Direct Debit. This was done as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to providing customers with more choice, reducing costs and providing better value for money. To date an additional 1965 households have switched to paying by Direct Debit helping us to reduce costs.
- **Do it online** – the council's website continues to grow in popularity as a means of accessing council information and services, and in the year to April 2008 recorded an average figure of 29,445 unique visitors per month. An independent survey carried out by SOCITM (Society of Information Technology Management) recently improved the grading of the council's website to Transactional status, a significant achievement. Investment in new technology means that visitors to our site can carry out many self-service transactions, such as paying bills, reporting highway streetlighting and litter problems or finding their nearest health services schools and public amenities.
- **Planning improvements** – The quality of the Planning Service offered to our customers continues to improve, again hitting 100% of its performance targets for planning applications. Customers are able to submit and pay for planning applications online, to track current applications, to view applications and submit comments.
- **Customer Services** – We opened two state of the art face to face Customer Service Centres in Morecambe and Lancaster Town Halls which have seen a steady rise in footfall since opening, with a total of 21,798 visitors in person.

- Customer Service Staff received a total of 69,505 telephone calls between October 2007 and April 2008. Since the main switchboard number was incorporated into Customer Services we have maintained a figure of 97% of all calls answered. This is excellent performance, particularly when you consider that that the volume of calls received increased by 28% in the year.
- Clear customer service standards are in place for dealing with our customers whether face to face, on the telephone, by letter or email. Customers know what they can expect from the Council and staff know what is expected of them
- Phased customer care training programme has been introduced for all public facing staff
- We have produced a Welcome to the District Pack to target help to our most numerous BME communities to assist them to settle better in the community
- Customer feedback to date has been positive and monthly customer exit surveys are due to commence with effect from June 2008 in order to provide robust and consistent customer satisfaction data.

2. To make our district a cleaner and healthier place

Improving the cleanliness of our streets and open spaces, recycling, waste collection and healthier communities:

- **Cycle Demonstration Town (CDT)** – The district's status as one of only six Department of Transport 'Cycling Demonstration Towns' continues to bring improvements to the local cycle network. Some CDT facts:
 - Over 430 children have received national standard training (as of the end of financial year 2007/08)
 - 15km of improved/new cycle routes
 - Over 300 new cycle parking spaces installed
 - Over 280 adults have taken part in some form of training session
 - In the year 2007 there were over 4,750 individual visits to celebratingcycling.org every month
 - Morecambe Promenade opened to cyclists and other works to link up Greenway and Heysham.
 - A 2.7% increase in cycle trips year on year 2006 to 2007
- **Inclusive Sport** - Our sports facilities, venues and programmes provide a service to more than one million customers every year and Salt Ayre Sports Centre is a nationally accredited Inclusive Fitness Centre.

Together with Lancashire Adult and Community Services we have run a successful pilot scheme to increase access to leisure activities for young people aged 13-16 with significant disability.

- **Tackling Obesity** - Our Body Mass Index (BMI) project addressing childhood obesity and targeted at primary school children measures BMI in a non-intrusive way and provides each child with individual fitness charts.
- **Outstanding green space** - Both Williamson Park and Happy Mount Park have secured Green Flag status. The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country and is seen to be a benchmark for high environmental standards and excellence in recreational green areas.

- **Healthy and independent for longer** - To date 53 vulnerable older people are connected to the Telecare service, helping them to stay in their own home for longer.
- **Managing waste** - More than 55,000 households now have wheeled bins and boxes. It is planned that the remaining 6,000 households will join the scheme in September 2009.
 - A plastics recycling collection service was added to the scheme in September 2007.
 - Our Trade Waste Collection Service now offers a recycling service to schools
 - Once again the annual DEFRA target for recycling has been exceeded – detailed information on actual performance is available elsewhere in this document
- **Reduce and re-use** – City Council (Direct) Services and Customer Services continue to work in partnership with social enterprise organisation 'Furniture Matters' to deliver the award winning 'Bulky Matters' project, reducing the amount of waste going to landfill from 100% to 40% thus saving many tonnes of landfill per year and, at the same time, improving the service to customers by introducing appointments for in-house collection and providing employment/training opportunities for local residents. Over 50% of tonnage collected is re-used or recycled and 100% is removed within our standard of seven days
- **Cleaner streets** - There have been noticeable improvement in standards of street cleansing and response to reports of flytipping, littering etc. In 2004/05 28% of land surveyed had significant deposits of litter – this figure has significantly fallen year on year to a much improved 10.67% in 2007/08.
 - **????** investigations into cleanliness complaints
 - Over 150 Targeted dog fouling patrols
 - 'Yeah butt – no butt!' Over 1,200 portable ashtrays have been distributed to date
 - A competition offered £1000 prize money to the primary school that comes up with the best idea combat litter in the district.
- **Street Pride** – is a scheme which encourages pride in the local environment where individual streets are given an environmental overhaul or 'deep clean'. A typical day would see a range of services carried out including street cleansing, grounds maintenance, gully emptying and minor street repairs. Local residents nominate their area for attention by contacting their ward councillor. Once the city council has completed the exercise residents are invited to will be asked to sign up to a voluntary charter to maintain the appearance of the streets. As an added incentive households included in the Street Pride scheme are offered the opportunity to have their unwanted bulky household items collected by the Bulky Matters service at half price, for bookings made in the week of the clean up.
- **Blooming marvellous** – Our Grounds Maintenance Department won Gold at RHS Tatton Show with an exhibit called 'Out of Africa' which marked the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Slave Trade. In addition, the team has supported numerous community 'Britain in Bloom' entries and has tackled an extensive programme of playground refurbishment

- **Public conveniences** – In the calendar year 2007 a total of 34,600 visitors paid to use the new Clock Tower and Arndale car park toilets. The Clock Tower toilets are now open for longer hours to cater for the Morecambe night time economy.

3. To reduce crime and the fear of crime

Working with our partners to achieve national and local targets relating to criminal damage, alcohol related crime and domestic violence:

- **Working in partnership** - The Community Safety Partnership, chaired by the City Council Cabinet Member for Community Safety, met its PSA1 target to reduce crime by between 16%-19% over a 3 year period and has received congratulations from the government as a consequence. A new Community Safety Plan contains future targets from April 08 and can be viewed on the council's website www.lancaster.gov.uk. Initiatives to meet our targets over the last 3 years included
 - A Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) team comprising staff from the City Council, Police, Youth and Community, Fire and Rescue, Youth Offending Team and Victim Support has been established and work together at a strategic and tactical level within shared office space
 - Key projects developed by the Community Safety Partnership include substance misuse projects such as XS and Tower and the Arrest Referral Scheme
 - The district benefited from extra street lighting of over £66,000 (twice as much as last year) due to a successful bid from the CSP
 - The partnership scores well against a checklist of best practice in tackling domestic violence, and continues to employ a dedicated officer to ensure we stay on track (detailed performance information may be viewed elsewhere in this document)
 - 20 new Police Community Support Officers are at work in the district. Funded by the City Council, Police the CSP and the West End Partnership, they provide visible reassurance to residents and are targeted to tackle environmental abuses, anti-social behaviour and low level crime.
 - Partnership Plus agreement is in place between the district, County, NCP and the Police, whereby parking attendants act as 'eyes and ears' for the police and in return offences against attendants are rigorously prosecuted.
 - Cycling Demonstration Town Project has funded 8 new bikes for the Lancaster and Morecambe Neighbourhood Policing Teams to increase cycling patrols in urban centres and the district's extensive network of cycle paths
 - Lancaster car parks awarded 'Parkwise' and 'Park Mark' accreditations (safe and secure environment for customers)
 - City Council (Direct) Services has worked with other agencies on the 'Clean Sweep' initiative in partnership with other council services, Police and Fire and Rescue Service.
 - Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy – the Lancaster Alcohol Harm Reduction Partnership works to regulate Licensed Premises and deliver the outcomes in the 3 year strategy.
- As a consequence crime in the district over the last three years has fallen as follows:

- All crime reduced by 21.9%
- British Crime Survey Acquisitive Crime fell by 3.3%
- British Crime Survey Damage Crime fell by 14.7%
- All Violent Crime fell by 19.1%

4 To lead the regeneration of our district

Leading regeneration and tourism activity throughout the district:

- **EDZ** – Lancaster and Morecambe Economic Development Zone (EDZ) continues to be the largest externally funded regeneration programme ever under taken by the Council. We will be able to draw down £8m of European funding by the end of 2008.
- **The Canal Corridor (North)** – Proposals for a retail led regeneration of the Canal Corridor (North) area continued to progress during 2007/08. The Council entered into a formal development agreement with potential developers Centros Miller in 2006 which continues to be dependent upon a number of issues, the most important of which is the granting of a satisfactory planning permission. This radical development of the Canal Corridor (North) area, so blighted for over 20 years, aims to enhance the townscape with a sympathetically designed mixed retail, cultural/leisure and public space provision, combined with community facilities and housing. It is a public/private partnership between the council and Centros Miller.

Revised plans for the proposed extension of Lancaster city centre have now been published. The new plans have been changed in response to consultation following the submission of the first application last year. Numerous changes have been made including the addition of nearly 20% more homes in the scheme.

- **Storey Centre for the Creative Industries** – Lancaster City Council has secured over £3 million to renovate and convert the Storey Institute into a centre for the Creative Industries. Built in 1891 by Thomas Storey, it is a Grade II listed building located on the edge of the city centre, close to the railway station. Large parts of the building will be converted to form workspace for the creative industries sector and the centre will contribute to the revitalisation of Lancaster's conservation/ Castle area, as well as creating new employment opportunities.

Building work is well underway and the Council has set up a not-for-profit company called Storey Creative Industries Centre (SCIC) and appointed a Board of Directors to manage the centre once it opens in late 2008. It will offer small businesses (within the creative industries sector) local communities and visitors to the city the following facilities:

- Quality creative industry workspace/offices
 - A new 100 set auditorium space and conference venue
 - Workshops and training space
 - Meeting rooms
 - Restored galleries and exhibition spaces
 - A community café complex
 - A new Tourist Information Centre
- **Lancaster Science Park** – Northwest Regional Development Agency, Lancaster City Council and Lancaster University are working in collaboration to develop a new Science Park on a 9.7ha site immediately adjacent to the University campus. The vision is: *"To develop a science park*

adjacent to Lancaster University which will become an internationally significant centre of commercial scientific excellence."

The development of Lancaster Science Park is a key priority for the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA). This site is also a designated Regional Strategic Site and the project will build on the Agency's commitment through the Regional Economic Strategy to support major research concentrations, business/HEI collaboration and knowledge transfer. The project will comprise a purpose-built Innovation Centre to house new and expanding knowledge-based businesses. It will also provide serviced sites and space for businesses wishing to co-locate with the University or spinning out from InfoLab21 and the Lancaster Environment Centre.

- **Luneside East** – Is a 6 hectare site located on the south banks of the River Lune on Lancaster's historic St George's Quay. The vision is to create a new quarter of the city with 350 houses in a mix of tenures, 8000sqm business space, new high quality open spaces and walking and cycling routes.

The council has continued to make progress with the scheme in the year, having completed a CPO enquiry and site assembly (land purchase) ready to hand over to a developer. The gasholder has been demolished and flood protection works on that section of river front are complete.

- **West End Gardens** – This new facility for residents and visitors is managed by the council was financed by a successful bid for European funding and includes a performance plaza, a viewing platform, 3 separate play areas, interactive water fountains, public art works, picnic areas and landscaped areas. And, in a 'first' for the district, an outdoor ice rink was available to the public free of charge over Christmas 2007.
- **Coastal defences** – The completion of phases 6 & 7 of the coastal defence works and the restructured Sandylands Promenade provide an extension to the landscaped promenade walkways.
- **Business Development Scheme** – provides grant support for job creation by local businesses. During 2007/08 the Scheme has supported 56 businesses with grants totalling £21,533. Since April 2000, 54 businesses have been supported and a total of 271 jobs have been created/safeguarded. Of total grant expenditure of £193,000, 84% has been met from external funders
- **Promoting Tourism** – latest figures show that the number of staying visitors increased by 4% in the last full year for which figures are available (exceeding our target of 3% p.a) and 80% of customers in our Tourist Information centres received 'good' or 'excellent' service

5. To support sustainable communities

Supporting physical and social regeneration through Neighbourhood Management. Reducing homelessness and supporting affordable housing provision. Working with our partners to mitigate the effects of climate change:

- **Decent Homes** – we are proud of the fact that we continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard for all our council owned dwellings and are determined to maintain and exceed it. Earlier this year, we completed our five yearly Independent Stock Condition Survey. The results will be used to help formulate our long term requirements for maintaining the Decent Homes/Lancaster Standard and for updating the 30 year HRA Business Plan.

- The average time to undertake non-urgent repairs was 12.9% 2006/07. Last year that figure fell again last year to 11.3%. Tenants are also offered fixed appointments by trade operatives at the first point of contact to report a repair
- The average time taken to allocate council properties continues to improve, the re-let time has reduced again to 32.19 days
- **Tackling Climate Change** – Our commitment is clear. We have produced an In-house Climate Change Strategy and signed the Nottingham Declaration and the North West Climate Change Charter (see section – Environmental Footprint for more information)
 - Council homes are some of the most energy efficient in the country.
 - In the private sector the most recent HECA (Home Energy Conservation Act) return reported an annual improvement in district-wide energy efficiency of 2.4%, more than double the estimated target for the year.
- **Homelessness** - 'Drop in' homelessness advice services have increased and there has been an overall reduction in the numbers of homeless applications and acceptances. There has also been increased access to both temporary dispersed housing (RSL managed) and accommodation within the private rented sector. The Authority will continue to improve services with more emphasis placed upon prevention initiatives, to achieve future set targets and reduce the levels of homelessness.
 - The Council supported the YMCA to re-open emergency accommodation in Portland Street. This will provide accommodation and support for 6 young people.
- **Private Sector Housing** – it is our aim to increase the amount of affordable, social housing in the district. Through the planning system we have focussed strongly on the provision of social rented units through S109 agreements.
 - We continue to work within the terms of the Housing Act 2004 to ensure that all houses in multiple occupation are licensed and their condition properly assessed
 - Our home Maintenance and Housing Options Service for vulnerable private households helps makes homes decent and promotes independence.
- **Neighbourhood Management** – gives local people a bigger say on how their localities are shaped and in holding service providers to account. Working alongside people in a particular area continues to have a positive impact on those neighbourhoods and the lives of all the people who live there. Our track record in the Poulton and West End areas of Morecambe is impressive
 - There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of residents who are unemployed or claiming Job Seekers allowance (from 7% in 2003 to ??? in 2007)
 - Residents have also perceived positive progress to have been made in crime related areas such as drug-dealing, burglary and violent crime.
 - Since 2003, significantly fewer residents have identified problems across the range of service areas including rubbish collection, street lighting, local bus services and social and leisure services and feelings of neighbourliness have increased.

For all the up to date news on the Winning Back the West End follow this link: <http://www.winningbackthewestend.co.uk/index.php>. And for all the latest developments in Poulton: <http://www.poultontimes.co.uk/>

6. To continue to improve the council

Lancaster City Council's organisational improvement programme:

- **CPA Success** – We are now a GOOD authority and our continued achievement and improvements have been recognised by local government watchdog, the Audit Commission
- **Use of Resources Judgement** – 3 out of 4, performing well, consistently above the minimum required.
- **Data Quality** – the council produced consistent high quality timely information and we now merit a score of 3 'performing well'
- **Performance Management** – is robust, well embedded and consistently applied across the council. Audit Commission inspectors say *'there is a consistent and open approach to performance management by officers and councillors. Individual portfolio holders, directors and heads of service have a good oversight of performance within their portfolio areas through good use of performance monitoring information'*.
- **LAMP** – Lancaster's Approach to Managing Projects (LAMP) continues to ensure that intended project benefits are realised and key council projects are delivered to time, cost and quality
- **Strong Accounting Practices** – the council received an unqualified opinion on its annual accounts
- **Improving Access to Services** – two face-to-face customer service centres based in Morecambe and Lancaster Town Halls were opened in the year.
- **Investing in our staff** – external inspectors consistently tell us our staff are our greatest asset. More council services than ever are formally accredited for the quality of service they provide – here are some of our successes.
 - The Council achieved **Investors in People Employer** accreditation for all its services, a magnificent achievement
 - Council Housing repair and maintenance holds ISO 9002 and the Sheltered Housing Team is accredited by the Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies.
 - Highways Maintenance holds ISO9001, OHSAS accreditation
 - Revenue Services holds a Charter Mark recognising the excellent service offered to our customers
- **Communications** – our popular council magazine 'Your District Council Matters' continues to bring wide range of council information to every household in the district at a cost of only 14p a copy per household – this has been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations as providing outstanding value for money.
- **Participation in the budget process** - Poulton Neighbourhood Management piloted participatory budgeting in February 2008. Participatory budgeting, otherwise known as 'community kitties' is a way of asking local people to get

involved in how public money is spent. and is part of the new Duty to Involve which will come into force in April 2009.

The duty to involve ensures that local partnerships empower local communities to shape the future of their area. The duty goes beyond consultation, requiring authorities to provide information about local decisions, policies and services. Authorities must also provide opportunities for more active participation in decisions and in the design, delivery and assessment of local services and policies.

Local residents decided who should receive a share of £20,000 in February at the 'In Your Hands Grand Voting Event'. A total of 26 local community groups applied for money to spend on building a stronger community. Residents scored each bid out of 10 and at the end of the day, those with the highest scores received funding of up to £2,000 from the 'In Your Hands fund'. 13 of the 26 bids received funding and even those who were unsuccessful thought participatory budgeting was an excellent idea and an opportunity to promote their work to a large audience.

A DVD explaining in more detail about how participatory budgeting came about and the benefits of allowing local people to spend public money is now available to view online at www.poultontimes.co.uk/poulton-video. The Council is now considering how it can roll participatory budgeting out to other service areas.

- **Civil Contingencies** - The Council's District Emergency Plan was fully revised and re-issued and a new Flooding and Severe Weather Plan introduced. Both were externally assessed as suitable by the County Council Emergency Planning Service and the Environment Agency respectively.

All services have produced Business Continuity Plans which are regularly revised to ensure that key council functions can continue to function in an emergency situation.

- **Children and Young People** – Produced a Children and Young People's Plan which aims to improve outcomes for children and young people across the district. It is part of our response to the development of Children's Trust in the County and the Every Child Matters Agenda, and ensures that our services focus on the needs and well-being of young people.

How well are we improving?

What the Audit Commission has said about us

CPA SUCCESS - The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog responsible for making sure public money is spent effectively to achieve high quality local services for the public.

We are ambitious for our communities and are proud of the many ways we have improved the services offered to you in recent years. Our recategorisation by the Audit Commission as a GOOD authority following a rigorous Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection is a welcome recognition of that improvement.

Inspectors found that the council has a “clear and challenging vision for its communities” and its ambitions and plans to regenerate the district are “impressive”. This vision, the report adds, is helping to narrow the gap between the district’s most deprived communities and its areas of affluence.

The council’s strengthened financial capacity was praised, we are deemed to be well managed financially, maximising funding opportunities and delivering adequate value for money. In the past few years, we have exceeded our efficiency targets and the improved financial position is supporting the delivery of our priorities.

The report also recognises that there are areas where the council can improve and the recommendations will inform our future plans and ensure continued improvement. Among the achievements noted by the report are:

- Regeneration of the district with the attraction of £54 million in external funding
- A strong focus on preserving the district’s heritage by working with partners to refurbish buildings including the Midland Hotel and the Storey Institute
- The success of Neighbourhood Management in Poulton and the West End of Morecambe, where the Council engages well with residents.
- Improvement in recycling rates
- Use of leisure facilities to encourage exercise and healthy eating
- Good use of the Cycling Demonstration Town project to enhance cycling facilities and encourage more people to go by bike
- Impressive Service Performance improvement
- A significant contribution to reducing crime and fear of crime through work with other partners on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Significant improvements to housing services with tenant satisfaction increasing from 63.5 per cent to 79.6 per cent.
- The success of the anti-litter action plan, ‘Putting Litter in Its Place, which has had a positive impact on the overall cleanliness of the district.
- Strong improvement in the benefits service, resulting in improved user satisfaction

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa/authority.asp?CategoryID=ENGLISH^576^LOCAL-VIEW^AUTHORITIES^104616>

Use of Resources

This assessment looked at how financial management is integrated with strategy and corporate management, and whether we provide value for money. The overall score was three out of four, 'performing well and consistently above minimum standards', puts us amongst the top council's in the country although we know that we will have to build on our improved approach to assessing Value for Money. This area will therefore be the focus of further activity in the coming year

Finance and accounting

Auditors gave a clean bill of health to the council's accounts and financial management and said that the council has 'a strong approach to financial management and can demonstrate that its approach is helping to deliver improvement priorities'.

Our auditors were happy to give us an 'unqualified opinion' that our accounts present a true and fair view of the council's financial position, and also that the council had arrangements in place to deliver value for money.

All the deadlines on the closing of accounts were met in 2007/08

The full Annual Audit and Inspection Letter is available on the council's website following publication by the Audit Commission (www.lancaster.gov.uk or www.Audit-Commission.gov.uk)

Statement of contracts on the transfer of staff

The council complies with best value requirements in procurement, including the requirements of the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts, in the awarding of contracts and the establishment of partnership arrangements. The council did not enter into any contracts requiring a transfer of staff in 2007/08 and therefore had not need to initiate the Code of Practice.

Future Plans – Monitoring & Ensuring Success

Every public body has a number of priorities. Given the range of services this council provides, it is right and proper that we do too. All our high level priorities are full articulated in our Corporate Plan and delivery is monitored through our Performance Management Framework.

Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out our ambitions for the next three years, the issues we have decided to prioritise and a programme of key actions we will be undertaking to ensure those ambitions are realised. To measure our success against these priorities, we have indicated a number of milestones and targets upon which performance may be judged.

The Corporate Plan is developed to reflect the ever changing challenges we face and the broad outcomes we have set out to achieve. The Council, following extensive consultation with partners and the public, has set the following seven new medium term objectives for the next three years with effect from 1 April 2008.

- Ensure cost effective services that give good value for money
- Provide customer focused accessible services
- Make our district a cleaner and healthier place
- Contribute to a safer society
- Lead the regeneration of our district
- Support sustainable communities and action on climate change
- Give local communities more influence and involvement

The Corporate Plan not only sets out the aspirations of the community that the council will deliver in the immediate future but also forms the basis of our budget process. Consequently, all the resources in the council's revenue and capital budgets are aligned to the Medium Term Objectives. In this way, the council's resources are directed into the service areas where the public want to see them.

If you wish to view the Corporate Plan 2008/09, please visit the council's website <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/Category.asp?cat=2>

Ensuring Success - Managing Performance

This Annual Report is in many ways the companion document to the Corporate Plan. Its main purpose is to take stock of our performance in the past year. Each of the following six sections details the performance measures which were in place for the **financial year 2007/08** to help us achieve our objectives and corporate priorities. Comments are given where there is a variance against targets. ALL services and staff throughout the authority play their part and have highlighted their individual contribution in service business plans.

The council's Performance Management Framework helps us to identify whether we are achieving our priority objectives, meeting community need and improving the services we deliver. One way the council can monitor its performance is through performance indicators. These help us to see whether we are achieving the standards we and our customers expect. Performance is reported quarterly to our Performance Review Teams to ensure a sustained focus on the things that matter.




It should once again be stressed that 2007/2008 was the last year for collection of the familiar Best Value Performance Indicators. From 1 April 2008 these have been replaced with a new set of statutory National Performance Indicators. To avoid confusion in this transitional year, only BVPIs and a small number of local indicators will be reported on the following pages

Similarly, whilst it has previously been our custom to include three years of future targets, the significant changes to the national framework mean that future targets have not been included in this report for this year only.

Indicator Guide

- Statutory PI's are numbered in bold
- Local PI's are in plain type

A simple key will indicate performance trends

	Got worse
	Stayed the same
	Got better

Corporate Commitment to Data Quality

It is vitally important that the information this council produces and relies upon to make its decisions is correct. Lancaster City Council is therefore strongly committed to ensuring that all its published performance information must be correct and fit for external scrutiny.

Responsibility for ensuring the robustness of our data rests at the highest level with the Cabinet Member for Information Technology and Customer Services and the Corporate Director (Finance and Performance). Monitoring of strategic performance indicators takes place quarterly in the Cabinet led 'Performance Review Teams' and then these are scrutinised within the Budget and Performance Panel. In this way, an awareness of performance management has been embedded into the culture of the council and all decision makers are able to rely upon timely and accurate data.











Our sound management in this area was endorsed by the Audit Commission in 2006/07 when Lancaster City Council was judged to be 'performing well' (i.e. Level 3 - the second highest out of four possible grades).

The introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework from 2009 will make reliable performance information more important. The CAA will place greater emphasis on assessments that are proportional to risk. Councils will also be required to use information to reshape services, and to account to the public for performance.

The CAA focuses on positive outcomes for communities and the way in which local agencies work together to deliver them, so in the coming year we will work closely with the other members of the Local Strategic Partnership. Together we will ensure that a best practice approach the production of high quality, reliable data is shared by our key partners. Through this work we aspire to achieve a Level 4 (the highest possible score) against the Data Quality KLOE by the end of 2009/10.

Success Measures 2007/08













PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO DELIVER VALUE FOR MONEY, CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV76b	Benefits - Number of fraud investigators/1000 caseload	0.16	N/A	N/A	0.16	0.16	N/A	☺	☺
BV76c	Number of fraud investigations/1000 caseload	83	N/A	N/A	83.5	78.3	N/A	☹	☹
BV76d	No. of prosecutions & sanctions/1000 caseload	6.17	N/A	N/A	6.8	5.94	High	☹	☹
BV78a	Average time for processing new claims (days)	19	28	24	22	19	Low	☺	☺
BV78b	Average time for processing change of circumstances (days)	7	9.8	7.1	8	7	Low	☺	☺
BV79a	% of cases where calculation was correct	98.60%	98.40%	99.20%	99.01%	99.80%	High	☺	☺
BV79b (i)	Amount of HB overpayments recovered	94.37%	72.82%	81.71%	95%	86.58%	High	☹	☹
BV79b (ii)	Overpayments recovered as a % of total debt outstanding (plus overpayments raised during the year)	37.22%	33.22%	39.02%	38.00%	39.76%	High	☺	☺
BV79b (iii)	Overpayments written off during the year	5.13%	N/A	N/A	5%	3.32%	Low	☺	☺
BV109a	% of major applications determined within 13 weeks	69%	74.19%	80.71%	64%	65%	High	☹	☺
BV109b	% of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	76%	77.33%	83.66%	77%	84%	High	☺	☺
BV109c	% of other applications determined within 8 weeks	87%	89.13%	92.57%	83%	88%	High	☺	☺
BV204	Planning appeals allowed	14%	30.40%	25%	25%	58%	Low	☹	☹
BV205	Score against planning quality checklist	83.30%	94.40%	100%	100%	83.30%	High	☺	☹

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
Comment: The Council currently does not employ an officer with a recognised Urban Design qualification. However, a staff member is currently studying part time for such a professional qualification.									
BV156	% of authority buildings accessible to the disabled	75%	72.87%	87.50%	81%	75%	High		
BV226a	Total amount spent by the authority on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations	£290,300	N/A	N/A	£292,100	£274,000	Within range		
BV226b	% of monies spent on advice and guidance services which was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark	65.30%	N/A	N/A	60.62%	66.46%	High		
BV226c	total amount spent on advice and guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and customer matters provided directly by the authority to the public	Not reported	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Local indicators									
LCC25	% of searches of local land register carried within 5 working days	98.91%	NA	NA	98%	99.46%	High		
LCC79	% of prosecutions won or otherwise satisfactorily concluded to the reasonable satisfaction of the client.	85.00%	NA	NA	100%	100.00%	High		

Success Measures 2007/08















PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO MAKE OUR DISTRICT A CLEANER AND HEALTHIER PLACE									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV82a(i)	% of household waste recycled	15.64	19.98	24.19	18	18.69	High	☺	☺
BV82a(ii)	tonnage of household waste recycled	8211.52	7870.9 1	10069.9 5	9450	9934.91	High	☺	☺
BV82b(i)	% of household waste composted	9.68	11.2	17.97	11	12.14	High	☺	☺
BV82b(ii)	tonnage of household waste composted	5082.74	3890.3 3	7513.87	5775	6455.07	High	☺	☺
BV84a	Kg of household waste collected per head of population	380.43	411.0	380.0	381	371.70	Low	☺	☺
BV84b	% change in household waste collected year on year	3.10%	0.47%	-1.87%	0%	-0.32%	Low	☺	☺
BV86	cost of household waste per household	£46.60	£49.52	£42.14	£51.00	To follow	Low		
BV91a	% of population served by collection of one recyclable	80.64%	99.20%	100%	90%	90.20%	High	☺	☺
BV91b	% of population served by kerbside collection of two recyclables	80.64%	99%	100%	90%	90.20%	High	☺	☺
BV199a	Proportion of land and highways assessed as having unacceptable levels of litter and detritus	12.78%	10.70%	6%	12%	10.67%	Low	☺	☺
BV199b	Proportion of land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible (on day of survey)	4%	1%	0%	4.00%	0.67%	Low	☺	☺
BV199c	Proportion of land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible (on day of survey)	0.33%	0%	0%	1%	0.22%	Low	☺	☺

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
BV199d	This indicator has been omitted. The Audit Commission has confirmed that local authorities will not be expected to include this PI within their Annual Report.	1.00	N/A	N/A	1.00	To be supplied by DEFRA	N/A	N/A	N/A
BV166a	Score against Environmental Health best practice checklist	90%	96.70%	100%	100%	100%	High	😊	😊
BV216a	Number of sites in the LA area with potential concern with respect to land contamination	1170	N/A	N/A	2000	2845	N/A	N/A	N/A
Comment: Two research contractors have now completed their work and have found a greater number of potentially contaminated sites than previously considered. This result is not unexpected however, as proactive survey work is likely to identify sites.									
BV216b	Contaminated land-number of sites for which sufficient information is available to determine whether remediation is necessary (as a% of all sites of potential concern)	2%	4%	10%	2%	1%	High	😞	😞
Comment: Two research contractors have now completed their work and have found a greater number of potentially contaminated sites than previously considered, but the number of sites resolved did not alter.									
BV217	% of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time	73	100	100	90	81	High	😊	😞
BV218a	Abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours	54.80%	92.00%	98.22%	80.00%	39.00%	High	😞	😞
BV218b	Abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours	93.00%	88.00%	97.76%	70.00%	To follow	High		
BV219b	% of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up to date character appraisal	8.10%	15%	35.07%	18.90%	8.10%	High	😐	😞
Comment: Conservation resources have had to be directed to other areas of work such as large scale development projects, assisting with Morecambe Townscape Heritage Initiative (THJI) bid, 'A View for Eric', other projects and grants schemes.									
Local indicators									
CCS01	Efficient handling of bulky wastes	3 days	NA	NA	7 days	3 days	Low	😐	😊





















PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
CCS02	% of household waste collections that were missed	0.14%	NA	NA	0.75%	0.15%	Low		
CCS07	5 of household waste collected by WCA going to landfill	74.68%	NA	NA	72.00%	68.66%	Low		
CCS09	(Defra indicator) % of household waste arisings that were recycled and composted	25.40%	NA	NA	28.00%	32.27%	High		
Cult03	Number of children who receive coaching per week (average)	2174	NA	NA	2200	2814	High		
EP08	Contaminated land-inspection programme on schedule	No	NA	NA	Yes	Yes	NA		
FS10	% Category A food premises inspected on schedule	100.00%	NA	NA	100.00 %	100.00%	High		

Draft











Success Measures 2007/08

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO REDUCE CRIME AND THE FEAR OF CRIME									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	6.82	7.1	5	6.52	6.24	Low		
BV127a	Violent crime per 1,000 population	19.56	15.1	11.4	18.72	16.22	Low		
BV127b	Robberies per 1,000 population	0.47	0.4	0.2	0.45	0.38	Low		
BV128	Vehicle crime per 1,000 population	7.79	8.1	6.2	7.46	5.45	Low		
BV174	The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	4.35%	N/A	N/A	4.35%	1.40%	High		
<p>Comment: There was a 67% reduction in the number of reports to the City Council compared to 2006/07 (6 reports in 06/07 down to 2 in 07/08).</p>									
BV175	Racial incidents resulting in further action	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	High		
BV225	Actions against domestic violence	36.40%	N/A	N/A	45.50%	73%	High		
<p>Comment: The target for 2007/08 was established on the basis of capacity at the time. From the beginning of October 2007 additional resources were assigned by the City Council to deliver these actions, in particular a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator was appointed whose workplan has ensured the delivery of a number of these actions.</p>									











Success Measures 2007/08

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO LEAD THE REGENERATION OF THE DISTRICT									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV64	Private sector dwellings returned to occupation or demolished	46	18	55	53	61	High		
BV106	% of new homes built on previously developed land	80.20%	78.89%	91%	72%	77.40%	High		
BV170a	The number of visits/usages of museums per 1,000 population	810	453	928	1200	1097	High		
BV170b	The number of visits/usages of museums per 1,000 population that were in person	472.92	244	557	480	481	High		
BV170c	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	2230	1489	3805	2230	2899	High		
Local indicators									
ED01	Financial Performance of EDZ (% contracted expenditure achieved)	96.00%	NA	NA	90.1%	77.09%	High		
ED02	Physical Performance of EDZ	70.00%	NA	NA	65.0%	46.09%	High		
ED12	No. of staying visitors, data from Steam report (obtained in July for previous year)	461,898	NA	NA	Increase by 3 %	Due July 08	High		
ED13	Tourism customer satisfaction - % of TIC customer satisfaction forms recording excellent/good for quality of service	80.00%	NA	NA	80.00%	97.52%	High		
ED14	Level of tourism spend, across all visitors	£224.75M	NA	NA	Increase by 5%	Due July 08	High		

Success Measures 2007/08

















PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV63	Energy efficiency of LA dwellings (SAP rating)	69	68	72	71	70	High		
BV66a	Proportion of rent collected	98.40%	98.24%	97.53%	100%	98.60%	High		
BV66b	The number of LA tenants with more than 7 weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a % of the total number of council tenants	3.38%	4.90%	3.43%	3.20%	3.65%	Low		
BV66c	% of LA tenants who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	25.80%	24.59%	13.61%	20.00%	27.70%	Low		
Comment: Variance against target is explained in that there was no trend analysis or benchmarking information available at the time of setting target. Original targets set are not realistic based on current benchmarking information.									
BV66d	% of LA tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.29%	0.28%	0.17%	0.20%	0.30%	Low		
Comment: The variance is explained by a change of definition. In the past calculation has been made using the number of all tenants who have been evicted divided by the total number of tenants.									
Comment: The PI for 2007/08 has been calculated using the number of secure tenants who have been evicted divided by the number of secure tenants in arrears.									
BV74a	Overall tenant satisfaction with landlord (all tenants)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BV74b	Satisfaction with landlord - ethnic minority tenants	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BV74c	Satisfaction with landlord - non ethnic minority tenants	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BV75a	Satisfaction with involvement in management (all tenants)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BV75b	Satisfaction with involvement in management (ethnic minority tenants)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top Quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to Be High/Low	Getting Better	On target
BV75c	Satisfaction with involvement in management (non ethnic minority tenants)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
COMMENT - BV74a - 75c No satisfaction survey carried out in 2007/08. Next one due in 09/10									
BV183b	Average length of stay in temporary accommodation (hostel)	0.14	6.84	0	1	0	Low	😊	😊
Comment: During the last 12 months concerted efforts have been made to tackle the issues around temporary accommodation. In order to meet the revised targets further emphasis was placed upon prevention initiatives. There are now 2 designated prevention officers who offer a more community focused service, which has contributed towards the reduction in temporary accommodation hostel placements.									
Comment: The use of hostel accommodation remains low. This reduction is due to officers continuing to take a more pro-active approach and making concerted efforts to access all housing services, making full use of the devised multi-agency protocols and move on services available to temporary house clients. However, due to lack of hostel accommodation within the district this is seen as a last preferred option, which is reflected in the low targets.									
BV184a	Proportion of LA homes which are not decent	0%	21%	10%	0%	0%	Low	😊	😊
BV184b	% change in proportion of non decent LA homes	0%	16.80%	32.90%	0%	+1%	Same	😊	😊
BV202	Number of people sleeping rough on a single night	0	1	0	3	0	Low	😊	😊
Comment: During 2007/08 the number of rough sleepers reported was 0, therefore, in accordance with DCLG guidelines a rough sleepers count was not necessary.									
Comment: The restructuring of the housing advice team and the increased advice services across the district has allowed the service to be more accessible and able to make contact with hard to reach client groups. These changes in the service provision have made a significant contribution to the actual achieved target in 07/08. It is acknowledged that this target is difficult to predict, and subsequently, due consideration has been given towards future targets as to allow for any changes.									
BV212	Average time taken to re-let LA housing	38.30%	33%	25%	35.00%	32.19%	Low	😊	😊
BV213	Number of homeless households given LA housing advice where situation was resolved	2.42%	2	5	3	7.07	High	😊	😊
Comment: During the last 12 months there have been many changes made to improve procedural practice and its overall service delivery. In order to meet the devised targets further emphasis was placed upon increasing prevention activity. There are now 2 designated prevention officers who offer a more community focused service, resulting in the increase in the level of advice drop in services and the vast increase in the successful prevention outcomes.									
Comment: The Authority will continue to improve services with more emphasis placed upon prevention initiatives, to achieve future set targets and reduce the levels of homelessness.									
BV200a	Plan making - Development plan unexpired and under 5 yrs old?	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	😊	😊

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top Quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to Be High/ Low	Getting Better	On target
BV200b	Has the local planning authority met the targets which the Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out?	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	N/A		
Local indicators									
SH12	(Health and Strategic Housing) - Number of private sector properties improved through enforcement	159	N/A	N/A	115	175	High		
SH13	Number of private properties where serious hazards (category 1) have been eliminated	92	N/A	N/A	70	89	High		
SH16	Number of private properties where risk profile has been reduced	67	N/A	N/A	70	86	High		
SH06	Number of houses improved in the district as a result of the home maintenance service	21	N/A	N/A	20	40	High		

Success Measures 2007/08

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to be High / Low	Getting Better	On target
TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE COUNCIL									
Statutory BVPI's									
BV2a	Equality standard for local government - level achieved	1	N/A	N/A	2	1	High		
<p>Comment: The council has failed to reach its target of level 2 this year and has remained at level 1. Progress is being made however towards gaining level 2 and the council is committed to its achievement in 2008/09.</p>									
BV2b	The duty to promote equality - checklist score	42.1	64%	79%	57.89%	42.10%	High		
<p>Comment: There is a variance of -27.28% when the actual and target for 2007/08 are compared. The council has not completed any more of the criteria on the checklist this year and so the figure for this year remains the same as the actual for 2006/07.</p>									
BV8	% of correct invoices paid within 30 days	89.17	N/A	N/A	90.00%	90.20%	High		
BV9	% of Council Tax collected by the authority	96.50	98.2	98.6	96.70%	96.80%	High		
BV10	% of non-domestic rates collected by the authority	99.10%	99.02	99.36	99.15%	99.30%	High		
BV11a	% of top 5% of earners that are women	25.53%	26.92%	33.31%	25.5%	27.66%	High		
BV11b	% of top 5% of earners that from minority ethnic communities	2.12%	0.00%	3.70%	2.17%	2.12%	High		
BV11c	% of top 5% of earners with a disability	0.00%	3.13%	6.25%	2.17%	0.00%	High		
<p>Comment: There is a 100% variance between the target and the actual for 2007/08. The council recruited only one member of staff to the top 5% of earners this year and this member of staff did not have a disability. The council continues to seek to promote the two tick symbol and promote equality for the disabled both in its recruitment strategy and throughout the council via the new Disability Equality Scheme.</p>									
BV12	Number of working days lost to sickness absence	11.82	9.35	8.08	10	9.93	High		
BV14	% of early retirements - staff	0.12%	0.50%	0.00%	0.40%	0.12%	Low		
<p>Comment: The variance between the actual and target is -70%. The council has revised its Early Retirement and Voluntary Redundancy Policy earlier this year and Early Retirement Applications are no longer sought annually from staff. Of those staff who have become affected most have been redeployed or have been at an age whereby early retirement was not an option which could be considered.</p>									
BV15	% of ill health retirements - staff	0.60%	0.18%	0.00%	0.40%	0.12%	Low		
BV16a	% of employees with a disability	5.54%	3.60%	5.25%	5.75%	5.25%	High		

PI ref	Indicator description	Lancaster 06/07	All District Median	All District top Quartile	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08	Good to Be High/ Low	Getting Better	On target
BV16b	% of economically active people in the district who have a disability	15.88%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.88%	N/A		
BV17a	% of black and ethnic minority employees	0.76%	1.60%	3.10%	1%	0.81%	High		
Local indicators									
LCC81	Recruitment (HR & OD)								
a	prepare a short list for interview within 2 weeks of the closing date	99.48%	N/A	N/A	92.00%	93.70%	High		
b	All candidates given 5 days notice of interview	95.74%	N/A	N/A	96.50%	93.00%	High		
c	All candidates informed of outcome within 7 working days	93.15%	N/A	N/A	92.00%	93.80%	High		
d	% of posts not filled	5.70%	N/A	N/A	9.00%	8.30%	Low		
LCC61a	Internal Communications (Corporate Strategy) % of staff who are satisfied with internal communications channels	81	N/A	N/A	80	80%	High		
b	Number of staff reached through staff briefings	935	N/A	N/A	700	420	High		
Comment: LCC 61b - Reduced number of staff briefings in the year, but other methods were used to ensure information reached people. this is endorsed by high level of satisfaction with communication methods.									

Ensuring the council's high standards

The council is responsible for ensuring that:

- It acts in accordance with the law and proper standards
- Public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively

To carry this out responsibly the council must:

- Have a sound system of internal control which ensures it carries out its functions and services effectively, including arrangements for the management of risk
- Fulfill the specific responsibilities relating to the council's financial statements

These financial responsibilities include:

- Making arrangements for the proper administration of the council's financial affairs and giving one of its officers overall responsibility for this (at Lancaster City Council that officer is the Head of Financial Services, Nadine Muschamp)
- Approving the Statement of Accounts and accounting policies

The City Council operates a system of Corporate Governance in accordance with the framework developed by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers).

An Annual Review is carried out on the effectiveness of the system of internal control and corporate governance and the results are published in a Statement on Internal Control and Corporate Governance that forms part of the council's Statement of Accounts.

All this can be viewed at the council's website at www.lancaster.gov.uk

Our financial performance

To Follow – content to be agreed by Audit Committee on 26th June (same day as Council Business Committee will agree this section of the document)

The following snapshot covers some of the key points of the council's finances for the 2007/08 financial year which ended on 31 March 2008.

Financial performance

Revenue performance

Capital performance

Value for money and 'Gershon'

Overall Financial Position (from the balance sheet)

Conclusion

Draft

How to contact the council

Telephone

General Enquiries (8am-5pm Monday –Friday)

- Telephone 01524 582000
- Minicom 01524 582175
- Fax 01524 582161 (Lancaster) or 01524 582162 (Morecambe)

Out-of-hours Emergencies

- Telephone 01524 582175 (Calls are recorded to improve our standards)

Domestic Waste and Street Cleaning (8am-5pm Monday-Friday)

We have a dedicated customer service centre for all enquiries relating to household waste collections, bulky waste, missed bins, abandoned vehicles, flytipping, flyposting, public toilets, litter bins and street cleansing

- Telephone 01524 582491

Individual Services and Departments

Please use the telephone directory on the website – www.lancaster.gov.uk/Documents/General/A_Z.pdf

Email

Email (General issues): customerservices@lancaster.gov.uk
Email (Website issues): webmaster@lancaster.gov.uk

Write or visit

Customer Service Centre
Town Hall
Dalton Square
LANCASTER
LA1 1PJ

Or

Customer Service Centre
Town Hall
Marine Road
Morecambe
LA4 5AF

Town Hall opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
Benefits Office opening hours: 9am to 5pm

Our Customer Service Standards

If you **write** to us, we will reply within 5 working days

If you **email** us, we will reply within 1 working day

If we need longer to give you a fully detailed response, we will still reply to you within these stated times, and inform you when a more detailed response can be expected.

If you have a **complaint**, please visit our website where our complaints procedure is fully explained
<http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/Complaints/>

This document is available in other formats upon request including alternative languages, Braille and large print.

If you wish to request any of the above, or comment upon this document, please contact:

Corporate Strategy
Town Hall
Dalton Square
LA1 1PJ

Telephone 01524 582150

Or

Email: Liz Stokes – Lstokes@lancaster.gov.uk

Draft

Council Business Committee

**Consultation on moving the date of English Local
Government elections to the date of the European
Parliament elections in 2009
26 June 2008**

Report of Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider a draft response to the consultation on moving the date of local government elections to the date of the European Parliamentary election in 2009.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) To approve the draft response detailed in Appendix B for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the consultation on the date of elections in 2009.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In 2009 there will be elections to 34 principal authorities, of which Lancashire County Council is one, scheduled to take place on Thursday 7th May 2009. There is also the possibility subject to approval that the elections for the proposed Morecambe Town Council will also be held on the same day.

1.2 Section 37A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 enables the dates of all these elections to be moved to the same date as the European Parliamentary elections in the years that they take place. The next European Parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place on Thursday 4th June 2009.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government has issued a consultation paper seeking views on using the power in Section 37A to make an order to move the date of the local government elections from the 7th May 2009 to coincide with the date of the European elections - 4th June 2009. If the elections are to be combined an Order must be made by 7th November 2008. The deadline for responses is 11th August 2008.

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government are consulting widely with all interested organisations on whether the planned elections should be combined and held on the 4th June 2009. A full list of organisations that have been consulted is available at Appendix A to the report.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 The concept of combining elections is not a new one. In 2004, the local, GLA and European elections were combined and took place on the 10th June 2004 in line with measures that focussed on voter convenience and assisting the voter and so that people did not have to vote twice in a six week period. In 2004 the North West Region was part of a pilot and these elections were all postal elections. The turnout at the European elections was significantly higher than in previous years and the Electoral Commission concluded in their follow up report of those elections that the combination of the elections was an important factor in the improved turnout. In Lancaster the European elections were not combined as there were no local elections, the turnout in Lancaster was 40.9% however it is more likely that the higher turnout was due to the fact that Lancaster was part of the all postal pilot and there is strong evidence that postal ballots attract a higher turnout.

4.2 DCLG feel that there is a risk that if the elections are not combined that the closeness of the dates for the elections will cause confusion for electors who could receive a poll card for the European elections just before they are going to vote in the County Council elections and also that the overlap will cause administrators difficulties with having to publish notice of election and deal with nominations for the European election in the week leading up to polling day for the local elections. Nominations for European elections are submitted to a regional co-ordination centre and are not dealt with by the individual authorities therefore the impact of the overlap would minimal to most authorities.

4.3 Combining the elections would reduce the costs for electoral administration and there would also be savings for political parties in election campaigns being held simultaneously rather than separately.

4.4 The consultation paper states that the benefits to holding the local and European election on the same day are:

- it will be more convenient for voters to have to visit the polling station once only, meaning that more voters are likely to participate in the election
- it will result in the election periods for the local and European elections running together and avoid the start of the European election period overlapping with the end of the local election period
- it will reduce costs incurred by local authorities, returning officers and political parties in distributing election material, contacting voters, canvassing and holding the polls themselves
- those responsible for voter awareness campaigns, particularly local authorities, will be able to concentrate their efforts in increasing awareness of one single election day.

4.5 There are practical issues that should be considered when elections take place on the same day some of which that are not connected to the administration of elections. Local authorities may need to make provisions regarding the dates when annual meetings may be

held and committee cycles may have to be amended. Whilst this does not affect Lancaster City Council directly, the term of office of County Councillors would be extended for a further month.

4.6 In addition it is not only principal authorities that have scheduled elections, in some areas there may be parish council elections. As previously mentioned it is very likely that the elections for the proposed Morecambe Town Council could be scheduled to take place in 2009. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 there is a power to amend the current provision (Section 16, representation of the People Act 1985) that requires a parish election to be deferred by at least three weeks in any case where other local elections are combined with the European Parliamentary elections and the DCLG believe that parish elections should also be moved in step with the local government (County Council) elections and held on the 4th June 2009. As stated this proposal will directly affect this District and there is a real concern about the issue of capacity of the Elections team should all elections be held on the same date.

4.7 Holding elections on the same date can be a complex matter and since 2004 concerns have been expressed about the impact of combining elections on the administration of elections, particularly the increased levels of postal voters but also there have been concerns about the potential for increased confusion amongst electors, particularly when different voting methods are used.

4.8 Following an independent external review commissioned by the Electoral Commission on the 2007 Scottish Elections, the Gould report stated that that 'combined elections diminish the place of local government elections and may confuse the voters'.

4.9 In Scotland the electoral systems in use for the Scottish parliamentary elections and the local government elections were different. The electoral systems of English local government and European Parliamentary elections are also different.

4.10 A further concern highlighted in the Gould Report was that the constituency and regional votes for the Scottish Parliament were on the same paper. In order to reduce the risk of voter confusion, the Government believes that any proposal to move the date of the local elections to the date of the European Parliamentary elections date should not involve a combination of ballot papers; the two/three ballot papers should be dealt with separately.

4.11 It is the view of the Association of Electoral Administrators that planning for the conduct for an election is a much more complex matter now than in 2004. This is largely due to dependency of Returning Officers on commercial suppliers for a variety of services, in particular, ballot papers and postal voter packs and there is a real concern that printers may not have the capacity to respond to such a huge demand for services in such a short timescale. There is also an issue over the size of the ballot paper for European elections and local printers used by some local authorities may not be able to produce the correct size putting even more pressure on limited suppliers.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Whilst it is recognised that there are some benefits, mainly cost reductions, to combining the date of elections it is the view of officers responsible for electoral administration in Lancaster these are outweighed by the concerns. A copy of the draft response to the consultation paper is attached at Appendix B for approval or amendment.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Combining elections makes voting more convenient, avoiding asking electors to vote on two separate occasions in a short period of time. It may therefore encourage more people to take part in elections and improve the democratic process as a whole. In addition, having two elections on the same day, rather than two separate elections on different days, will result in savings for local authorities.

However, it might be argued that holding two different elections on the same day risks confusing voters and could be complex to administer.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report however having two elections on the same day, rather than two separate elections on different days, will result in savings for local authorities. There would be no saving Lancaster City Council in respect of the European Parliamentary election or Lancashire County Council election as they are funded entirely by external grant.

However as there is a possibility that there will be a parish election for the proposed Morecambe Town Council there will be some expenditure for Lancaster City Council associated with conducting this election, should the decision be taken not to combine Parish elections it is estimated that the cost of conducting the election would be £23,000. If there is a decision to combine the elections either with the County Council elections on the 7th may or all three elections combined on the 4th June there will be some savings from that estimate as the cost of polling stations and staff would be shared proportionately, however it is not possible to determine what level of savings there would be until a decision has been made.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 37A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 enables the dates of all these elections to be moved to the same date as the European Parliamentary elections in the years that they take place. However any change cannot be made until consultation has taken place with the Electoral Commission and such other persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate. This consultation meets those criteria.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Consultation paper dated May 2008 titled 'Moving the date of English Local Government elections to the date of the European elections in 2009.

Contact Officer: Alison Braidford, Elections Officer

Telephone: 01524 582058

E-mail: abraidford@lancaster.gov.uk

Ref: elections reports

List of consultees

All Principal Authorities
The Electoral Commission
The Conservative Party
The Labour Party
Liberal Democrats
British National Party
The Green Party
The Liberal Party
Mebyon Kernow – The Party of Cornwall
Respect – The Unity Coalition
Socialist Party
UK Independence Party
Local Government Association
National Association of Local Councils
Association of Police Authorities
Association of Chief Police Officers
Association of Electoral Administrators
The Chief Fire Officer's Association
Confederation of British Industry
County Councils Network
England National Park Authorities Association
Electoral Reform Society
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Institute of Directors
National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Operation Black Vote
Royal National Institute of the Blind
SCOPE
Society of Local Council Clerks
Society of Local Authority Chief Executives

Draft Response:Moving the date of English Local Government elections to the date of the European Parliamentary elections in 2009

Whilst it is recognised that there are some benefits: cost reductions, convenience to voters in that they only have to visit the polling station once and convenience for postal voters only having to vote once; advantages to electoral administrators in not having to organise two separate elections in a short space of time and avoiding the overlap in timetables; to combining the date of the local government elections with the European Parliamentary elections these are in our view outweighed by the practical difficulties and concerns. Therefore we do not believe that the Government should seek to move the date of the local elections or any parish council elections from the scheduled date of 7th May 2009.

The argument that the combination of elections is advantageous is not new and using the 2004 combined local and European elections as an example is in our view misleading. In 2004 four out of the twelve UK electoral regions piloted a system of all-postal voting; these regions were the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, the North East and the North West. The European elections were on district boundaries as part of regions and not as proposed for 2009 on existing Parliamentary boundaries.

It is reported that the combination of the 2004 elections led to an increased turnout for the European elections. It could be argued that this was due to local government (District) elections being held at the same time however only those local authorities that hold elections by thirds in fact had combined elections that year. The 2009 proposed combination is different from that experienced in 2004 in that the local government elections are mainly County Council elections which are known to have lower turnouts than District Council elections. There is probably more of an argument that the increased turnout was due to the all postal pilots which operated in a substantial portion of the UK. In 2004 Lancaster City Council did not have a combined European election and the turnout was 40.9%.

As stated in the consultation paper there are concerns about the potential for increased confusion amongst electors, particularly when different voting methods are used.

Since the combined elections of 2004 the administration of elections has become much more complex. There has been a significant increase in the number of postal voters - in Lancaster there has been a substantial increase in postal voters. In 2003 there were **3,484**, at present there are **12,650**. In addition to this the requirement to check personal identifiers at openings has made this element of an election extremely time consuming causing a significant impact on resources and if the elections are combined this would be doubled and in some areas with Parish elections tripled.

Lancaster City Council is still awaiting a decision on a petition for the creation of a Parish for the Morecambe area; however should approval be given for this it is likely that the elections for this would be in 2009. The proposed electoral arrangements for this parish cover five wards with 26 parish councillors and this would be an added burden on a small elections team. We are extremely concerned about the effect on the small elections team should Parish Council elections also be combined on the 4th June 2009.

The issue of checking personal identifiers is even more complicated by the fact that the European elections as proposals stand will involve cross boundary checking. There is concern as to whether the software providers will have a tried and tested solution to this

issue by 2009. This was a real concern when it was thought that there would be a general election in the autumn of 2007.

Since 2004 a number of local authorities are reliant on commercial suppliers for the provision of ballot papers, poll cards and postal ballot packs. In 2007 there were significant capacity issues for print industry which impacted on local authorities. Whilst it appears that those issues have not been repeated in the 2008 elections it should be noted that there were a significantly reduced number of authorities holding elections and there is a concern that the capacity issues of 2007 could be repeated if the elections are combined in 2009.

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**PROTOCOL ON PUBLICITY FOR COMPLAINTS OF
BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT MADE TO THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE****26th June 2008****Supplementary Report of the Monitoring Officer****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To recommend changes to the Publicity Protocol within the Constitution in the light of the new provisions for complaints to be made to the Standards Committee rather than to the Standards Board for England.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Protocol, as appended to the agenda, be approved for inclusion in the Council's Constitution

1.1 Members received within the agenda for this meeting a copy of a report to be considered by the Standards Committee at its meeting on the 19th June 2008, together with a draft Protocol on Publicity for Complaints of Breach of the Code of Conduct made to the Standards Committee.

1.2 At its meeting on the 19th June, the Standards Committee was content with the Protocol as drafted, and recommended this Committee to approve the Protocol for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

1.3 As Members will be aware, the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee include advising the Council on, and reviewing as necessary, any local Protocols regulating the conduct of Members.

2.0 Options

2.1 The options open to the Committee are to approve the revised Protocol appended to Standards Committee report, with or without further amendments, or to request the Standards Committee to reconsider the Protocol. The Monitoring Officer would recommend the adoption of the Protocol appended to the report.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and have no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The report has been prepared by the Monitoring Officer in her role as adviser to the Standards Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Ref: ST

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**PROTOCOL ON PUBLICITY FOR COMPLAINTS OF
BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT MADE TO THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

19th June 2008

Report of the Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To recommend changes to the Publicity Protocol in the light of the new provisions for complaints to be made to the Standards Committee rather than to the Standards Board for England.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) **That the Council Business Committee be recommended to approve the amended Protocol as appended to this report, for inclusion in the Council's Constitution**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council's Constitution currently contains a Protocol on publicity for and notification of allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct made to the Standards Board. The Protocol was introduced because the Committee felt that it was inappropriate for Members to discuss an allegation in public before the Standards Board had taken a decision as to whether or not the allegation should be investigated, or, if the allegation was to be investigated, before the investigation and hearing process had been concluded.

1.2 In the light of the new provisions for complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct to be made locally to the Standards Committee rather than nationally to the Standards Board for England, the current Protocol has become obsolete.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 At its meeting on the 23rd May 2008, the Committee took the view that a member who is the subject of a complaint should not be informed of the complaint until after it has been considered by the Assessment Sub-Committee.

2.2 The Monitoring Officer has prepared an amended version of the Protocol, which reflects this, and also reflects the rationale of the existing Protocol, that Members should not make Code of Conduct complaints public, or discuss such complaints in public.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 The Committee requested this report at its last meeting. There has been no other consultation.

4.0 Options

4.1 The options open to the Committee are to recommend the Council Business Committee to approve the revised Protocol appended to this report, with or without further amendments, or to recommend the Council Business Committee not to include such a Protocol in the Constitution. The Monitoring Officer would recommend the adoption of the Protocol appended to this report.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The Committee's views are sought.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and have no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The report has been prepared by the Monitoring Officer in her role as adviser to the Standards Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Mrs S. Taylor Telephone: 01524 582025 E-mail: STaylor@lancaster.gov.uk Ref: ST
None	

PART 5, SECTION 3

PROTOCOL ON PUBLICITY FOR COMPLAINTS OF BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT MADE TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Introduction

The purpose of this Protocol is to provide guidance to Members as to their conduct when referring an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct to the Standards Committee, or when they are the subject of such an allegation, or are aware of such an allegation.

Background

There is no statutory mechanism preventing those making a complaint to the Standards Committee (or those the subject of such a complaint) making the nature of the allegation known to the press and public, or making public comment on the allegation. Any such comments would be subject to the general law of defamation, and a Member could seek a court injunction to prevent the publication of defamatory material.

A Member who is the subject of a complaint made to the Standards Committee will not be notified of the complaint until the Assessment Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee has met to consider what action, if any, to take in respect of the complaint.

The Council has therefore adopted this Protocol.

Guidance to Members

When a Member has made or is considering making a complaint to the Standards Committee alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Member should not make the complaint or allegation known to any other Member, or to the public in any forum, whether at a meeting that is open to the public or through the press or media, and should not discuss the complaint or possible complaint in such a manner as is reasonably likely to cause the complaint to be made known to the public.

It is recognised that a Member who has made or is considering making a complaint to the Standards Committee may wish to discuss the matter within the Member's own political group or seek advice from a third party. In such cases, it is the Member's responsibility to ensure that any person(s) in whom the Member confides agree(s) not to make the information known to the press and/or public or to other Members.

A Member who is aware of a complaint should not make any public comment on it, and the matter should not be the subject of discussion or debate within the Council.

Likewise, once a Member becomes aware that he/she is the subject of a complaint or allegation to the Standards Committee, the Member should not make any public or press comment on it.

This guidance applies until the complaint has been resolved. This will be as follows:

- Where the Assessment Sub-Committee decides that no action should be taken, the complaint will be deemed to be resolved after the expiry of the time limit for the complainant to request a review, or where a review is requested, after the Review Sub-Committee has made a decision that no action should be taken.
- Where the Assessment Sub-Committee or Review Sub-Committee refers the complaint to the Monitoring Officer for action other than investigation, the allegation will be deemed to have been resolved after that action has been completed.

- Where the Assessment Sub-Committee or Review Sub-Committee refers the complaint to the Monitoring Officer or the Standards Board for England for investigation, the complaint will be deemed to have been resolved after the Standards Committee has accepted a finding of no failure to comply with the Code, or after the complaint has been considered at a hearing of the Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel.

This Protocol does not bind members of the public.

Where a complaint is made to the Standards Committee by a member of the public, this may become known to the public through the press or some other medium.

In these circumstances, this Guidance does not preclude the Member who is the subject of the complaint from making a public comment, although it is recommended that the Member should carefully consider the appropriateness of so doing. Until the complaint is resolved (as described above) no other Member who is aware of the complaint should make any public comment on it, and the matter should not be the subject of discussion or debate within the Council.

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Attendance on Training Courses and Developmental Conferences and Seminars

Report of the Head of Democratic Services 26th June 2008

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider a process for determining attendance at training course, conferences and seminars in accordance with the Member Development Strategy.

This report is public

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve:

- **training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; and**
- **training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member in consultation with the Chairman of Council Business Committee, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned.**

(2) That where any Member attends a training or development event costing more than £100 per member, they be asked to provide a report on their return to be available to other interested members and to be used in evaluating the event for the future.

2. Introduction

2.1 Members will be aware that the Council has increased its commitment to Member Development over the past two years and as part of this progression the responsibility for Member training was transferred from the Learning and Development Officer based in Human Resources to Democratic Services.

2.2 Responsibility for the budget therefore now lies with the Head of Democratic Services.

3 Proposal

3.1 A Member Development Strategy was first produced in 2007 as part of the work towards reaching Level 1 of the North West Charter for Member Development. Since then a system of one to one interviews with Members resulting in individual Personal

Development Plans has been introduced which provide a clear picture of Members' needs with regard to support and development.

- 3.2 The Strategy has also been now been reviewed and using other information gathered through Member workshops and considering the Council's Corporate priorities a series of training priorities has been developed.
- 3.3 When responsibility for the budget was first transferred to Democratic Services there was an over-riding need to deliver a wide-ranging Induction Programme and to ensure that all Members received sufficient initial information for them to perform their duties. This has now been completed and the programme of development and support is starting to address the more individually expressed needs contained within Members' Personal Development Plans.
- 3.4 It is now therefore an opportune moment to consider how decisions should be taken in respect of future training expenditure, assuming that there will be insufficient budget to allow all requests to be approved, but also to ensure that funds are targeted in the right direction and the training provided offers value for money.
- 3.5 This Committee is asked to agree a process and/or criteria by which any such applications should be judged.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 Option 1

That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve:

- o training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; and
- o training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned.

4.2 Option 2

- o That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; but
- o The approval of training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned, be delegated to the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Council Business Committee.

4.3 Option 3

- o That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; but

- The approval of training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned, be determined by the Council Business Committee.

4.4 Option 4

- That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; but
- The approval of training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned, be determined by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Democratic Services.

4.5 There are other variations of these options in terms of the level of expenditure which Members consider is appropriate to delegate to the Head of Democratic Services and the criteria against which any judgement should be made before approval to attend is granted.

4.6 It is also suggested that where any member attend a training or development event costing more than £100 per member, they be asked to provide a report on their return to be available to other interested members and to be used in evaluating the event for the future.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 Whilst option 1 is the simplest to administer, if Members wish to retain some input into the decisions where a higher level of expenditure is involved, options 2 and 4 are easily manageable and replicate the current system of the relevant Cabinet Member approving member attendance at any ad hoc conferences or seminars. Option 3 is not felt to be workable in some instances as a quick decision is often required in order to take advantage of beneficial booking rates, or on occasions to gain a place at a popular event.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Members are requested to set up a process for dealing with requests for training and offers of training to ensure that funding is properly targeted in accordance with the Member Development Strategy.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK
None
CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)
None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for Member training and development has been set at £10,700 for 2008/09. The purpose of this report is to ensure that spending of this budget is controlled and properly targeted, with effective evaluation.

Within the Democratic Representation budget there is also funding for Member attendance at Conferences and Seminars. Control of this budget is delegated to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Democratic Services and is utilised for attendance at large national or North West conferences where a City Council presence is felt to be of benefit to the Council as a whole. This budget is currently also used to fund Member attendance at smaller ad hoc conferences and seminars, subject to the approval of the relevant Cabinet Member. Consideration is being given to attendance at such events being more appropriately viewed as a development opportunity for an individual member, often assisting a Cabinet Member, for example, in their understanding of their portfolio area, with a view to such requests being forwarded to the Head of Democratic Services to include in the programme of member development and training funded by the Member Training budget. Should a decision to vire any part of this budget to the Member training budget be taken prior to this meeting, Members will be advised of the details.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer would advise that the administration and control arrangements should be proportionate to a budget's size / impact and the preferred option seems a sensible way forward in this regard.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Council Business Committee

Attendance on Training Courses and Developmental Conferences and Seminars

Supplementary Report of the Head of Democratic Services 26th June 2008

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise of a recent decision by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Democratic Services.

This report is public

1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the transfer of £3,700 from the budget for Members' Conferences to the Member Training Budget together with requests for attendance at Conferences or Seminars where attendance is for the developmental benefit of an individual Councillor be noted.

(2) That the annual attendance at the following conferences be approved from the Member Training Budget subject to the application of criteria agreed by this Committee, future evaluation and continued relevance of the conference content:

N W E O Scrutiny Conference (or similar)	Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny
Standards Board	Chairman of Standards
Planning Summer School	Chairman of Planning
Regeneration & Renewal National Conference	Relevant Cabinet Member (s)
Northern Regeneration & Renewal Conference	Relevant Cabinet Member (s)

(3) That Members attending conferences provide a report on their return to be available to other interested Members and to be used in reviewing the value of that conference for future years in line with recommendation (2) of the original report.

2.0 Report

2.1 Since the publication of the agenda, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Democratic Services has considered the future position with regard to the allocation of funding from the Members' Conference budget.

2.2 The decision set out below was published on 19th June 2008, for implementation on 27th June subject to there being no call in of the decision in the meantime:

- (1) *That the continuing attendance of the Leader and Leader of another Group on rotation at the LGA Conference on an annual basis be approved, to be funded from the Members conference budget, at an estimated cost of £2,000.*
- (2) *That the remaining budget of £3,700 be transferred to the Member Training Budget and remaining requests for attendance at Conferences or Seminars where attendance is for the developmental benefit of an individual Councillor be referred to the Head of Democratic Services for determination in accordance with the scheme for approving Member training agreed by the Council Business Committee with the recommendation that the following be approved on an annual basis:*

<i>N W E O Scrutiny Conference (or similar)</i>	<i>Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny</i>
<i>Standards Board</i>	<i>Chairman of Standards</i>
<i>Planning Summer School</i>	<i>Chairman of Planning</i>
<i>Regeneration & Renewal National Conference</i>	<i>Relevant Cabinet Member (s)</i>
<i>Northern Regeneration & Renewal Conference</i>	<i>Relevant Cabinet Member (s)</i>

- (3) *That the Head of Financial Services update the revenue budget accordingly, together with future years budgets as part of the 2009/10 budget process.*
- (4) *That the Council Business Committee be recommended to introduce a requirement that Members attending conferences provide a report on their return to be available to other interested Members and to be used in reviewing the value of that conference for future years.*

2.3 The decision confirms future attendance at the annual LGA conference which has been identified as having a continued wide benefit to the Council and at the same time acknowledges that attendance at other conferences and seminars can be of individual benefit in the development of Councillors in a particular role and that it would therefore be more relevant for these to be treated as part of the Council's Member Development programme and attendance agreed in accordance with the criteria set for this process and the priorities stated in the Member Development Strategy, allowing the budget to be appropriately managed and prioritised against spending on other forms of training and development.

2.4 This Committee is therefore requested to note the additional funds which will be transferred to the Member Training budget together with the additional commitment to consider requests for attendance at any conferences as part of the Member Development programme.

2.5 This makes no difference to the recommendations in the original report but Members are requested to also consider the additional recommendations set out in paragraph one of this report.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

None

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications set out in the original report are essentially unchanged. The result of the Cabinet decision is that the budget for Member training and development will be increased to £14,400. However there will be additional calls on this budget by way of requests to attend developmental conferences and seminars which were previously funded by the Members Conferences budget.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Contact Officer: Gillian Noall**Telephone:** 01524 582060**E-mail:** gnoall@lancaster.gov.uk

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**Member Development Strategy Review
26th June 2008****Report of Head of Democratic Services****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform Members of the emerging issues from the Corporate Priorities 2008/09 and the CPA report in relation to the Member Development Strategy.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Council Business Committee consider the main issues that have emerged from the Corporate Priorities 2008/09 and the CPA report, and further priorities for inclusion in the Member Development Strategy.
- (2) That Members identify any project areas that have emerged from the new priorities agreed.

1.0 Introduction

At its meeting on 15th November 2007, the Council Business Committee agreed the Member Development Strategy and resolved :

“That the Strategy be reviewed again in April – May 2008 to ensure that it continues to be adequately aligned to the Council’s Corporate Priorities and that the annual review takes place at that time of year in the future.”

2.0 Review

The 2008/09 Corporate Priorities are set out below :

- *Ensure cost effective services that give good value for money*
- *Provide customer focused, accessible services*
- *Make our district a cleaner and healthier place*
- *Contribute to a safer society*
- *Lead the regeneration of our District*
- *Support sustainable communities and action on climate change*
- *Give local communities more influence and involvement in the way their services are delivered and decisions that affect them are made*

Coupled with these, the areas for improvement highlighted in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) should also be taken into account. These are set out below:

1. *The community strategy does not provide clear direction for framing most local ambitions. The Council should support the LSP in developing a Sustainable Community Strategy which contains a clear vision, fewer high level priorities and is underpinned by outcome focused targets.*
2. *There are a number of issues hampering political leadership and in order to address these the Council should:*
 - *ensure clarity around political direction is communicated internally and externally; and*
 - *support portfolio holders in embracing their new roles by responding to identified development needs and reviewing portfolios in order to streamline decision making, aligning portfolios, services and Performance Review Teams.*
3. *Progress in relation to equality and diversity has been slow and there is an inconsistent approach to engaging with local communities. The Council should:*
 - *provide leadership to the equalities and diversity agenda ensuring it is prioritised; and*
 - *strengthen mechanisms for community engagement in order to ensure a consistent approach in relation to all the Council's business.*
4. *Performance management arrangements are not effective in relation to all key partnerships. The Council should strengthen these arrangements to ensure progress and the impact of all partnership activity can be performance managed.*

There are four main issues relating to Member Development that have emerged from these two documents that need to be addressed and reflected in the Member Development Strategy.

(i) Political Leadership

The CPA report stated that the Council needs provide more support for Portfolio Holders in terms of identifying their development and training requirements. This has been undertaken on an informal basis largely and support was offered to Cabinet Members after the elections last May. To increase this support, Members could consider this as a project area highlighted in the Member Development Strategy and request Cabinet to identify how this support could be achieved. As part of this process, the two Cabinet Members who resigned from Cabinet in the last year could be offered exit interviews to ascertain the level of support they received and how this could be improved upon.

(ii) Equality and Diversity/Accessible Services

The Corporate Plan identifies achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in its priorities. Members need to consider how Member Development can assist the Council is achieving Level 2 of the Standard. The CPA report highlighted that this is a weakness for Lancaster City Council which obviously needs to be addressed. Specific

training on Equality is currently mandatory for certain Committees but it was not identified as a priority in the one to one interview process which informed the Member Development Strategy. However it may be that more general awareness of the current emerging issues should be encouraged amongst all Members and ways to achieve this should be investigated.

(iii) Community Engagement/Local Communities having more influence and involvement in service delivery and decision making

With regard to Community Engagement, this was highlighted in the CPA report and has been included in the Corporate Plan as involving the community in, and having more influence in, the decision making process. These issues are being addressed in the Democratic Renewal process that is underway. Members need to consider how they see the role of Member Development in this area and if they wish to include this as a priority in the Strategy.

(iv) Action on Climate Change

Training opportunities have been offered on Climate Change, but it was not identified as a priority in the Member Development Strategy 2007/08. Members need to consider whether they wish to include this as a priority in the Member Development Strategy or if this is being addressed in other ways, for example the existence of the Climate Change Cabinet Liaison Group provides an opportunity for support to the Cabinet Member with specific responsibility for this area and also serves to develop the knowledge base of those on the Liaison Group.

Should Members want to ensure that no opportunities are missed, it would be possible to include in the Strategy a general provision that the Council should seek to take advantage of any opportunities which may arise to widen Members' knowledge and understanding of issues related to specific priority actions included in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Other Issues

At the meeting of the Business Committee on 24th April 2008, Members agreed a process to review the one to one interviews. A section on these reviews could be included in the Strategy to set out this process and encourage Members who have not had a one to one to book an interview.

A general update of the Strategy could also be undertaken to acknowledge that this review has taken place and any other changes that may have taken place since it was written.

A reference to statutory training for Members on Regulatory Committees could also be included in the Strategy making allowance for training that arises throughout the year and cannot be planned for.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial expenditure must be contained within existing budgets and consideration is being given elsewhere on the agenda to a system of agreeing expenditure in line with set criteria based on this strategy.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and had no comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Member Development Strategy

Contact Officer: Jenny Kay

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Ref:



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Member Development Strategy

2007/08 – 2010/11



1. Commitment to Member development

The Council took the decision in 2002 to commit to its own internal Charter for training and development for elected Members and employees. Following that the Council then signed up to the North West Charter for elected Member development.

To formalise this commitment, the Council included within the Terms of Reference of the Council Business Committee, responsibility for Member development. As Members of this Committee, Councillors have the responsibility to champion Member Development and cascade information to their political groups. Members of the Council Business Committee are:



Councillor Susan Bray



Councillor Morgwn Trolinger



Councillor Shirley Burns



Councillor Karen Leytham



Councillor Geoff Knight



Councillor Joyce Pritchard



Councillor Rob Smith

2. Member Development Strategy

A Member Development Strategy was developed by Members and adopted by the full Council in February 2007 which set out the various ways of supporting Members in the Town Hall and their Wards. The Strategy also set out the development priorities during 2006/07.

The Strategy has been reviewed to reflect the new learning priorities of Members and will once again set out the direction and resources and support available for Members for 2007/08 onwards.

The Council Business Committee has considered the information that had been gathered from the 34 one to one interviews that have taken place since the elections in May 2007 and an informal workshop that was held on 1st November 2007 where the Council Business Committee and many other Members considered what was important to them.

Using this together with feedback from training and induction events plus anecdotal comments, the themes that emerged were then considered alongside the Member training budget and the following Corporate Priorities:

- ❖ To deliver value for money, customer focused services.
- ❖ To make our district a cleaner and healthier place.
- ❖ To reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- ❖ To lead the regeneration of our District.
- ❖ To support sustainable communities.
- ❖ To continue to improve the Council.

With the election of 16 new Councillors this year, the Strategy is even more important to ensure that the Council provides the proper guidance and relevant support to all Members.

Whilst the Strategy is relevant to the Council's current position and priorities, these priorities are being reconsidered as part of the Corporate Plan 2008/09 and this element will therefore be reviewed again in Spring 2008 to ensure it continues to be aligned to the Council's priorities. The annual review will then take place at that time each year when the following year's priorities have been agreed and resources allocated.

In terms of budget allocation for Member Development, the Strategy goes beyond 2010/11 when the current term of office ends so that budgets set for future years as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy can be programmed to deliver appropriate training and development each year as Members' experience and knowledge grows.

3. Learning and Development Priorities and Projects

As Champions for Member Development, the Council Business Committee have developed the Member Development Strategy and identified the following six key development priorities:

- ❖ Local Government Finance
- ❖ Overview and Scrutiny
- ❖ Communications (including media)
- ❖ IT training
- ❖ Decision Making Process (including County Council functions)
- ❖ Ward and Community Leadership

It was also recognised that there were several other topics that had been identified in the one to one interviews and workshop that should be included as lower priority areas. It was noted that the support for newly elected Councillors, Cabinet Members and those with full time commitments were cross cutting themes and should be reflected within the 6 identified key training priorities. Included on the next page is a detailed summary of each priority.

A revised edition of the Elected Member Training and Development Programme will be issued in 2008 based on these priorities.

Projects

In addition to the key priority of IT training, it was agreed that a project area could be to develop the use of IT by Members and promote web pages for Councillors. As part of this project, a future meeting of the Council Business Committee will include a webpage training session and trial a paperless meeting to increase the use of IT by Members.

In addition to the key priority of Ward and Community Leadership, it was recognised that this need could be addressed by means of a project to develop the access to Ward and Council information and this could complement any formal training in this area.

There is also a need to further develop different approaches to learning such as shadowing, mentoring, online e-learning and the Members Library to include a wider range of topics.

Included in the Training and Development Programme will be key dates in the development of these projects.

Member Development Priorities

Ward and Community Leadership

Managing Ward/Casework
 Lone Working
 Community Engagement & Gov White Paper
 More information relating to Wards
 Running effective surgeries
 Role of Parish and Town Councils
 Contacts and locations of Council Offices & Officers
 Understanding of Political & Officer Management structure

Communications

Media training
 Speaking in public
 Leadership Academy
 Chairing Skills
 Dealing with confrontational people
 Dealing with conflict and heated meetings
 Speed reading

IT Training

General IT training
 Software

Decision Making Process

Role of Parish and Town Councils
 Understanding of Political and Officer Management structure
 Local Authority Legislation
 Civic and Ceremonial procedures
 Protocols for Personnel, Licensing, Planning & Appeals
 Legislation and issues for Personnel Committee
 Planning Committee
 Licensing Regulatory Committee
 Process of making a decision
 Understanding procedures at meetings, constitution & protocols
 Chairing Skills
 How City and County work in tandem
 Knowledge of role and functions of County Council
 Contact list of County Council Officers & Councillors

Local Government Finance

Procurement
 Understanding budgets
 Understanding Local Government Finance

Low Priority areas

Glossary of abbreviations and jargons
 What Members can ask for & who to ask
 Community Strategy, Council Vision & Corporate Objectives
 Young People
 Youth and Voluntary Organisations
 Community & Voluntary Sector Issues
 Partnership working
 LSP & Vision Board
 Member Development
 Council's Complaints Procedure
 Group Administrators Role
 Civil Contingencies
 Time Management & Managing Information
 Stress Awareness
 Equalities
 Council Housing
 Climate Change

Overview and Scrutiny

Task Groups
 Escendency
 Overview and Scrutiny in general
 Budget and Performance Panel
 Questioning techniques
 Performance Management

4. Progress

To complement the commitment to the Council has made to Member Development, staff resources have been re-allocated with Democratic Services. These extra resources have enabled the following achievements and successes over the last couple of years:

- ❖ A Member Training Programme was developed setting out a schedule of training and development events and briefings and the opportunity to attend joint training with Blackpool and Fylde Councils. A total of 77 events have been held since May 2007 as part of the Induction Programme.
- ❖ Members have the facility to borrow publications, books and cd-roms from the Members Library and have a Member and/or Officer mentor/buddy.
- ❖ An Induction Programme was developed and implemented to enable Members to visit council departments, tour the district, enjoy taster sessions and Freshers fair style introductions. In addition, handbooks were developed for all Members and for Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Members. Social evenings were also held for Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Members.
- ❖ An information pack was produced and an open evening held for potential councillors
- ❖ Personalised one to one IT training has been offered including using email, internet, web pages and Microsoft Word and IT drop in - workshops
- ❖ 37 Members had one to one interviews in 2006, with some reviews in early 2007 and 34 Members have again had one to one interviews following the elections in May 2007.
- ❖ E-newsletters produced for Members advising them of the support available.
- ❖ 6 members have attended the IDEA Leadership Academy
- ❖ A dedicated area on the intranet has been created for Members containing useful documents and links
- ❖ There has been dedicated budgets in 2007/08 of £14,500 for Member Development with an additional budget for attendance at conferences which stands at £5,600 which is divided into four sections in order to ensure more widespread conference attendance by Group Leaders, Cabinet, Regulatory and Standing Committees and Overview and Scrutiny.
- ❖ All Councillors have either a Council provided laptop or access to the Council's computer system via Netilla.

7. Officer Support

All Members of the Council will receive support to enable them to be effective in their role as a Councillor. Members' Services can offer day to day support, and together with Democratic Support they are co-ordinating the Member Development process. The key officers to contact are:

Lisa Jackson
Ceremonial and Members' Officer
Tel: (01524) 582070
Email: ljackson@lancaster.gov.uk

Julie Rutledge
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COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**Special Council Meeting 2008
26th June 2008****Report of Head of Democratic Services****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek Members consideration of a proposal for the Special Council Meeting 2008.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make appropriate arrangements for the 2008 Special Council meeting on the lines set out in section 2 of the report, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and other Group Administrators as necessary.
- (3) That a progress report be submitted to Council Business Committee in September setting out further details of the proposed event and any financial implications.

1.0 Introduction

It was agreed at the last Council Business Committee that the 2008 Special Council meeting would take place on 22nd October 2008 at the Platform.

The Head of Democratic Services was requested to canvas Members, Directors and Service Heads on possible themes for the meeting and the one particular issue that arose was the development of a 'Children and Young People Engagement Strategy' for the Council.

Currently the Council does not have any guidelines, protocols or cohesion in how or if to involve children and young people in any of its services. There are a number of factors that need consideration when deciding what is needed and it is proposed to produce a comprehensive 'Children and Young People Engagement Strategy' to provide clarity in the who, why, what and how of involving children and young people and ensure that the Council has a consistency and quality in its approach. By developing a shared understanding of what 'engagement', 'involvement' and 'participation' mean the Council will then be in a position to develop a menu of opportunities for involving children and young people in the future.

2.0 Proposal Details

It is suggested that the participants would be invited from local school councils, the Youth Council, Lancaster & Morecambe College in the first instance. However, at this stage there is the possibility that not all schools will give permission for pupils to out of school for the day.

The day of the Special Council meeting would be split into two parts, the morning would involve young people who would undertake work to present to Council in the later in the day. Young people will explore their conceptions of the Council and how they feel communication between the Council and young people could be improved.

In the afternoon, Councillors will attend and the young people will act as facilitators with Members being the participants in a number of workshops.

The information and evidence that is gathered at this event would then be used to develop the Council's Children and Young People's Engagement Strategy which is one of the stated elements of the Council's Children and Young People Plan, implementation of which is a key corporate priority. Council will formally make a recommendation on this at the end of the event.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

To provide a forum for dialogue between elected members and young people from across the district. It is envisaged that this will be the beginning of regular exchanges of views and ideas.

The day will give young people the opportunity to:

- Meet other young people from across the district
- Explore issues that are relevant to them
- Develop communication, listening and decision making skills
- Gain an understanding of what the council does
- Develop strategies for their involvement
- Practice presentation skills
- Have positive dialogue with councillors

Councillors will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in groups with young people
- Gain an understanding of young people and their issues
- Explore ways of having meaningful involvement with young people
- Make a commitment to developing youth engagement

The event will provide an opportunity for a cross section of young people from across the district to come together and discuss issues and ways in which they would like to be informed, consulted or involved in the services provided by the Council. This is part of the process in developing the Youth Engagement Strategy. This must be led by young people's input, otherwise it flies in the face of the basic principles of real engagement.

Currently there are school councils, a district youth council, members of the youth parliament, stakeholder groups, ad hoc groups, student bodies etc. So, there are a number of existing means of getting young people's views and for the young people to effect change within their host organization. However it is intended that this event

will provide an opportunity for mutual understanding and dialogue between Members and children and young people.

4.0 Details of Consultation

The proposal is being developed in consultation with the Council's Children and Young People's Manager.

5.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

The options available to the Committee are to approve the proposal as set out in this report, to amend the proposal or to propose an alternative. It is important that work begins on planning the special council meeting as soon as possible in order that a suitable and successful event can be achieved.

6.0 Conclusion

It is the view of officers that the proposal as set out in this report provides a suitable subject for the Special Council meeting, on an issue of interest to Councillors, the public and stakeholders and is achievable given the timescales involved.

It will also provide a positive and pro-active starting point to the exchange of ideas with young people as part of the development of an engagement strategy. Involving children and young people has to be more than general consultation and by agreeing to the proposed aim and objectives for this Special Council which in turn will inform the engagement strategy there is a very clear message as to the Council's commitment to the real involvement and contribution that children and young people make to council services.

Work will need to be done to ensure that the event is sufficiently focussed and relates to the Corporate Plan priority outcome to implement the Children and Young People Strategic Plan.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At this conceptual stage costings have not yet been obtained, but it is believed that the event as envisaged is achievable within existing budgets. Subject to approval at this meeting, Officers will fully cost the event, and ensure that all expenditure associated with the special meeting is duly contained within the budget available.

The cost of rooms and catering for all Council meetings, including this one, is met from the Democratic Representation budget of £7,000 for 2008/09. Whilst the cost of a Special Council meeting can be met from existing budgets, this is only the case if costs are kept to a minimum. Costs of the equivalent event last year were kept within the maximum limit of £700 which had been estimated during the planning stage. It is suggested that a similar maximum expenditure be set for the 2008 event.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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