

City | Coast | Countryside

Annual Report 2008-09



Introduction

This Annual Report reflects the achievements of Lancaster City Council in the last financial year (2008-09).



As I became a member of the council's Cabinet in May 2009, it is appropriate to thank the previous leaders of the council for their service last year and to recognise their hard work. The coming year will not be easy

because of the many challenges we face locally, nationally and internationally. However, we are well placed to meet those challenges and to continue to serve the people of this district.

Looking back on the council's performance in 2008/09, this report:

- gives a snapshot of some of our initiatives and achievements
- looks ahead to what we believe will be a challenging year
- sets out our key priorities in the coming year (outlined in our Corporate Plan).

Every area of the country is feeling the effects of the economic recession and clearly these extraordinary events provide a serious challenge to all local authorities.

This has meant some tough decisions being made by the city council in the last year and a reluctant acceptance that the council simply cannot do everything it might wish to.

In the coming year more savings are necessary to safeguard vital local services and keep Council Tax levels down to 4% or less.

As well as the recession, which is of course reducing income and significantly reduced investment interest, there have been higher than expected costs for the council in areas such as concessionary travel (there has been significantly more take up than provided for in the Government grant), and an increase in rent at Lancaster Market.

We are closely scrutinising all aspects of what we do to ensure the services we provide are delivered in the most cost-effective and value for money way possible. For example, we have

already made significant efficiency savings.

This can also be partly achieved by working even more closely with our partners, something we have already embraced in order to be better able to tackle district-wide issues. As community leaders, we are committed to working with all those who can help us to have a positive impact upon life in this district, such as the county council, police, fire, education, health, private companies, voluntary organisations and community groups through the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership (LDLSP).

Having set our budget, we are confident that in 2009/10, and with a clear concept of what we need to achieve, how and who with, we will be in a strong position to deliver our main priorities for the coming year which are:

Supporting for our local economy

We will continue to work with a range of organisations to ensure a strategic approach to regeneration.

Cleaner and greener spaces

We will continue to keep our public places clean and develop local responses to the challenge of climate change.

Safer and healthy communities

Both through our own services and alongside partners we will continue to address both crime related and health improvement issues.

Supporting our local communities

With partners we will aim to meet the differing needs of our communities and improve the standard, availability and affordability of housing.

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

Stuart Langhorn

Leader of the Council

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 13% share of the overall council tax bill, will together with other funding received, give us a budget of around £23.99m.

Together, around 1,000 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, benefits, 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 Cabinet with representation from five of its six 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

Service	Cost
Council tax and business rates collection	0.06
Electoral registration and elections	0.20
Culture and heritage	0.30
Recreation and sport	0.22
Environmental health services	0.25
Street cleansing	0.46
Waste collection and recycling	0.29
Planning and building control	0.22
Economic development and tourism	0.34
Concessionary travel schemes	0.19
Services costs	1.01
Total	£3.56

The weekly cost of your city council services for a Band D property is £3.56

Connecting residents to the council and its services

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.

There's no doubt our residents' views help us to deliver improved services. The Corporate Plan for 09/10 was developed following 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.

The council has carried out approximately 62 consultations in 2008/09 and in the appendix to this document you will find just a few examples on how the results have been used to shape our service delivery. The council's consultation web page provides information on how you can get involved including the 2009/10 consultation plan and current consultations. You can register onto our online consultation system to receive emails when online consultations are of interest to you.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like more information or would like to become a member of our community consultation register and get involved in future consultations of interest to you, please contact the council's consultation officer, Jennifer Williams by calling 01524 582268.

Leading local responses to climate change

Tackling climate change is a key issue for this council.

Lancaster City Council is working hard to meet the challenges presented by the changing climate. As you will have read earlier, tackling 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 plan to reduce the council's environmental impact, whilst ensuring local residents continue to receive the high quality responsive service they expect.

We will continue to work to ensure our carbon footprint decreases. 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.

Over the next three years we will be working closely with our partners at the Energy Saving Trust who is providing free, tailored one-to-one support, which will help us to develop a range of projects which will dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of both the council and the district as a whole.

Did you know...

Lancaster City Council serves more people than any other district council in the north west?

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 a whole.

	CO2 from buildings (tCO2)	CO2 from transport (tCO2)	CO2 from waste (tCO2)	Total CO2 emissions (tCO2)
2008-2009	3034.34	1528.97	43.18	4606.49
2007-2008	2409	1504.52	43.18	3905.49
2006-2007	2494.06	1504.52	43.18	4041.33
2005-2006*	2208.42	1496.61	43.18	3748.21
2004-2005	1875.2	1443.35	43.18	3361.73

* Revised figures for 2005-2006 include emissions estimates for Salt Ayre Sports Centre for first time

my
council



“...is here to help”

Lancaster City Council's friendly staff are on hand to answer your queries at our customer services centres, or why not visit us online at www.lancaster.gov.uk

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www.lancaster.gov.uk/makeeverypennycount

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Making a difference

It is right that councils are held to account for the improvements to peoples lives that the services provided achieve.

We aim to provide as much information as possible in a transparent and accessible format. In the appendix to this report you will find detailed tables which show how we performed against agreed targets in 2008/09.

But it is sometimes difficult to see how these performance measures relate to the impact on the ground. The following section shows some of the ways we have made a positive difference in the district in 2008/09 and gives you a taste of some of the human stories behind the statistics.

A helping hand for business

With many businesses feeling the effects of the credit crunch, Lancaster City Council launched a new grant to offer new-start and early stage businesses a helping hand.

The council offered grants towards rent for businesses that are within their first three years of trading. The grants are worth up to 50% of the first year's basic rent on new leases, for premises located across the whole of the district.



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More than 35 young people from 12 schools and colleges, Lancashire Young People's Service and the YMCA took part in a special council meeting.

Right 2B Heard!

Young people from across the district gathered together to talk about how they can become more involved in the services provided by Lancaster City Council.

More than 35 young people from 12 schools and colleges, Lancashire Young People's Service and the YMCA took part in a special council meeting at Lancaster Town Hall. The aim of the day was for the young people to identify effective ways for them to become involved in decision making, planning and development of services.

Following a morning of workshops, they presented their findings to councillors.

The results of the council meeting will help the council implement its own Young People's Engagement Strategy - www.lancaster.gov.uk/children-young-people

Planning for the future

Lancaster City Council became the first local authority in the north west of England to receive official endorsement for a new style forward planning document. The Lancaster District Core Strategy will help shape the district for the next 15 years and details 18 policies on how the council will maximise the district's potential.

The Core Strategy was tested by a government inspector at an independent examination against nine highly demanding 'tests of soundness'. Following this, the strategy was given the official thumbs up by the inspector, meaning that Lancaster was the first council in the North West of England to pass these tests.

This is a major achievement as elsewhere in the country a number of councils have had their plans rejected. Hundreds of people and organisations were consulted to ensure that the final document reflects the views of the community.

Tatton

Players from Morecambe FC threw their weight behind Lancaster City Council's gardeners in their attempts to dig up gold at the RHS Flower Show at Tatton.

Their entry to the National Flower Bed Competition of the show, which ran from July 23 to 27, was entitled "*Bring me football*" and celebrated Morecambe FC's achievement in gaining promotion to the Football League.

It featured a colourful display of flowers laid out in the shape of Morecambe FC's Christie Park. In the centre of the pitch, a replica of the famous sculpture of Eric Morecambe which adorns the seafront, looked out over the stands. Unfortunately the team of expert gardeners only managed a bronze medal in the competition, but the entry received much national publicity and brought Morecambe to the attention of thousands of people. Watch out for this year's entry!

Did you know...

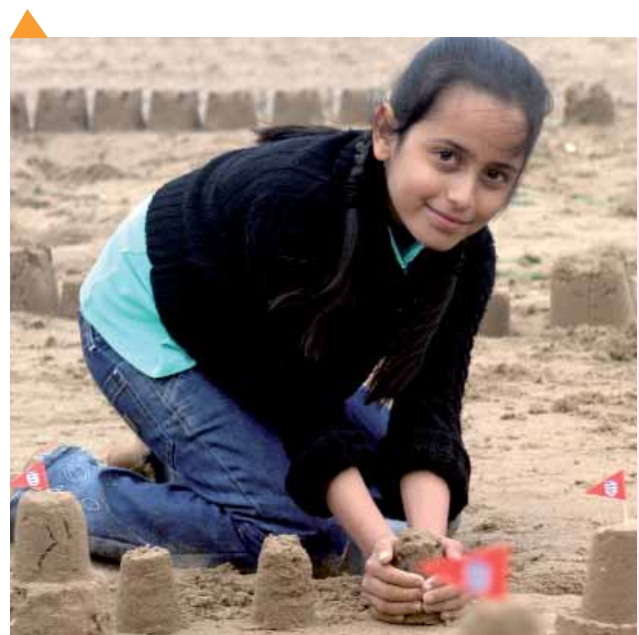
Since October 2005, the council has opened up more than 20km of additional safe travel for cyclists?

Sandcastle Festival

Hundreds of people grabbed their buckets and spades and flocked to the golden sands of Morecambe beach to take part in the second Sandcastle Festival.

The event, which was organised by Lancaster City Council, saw 32 teams battle against high winds for the title of Super Sandcastle Builder.

Held on the beach behind the newly reopened Midland Hotel, Morecambe was bustling with life as people of all ages joined in with the summer festivities. And, according to Morecambe Tourist Information Centre, it was their busiest day of the year, with 746 visitors passing through the doors.



Morecambe was bustling with life as people of all ages joined in with the summer festivities.

my
council



“...listened to my views”

Young people told Lancaster City Council they wanted a skateboard park - so we built them one! Find out how you can have your say at www.lancaster.gov.uk/consultation

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Morecambe mum benefits from lifesaving training

A Morecambe mum had to put first aid skills into action only an hour after passing a lifesaving course at Carnforth Community Pool. Mandy Duffy was driving through Torrisholme when she saw a man lying on the pavement with a head injury and in obvious distress.

She quickly pulled over and went to help, telephoning for an ambulance and making sure he was comfortable until paramedics arrived. Carnforth Community Pool is run by Lancaster City Council and holds lifesaving courses on a regular basis.

The courses train people to NaRS (National Rescue Standard) and teach essential skills including CPR, first aid and breathing techniques. Mandy took the course as she helps out with the Carnforth Otters swimming club, of which her daughter, Georgia, and son, Marcus, are both members.

"I think it's something everyone should do, especially if you have children," Mandy added.

"You never know when you might be called upon to help someone and potentially save their life."

Did you know...

Residents living in an average household are paying just £3.56 a week in council tax?

Clock this - children unveil new mural

Local children contributed to a wonderful piece of artwork which was installed at the Clock Tower in Morecambe.

The montage of Morecambe was the result of months of workshops run by artist Chas Jacobs in primary schools in Poulton.

Children from Years 5 and 6 from Poulton-le-Sands, Morecambe Bay and St Mary's Primary School were asked what Morecambe means to them, and to paint pictures to reflect their thoughts. The pupils came up with ideas including the Midland Hotel, the TERN birds, the Winter Gardens, Eric Morecambe and the Stone Jetty.



The montage of Morecambe was the result of months of workshops run by artist Chas Jacobs in primary schools in Poulton.

Play Rangers

Melissa Martin and Melanie Walker, affectionately known as 'The Mels', joined the council as Play Rangers.

Funded by a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, their job is to organise free activities for children including arts and crafts, gardening, bug hunting, fire building, family orientated games, den building and junk modelling.

Activities planned by 'The Mels' have taken place at events such as the Sandcastle Festival, Love Parks Week and the West End Gardens fun day.



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Morecambe school joins the fight to tackle litter

A Morecambe primary school won £1,000 to help target one of the scourges of modern society – litter. Lancaster City Council challenged primary schools across the district to come up with some creative ways of combating rubbish on our streets.

Pupils were asked to think of ideas their school could use to improve the overall cleanliness of the district, or reduce litter.

Lancaster Road School in Morecambe won the competition and the top prize of £1,000.

Tourism centre given top marks

Top marks were awarded to Lancaster City Council's two visitor information centres following a mystery shopper visit by the North West Development Agency.

Both Morecambe Visitor Information Centre and Lancaster Tourist Information Centre achieved a score of 100% in the report, which was carried out by an independent assessor. During the visits the assessor scored marks against the overall appearance of the centres, first impressions, displays, staff interaction and service. At both centres the assessor enquired about making a hotel reservation for the evening and ideas of what to see and do during their stay.

Comments from the assessor included "the assistant was very enthusiastic", "lots of gifts attractively displayed", "centre was warm and welcoming", "friendly, helpful staff".

Morecambe receives coastal award

Morecambe was branded the country's Best Reinvented Seaside Town in a national awards ceremony. The town received the accolade in this year's Coast Magazine Awards, beating rivals Blackpool and Folkestone.

Readers were asked to nominate entries to the awards and, following the town's shortlisting, Lancaster City Council was asked to put together a case for why Morecambe should win the category. A panel of judges representing all aspects of coastal life fiercely debated the entries before declaring Morecambe the winner in the Best Reinvented Seaside Town category.

In recognition of the award the council has been given a plaque, which now has pride of place in Morecambe's Visitor Information Centre.



A panel of judges representing all aspects of coastal life fiercely debated the entries before declaring Morecambe the winner!

my
council



“...helps keep my street clean for less than 30p a week”

The average household pays Lancaster City Council less than 30p a week to help keep the district's streets clean and litter free

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Old PCs benefit the community

Parish councils across the district benefited from recycled computers donated by Lancaster City Council.

Certain modern software packages, such as cash receipting and mapping systems, will not work on older PCs and the council has had to replace 100 with newer models.

However, keen to see the computers, which are still perfectly useful for simple word processing, spreadsheets, the internet etc, put to good use, the council has donated them to Furniture Matters, the locally based reuse and recycling charity.

Furniture Matters has refurbished the computers and six have been picked up by parish councils in Carnforth, Arkholme, Nether Kellet Parish Council/Over Kellet Parish Council, Bolton le Sands, Overton and Burrow-with Burrow.

Recycling

Wheeled bins and recycling boxes were rolled out to a further 6,000 households.

Over the last six years Lancaster City Council has been making it easier for residents to recycle by introducing a 'three stream' waste collection in which households receive two wheeled bins (one for non-recyclable items, one for green garden waste) and recycling boxes.

The aim is to reduce the amount of rubbish being sent to the country's ever-dwindling landfill sites.

Thanks to residents of the district the existing phases of the schemes have been a huge success, increasing the district's recycling rate from 6% in 2002 to the current rate of 30%.

Tenants Den

Council Housing Services actively sought the views of tenants in council housing areas as to how they would like us to spend an environmental budget of £58,000 on improvements in their local areas. Council

Did you know...

There are 1,390 listed buildings in the district, more than any other part of the county?

officers set up shop in communities with a marquee and knocked on doors seeking local people's opinions.

The majority of the money, about £40,000, has been spent on improving lighting to Sheltered housing Schemes and bungalows.

£5000 has been set aside to allow all Council Tenants to have two free bulky matters collections of up to three items twice a year. £2000 has been set aside for skips – these will be used to tidy up estates or help community groups carry out litter picks etc.



The schemes have been a huge success, increasing the district's recycling rate from 6% in 2002 to the current rate of 30%

Want to know more?

Please read on to the appendix to this report which gives a more detailed account of our performance in 2008/09.



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

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How to contact us

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Lancaster LA1 1PJ

Telephone

General Enquiries: 01524 582000

Email

customerservices@lancaster.gov.uk

Office Hours

9am to 5pm (Monday to Friday)

Out of hours emergencies

Telephone: 01524 67099

For medical emergencies, police or fire dial 999

For a comprehensive A-Z of council services visit www.lancaster.gov.uk/makingeverypennycount or contact the council on 01524 582000.

More information about the services we provide is available on our website which also offers you the facility make on-line payments for council tax, rent and parking fines.

Visit www.lancaster.gov.uk

Need help to weather the credit crunch?

Visit our special website page www.lancaster.gov.uk/financialadvice where you will find lots of useful links on how to find help.

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 - www.lancaster.gov.uk/comments-complaints

This information can be made available on request in large print, braille, audio and other languages. Telephone 01524 582150.

Appendix

Detailed account of our performance in 2008/09.



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

Lancaster 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

How are we doing?

What external auditors said about us in 2008/09

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 councils in the country. Although we have made a number of improvements in the way we assess value for money there is still much to do and this remains a key focus for the current financial year.

In the coming year, as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) a revised methodology for Use of Resources, together with a new judgement on Managing Performance will be introduced. Confusingly, the name Use of Resources will remain, even though the scope of the review is far wider and will present an even harder test for local authorities.

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 2008/09

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

Our financial performance

The following snapshot covers some of the key points of the council's finances for the 2008/09 financial year, which ended on 31 March 2009.

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 £24.6M 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 £24.6M outturn was £0.2M 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 99% of the revised budget was spent, and therefore the savings were put into balances in line with the council's policies.

The main reasons for the underspend included reduced concessionary travel costs, savings on City Council (Direct) Services functions and savings made on staff costs. There were some areas that cost the council more than it expected though. Furthermore, the council had £6M of investments with Icelandic banks, at the time of their collapse.

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

2008/09 Summary Revenue Account	Draft outturn £'000
Service costs (net of income from direct charges):	
Central services to the public	2,499
Cultural, environmental and planning services	18,160
Highways, roads and transport services	1,551
Council housing services	(2,348)
Other housing services	3,601
Corporate and democratic activities	4,297
Other central costs	529
Net revenue cost of services	28,289
Less: Investment interest earned	(1,144)
Other net charges and transfers in line with statute or accounting practice	(9,146)
Add: Payments to parish councils (precepts)	284
Deficit made on trading operations (see note 1 below)	2,208
Investment losses (see note 2 below)	1,632
Interest payable (on borrowings)	2,443
Net revenue expenditure	24,566
Funded by:	
Revenue Support Grant from Government	1,897
Other general grants	1,070
Business Rates	13,626
Council Tax	7,973
Total	24,566

Notes :

1 The deficit made on trading operations is due to a downward revaluation of £2.3M on two buildings, however this does not impact on the council's overall outturn position as it is reversed out in the other net charges and transfers in line with Statute or Accounting Practice.

2 This represents the current estimate of total potential losses relating to the investments in Icelandic Banks. Effectively, around £0.4M of this loss has been provided for in 2008/09 (with some additional amounts in future years). In line with Government Regulations issued in December 2008, the remaining £1.2M of potential loss as at 31 March 2009 has been deferred and no specific provision has been made within the 2008/09 accounts. Other reserves have been increased by £800K, however, and this will give the council scope to address its investment position, and/or other potential liabilities in 2009/10.

Capital performance

In 2008/09 the city council spent £13.551M on capital schemes.

An analysis of the expenditure and funding is shown below. The council's revised Capital Programme for 2008/09 was £15.246M but due to delays in progressing a number of schemes, around £2.5M will need to be rolled forward into 2009/10.

Overall financial position (from the balance sheet)

At the end of 2008/09 the council had net 'equity' of £165M. This was made up of a property portfolio of £292M, although it had £39M long term borrowing outstanding, and also estimated future potential liabilities totalling £41M in connection with its employees' pension fund. Other net liabilities amounted to £47M. The council had money set aside in usable reserves amounting to £16M. Of these, around £15M has already been earmarked to fund future spending plans, or to provide protection against the main financial and other risks facing the council.

Conclusion

2008/09 has been a difficult financial year for the council. In particular, the downturn in the global economy has affected the council both in terms of its investments and investment interest generated from cash flows. On a more local level income receipts from some council activities have also fallen, but savings have been generated in other areas. The council's reported financial position has improved overall, with balances slightly higher than expected – but this should be considered in context of deferring the majority of currently estimated losses in connection with Icelandic investments.

2008/09 Summary Revenue Account	Draft outturn £'000
Leisure and parks facilities	605
Coast protection and flood defence schemes	338
Other environmental schemes	364
Planning and regeneration schemes	5,007
Highways and transport related schemes	602
Council housing improvements	3,034
Other private sector housing renewal and regeneration	3,113
Computer equipment and software	266
Municipal and other building improvements	222
Total capital expenditure	13,551
Financed by:	
Capital receipts from property sales	2,093
Borrowing	1,804
Capital grants and contributions	6,123
Revenue and reserves	3,531
Total	13,551

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.

Corporate Plan – year end report

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 2008/09 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.

Corporate commitment to data quality

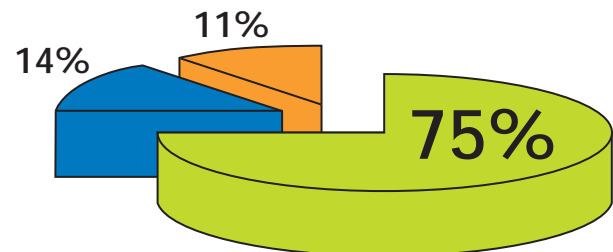
It is vitally important that the information this council produces and relies upon to make its decisions is correct. Lancaster City Council is therefore strongly committed to ensuring that all its published performance information must be correct and fit for external scrutiny.

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

Corporate Plan Targets

- Targets achieved
- Behind target
- Not achieved



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 2007/08 when Lancaster City Council was judged to be ‘performing well’ (i.e. Level 3 - the second highest out of four possible grades).

The introduction this year of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework 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.



Indicator Guide

A simple key will indicate performance trends














Failing	
Behind Target	
On or above target	

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Support our local economy								
NI170 Vacant or derelict land	3.83	NA	NA	3.83	5.29	Low		The baseline figure for derelict land was based on the best information available at that time, this has now been updated to reflect a more accurate position. Thus the increased figure can be attributed to a changing baseline position rather than declining performance.
NI171 New Business VAT registration rate - input required from LAA to set target	41.4	NA	NA	NA	-	High		These figures are provided annually in December, the latest figures are for 07/08.
LOCAL (ED01) EDZ Financial Performance	73.38%	N/A	N/A	98.50%	98.67%	High		EDZ programme completed
LOCAL (ED13) Tourism Customer Satisfaction	94.55%	N/A	N/A	90%	100.00%	High		
LOCAL (ED14) Level of Tourism spend	259.26	N/A	N/A	267	267	High		
LOCAL (ED17) Increase the number of unique visitors to the tourism website	New	NA	NA	15000	15754.1	High		
Clean and green places								
NI185 Reduction in CO2 emissions from Local Authority operations	New	NA	NA	NA	4563.3 tonnes	Low		Baseline year
NI192 % household waste recycled and composted	32.27%*	N/A	N/A	33	34.8	High		*Although this is a new statutory indicator, we have tracked recycling and composting tonnages for a number of years for Defra and so historic data is available.
NI195b - Street Cleanliness - detritus	New	N/A	N/A	7	7	Low		
NI195d - Street Cleanliness - fly posting	New	N/A	N/A	1	0	Low		
NI195c - Street Cleanliness - Graffiti	New	N/A	N/A	3.5	1	Low		
NI195a - Street Cleanliness - litter	New	N/A	N/A	15	4	Low		
NI196 Illegally dumped waste - flytipping	New	N/A	N/A	3		Low		Final audited figure is expected from Defra later this year
LOCAL (CCS01) Bulky waste requests (days taken)	3 days	N/A	N/A	5 Days	3.83 days	Low		

Failing Behind Target On or above target

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Clean and green places								
LOCAL (CCS02) % of missed collections	0.15%	N/A	N/A	0.75%	0.20%	Low		
LOCAL (CCS03) % of households with 3 stream recycling collection	90.20%	N/A	N/A	90%	96.60%	High		
LOCAL (EP46) Dog related offending score against best practice enforcement checklist	New	N/A	N/A	70	70	High		
LOCAL (BV199a) Street Cleanliness	10.67%	6.60%	14%	14%	8.33%	Low		
Safe and communities								
NI8 The percentage of the adults (age 16 and over) population in a local area who participate in sport and active recreation	New	NA	NA	NA	28.30%	High		
NI19 Rate of proven reoffending by young offenders	1.36	NA	NA	1.68	1.38	Low		Current data available to January 2009 only.
NI20 Assault with injury crime rate	1125	NA	NA	1094	954	Low		
NI21 Dealing with local concerns about anti social behaviour and crime issues by local council and Police	New	NA	NA	NA	28.6	High		Baseline year
NI22: Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	New	NA	NA	NA	30.2	High		Baseline year
NI23: Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect	New	NA	NA	NA	30.5	High		Baseline year
NI27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police	New	NA	NA	NA	29.2	High		Baseline year







Failing  Behind Target  On or above target 

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Safe and healthy communities								
NI32 Repeat incidents of domestic violence	864	NA	NA	NA	962	Low		
NI41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem	New	NA	NA	NA	30.9	Low		Baseline year
NI42 Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem	New	NA	NA	NA	29.2	Low		Baseline year
NI57 Children and young peoples participation in high-quality PE and sport	New	NA	NA	NA	89	High		
NI119 Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing	New	NA	NA	NA	74.5	High		Baseline year
NI184 Food Establishments broadly compliant	New	N/A	N/A	90%	89.69%	High		
LOCAL (CS05) Reduce criminal damage	3168	N/A	N/A	3057	3074	Low		
LOCAL (CS01) Reduce serious violent crime	90	NA	NA	81	81	Low		
LOCAL (Cult22) The average no. of children receiving coaching per week	2814	N/A	N/A	2400	3484	High		
Support communities								
NI1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together	New	NA	NA	NA	76.6	High		Baseline year
NI2 % of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood.	New	NA	NA	NA	57.2	High		Baseline year
NI3 Civic participation in local area	New	NA	NA	NA	14.4	High		Baseline year
NI4 % of people who feel they can influence decisions locally	New	NA	NA	NA	25.3	High		Baseline year
NI6 Participation in regular volunteering	New	NA	NA	NA	25.8	High		Baseline year













Failing  Behind Target  On or above target 

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Support our local communities								
NI17: Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	New	NA	NA	NA	20.4	Low		Baseline year
NI35 building resilience to violent extremism	New	NA	NA	NA	2	High		Baseline year
NI37 Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area	New	NA	NA	NA	16.2	High		Baseline year
NI138 Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood	New	NA	NA	NA	85.1	High		Baseline year
NI139 The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home	New	NA	NA	NA	34.6	High		Baseline year
NI154 Net additional homes provided	New	N/A	N/A	400	325	High		Estimated figure, completion of survey expected July 2009
NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered	New	N/A	N/A	60	28	High		Estimated figure, completion of survey expected July 2009
NI156 No. of households living in temporary accommodation	New	N/A	N/A	21	3	Low		The authority has reduced the number of dispersed houses to 12. The authority has now met the target set by DCLG ahead of time.
NI158 % non decent homes (local authority homes)	0	N/A	N/A	0	1	Low		There is a planned maintenance programme to bring all housing stock back into decency by the end of 2009/10
NI160 Local authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services	80.40%	NA	NA	NA	80%	High		
NI187 Fuel Poverty: % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating (SAP rating of <35)	New	NA	NA	NA	7.65%	Low		Baseline year
NI187 Fuel Poverty: % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a high energy efficiency rating (SAP rating of >65)	New	NA	NA	NA	31.88%	High		Baseline year




Failing Behind Target On or above target

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Support our local communities								
LOCAL (BV64) Empty properties back in occupation	61	112.5	12	50	64	High		
LOCAL (BV183a) Length of stay in B&B	0.74	NA	NA	1	2.36	Low		
LOCAL BV202 08/09 Rough sleepers	0	0	3	3	2	Low		
LOCAL (BV212) Average Time to Relet LA Housing	32.19Days	25Days	47Days	32Days	41.89Days	Low		After a poor start to the year performance is now improving due to remedial action including; sub contracting of more work, staff training and more effective monitoring.
LOCAL (BV213) Homeless Prevention	7.07	4	1	8	15.35	High		
LOCAL (BV170a) Overall use of museums	1097	1123	192	1350	966	High		
LOCAL (SH12) No. of properties improved through enforcement	175	N/A	N/A	215	278	High		
LOCAL (SH13) Number of properties in which serious hazard eliminated	13	N/A	N/A	120	154	High		
LOCAL (SH16) No. of properties where risk profile reduced	86	N/A	N/A	70	144	High		
LOCAL (SH19) No. of private sector homes made decent	94	N/A	N/A	50	127	High		
LOCAL (SH20) Number of homes made decent with vulnerable occupants	13	NA	NA	20	38	High		
Co alth								
NI5 Overall satisfaction with the District	New	NA	NA	NA	79.9	High		Baseline year
LOCAL (LL01) Local searches completed within 5 working days	99.46	NA	NA	98	98.99	High		
NI14 Avoidable contact	New	N/A	N/A	52	52.21	Low		Baseline year
NI140 Fair treatment by local services	New	NA	NA	NA	66.2	High		Baseline year

Failing  Behind Target  On or above target 

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Corporate health								
LOCAL (BV02a) Level of Equality Standard Achieved	1	N/A	N/A	2	1	High		This is the last year this indicator is to be reported - in Jan 09 a new national Equality Framework was introduced which will guide future council activity
LOCAL (BV09) % of Council Tax Collected	96.80%	98.60%	97.35%	97.10%	96.62%	High		A small number of our indicators have been affected by the global economic downturn. It is clear that financial hardship in the community will adversely effect people's ability to pay and a small dip in performance is to be expected.
LOCAL (BV10) % of NNDR collected	99.30%	99.36%	98.53%	99.20%	98.37%	High		
LOCAL (BV12) Sickness absence, days lost per employee	9.93	8.3	10.6	9.75 days	9.97 days	Low		
LOCAL (BV66a) Rent Collected	98.50%	98.61%	97.53%	98.60%	98.50%	High		
LOCAL (BV66b) Tenants Owing More Than 7 Weeks Rent	3.72%	3.43%	6.26%	3.60%	3.94%	High		
LOCAL (BV66c) Tenants with NSP's for Rent Arrears	14.40%	13.55%	36.25%	25%	19.40%	Low		
LOCAL (BV66d) % LA Tenants Evicted for Rent Arrears	3.72%	0.17%	0.43%	0.30%	0.16%	Low		
NI157a Major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	60	80.71	66.67	65	66.67	High		Local target exceeded and ahead of national target for major applications of 60%
NI157b Minor applications determined within 8 weeks (Quarterly)	86.36	83.66	70.29	80	78.72	High		National target of 65% exceeded for minor applications
NI157c % of other applications determined with 8 weeks	88.89	92.57	85.2	85	84.64	High		National target of 80% exceeded for other applications of 80%.
NI179 Value for Money - Total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains	New	NA	NA	1,046,000		High		Figures will be available later in the year.
NI180 Change of HB/CTB circumstances processed	New	N/A	N/A	11,500	13,419	High		

Failing  Behind Target  On or above target 

Performance Indicator	Historic 07/08	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Target 08/09	2008/09	Good is?	Status	Commentary
Corporate health								
NI181 Time taken to process new claims	New	N/A	N/A	15	11.2	Low		
NI182 satisfaction with regulatory services	New	NA	NA	NA	82%	High		Baseline year
NI189 - Flood and coastal erosion risk management	New	NA	NA	NA	100%	High		

Failing  Behind Target  On or above target 

We asked, you said - we did/are doing

Lancaster City Council 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.

The council has carried out approximately 62 consultations in 2008/09. Below are a few examples on how the results have been used.

We Asked	You Said	We Did/Are Doing
<p>Play ground closures in Whinsfell View and Wingate Avenue – January/February 2008</p> <p>This was due to anti social behaviour and equipment being in a poor state.</p>	<p>Whinsfell View - there was a 28 response rate - 21 in agreement with and 7 were against the proposal.</p> <p>Wingate Avenue - there were 92 responses - 73 in agreement; 16 against, 3 uncommitted to the proposal.</p>	<p>The play equipment was removed in June/July 2008.</p> <p>A focus group was held in August 200 at the Dukes to provide people with a chance to discuss the issues in more detail.</p>
<p>An online survey on Women's Cycling took place in April 2008.</p>	<p>350 responses were received to the online survey which was open to women in the Lancaster District.</p> <p>Some key results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79% of respondents owned a bike (or had one available to them) • 20% said cycling was their main mode of transport - 51% said that the car (as driver) was their main mode • 40% cycle at least weekly, while 8% never cycle • 27% regularly cycle to work • 62% were confident or average cyclists; 33% were not confident and 4% could not cycle • The 5 main advantage of cycling were: physical health (97%), environmentally friendly (85%), low cost (82%), being outdoors (77%) and mental health (65%). 	<p>A leaflet has been produced 'women on wheels – guided cycle rides' and a number of events of events have been/are being run.</p> <p>For more information visit www.celebratingcycling.org or phone 01524 582392/01524 582616.</p>

We Asked	You Said	We Did/Are Doing
	<p>The 5 main disadvantages were: weather (77%), road safety (74%), carrying loads (63%), personal safety (49%) and bike security (43%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% expressed an interest in maintenance training, 40% in on road cycle training and 29% in off road training • 83% of respondents were possibly interested in cycling more 	
Plans for Regents Park	<p>We received 102 questionnaire responses which gave a consultation response of 34%</p> <p>The results showed that the preferred top improvements were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park warden • Toilets • More festivals/events • Separate dog area • Sensory wildlife/relaxation area • Improved Lighting 	<p>The survey results helped to support a Community Design grant application.</p> <p>All the identified physical top improvement elements have been fed into the park design, although, the dog training area have not gone ahead due to health & safety issues.</p>
A postal Lifeline Connect Service customer satisfaction survey took place in April 2008.	<p>The results showed a high satisfaction with the service.</p> <p>Many people said that it has made them feel more secure and helped them to keep their independence.</p>	As a result a marketing sub group has been set up to promote the service and improve take up numbers. The system is now available to everyone in the district not just council tenants.
Sheltered housing (Prospect Grove/Penhale walk Gardens and Altham) management - April 2008.	There was an overwhelming positive response when residents were asked if the service had improved since the pilot residential management scheme had taken place.	Community facilities have been extended and upstairs guest rooms have been approved.
<p>During the Summer School Holiday's of 2008, Lancaster City Council's Children's Playschemes took place.</p> <p>Leisure Development delivered Playschemes at the following sites over the summer;</p>	535 places were offered in total. A cross section of playscheme attendees were asked to complete a playscheme consultation form for which we received 150 respondents.	The results will be used to improve this year's playscheme programme.

We Asked	You Said	We Did/Are Doing
<p>Heysham Methodist Church, Morecambe High School, Ellel School, Cockerham Village hall, Warton Village Hall, Carnforth High School, Morecambe Youth & Community Centre, Barton Rd Community Centre, St Pauls Parish Hall Scotforth, Hornby High School, Halton Community Centre.</p>	<p>There was a positive response from a mixture of gender and age groups. The majority were keen to take part in a scheme again.</p>	
<p>Tenants' Den - August 2008</p> <p>How did housing tenants from across the district want the council's £58,000 Annual Environmental Budget to be spent?</p>	<p>There were 170 responses.</p> <p>12 tenants expressed an interest in getting further involved and range of ideas were provided for spending the Environmental Budget.</p>	<p>The results were presented to the District Wide Tenants' Forum / Cabinet Liaison Group and a sub group was set up from a variety of areas (including rural) and spending was prioritised as follows:</p> <p>The majority of the money about £40,000, has been spent on improving lighting to sheltered housing schemes and bungalows.</p> <p>£5,000 has been set aside to allow all council tenants to have two free bulky matters collections of up to three items twice a year. £2,000 has been set aside for skips – these will be used to tidy up estates or help community groups carry out litter picks etc.</p>
<p>Children and Young People's Special Council Event - October 2008</p>	<p>Below are some of the comments young people made on their evaluation sheets:</p> <p>What was the best bit for you? And why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking/meeting/presenting in front of the councillors • Feed back from the councillors because it was interesting to hear what they had to say • The best bit was getting to hear that the councillors want to also make a change 	<p>The comments and suggestions from the day have formed the basis of the draft Council's Youth Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>A feedback pack including a DVD of the day has been sent to everyone who attended or helped out on the day.</p> <p>The young participants and the school/youth councils will soon have the opportunity of feeding back on the strategy in its draft form and will OK the final draft that will then be approved by Council.</p>

We Asked	You Said	We Did/Are Doing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting new people and hearing their views • Expressing opinions and hearing from other people • All of it because it was good <p>How could we make it better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be honest, not much • More activities • One to one discussion with councillors • Actually do anything about the points we made • More time <p>Do you think this event has been successful? Yes</p> <p>31 – unanimous</p>	
<p>New Crag Bank Play Area – December 2008</p>	<p>60 replies were received. 71.6% of responses supported the proposal to relocate and improve the play area, 16.6% had no strong opinion for or against and 11.6% were against the proposal.</p> <p>12 adults and 11 children attended the community centre sessions and gave their views.</p>	<p>These results were used to inform the decision to build the new play area - work finished at the end of March 2009.</p>