

CITY • COAST • COUNTRYSIDE



Annual Report 2007 2008

**LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL**
Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

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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 recently completed 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 Centres 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 that 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 residents' views help us to deliver improved services. The Corporate Plan for 2008/09 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 in 1909!

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 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 Black and Minority Ethnic (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. A successful bid for additional funding from Cycling England for a further £1.5 million will enable the council to extend the life of the CDT Project to 2011 and allow further improvements to be made to the local cycling network as well as work to encourage its use.

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.
 - 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 undertaken 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 9.7hectare 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 and 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** – 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 Housing Revenue Account 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 six 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
- 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 16p 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

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 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 no 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 (key line of enquiry) 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		











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%	1%	Low		
BV184b	% change in proportion of non decent LA homes	0%	16.80%	32.90%	0%	0%	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%	90.22%	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	☹️	☹️
<p>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.</p>									

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

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.

The figures included in this summary have been produced in line with good accounting practice for Local Government, but some aspects have been simplified in order to make them more meaningful.

All the figures are still draft, however, as the Council's accounts have yet to be audited by KPMG LLP, who are the Council's external auditors. The full draft Statement of Accounts is available on the Council's Website at www.lancaster.gov.uk. Once the audit has been completed, the audited Accounts will be published by 30 September.

These will also be available on the website, and they will be available to view at the Town Halls in Lancaster and Morecambe.

Financial Performance

The Council has two different types of spending and income.

- The running costs of day to day services provided are known as **revenue** expenditure. This is paid for entirely through government grants, council tax and income from direct charges for services, which are known as **revenue** income.
- Spending on things like buying or improving property, where it will have a lasting value, is known as **capital** expenditure, or capital investment. This is paid for in a number of ways:
 - by selling other properties (from which the proceeds are known as **capital receipts**)
 - by borrowing money, which spreads the cost over a number of years
 - by receiving capital grants and developers' contributions
 - and also, by making some contributions from the Council's revenue income or its reserves. (Revenue income can be used for either purpose – revenue or capital).

Revenue Performance

During the year the Council spent £23.7 million on services. This represents its net revenue expenditure (which is basically total revenue expenditure on services, less any income received from direct charges for services and any grant funding towards specific activities). Overall the £23.7 million outturn was £0.5 million lower than expected when compared to the Council's most recent budget forecast, which it updated during the autumn/winter of last year. The figures mean that only 98% of the revised budget was spent, and therefore the savings were put into reserves in line with the Council's policies.

The main reasons for the underspend included extra grant being received from Government, savings made on staff costs, and extra interest being earned on the Council's bank balances. There were some areas that cost the Council more than it expected though.

A summary of the Council's net revenue spending is shown below. This includes headings and items that the Council must show, in line with its accounting practices.

2007/08 Summary Revenue Account	Draft Outturn £'000
Service Costs (net of income from direct charges):	
Central Services to the Public	1,631
Cultural, Environmental and Planning Services	14,582
Highways, Roads and Transport Services	868
Council Housing Services	(3,394)
Other Housing Services	2,550
Corporate and Democratic Activities	2,861
Other central Costs	749
Net Revenue Cost of Services	19,847
Less: Surpluses made on Trading Operations	(536)
Investment Interest earned	(1,139)
Add: Payments to Parish Councils (precepts)	271
Interest Payable (on borrowings)	3,630
Other Net Charges and transfers in line with Statute or Accounting Practice	1,601
Net Revenue Expenditure	23,674
Funded by:	
Revenue Support Grant from Government	2,146
Other General Grants	1,094
Business Rates	12,786
Council Tax	7,648
Total	23,674

Capital Performance

In 2007/08 the City Council spent £15.631M on capital schemes. An analysis of the expenditure and funding is shown on the following page. The Council's revised Capital Programme for 2007/08 was £21.997M, however due to delays in progressing a number of schemes, around £4.7M will need to be rolled forward into 2008/09.

2007/08 Capital Summary, by Service Area	Draft Outturn £'000
Leisure and Parks Facilities	230
Coast Protection and Flood Defence Schemes	2,513
Other Environmental Schemes	998
Planning and Regeneration Schemes	2,273
Highways and Transport Related Schemes	516
Council Housing Improvements	2,879
Other Private Sector Housing Renewal and Regeneration	4,937
Computer Equipment and Software	711
Municipal and Other Building Improvements	574
Total Capital Expenditure	15,631
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts from property sales	1,466
Borrowing	1,762
Capital Grants and Contributions	9,528
Revenue and Reserves	2,875
Total	15,631

Value for Money and 'Gershon'

As part of Government's Efficiency Review and following Sir Peter Gershon's report 'Releasing Resources to the Front Line', all Councils were required to achieve annual efficiency savings of 2.5% per year, when compared to their 2004/05 spending. For 2007/08 the Council's cumulative target was £1.752 million. In July 2008 the Council will report to Government on the progress made, and the Council will be in a position to confirm that it has met the Government target.

Overall Financial Position (from the Balance Sheet)

At the end of 2007/08 the Council had net 'equity' of £154 million. This was made up of a property portfolio of £278 million, although it had £45 million long term borrowing outstanding, and also estimated future potential liabilities totalling £42 million in connection with its employees' Pension Fund. Other net liabilities amounted to £37 million. The Council had money set aside in usable reserves amounting to £17 million. Of these, £15 million has already been earmarked to fund future spending plans, or to provide protection against the main financial and other risks facing the Council.

Conclusion

During 2007/08 the Council continued to strengthen its overall financial position, in line with the improvements made in previous years. It has kept its net spending well within budget and as at 31 March 2008, reserves and balances reserves were in a healthy position. This performance will feed into the review of the Council's financial planning arrangements, to support service delivery in future years.

How to contact the council

Telephone

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

- Telephone 01524 582000
- 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