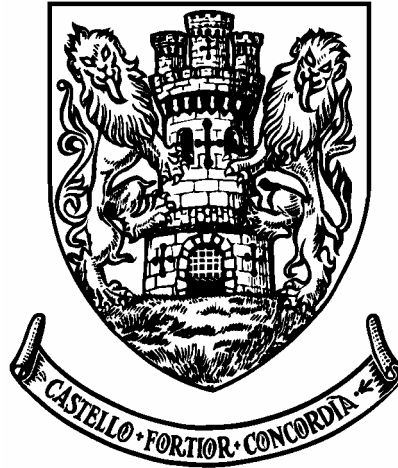


NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 26 June 2006

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, THE TWENTY SIXTH DAY OF JUNE 2006 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED:-

1. MINUTES.

To approve the minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Council held on 22nd May and the Annual Meeting held on 25th May 2006.

2. APOLOGIES.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES/QUESTIONS.

5. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURAL RULE 5.2.

6. NOTICES OF MOTION

(A) The following motion to be moved by Councillor Evans and seconded by Councillor Barron;-

“That procedural rule 3.4 be suspended to enable the following motion to be discussed and a vote taken”

1.”This Council notes the consultation by Northamptonshire County Council on who can receive community care services.

2.This Council expresses grave concern that the proposals to only invest and allow access to services to residents that are “Critical” and “Greater substantial” and believes it will;

Leave local citizens with care needs at risk

Leave vulnerable tenants in our housing with inadequate support

Risk destabilising voluntary and community groups in the town which the Borough Council jointly fund to provide support services for these citizens currently by the decommissioning of services.

3.This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the County Council putting forward these concerns as the formal position of the Borough Council

4.This Council instructs the Leader of the Council to make representations in the strongest possible terms to the Tory Administration of the County Council.”

(B)The following motion to be moved by Councillor Glynane (a seconder to be confirmed);-

“This Council instructs officers to submit a planning application to remove Delapre Park bunding along London Road, from the pond to the park gates.

This Council instructs officers to review and investigate the possibility of implementing all other appropriate measures to prevent unauthorised vehicles entering Delapre Park.”

7. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2006/07

(copy herewith)

8. PROGRESS ON RECOVERY PLAN

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN WORKING GROUP

(copy herewith)

10. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN

(report herewith)

11. CONSTITUTION - REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL

(report to follow)

12. REVENUE OUTURN 2005/06

(report to follow)

13. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

The Guildhall
Northampton
16th June, 2006

M.McLean Chief Executive



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Name of Committee	Council
Directorate:	Citizen, Governance & Finance
Corporate Manager:	Ella Yeshin
Date:	26th June 2006

Report Title	Corporate Plan 2006-2007
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Key Decision	NO
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1. Recommendations

<p>1. Receive the report with ammendments made from comments received during the draft plan's consultation period, and any comments and recommendations to Council from Improvement Board and Cabinet.</p>
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2. Summary

<p>To outline the process and decisions to date for the production of the Corporate Plan 2006 and for production of a further longer term Corporate Plan commencing this summer.</p> <p>To date the Draft Corporate Plan for 2006-2007 has been to the following meetings. The timetable for its development was agreed at Cabinet on the 8th May 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Board: 13th April 2006 • Corporate Planning session at Highgate House: 20th April 2006 • Overview & Scrutiny Committee: 3rd May 2006 • Cabinet: 8th May 2006 • Priority and Budget Planning session at Highgate House: 11th & 12th May 2006 • Discussions at political group meetings: 19th May 2006 • Improvement Board 15th June 2006
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3. Report Background

A Corporate Plan was approved for 2005–2006 that contained a new vision and a number of new priorities for the Council.

The need for an update of this Plan for this financial year was identified. Using the 2005-2006 Corporate Plan, Corporate Managers met to discuss and update the corporate priorities in preparation for the development of a new Corporate Plan. Consequently a number of draft papers that outlined draft priorities and a timetable to get the plan to completion and approval were put together for a meeting of the Improvement Board on the 13th April.

At the meeting of the Improvement Board on the 13th May there was a general discussion regarding the merit of producing a Corporate Plan at this point of the financial year. It was agreed that Councillors would consider this matter and discuss it further at the meeting scheduled to take place at Highgate House on the 20th April 2006. This meeting would also discuss the draft corporate priorities in further detail.

This first meeting at Highgate House was attended by most of the members of the Cabinet, Councillors from the Liberal Democrat and Labour groups, the Chief Executive, Director of Citizen, Governance & Finance and Corporate Managers.

Those at Highgate considered whether or not there was in fact a need to produce a Corporate Plan for the remainder of this financial year at all, but came to the conclusion that the vision and direction which such a plan would produce was necessary as a starting point for the BVPP which is a statutory requirement. However the two plans whilst sharing common elements need to look different in that the Corporate Plan is strategic and directive in nature and the BVPP is about how improvement in performance will be achieved.

The Highgate meeting also considered those service areas that might need to be provided in a different way given the Council's priorities. A list of service areas, titled "Best Value Issues" had been put together by Corporate Managers and was discussed at the workshop so that Councillors could further consider these against their updated priorities.

At the conclusion of the Highgate House meeting the following approach was agreed:

- The Council's Corporate Plan would be developed in two parts:
 - I. A Corporate Plan for 2006 – 2007 would be developed for approval at Full Council at the end of June 2006. This Corporate Plan would be a compendium of this year's work under the agreed priorities and would focus on improving services. It was understood that the plan would not be founded on public consultation but would act as a precursor to the production of a full and proper Corporate Plan for 2007-2010.
 - II. A Corporate Plan for 2007 – 2010 would be developed and would include thorough public consultation, and the development of a new vision for the town produced in line with the corporate planning framework, and allowing the various processes such as consultation, budget planning etc to occur in the correct order at the correct time of the year.

- Further work would be undertaken on the potential non-priority issues for the priority and budget planning meeting scheduled for the 11th & 12th of May at Highgate House.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Plan on the 3rd of May and made recommendations to Cabinet about how they could be involved in any future development of the Corporate Plan and also where they could add value to the Corporate Planning Framework. They expressed concerns around the Plan being on the private part of the agenda given its very public purpose.

Cabinet met on the 8th of May and considered the draft Plan and agreed the timetable and arrangements for its further development.

On the 11th and 12th May the same delegates met again at Highgate House to agree the Council's priorities and non-priorities in respect of producing a balanced budget for 2007-2008.

Following all the above activities a new draft Plan was circulated for comment. An amended version is attached. In addition but highlighted separately in section 4 are a number of more far reaching comments.

4. Options and Evaluation of Options

The following comments have been received:

- a. The milestones within the action plan should be removed thereby reflecting the Plans more strategic nature. The milestones would continue to exist but would be found within the Recovery Plan and individual service plans.
- b. The targets set to raise the performance of the bottom quartile Best Value Performance Indicators should be contained in the Corporate Plan but should also sign post readers to the Best Value Performance Plan where they are more extensively reviewed and explained.
- c. The milestones within the Recovery Plan and service plans need to be updated whether or not they remain within the Corporate Plan.

5. Resource Implications (including Financial Implications)

There are currently no financial implications, however further reports will highlight the costs of public consultation associated with the production of the longer term Corporate Plan.

6. Risk and Opportunity Issues

Failure to develop an appropriate Corporate Plan within the timescales will lead to a negative impact on the CPA score and local people will be unaware of how the Council is planning to better meet their needs in the future.

If the objectives within the Corporate Plan are written too broadly this could lead to lack of focus on what should and should not be prioritised and result in investment of resources in the wrong place and ultimately an inability to balance the budget.

7. Consultees (Internal and External)

Internal	Cabinet, Improvement Board, Overview & Scrutiny, Group meetings, Chief Executive, Directors, Corporate Managers
External	Not applicable on this occasion

8. Compliance Issues

A: How Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes

Recovery Plan
The production of a Corporate Plan for 2005-2006 addresses the comments made in the original CPA report and raised in the subsequent CPA "Direction of Travel" published in March 2006
Corporate Plan
Not applicable

B: Other Implications

Other Strategies
Provides direction to policy and strategy development.
Finance Comments
Legal Comments

9. Background Papers

Title	Description	Source
None		

This is a decision of:

Full Council

Name	Signature	Date	Ext.
Author	Simone Wade, Operational Manager – Recovery, Policy & Governance	31 st May 2006	8569
Corporate Manager	Ella Yeshin, Legal & Democratic Services	31 st May 2006	7431
Director	Mario Abela, Citizen, Governance & Finance	31 st May 2006	7870
Monitoring Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			
Section 151 Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			

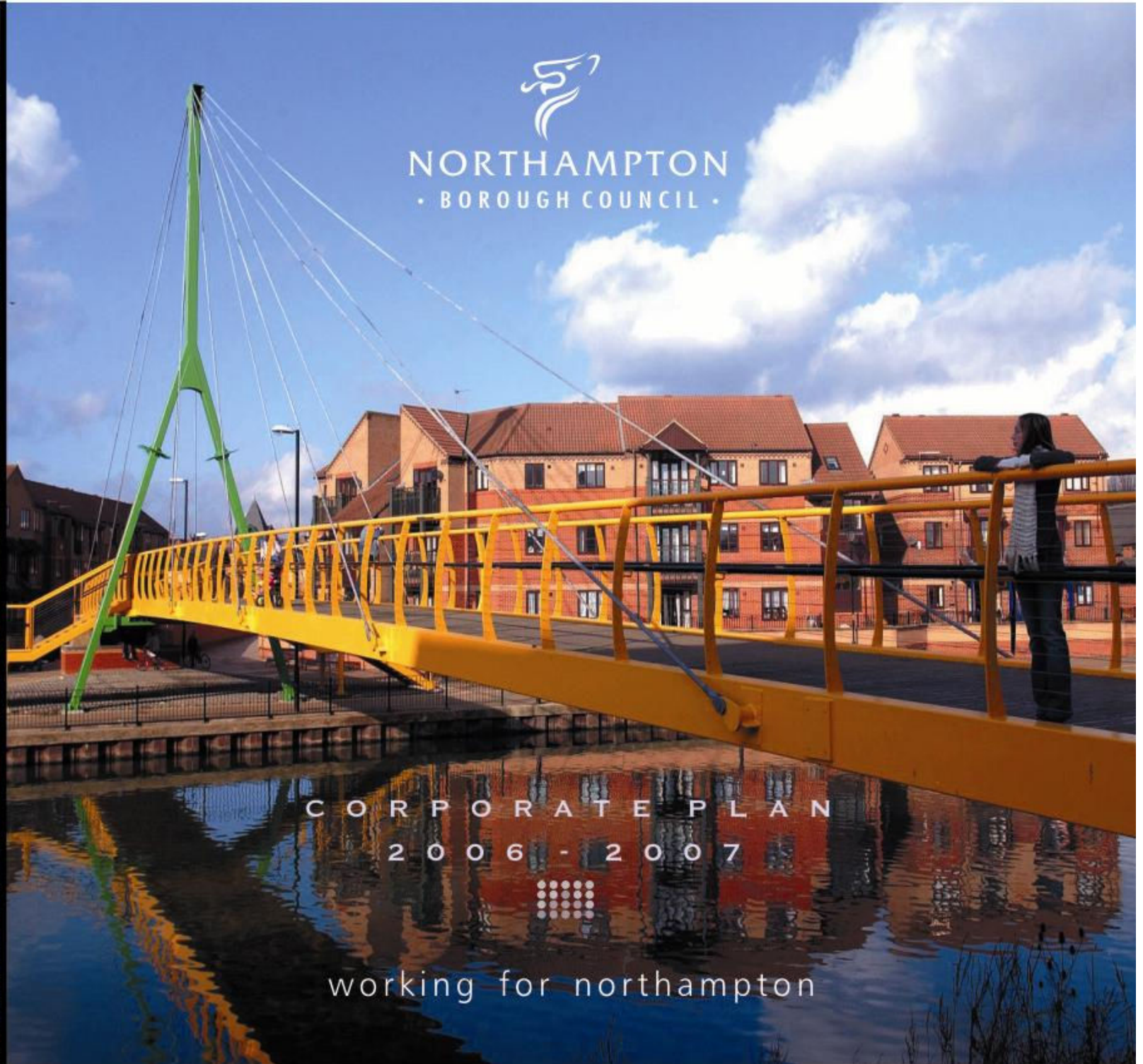


NORTHAMPTON
• BOROUGH COUNCIL •

C O R P O R A T E P L A N
2 0 0 6 - 2 0 0 7



working for northampton



This document is Northampton Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2006/2007, and explains the Council's ambitions and priorities. If English is not your first language and you need help in translating this document, contact Simone Wade on 01604 838569

Bengali

এটি হলো নর্থাম্পটন বোর কাউন্সিলের 2006/07 সালের কর্পোরেট প্ল্যান, যা কাউন্সিলের লক্ষ্য ও অগ্রাধিকারগুলো বর্ণনা করে। ইংরেজী যদি আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হয় এবং এ কাগজপত্রের অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন হয় তবে সান সিলভার ফে 01604 838569 এ নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese

這份文件是諾咸頓市議會提出的 2006/07 年度綜合規劃，內容說明市議會的抱負和優先推展項目。如果英語不是你使用的主要語言而需要翻譯這份文件的幫助，請致電與 Simone Wade 聯絡，電話 01604 838569

Vietnamese

Văn kiện này là Bản Kế Hoạch Tổng Hợp Niên Khóa 2006/07 của Hội Đồng Thành Phố Northampton, nội dung giải thích các hoài bão và việc ưu tiên của Hội Đồng. Nếu tiếng Anh không phải là ngôn ngữ chính của quý vị và quý vị cần giúp đỡ phiên dịch văn kiện này, hãy gọi điện thoại số 01604 838569 liên lạc với Simone Wade

Gujarati

આ દસ્તાવેજ નોર્થમ્પટન બોરો કાઉન્સિલનો 2006/07 માટેનો કોર્પોરેટ પ્લાન છે, અને તે કાઉન્સિલની મહત્વાકાંક્ષાઓ અને અગ્રતાઓ સમજાવે છે. જો અંગ્રેજી તમારી પહેલી ભાષા ન હોય અને તમને આ દસ્તાવેજના ભાષાંતરમાં મદદ જોઈતી હોય, તો શોન સિલ્વરનો 01604 838569 ઉપર સંપર્ક કરો.

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੋਰਥਮਪਟਨ ਬੋਰੋ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੀ ਸੋਮਲਿਤ ਯੋਜਨਾ 2006/07 ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੇ ਉਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਭਰਜੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸ਼ੋਨ ਸਿਲਵਰ ਨਾਲ 01604 838569 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Romanian

Acest document din planul colectiv al Consiliului Northampton pe anul 2006/07 explică ambițiile și prioritățile Consiliului. Dacă engleza nu e limba dv. principală și aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru traducerea acestui document, contactați-l pe Simone Wade la numărul 01604 838569.

Swahili

Dokumentigan ah Northampton Borough Council 's Corporate Plan 2006/07, wuxuuna sharxayaa Koonsalka hiyilgisa iyo mudnaantooda. Haddii uu Ingiriisiga iuuqadaada koowaad ahayn oo aadna caawimaad uga baahahan tahay in dokumentigan lagu turjumo, lasoo xiriir Simone Wade 01604 838569

Somali

Kanuni hii ni ya Northampton Mpango wa Borough Council's Corporate ya kipindi cha 2006/07 na inaelezea mipango ya maendeleo na kipaumbele. Kama English siyo Lugha yako ya kwanza na unahitaji tafsiri ya kanuni hii, wasiliana na Simone Wade simu namba 01604 838569.

Urdu

یہ ڈاکومنٹ نارٹھمپٹن بورو کونسل کے کارپوریٹ پلان 2006/07 میں شامل ہے، اور یہ کونسل کی اہمگوں اور ترجیحات کی وضاحت کرتا ہے۔ اگر انگریزی آپ کی اپنی زبان نہیں ہے، اور آپ کو اس ڈاکومنٹ کے ترجمے میں مددگار ہوتو، براہ کرم Simone Wade سے رابطہ کریں۔ 01604 838569 پر شان سلور (Simone Wade) سے رابطہ کریں۔

LARGE PRINT & TAPE

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- Telephone: 01604 837837
- Or visit: www.northampton.gov.uk

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OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES FOR THE TOWN

The Council's **Vision**:

“We will work with, and for, the people of Northampton to build an increasingly prosperous, healthy, safe and attractive town of which we are proud. We will strive to maximize and sustain opportunities for all.”



We believe in a number of principles and ideals by which we work with each other, local people and with our partners in delivering services. They are the **values** by which we conduct ourselves.

We will be:

- Councillor led
- Citizen focused
- Open & accountable

In all that we do, we will:

- Strive for excellence
- Embrace diversity
- Work together
- Lead and empower people
- Plan for a better future
- Deliver sustainable communities



We will achieve our Vision through our **priorities**. These will direct our work and resources for 2006-2007.

Our **priorities** are to:

1. Listen to local people and provide the services they need
2. Improve Northampton's housing by focusing on & improving our weakest services:
 - Revenues & Benefits
 - Void properties
 - Decent homes standard
 - Homelessness
3. Invest in the regeneration of the Town, providing economic development & growth
4. Make Northampton a cleaner, safer & greener place to live
5. Manage the Council's finances effectively
6. Improve our performance to be fit for all our purposes

Our **priorities** are supported by a range of **specific, measurable targets & actions** which allow us to know if we have been successful in meeting our aims and focus on areas for improvement. They are listed in our BVPP and in our Recovery Plan

Our Corporate Plan For This Year (2006 - 2007)

Following a poor Corporate Performance Assessment in 2004 the Audit Commission have revisited the Borough and agreed that we are now making slow but visible progress in our recovery. This is thanks to the great efforts of our councillors and all of our staff.

We are ultimately aiming for excellence but are very aware that we still have some distance to travel and need to raise our game if we are to complete our recovery. We are clear what we are aiming for and are confident we can achieve this. The foundations to achieve sustainable change and improve service delivery are in place and the Council has made dedicated efforts in implementing the community leadership structures, management structure and systems necessary to ensure success. This year we are concentrating on improving our weakest services.

Our priorities are to:

1. Listen to local people and provide the services they need
2. Improve Northampton's housing by focusing on & improving our weakest services
 - Revenues & Benefits
 - Void properties
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 - Homelessness
3. Invest in the regeneration of the Town, providing economic development & growth
4. Make Northampton a cleaner, safer & greener place to live
5. Manage the Council's finances effectively
6. Improve our performance to be fit for all our purpose

We vow to make service improvements that benefit all our citizens

We care about vulnerable people and are making things better for them by focusing on:

- Reducing the numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation
- Working to prevent homelessness

We are putting Citizens first through our new and dedicated work in:

- Engagement, consultation and communications
- Community development initiatives
- Renewed vigilance in community safety
- Working with partners

We are making services better for all local people by improving:

- The way you can access the Council
- The speed and ease with which you can claim housing benefits which we will process accurately
- The quality of our housing
- Our collection of council taxes
- Our “Streetscene” – the way the town looks
- Our website and new technology ways of accessing services
- Access and information about our planning services
- The quality of leisure services
- Upgrading the local environment

.....and keeping us all safer by increasing the number of neighbourhood wardens on our streets

We know we need to work differently...

We believe you know what will make a difference...

We value your feedback and suggestions as to how we might serve you and your community better!

PRIORITIES

The targets that underpin the delivery of the priorities listed here are set out in the Best Value Performance Plan which you can find on our website.

As a Council, we will continually strive to make the town a great place to live and work. We want to be a Council that is inclusive, focused on our customers and working with local people, partners and employees. We do not underestimate the journey ahead of us to become a high performing Council and we have developed a Recovery Plan that will help us improve over the coming years. This plan can be found on our website and lists the activities we will undertake.

The focus of this Corporate Plan is on how the Council can provide the best possible services to local people this financial year,

Priority 1: Listen to local people and provide the services they need

Northampton Borough Council is at the heart of the town's communities, listening to the needs of local people. We recognise that improvement in service quality is only part of the story. The Council is changing its whole focus, putting local people first in all that we do. This is a fundamental priority for us.

The Council went through major internal change last year. This involved looking closely at how all our services and activities were designed and delivered to meet the needs of all our customers, local people, partners and other stakeholders. We have completed this work and now need to listen to you about the services you want for the future. We recognise and celebrate the diversity of the people and communities that we serve and so will design and deliver services in response to these needs, wants and aspirations within the resources available.

Customers, local people, partners and other stakeholders will be able to express their needs regularly in a variety of ways, including an annual survey, service specific consultation, community forums, area partnerships, improvement clinics and Council meetings. Information from these will be used to design, develop and improve services.

Communication is at the heart of what we are doing and we will ensure that people are able to express their needs and views to us easily and that we respond to their concerns. We are building an improved customer care culture.

Priority 2: Improve Northampton's housing by focusing on & improving our weakest services:

- **Revenues & Benefits**
- **Void properties**
- **Decent homes standard**
- **Homelessness**

We regret how long it currently takes to process claims for benefits by some of the most vulnerable people in our community. The targets that we have set will bring about an improvement and give those who need help a better deal however they contact us, and that we will provide benefit to as many people as we can who need help.

The Council will represent the views of all local people to make sure that Northampton gets a fair deal from the planned future growth of the town, so that any development lasts and that decent affordable homes are available for all.

Priority 3: Invest in the planning and regeneration of the Town, providing economic development & growth

We are a growing town. Northampton has been identified by the government as a major area for growth. The West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) has been established to drive the regeneration and development of the area (Northampton, Daventry & Towcester). WNDC will work with its partners to deliver the best possible solution.

Northampton Borough council is playing a strong and influential role in the renewal agenda, making sure that local peoples' view are represented and the best outcomes delivered for the future of the town.

This year we will make clear information available on planning enforcement services so that local people can contribute easily to creating a well-developed town.

The Council wants economic prosperity for all. We will make sure that new investment delivers the regeneration of Northampton. This will help reduce deprivation across the town.

We recognise that the significant growth of the town will have a major impact on how the Council reshapes its services to meet the future challenges and demands.

Priority 4: Make Northampton a cleaner, safer & greener place to live

We know that local people, our customers and partners want a town that is free from graffiti, gum, litter and abandoned vehicles. We will work in partnership to reduce the levels of these.

We will be tough on those who behave in an anti-social manner, in particular those who vandalise, dump rubbish and drop litter. We will issue a fixed penalty notice in all appropriate cases.

We know that safety and the reduction of crime is important to local people, customers and our partners in making Northampton a place where you want to live, work, shop and visit.

Priority 5: Manage the Council's finances effectively

The level at which we choose to set our council tax and the level of our income from government mean that we can not provide every service that local people would like to see, so we have to prioritise to make sure we provide services people most need. The Council has worked hard to clarify its priorities and to identify those areas that are not a priority for this year. We will be consulting you about this.

Some resources have already been redistributed to priority areas. This has meant a reduction or cessation in some service areas. Once these priority areas improve we will look at better resourcing other areas.

The Council is considering a number of options that will allow it to reap the financial benefits that it would not be able to gain if it continued to run certain services itself. These savings will be re-invested in priority services.

Current work and future development of our approach to procurement will achieve the government's targets for efficiency.

Priority 6: Improve our performance to be fit for all our purposes

We want to be a Council that enables staff to do the best job they can. We do this by providing clear direction, good management and training, then we set targets and measure performance.

We will recruit, retain and develop the necessary skills and competencies in people required to deliver our services and future priorities, and have built the necessary leadership capacity to motivate employees and sustain improved performance.

Services prioritised for rapid improvement

Some of our key performance indicators are currently in the bottom quartile with regards to performance. This means they are doing less well for you than similar services in most other councils. We are working to change this.

Those indicators where we have the lowest levels of performance when compared with other councils are set out below and our priorities are designed to move all out of the bottom quartile as soon as possible.

Indicator Description	Outturn 2005/06	Target 2006/07
Percentage council tax collected in the year.	95.45%	98.5%
Housing benefit – the number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload	53.35	195*
Housing benefit – average time for processing new claims	57.6 days	36* days
Housing benefit - average time for processing changes in notification	24.4 days	9 days
Housing benefit – accuracy of processing	83%	98%*
Housing – rent collection and arrears – the proportion of rent collected	96.04%	97.5%
Number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee year	16.12 days	11.5 days
Percentage of employees retiring early	2.64%	0.8%
Percentage of invoices for commercial goods paid within 30 days of receipt	86.89%	93%
Number of vehicle crimes per year per 1,000 population	21.6 crimes	18.12 crimes
Number of domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	22.1 burglaries	17.47 burglaries
Cost of household waste collection per household per year	£51.72	£48.00

* Targets to be confirmed in consultation with DWP/GOEM

Our Corporate Plan for the next three years (2007 – 2010)

The Council has already started the process of developing its next Corporate Plan.

This next Plan will cover a longer time horizon (the period from 2007 to 2010) and include robust vision, ambitions and priorities for the future of Northampton. We will have absolute clarity in our vision for the future built through consultation with all our communities.

The Corporate Plan for 2007-2010 will be based on the needs and views of local people, businesses, our partners and other stakeholders and will show an integrated approach to priority setting and allocating resources. We will need to set a balanced budget that will deliver our ambitions and priorities.

We have already started work in looking at areas that are not a priority for 2007-2010 and will be consulting you about your views on these. We will tell you the results of the consultation and those non-priority areas in the Corporate Plan for 2007-2010.

In order to focus on our priorities, we need to review those activities we undertake that don't contribute to those priorities.

In order to move on and improve so that we offer you as good, or better, services as other councils we will need to disinvest in non-priority areas to enable us to target resources on those priority areas that have the most profound impact on the lives of local people.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Council is led by the Cabinet, which is responsible for day-to-day decision-making. The Cabinet is led by the Leader of the Council. The Cabinet is comprised of six Councillors of the largest political party who form a minority administration in a Council with no overall control. Each member of the Cabinet is responsible for a portfolio of services.

Alongside the Cabinet there is the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This committee holds the Cabinet to account for their decisions. They also review services, monitor performance, contribute to the development of policies and can investigate anything that affects the people of Northampton, even things the Council is not responsible for. Much of the Committee's work is done through Task and Finish groups. The Committee's meetings are not just open to the public, but actively involve the public in many different ways, including raising issues for investigation.

The Council has implemented a new, innovative way of working, by creating the Improvement Board with cross party representation. The main duties of the Board are to set the priorities for the Council and oversee and manage the implementation of all measures necessary to achieve improvement, meet targets and priorities and satisfy the Audit Commission and the Secretary of State that the Council is performing to an acceptable level.

The Audit Committee is composed of six Councillors two from each political group excluding members of the Cabinet. The main purpose of the committee is to ensure that the Council provides value for money, manages risk effectively and observes financial probity.

Full Council, made up from all the Councillors, is mainly responsible for approving the Council's Policy Framework and Budget.

The public are able to attend and speak at all these meetings. For more information contact Meeting Services on (01604) 837101

There are also a number of regulatory committees that oversee issues such as planning and licensing.

Each committee is supported and advised by a senior member of staff.

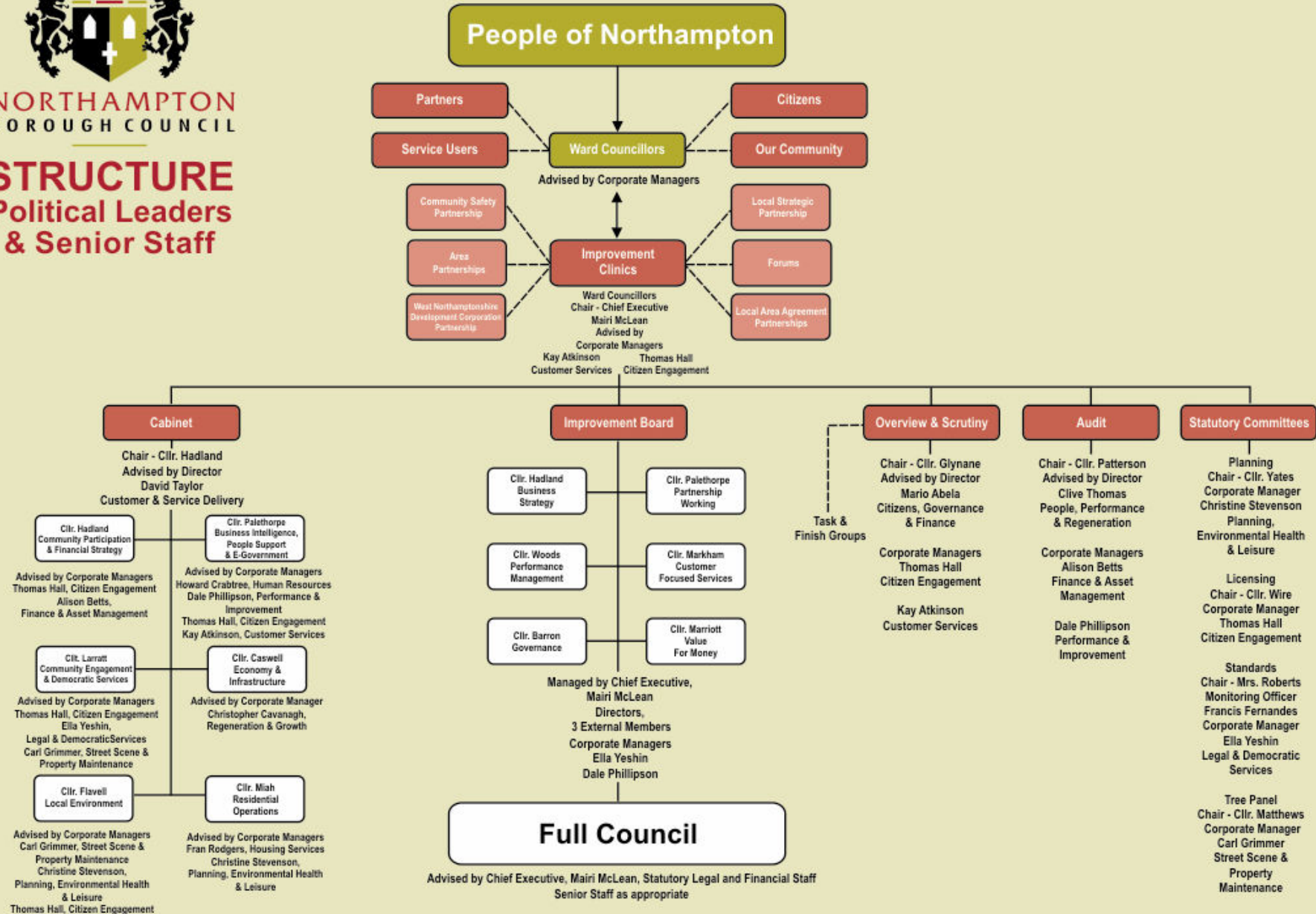
The Councillors employ managers and staff to carry out their decisions so that you feel the benefit of them.

The following diagram shows the governance structure for the Council.....



**NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

STRUCTURE Political Leaders & Senior Staff



How will we deliver our plan

The behaviours below set out how people will act to make our values real, which in turn will help the Council to achieve its vision. The attitudes and activities set a new standard for all our Councillors and employees and show what we expect to see happening every day.

How we will treat our citizens and partners

All local people, customers, partners and other stakeholders of Northampton and Northampton Borough Council will be treated with respect as described below:

Councillors and employees will...

- Be courteous, polite and treat each other with respect
- Treat each other as individuals with individual needs
- Be easy to speak to and be easy to understand
- Be prepared to change our approach to work well together
- Work collaboratively with partners in the best interests of the people of Northampton

Managers' and employees' responsibilities

All employees have an equally valuable part to play in making the Council a success. Employees are accountable and responsible for meeting the Council's standards and providing good, value for money services. Therefore all employees will be given the opportunity to understand what is expected of them.

Managers will....

- Make sure employees are clear about what is expected of them
- Respect employees' individual contribution
- Be approachable, motivating and supportive
- Treat everyone in a fair and even-handed manner
- Act on information and play an active role
- Communicate and feed back

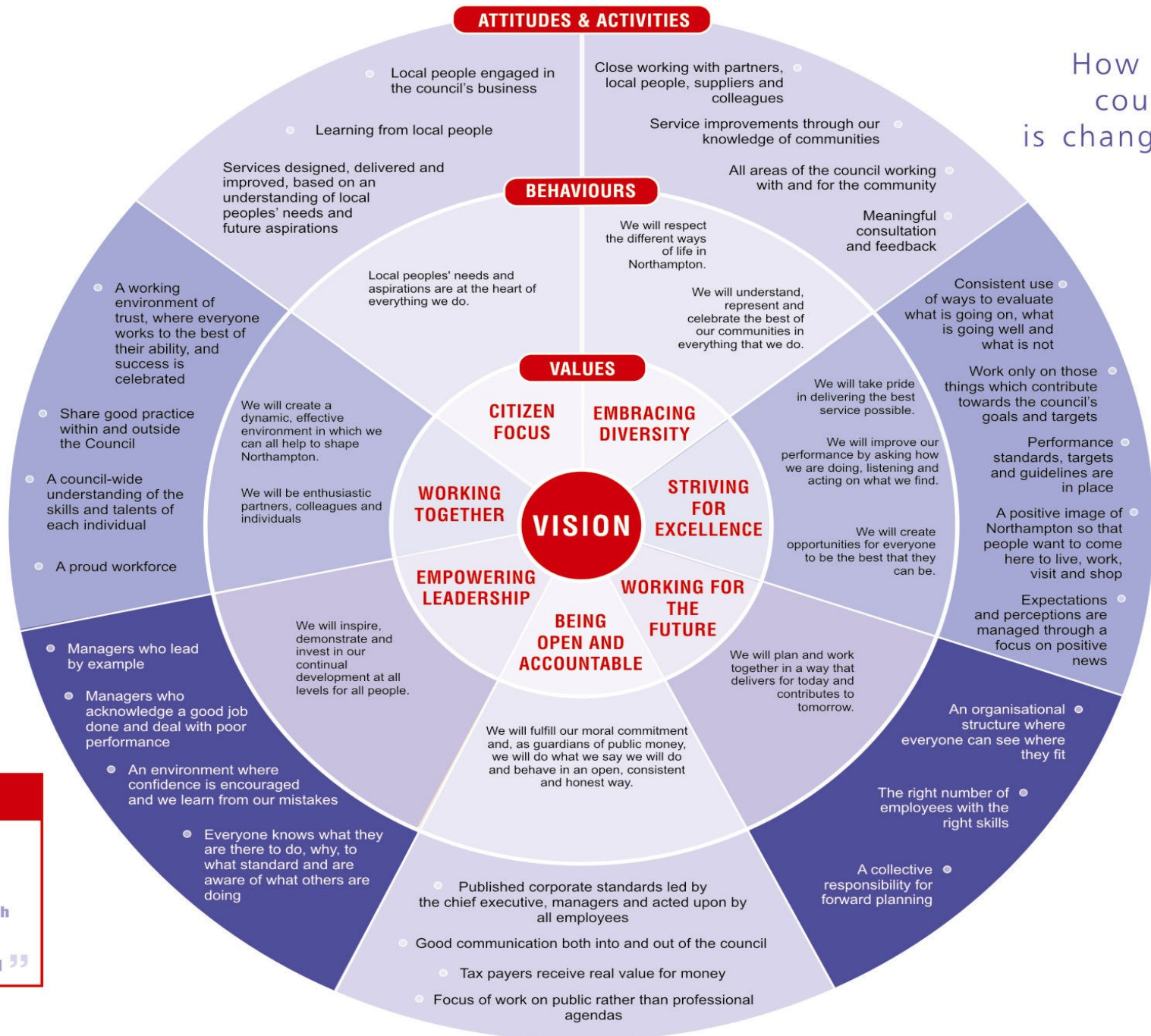
Employees will...

- Show commitment and personal responsibility for what they do
- Understand the need to prioritise and meet deadlines
- Work together and use initiative to solve problems and help improve services
- Work co-operatively as one organisation
- Have performance and development meetings with their manager
- Be invited to and expected to attend regular team meetings
- Be offered training and development to enable them to reach their full potential

These changes will make a difference to the way we treat local people, customers, partners and other stakeholders and to the quality of the service we offer.



How the council is changing



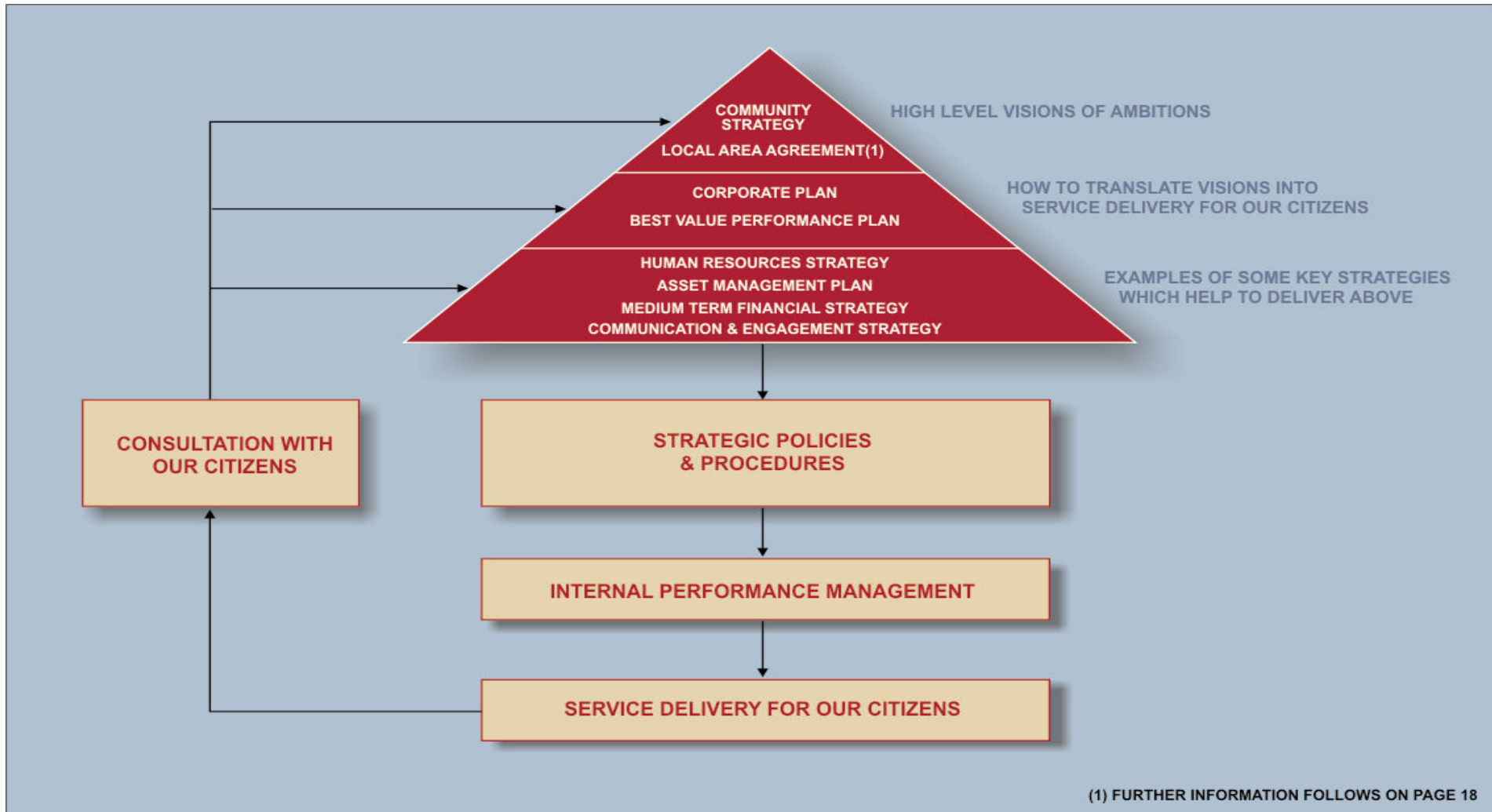
OUR VISION

“ We will work with, and, for the people of Northampton to build an increasingly prosperous, healthy, safe and attractive town of which we are all proud. We will strive to maximise and sustain opportunities for all ”

How the Corporate Plan Fits with other Plans

The Corporate Plan does not exist in isolation but is part of a bigger framework, working with other plans to make sure that we all focus our efforts on achieving the vision for the future of the town.

The Corporate Plan is central to our performance management framework, translating our ambitions into priorities, targets and actions, so that we all understand how we contribute to what the Council is trying to achieve.



Our new way of working with others for you is called the Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are a central government initiative. The agreements are between public and voluntary sector which provide public services in an area. The agreement is about joint working to improve the quality of life for local people.

The Northamptonshire LAA is made up of four 'blocks':

- Children & Young People
- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Healthier Communities & Older People
- Economic Development, Growth and Enterprise

For each of the above 'blocks' there are a number of outcomes. These are as follows:

Safer and Stronger Communities Block –

- To significantly improve the quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged (rural and urban) areas by developing and implementing neighbourhood approaches through the neighbourhood renewal strategy target areas
- To reduce crime, increase public confidence and reduce the fear of crime, reduce the harm of drug, substance and alcohol abuse and reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour
- To reduce the number of avoidable injuries
- To strengthen communities by supporting development of the Voluntary and Community Sector, giving people a greater voice and influence over decision making and developing cohesive communities
- To create cleaner, safer and greener communities

Economic Development, Enterprise and Growth Block –

- To increase skill levels in the labour market to ensure that labour supply is inclusive and meets the needs of the county's employers both now and in the future
- To promote growth in the number of enterprises in Northamptonshire, with a specific focus on knowledge economy employers, and maximise the benefits of their growth all, but particularly for excluded communities
- To increase the affordability, supply, quality and condition of housing in Northamptonshire
- To increase the accessibility of communities to meet their needs and maximise their opportunities

Children and Young People Block –

- To ensure children and young people achieve healthy life-styles by avoiding obesity, substance misuse and unplanned teenage pregnancy
- To ensure children and young people enjoy improved mental health through high quality services
- To provide a safe environment for children and young people by better multi- agency services supporting families
- To improve the life-chances for a) children with disabilities b) looked after children
- To improve educational attainment and enjoyment (including increased access to recreation and leisure)
- To improve attendance, raise levels of behaviour and reduce incidences of bullying
- To overcome social, accommodation and economic disadvantage for children and young people through collaborative service approaches
- To increase the proportion of young people accessing education, employment, training or volunteering post-16
- To increase opportunities for children and young people to influence the way services are provided
- To reduce the number of children and young people affected by offending and victimisation

Healthier Communities and Older People Block –

- Supporting independent living for Older People
- Increasing the quality of life and reducing social isolation for Older People
- Reducing health inequalities for the population of Northamptonshire
- Improving the health of the population of Northamptonshire
- Reduce poverty and the effects of poverty in Northamptonshire by supporting people to maximise their income through benefits and debt management

The partners of the LAA include Northampton Borough Council, district and county councils, the police, the health authority and the voluntary sector.

The priorities, activities, outcomes and targets have been set to ensure that we make our contribution towards the above outcomes.

Customer Feedback:

We want to hear from you whether we have got it right or wrong so we can improve services.

If you make a complaint we will take it seriously and investigate the matter quickly and fairly. We will monitor information about the type of complaints we receive and use this to make sure we improve the service. We would also like to hear from you when we get things right. We can use this information to help us get it right in other areas.

Where to go first..... If you want to complain about something that we have or have not done, the first step is to contact the department concerned. You can tell them what the problem is over the phone, or you can fill in one of our complaint forms. The form is called "*Something to tell us?*" and copies are available on the Council's website; www.northampton.gov.uk or from any Council office. Each service area is responsible for investigating your complaint in a fair, thorough and even-handed way. We hope that your complaint will be successfully resolved this is stage.

What to do next.....You should hear about your complaint within 10 working days. You can take the matter further until you feel the issue has been resolved. Here is how you can do this:

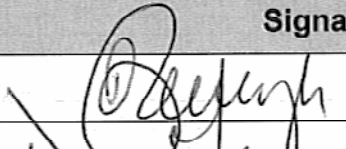
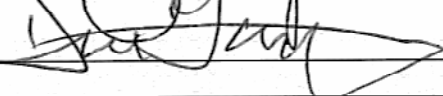
- You have the right to have your complaint looked at by an independent person. You can do this by writing to one of the Council's Corporate Managers. They will look into the issue and get back to you in writing within 10 working days
- If you are not happy with what the Corporate Manager has to say, you can bring your concerns to the Chief Executive, Mrs Mairi McLean. You can contact her by e-mail on cetc@northampton.gov.uk, or you can write to her at the Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE. You can also contact her by telephone on (01604) 837726.
- If you would like your local Councillor to look into the matter please contact them directly. To find out who your local Councillor is, you can phone (01604) 837100 or look on the Council's website.
- If you are still not satisfied you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman, who is independent of Northampton Borough Council, on:

The Oaks No2
Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
COVENTRY
CV4 8JB

Agenda Item 10



Committee	Council	Meeting Date	26/06/2006
Report Title	Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07		
Agenda Item No.		Version Number	0

Actioned:			
Position	Signature	Date	Ext
Corporate Manager		16/6/06	
Corporate Director		15/6/06	

Report of:	
Directorate	People, Performance and Regeneration
Author Name & Ext	Dale Phillipson, Corporate Manager ext 8273

Key Decision	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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1. Purpose and Brief Summary of report

Production of an annual 'Best Value Performance Plan' by 30th June is a statutory requirement for all local authorities. The production process for this year's BVPP commenced earlier than in the past two years, and draft versions of the plan have been considered by Improvement Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. The plan reflects the Corporate Plan and sets out three-year targets for service areas, in addition to reporting the outrun data for 2005/06.

2. Recommendations

That Council approve the Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07 for publication by 30th June 2006.

3. Relevant Background

Our BVPP last year was 'qualified' by external audit owing to its late submission. The Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group report on the BVPP process sets out relevant background.

4. Evaluation of Alternative Options

	Option	Evaluation Summary
a	None	
b		
c		
d		

5. Consultees [internal and external]

Internal	Improvement Board; O+S Task and Finish Group; SCMT.
External	KPMG (external audit)

6. Compliance Issues

Links to relevant Council Priorities	
Recovery Plan	Yes - BVPP reflects and references the Recovery Plan
Corporate Plan	Yes - the BVPP reflects and references the Corporate Plan
Links with / Impact on other Strategies	Yes - various explicit links set out in the BVPP.
Resource Implications	None

Legal Implications	Publication by 30th June 2006 is a statutory requirement. Failure to publish by this date will result in automatic qualification of the BVPP. Such a qualification would significantly impact on the Council's prospect for improvement from a 'poor' CPA rating, and could also lead to central government intervention.
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Community Safety	Links set out in the BVPP.
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Children Act Issues	As above
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Risk Management Issues	None
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Equalities Compliance Issues	None
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7. Background Papers

Title	Description	Source
None		

8. Review

Proposed Review Date	None set yet.
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The Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07 has been produced in accordance with the requirements from the Department for Communities and Local Government (formerly ODPM).

Earlier drafts of the plan have been considered by both Improvement Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, which reviewed the BVPP process and whose report is being presented to Council separately.

Following the completion of the latest draft, detailed comments from our external auditors have been received. These are attached for your information. In general their advice is that the plan meets all essential criteria and contains no serious omissions. The attached comments add additional value and are suggestions, rather than requirements.

Council is recommended to approve the attached Best Value Performance Plan 2007/07. Amendments as set out in the attached comments from external audit can be inserted prior to publication where practical to do so.

Northampton Borough Council

Comments on draft version 9

Para No.	Comment/suggestion
2.5	Could you give very brief indication of what each partnership or forum is meant to achieve. Could link to outcomes that have been achieved to date.
2.7	Title is misleading because you only refer to council tax and no other sources of income.
2.7page 9	Para number is wrong as it should be 2.8 I think you need to say something about performance measures and how they are the means by which you judge whether services are improving or not. You could give examples of better and possibly not so good performance. You refer to quality – in my view this is often difficult to measure so I think you need a good example to demonstrate 2 nd para Can you say that progress is evaluated by GMB? (d) Will the reader know what a balanced scorecard is? (e) You could add the first studies to show how they link to the Council's priorities. (g) As a firm we are the agents of the AC so are not really a separate body.
3.1	Priorities remain a mixture of where we want to get there and how we will do it
3.2	How many were consulted on financial planning?
3.3	This is an opportunity to show how the priorities in 3.1 are met in part by the LAA. I would suggest using the words of the priorities to link them. (a)(b) (c) (d) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any examples especially with numbers %s people can relate to? • how will NBC contribute to these? • what are knowledge economy employers? • what does “accessibility of communities to meet their needs” mean?
4	If you could link the priorities to the relevant performance measure so that cleaner safer etc precedes “streetscene and property maintenance”. It would give the opportunity to use the streetscene performance in the earlier text. Highlights some issues such as the only pm for finance is the number invoices paid within 30 days but there is a little more to managing the Council's finances effectively Is it possible to add to the pi's where you are now so the extent by which you have to improve to achieve your targets can be seen with a comment as to why this necessary Do you need the PI no.?
4.11	Not clear how this adds anything and the missing data (in this version) doesn't help
5.1	Improvement objectives – would service improvements not be better understood How can you suspend what was never in place?
5.2	Have complaints increased or decreased?
5.4	I think you need to say that these are 2004/05 Penultimate para – do the consultants have a contract? If so where does partnership come in? Line 5 “payment of invoices” Last line page 9?
5.5	I'm not clear what the final tables are – year/purpose/ what they demonstrate – and what the reader is intended to draw from them

***Working
For
Northampton***

**The 2006/07
Best Value
Performance Plan
For
Northampton Borough Council**

Final Version – 16th June 2006

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 - 1.2 The Structure of this Years Plan**

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- 4 What We Will Deliver This Year**
 - 4.1 Targets and Outcomes**
 - 4.2 Streetscene and Property Maintenance**
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 - 4.5 Citizen Engagement**
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 - 4.9 Customer Services**
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 - 4.11 Partnership Working and Linked Strategies**

- 5 What We Achieved in 2005/2006**
 - 5.1 Progress Assessment**
 - 5.2 Customer Focused Services**
 - 5.3 Statement on Contracts**
 - 5.4 Summary of Performance During 2005/2006**
 - 5.5 Detailed report on Performance**
 - 5.6 Amended and Reserved Indicators 2004/05**

'Working for You'

Our Performance Plan for 2006/07

Foreword:

Welcome to Northampton Borough Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07.

Following a Corporate Performance Assessment in 2004 that rated the Council as poor, the Audit Commission have revisited the Borough and completed a direction of travel assessment. They have assessed us as having made slow but visible progress in our recovery. This is thanks to the great efforts of our Councillors and all of our staff.

We are ultimately aiming for excellence but are aware that we still have some distance to travel and need to raise our game in order to complete our recovery. We are clear on what we are aiming for and are confident we can achieve this. The foundations to achieve sustainable change and improve service delivery are in place and the Council has made dedicated efforts in implementing the community leadership structure, management structure and systems necessary to ensure success. This year we are concentrating on improving our weakest services.

We hope you find this Plan informative and easy to read and would be pleased to receive any comments you wish to make so that we can continue to improve in future years. We know that it takes resources, determination and more to produce results. We should like to express our thanks to the colleagues who have been involved in the recovery programme and the preparation of this Plan. Importantly, we look forward to working with everyone to deliver the quality services that the people of Northampton deserve.



Tim Heales

Leader of the Council



Tony Woods

Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group



Simon

Leader of the Labour Group



Pauline

Chief Executive

1 The performance Plan for 2006/07

1.1 The Purpose of the Performance Plan

The Local Government Act 1999 requires councils to produce an annual Best Value Performance Plan. Our plan '*Working for Northampton*' is one of our three key strategic plans, setting out our priorities for this year and performance targets for three years. The other strategic plans which link with this are our Corporate Plan, Recovery Plan and Community Strategy. Our current interim Corporate Plan - 2006/07 – sets out the Council's vision and seven priorities for this year. In recent years we have presented corporate plans that address priorities for one year. Next year – from April 2007 – we will produce a plan that addresses the period 2007 - 2010. Our Recovery Plan is a key document that sets out what actions we need to take to stop service failure and to improve areas of weakness in our organisation. The Recovery Plan is updated regularly, with progress evaluated by the Government Monitoring Board. While each of our strategic plans has a specific emphasis, there is also some overlap. Where this is the case, the text provides a reference to the relevant document.

1.2 The Structure of the 2006/07 Plan

In this years plan we have set out some contextual information about Northampton, the Council and the progress we have made during the past twelve months. Our plan addresses the statutory requirements for Best Value Performance Plans, including descriptions of our strategic objectives, arrangements for addressing our improvement priorities and weaknesses identified in the 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment, details of our performance based on our results (outturn) for 2005/06 and targets for three years, and a statement on contracts. For ease of reading, we have provided reference to other documents and indicated where those can be obtained.

2 About Northampton

2.1 Northampton Context

The town of Northampton has a long and rich history. It has played an important role both regionally and nationally, at one time being the seat of the national Parliament. The town has a strong root in industry, and is particularly known for its strong associations with shoe and boot making. Northampton has grown into the largest district council in the country and is strategically important to the region.

The town is yet fully to achieve the transformation from its industrial boot and shoe-making legacy to a modern, fully developed economy. The town is part of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands area identified for economic and population growth as part of the ODPM's¹ Sustainable Communities Plan. The newly formed West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) has been created to deliver economic, social and housing growth in West Northamptonshire with Northampton being central to the success of that growth agenda. As such it is imperative that the Borough achieves the rapid improvement programme we have commenced.

Northampton Borough Council is the largest district council in England. The town is one of many contrasts and faces the challenges of improving outcomes for all against a complex and rapidly

¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Communities and Local Government
Page 4/38

changing social and economic landscape. We have a population of 194,500 people living in around 85,000 households. We are a diverse community; visible minority ethnic communities form 8.5 per cent of the population. Northampton has areas of high deprivation, including three wards, which are amongst the most deprived in the country. Unemployment in the town, at 2.1%, is slightly higher than the regional and national averages (1.8% and 2.0% respectively²). Around 20% of children in the borough live in low-income households³.

2.2 The Council

The Council is made up of 47 councillors, selected during elections every four years. The next elections will take place in May 2007. The current political composition of the Council is 20 Conservative, 17 Liberal Democrat and 10 Labour Councillors. A Leader and Cabinet model of governance is in place, with a cabinet made up of seven Conservative councillors. Cabinet meets each month and collectively take major executive decisions for the Council. The Cabinet's business is delivered through six portfolios:

- Leader of the Council – Community Participation and Financial Strategy – Cllr Tim Hadland
- Deputy Leader of the Council, Business Intelligence, People Support and E-Government – Cllr David Palethorpe
- Economy and Infrastructure – Cllr John Caswell
- Local Environment – Cllr Penelope Flavell
- Residential Operations – Cllr Yousuf Miah
- Community Engagement and Democratic Services – Cllr Phil Larratt

2.3 Recovery and Improvement

As a result of a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) undertaken in March 2004, Northampton Borough Council was rated as a 'poor' council. A period of significant change followed, including the appointment of a new Chief Executive in November 2004. Further changes to the structure of the Council continued into 2005, including the appointment of three new Directors. Twenty six heads of service were replaced by ten new corporate managers in a structure designed to provide improved customer focus and service improvement.

In October 2005 the Council revised its political governance structure to deliver the recovery programme. An innovative cross-party 'Improvement Board' was established, comprising six senior councillors – two each from the three political parties. The Board also has external representation – the Chief Executive of Northampton County Council attends in the role of 'critical friend', and shortly two new independent members representative of the local business community will join the Board. The Board is managed by the Chief Executive and meets in public fortnightly - the only body of its type in the country. Each councillor takes a lead on specific improvement priorities. These include:

- Finance – Cllr Tim Hadland
- Partnerships – Cllr David Palethorpe
- Performance Management – Cllr Tony Woods
- Customer Focused Services – Cllr Brian Markham
- Governance – Cllr Lee Barron
- Value for Money – Cllr Les Marriott

² Number of Job Seekers Allowances paid as a percentage of the population – March 2005

³ ODPM data - 2001

2.4 Council Committees and Area Partnerships

The Council's responsibilities are discharged through a structure of formal committees, with services provided by officers. The Council structure is illustrated in table 1.

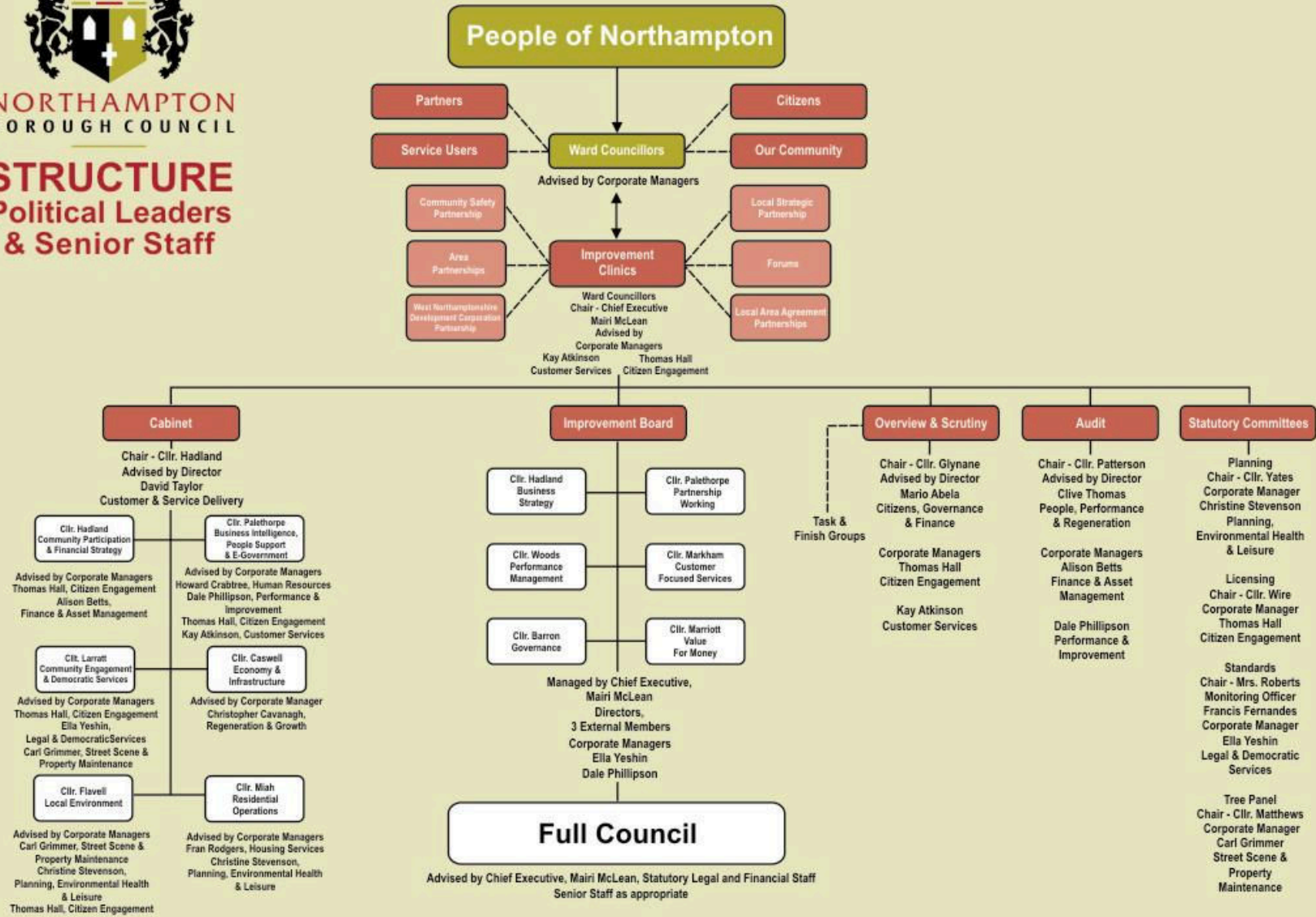
TABLE 1

Date: 1 / 6 / 2006



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRUCTURE
Political Leaders
& Senior Staff



2.5 Partnerships and Forums

The Council has developed a wide range of partnerships across the town. These help keep us informed about issues of importance in the community and also in the delivery of some of our objectives. These include:

- The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Eight Area Partnerships –
 - Abington, Castle, St Crispins (Area Partnership 1)
 - Billing, Ecton Brook, Lumbertubs, Thorpelands (Area Partnership 2)
 - Kingsthorpe, St Davids, Boughton Green (Area Partnership 3)
 - Delapre, St James, Spencer (Area Partnership 4)
 - Eastfield, Headlands, Weston (Area Partnership 5)
 - East Hunsbury, Nene Valley, West Hunsbury (Area Partnership 6)
 - Kingsley, Parklands (Area Partnership 7)
 - New Duston, Old Duston (Area Partnership 8)

We also actively support six forums that represent the views of specific groups within the town. These are:

- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People Forum
- Race Equality Forum
- Women's Forum
- Youth Forum
- Disabled People's Forum
- Pensioners Forum

2.6 How We Fund Our Services

We began to implement the Council's first Medium Term Financial Strategy in April 2006. This sets out how we will resource our services over a rolling three-year cycle. There will be challenges in addressing the funding gap we have identified – likely to be between £1m and £1.8m by 2008/09. This is the result of three main factors – estimates for the costs associated with implementation of the 'Single Status' agreement on employment, potential changes to some services and the need for flexibility to resource priority areas. We commenced work on this in May this year - senior Councillors from the three political groups generated a series of proposals to achieve the savings and efficiencies required. We are currently undertaking detailed work on these proposals and will consult more widely on these during the 2nd and 3rd quarter of this year. Work is also ongoing in regard to our capital budgets, ensuring that our capital programme reflects our priorities.

2.7 How We Monitor Our Performance

We monitor our performance against statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and national targets, together with locally defined indicators specific to each service. From April 2006 we are increasing the number of these local indicators to inform public and managers more about the quality of the services we provide. Some of these are already in place and are presented in the list of service targets in this report, while others are still under development.

Our performance monitoring is not just limited to indicators and targets. We regularly monitor our progress against priority areas – including our Recovery Plan actions. Our Recovery Plan sets out a series of projects and actions to address under-performance in key areas which impact on services. The Recovery Plan is frequently updated by our Recovery, Policy and Governance Manager, and progress evaluated every two months by Government Monitoring Board.

Our performance management framework has the following elements:

a) Weekly Team Meetings in Each Service Area

These are operational team meetings and are held to ensure service activities are planned for the week, resources and project responsibilities allocated and progress monitored.

b) Monthly reporting by service areas on relevant targets, projects and actions

Each Operational Manager provides a monthly (level one) report to a Corporate Manager outlining key service activity against corporate priorities, recovery plan projects and service priorities. Progress against relevant service performance indicators is also provided. These reports form the basis of a level two report provided by each Corporate Manager, bringing together an evaluation of progress for the whole service area. The level two reports are presented to each Director and used to provide an overall Directorate performance report to the Chief Executive. Since December 2005, all level one reports are also forwarded to two Improvement Board councillors with specific responsibility for monitoring performance.

Our monthly performance reports set out progress we make against all our monthly targets for all services. Indicators that are collected either quarterly or annually are reported at the appropriate time, so are not reported on a monthly basis. We evaluate our performance against the results of the previous month, the same period twelve months before and in relation to the performance of other councils. We use traffic light coding to clearly identify whether our progress is on track to meet our targets. This information is circulated widely across the council, with printed copies placed in prominent locations around our council buildings.

c) Analysis of Performance at Improvement Board

Improvement Board meets fortnightly and receives reports on progress against recovery objectives. The Improvement Board also receives reports from senior councillors on performance in relation to a range of local and national targets to assess our progress.

d) Quarterly Performance Reviews

Quarterly Performance Reviews commenced in April 2006. These panels, chaired by the Chief Executive and comprising senior councillors from Cabinet and Improvement Board and Directors, provide high-level evaluation of performance in each service area every three months. The Chief Executive sets out specific actions to be delivered as a result of each review, allocating responsibility for this along with clear timescales for delivery. A balanced scorecard is used for each service area, setting out relevant national and local targets, financial performance, corporate and recovery priorities and organisational health factors (such as absence monitoring).

e) Service review programme

In May this year we introduced a new programme of service reviews. These have been designed to challenge the way in which services are provided to ensure that we achieve efficient, effective and economic service delivery. A three-year programme has been developed. The reviews will include specific consultation with stakeholders, including service users, councillors, trade unions, and staff. Details on the methodology and the service review programme are set out in the Council's Service Review Methodology⁴. A specific element at the methodology in value for money - each review will challenge how well the services achieve value for money.

f) Corporate Appraisal Scheme

We have this year launched a new staff appraisal scheme. This sets out clear objectives and targets for each member of staff, linked to corporate priorities. The objectives are reviewed during the course of the year to ensure progress is made. The scheme is designed around a competency framework that sets out the skills, behaviours, attitudes and knowledge required to deliver our services in accordance with our values.

g) Bi-monthly assessment by Government Monitoring Board

As a Council rated as 'poor' in 2004, we are subject to close monitoring by Government, and specifically by the Department for Communities and Local Government (formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). A Lead Official appointed by a Minister is responsible for continuous evaluation of our progress together with a range of other external monitors, including the Audit Commission, Government Office East Midlands, Department for Work and Pensions and external auditors.

⁴ available from the Performance and Improvement Department, Northampton Borough Council
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3 Our Priorities

3.1 Our Seven Priorities for 2006/07:

- ⇒ **Meet and exceed all the targets set out in our Recovery Plan**
- ⇒ **Improve Northampton's housing by focusing on improving our weakest services** (revenues and benefits, void properties, decent homes standard, homelessness)
- ⇒ **Make Northampton a cleaner, safer and greener place to live**
- ⇒ **Invest in the regeneration of the town, providing economic development and growth**
- ⇒ **Listen to local people and provide the services they require**
- ⇒ **Manage the council's finances effectively**
- ⇒ **Improve our performance to be fit for all our purposes**

Details on the specific targets that underpin these priorities follow in section 4.

3.2 Developing Our Priorities

Our priorities have been determined through a combination of events and factors. Firstly, as a Council rated as poor, we have specific areas of weakness on which we need to focus. These include addressing under-performance in some of our key services that impact on our community and a range of internal systems and processes that have contributed to service failure. Details of the specific actions and projects that are underway are set out in our Recovery Plan.

In December 2005 and January 2006 we consulted with local people to inform our financial planning. The consultation was structured around value for money and views on priorities for funding. The consultation included workshops with local people, postal surveys, and a telephone survey, the results of which have been considered as part of the development of our priorities. In May 2006, senior councillors from the three political groups met to consider the consultation results, together with detailed financial information on all our service areas. This process, together with our knowledge of our under-performing services, resulted in the identification of the seven corporate priorities set out in paragraph 3.1.

We intend to improve our corporate planning process later this year. This will result in a longer-term corporate plan and better and more frequent consultation.

3.3 The Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement

A Local Area Agreement⁵ was formally signed off this year. This is a three-year agreement between central and local government and key partners at the local level. It sets out priorities for Northamptonshire and a range of targets. The primary objective of the LAA is to deliver sustainable communities through better outcomes for local people. There are four service blocks, each led by a Board comprising representatives from a range of partner agencies and voluntary organisations.

The Northamptonshire LAA is made up of four 'blocks':

- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Economic Development, Enterprise and Growth
- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People

For each of the above 'blocks' there are a number of outcomes. These are:

a) Safer and Stronger Communities

- 1: To significantly improve the quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged (rural and urban) areas by developing and implementing neighbourhood approaches through the neighbourhood renewal strategy target areas
- 2: To reduce crime, increase public confidence and reduce the fear of crime, reduce the harm of drug, substance and alcohol abuse and reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour.
- 3: To reduce the number of avoidable injuries
- 4: To strengthen communities by supporting development of the Voluntary and Community Sector, giving people a greater voice and influence over decision making and developing cohesive communities
- 5: To create cleaner, safer and greener communities

b) Economic Development, Enterprise and Growth

- 1: To increase skill levels in the labour market to ensure that labour supply is inclusive and meets the needs of the county's employers both now and in the future
- 2: To promote growth in the number of enterprises in Northamptonshire, with a specific focus on knowledge economy employers, and maximise the benefits of their growth all, but particularly for excluded communities
- 3: To increase the affordability, supply, quality and condition of housing in Northamptonshire
- 4: To increase the accessibility of communities to meet their needs and maximise their opportunities

⁵ Details on the Local Area Agreement can be obtained from Citizen Engagement, Northampton Borough Council
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c) Children and Young People

- 1: To ensure children and young people achieve healthy life-styles by avoiding obesity, substance misuse and unplanned teenage pregnancy
- 2: To ensure children and young people enjoy improved mental health through high quality services
- 3: To provide a safe environment for children and young people by better multi-agency services supporting families
- 4: To improve the life-chances for a) children with disabilities b) looked after children
- 5: To improve educational attainment and enjoyment (including increased access to recreation and leisure)
- 6: To improve attendance, raise levels of behaviour and reduce incidences of bullying
- 7: To overcome social, accommodation and economic disadvantage for children and young people through collaborative service approaches
- 8: To increase the proportion of young people accessing education, employment, training or volunteering post-16
- 9: To increase opportunities for children and young people to influence the way services are provided
- 10: To reduce the number of children and young people affected by offending and victimisation

d) Healthier Communities and Older People

- 1: Supporting independent living for Older People
- 2: Increasing the quality of life and reducing social isolation for Older People
- 3: Reducing health inequalities for the population of Northamptonshire
- 4: Improving the health of the population of Northamptonshire
- 5: Reduce poverty and the effects of poverty in Northamptonshire by supporting people to maximise their income through benefits and debt management

Members of the Local Area Agreement partnership include Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council and all other district councils in Northamptonshire; Northamptonshire Police and Policy Authority, Primary Care Trusts and the Countywide Infrastructure Organisation (NCOMPASS) which represents voluntary and community groups.

4 What We Will Deliver This Year

4.1 Targets and Outcomes

In this section we set out the specific targets for each service area. These targets indicate the level of achievement we aim for within each service. These targets reflect our corporate priorities and our recovery plan priorities and are structured by service area.

4.2 Streetscene and Property Maintenance

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
82a (i)	Percentage tonnage of household waste arisings sent for recycling	19.20%	20.00%	20.00%
82a (ii)	Total tonnage household waste arisings sent for recycling	15,484.26 tonnes	16,596.96 tonnes	17,103.44 tonnes
82b (i)	Percentage tonnage household waste arisings sent for composting	16.80%	17.50%	18.00%
82b (ii)	Total tonnage household waste sent for composting	13,548.73 tonnes	14,522.34 tonnes	15,399.01 tonnes
84a	Kilograms of household waste collected per head population	414 kg	426 kg	439 kg
84b	Percentage change from the previous year in kilograms of waste collected per head population	+3.00%	+3.00%	+3.00%
86	Cost of waste collection per household	£52.00	£53.00	£54.00
91a	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of recyclables	100%	100%	100%
91b	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables	100%	100%	100%
199a	The proportion of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	5%	4%	3%
199b	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	9%	8%	7%
199c	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of flyposting are visible	2%	1%	1%
218a	Percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24hrs of notification.	95%	97%	99%
218b	Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the Authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	95%	97%	99%
BV89	Percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standard~	65%	-	-
BV90a	Percentage of people satisfied with household waste collection~	90%	-	-
BV90b	Percentage of people satisfied with waste recycling~	76%	-	-
BV119e	Percentage of people satisfied with parks and open spaces~	79%	-	-
ELPI 5	Percentage of flytips removed within two working days	97%	99%	99%
ELPI 6	Number of missed refuse collections per month	1500	1200	1000
ELPI 10	Number of missed collections put right within 24 hours	95%	97%	99%
HLPI 9	Night time repairs to housing completed on target	99%	99%	99%
BV 184a	Proportion of local authority homes which were non-decent on 1 st April	15	10	5
BV 184b	Percentage change in proportion of non-decent homes between 1 st April and 31 March	5%	5%	5%
BV 212	Average time taken to re-let local authority homes	50	30	20
BV 63	Energy Efficiency: Average SAP rating of council properties	68	70	72

~ Customer Satisfaction is measured tri-annually, with the next national survey being available in 2006

4.3 Housing and Residential Operations

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BV9	Percentage of council tax received in the year	98.5%	98.5%	99%
BV10	% of non domestic rates due for the year which were received by the authority	99.12%	99.2%	99.3%
BV66a	Local authority rent collection and arrears – proportion of rent collected.	97.5%	98%	99%
BV66b	The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants	11.81%	11.22%	10.61%
BV66c	of local authority tenants who have had notices seeking possession served	42.35%	40.23%	38.22%
BV66d	The percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.79 %	0.75 %	0.71 %
BV74a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with overall service provided by landlord	81%	85%	90%
BV74b	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with overall service provided by landlord broken down by ethnic minority tenants	76%	81%	86%
BV74c	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with overall service provided by landlord broken down by non-ethnic minority tenants	81%	85%	90%
BV75a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	70%	80%	90%
BV75b	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord: broken down by ethnic minority tenants	60%	70%	80%
BV75c	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord: broken down by non-ethnic minority tenants	70%	80%	90%
BV76a	Housing Benefit Security: the number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload	195*	195*	195*
BV76b	Housing Benefit Security: the number of fraud investigators employed per 1,000 caseload	0.25*	0.25*	0.25*
BV76c	Housing Benefit Security: the number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload	51*	51*	51*
BV76d	Housing Benefit Security: the number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1,000 caseload.	4.25*	4.25*	4.25*
BV78a	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing new claims	36*	36*	36*
BV78b	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing notifications of change in circumstances	9	5*	5*
BV79a	Accuracy of processing (a) Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available for the decision for a sample of cases checked post-decision	98%*	99%*	99%*
BV79bi	The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of housing benefit deemed recoverable overpayments during that period	55%*	55%*	55%*

*Targets to be confirmed in consultation with DWP/GOEM prior to publication

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BV79bii	Housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of hb overpayments identified during the period	90%*	95%*	99%*
BV79biii	Housing benefit overpayments written off during the period as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of housing benefit overpayments identified during the period	10%*	7%*	1%*
BV80a	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: facilities to get in touch with the benefit office	85%	90%	95%
BV80b	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: satisfied with the service in the actual office	88%	93%	98%
BV80c	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: satisfied with the telephone service	82%	87%	92%
BV80d	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: satisfied with the staff in the benefits office	87%	92%	97%
BV80e	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: satisfied with the clarity and understandability of forms, letters and leaflets	67%	72%	77%
BV80f	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: satisfied with the amount of time it took to say whether claim was successful	77%	82%	87%
BV80g	Overall satisfaction with benefits service: Overall satisfaction	70%	75%	80%
BV164	Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing and follow the Good Practice Standards for social landlords on tackling harassment included in Tackling Racial Harassment Code of Practice in Social Landlords	Yes	Yes	Yes
BV183a	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	6 weeks	5 weeks	4 weeks
BV202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	4	2	0
BV203	The percentage change in the number of families which include dependent children or pregnant women, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average in the previous year	20%	20%	20%
BV213	Number of household who considered themselves homeless who approached the local authority housing advice service and for whom advice casework intervention solved their situation	200	300	400
BV214	Proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless by the same authority within the last 2 years	5%	3%	1%

**Targets to be confirmed in consultation with DWP/GOEM prior to publication*

4.4 Planning, Environmental Health and Leisure

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
216a	Number of sites of potential concern within the local authority area with respect to land contamination	775	700	625
216b	Number of sites for which detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all 'sites of potential concern'.	10.7	12	13
217	Percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time	95	95	95
166a	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	100	100	100
BV 109 (a)	Percentage of planning applications determined : 60% of major applications in 13 weeks	66%	70%	75%
BV 109 (b)	Percentage of planning applications determined in line with the government's new development control targets to determine: 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks	76%	80%	85%
BV 109 (c)	Percentage of planning applications determined: 80% of other applications in 8 weeks.	86%	90%	90%
BV 188	The number of decisions delegated to officers as a percentage of all decisions	90%	90%	90%
BV 204	Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications	30%	25%	25%
BV 205	Quality of Service checklist for Planning	14/18 – 78%	14/18 – 78%	14/18 – 78%
BV 64	Number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during the year as a direct result of action by the local authority	118	77	42
BV111	Percentage of applicants satisfied with the service received from Planning~	84%	-	-
BV119a	Percentage of residents satisfied with sports and leisure services~	59%	-	-
ELPI 7	Number of swims and other visits per 1000 population	3832	3792	3928

~ Customer Satisfaction is measured tri-annually, with the next national survey being available in 2006

4.5 Citizen Engagement

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
2a	The level of the Equality Standard for local government to which the authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability	1	2	3
2b	The quality of an authority's Race Equality Scheme and the improvements resulting from its application	48%	53%	63%
174	The number of recorded racial incidents per 100,000 population	23	24	25
175	Of these, the percentage resulting in further action	100%	100%	100%
226a	Total amount spent by the Local Authority on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations	£368,860	£368,860	£368,860
226b	% Monies spent on advice and guidance services provision which was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark at general Help level and above	94%	95%	96%
BV 126	Domestic burglaries per year - 1,000 households	17.47	13.97	11.88
BV 127a	Violent crime per year - 1000 population	25.69	24.66	23.68
BV 127b	Robberies per year - 1000 population	3.05	2.83	2.99
BV 128	Vehicle crimes per year - 1,000 population	18.12	15.41	13.87
BV 225	Domestic violence checklist- The percentage of questions answered 'yes'; (to answer 'yes' the local authority must have fully achieved the goal described; it is not enough that the authority is working towards the goal)	85%	100%	100%
BV 170a	The number of visits to/usage's of local authority funded or part funded museums per 1,000 population	1319	1322	1327
BV 170b	The number of those visits to local authority funded or part funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population	801	808	814
BV 170c	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	12,375	12,385	12,400
BV 156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	95%	Don't know if will continue	Don't know if will continue
BV119c	Percentage of residents satisfied with museums~	57%	-	-
BV119d	Percentage of residents satisfied with arts activities and venues~	72%	-	-

~ Customer Satisfaction is measured tri-annually, with the next national survey being available in 2006

4.6 Regeneration and Growth

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BVPI106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	65	65	60
BVPI 200a	Did the local planning authority submit the Local Development Scheme by 28th March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3 year rolling programme?-	Yes	Yes	Yes
BVPI 200b	Has the local Planning authority met the milestones which the current local Development scheme set out?	Yes	Yes	Yes
BVPI 200c	Did the local Planning authority publish an annual monitoring report by December of the last year?	Yes	Yes	Yes
BVPI 219a	The total number of conservation areas in the local authority area	19	19	20
BVPI 219b	Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up to date character appraisal-	26% (5)	52% (10)	75% (15)
BVPI 219c	Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals	17% (3)	26% (5)	52% (10)

4.7 Human Resources

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BV11a	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	30%	35%	35%
BV11b	The percentage of top 5% of earners who are from an ethnic minority	6.5%	7%	7%
BV11c	The percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability	5.25%	5.3%	5.4%
BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	11.5	9.5	8.4
BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce	0.8%	0.6%	0.5%
BV15	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce	0.4%	0.3%	0.25%
BV16a	The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition	5%	5.5%	6%
BV17a	The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities	5.25%	5.5%	6%
BV16b	Percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area	12.25 from census	12.25 from census	12.25 from census
BV17b	Percentage of the economically active minority ethnic population in the authority area	8.13 from census	8.13 from census	8.13 from census

4.8 Performance and Improvement

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
LPPI 157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery	95%	100%	100%

4.9 Customer Services

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BV3	Percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the local authority~	50%	-	-
BV4	Percentage of citizens satisfied with the handling of their complaint~	35%	-	-

~ Customer Satisfaction is measured tri-annually, with the next national survey being available in 2006

4.10 Finance

Performance Indicator	Description	2006/7	07/08	08/09
BV8	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services paid by the authority within 30 days of being received	93%	94%	95%

4.11 Partnership Working and Linking Strategies

In addition to those areas of performance for which we are directly accountable, we have a wide range of areas on which we will work with partners to deliver. These areas comprise priorities set out in our Corporate Plan, in the Community Strategy 2002 – 2012⁶ and the Local Area Agreement referred to on page x in this Performance Plan. The table below shows the links between the range of priorities.

Northampton Borough Council Corporate Plan 06/07	Make Northampton a Cleaner, Safer and Greener Borough	Listen to Local People and provide the Services They Need	Improve Northampton's Housing by focusing on and Improving Our Weakest services	Invest in the Regeneration of the Town, providing Economic Development and Growth	Meet and Exceed the Targets in our Recovery Plan	Manage the Council's Finances Effectively	Improve our Performance to be Fit for All Our Purposes
Community Strategy 2002/12	Promoting Community Safety and Improving the Environment	Promoting Good Health, Housing and Well-being, and Promoting Leisure and Cultural Opportunities	Promoting Good Health, Housing and Well-being	Strengthening the Economic Base			
Local Area Agreement	Safer and Stronger Communities, and Children and Young People	Healthier Communities and Older People and, Children and Young People	Children and Young People	Economic Development, Enterprise and Growth			

⁶ The Community Strategy 2002-20012 is available from Legal and Democratic Services, Northampton Borough Council
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5 What We Achieved in 2005/06

5.1 Progress Assessment

In March 2006 the Audit Commission completed a progress assessment of the Council. The report confirmed that we had made some progress with our improvement objectives. However, the pace of change has been slow and we have not achieved the level of performance in some key services that we had set out to achieve. For much of 2005 our focus had been on strengthening our internal systems and processes to ensure sustainable improvement into the future. As such, we have had to restrict what would – in higher performing councils – be normal performance management, to that focused specifically on recovery. Having accomplished this significant programme of change, we are now focusing on those services that require specific improvement.

5.2 Customer Focused Services

This has been an area of weakness in the Council and during the past year we have delivered improvements in this area. We have made significant investments to improve the way in which customers contact us and access our services. These improvements include a much improved Council internet site, new call handling system and the first stage implementation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. A Programme Board oversees the implementation of a range of projects which have been designed to deliver improvements to customers. We have already substantially reduced the numbers of abandoned telephone calls to some of our services through these new approaches.

5.3 Statement on Contracts

The Authority can confirm that all contractual arrangements during 2005/2006, which involved a transfer of staff, complied where applicable with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts and the related provisions in the Local Government Act 2003.

5.4 Summary of Performance During 2005/06

We are required to collect data and report our progress against a number of statutory and local indicators. This year we collected performance data on 112 indicators spread across our ten service areas. Streetscene and Housing have the highest proportion of these targets. We measure progress over a twelve-month period (April to March), and the results are used by Government to evaluate the performance of all councils. The resulting data is divided into four categories (quartiles). The top quartile identifies the highest performing 25% of councils, with the lowest performing 25% being in the bottom quartile.

The table below shows a summary of our performance indicators (BVPIs) and the resulting quartile position for 2004/05 and 2005/06. We have displayed the results for all services based on this comparison. Please note that while we have used our results this year to compare with our quartile position last year, the quartiles will certainly change as the performance of all councils changes annually. Quartiles are published by the Audit Commission in or around November each year using outturn data from councils produced in May that year. Quartiles for 2005/06 performance will be available in November 2006.

The results show that of the 37 comparable indicators, we have 18 (49%) indicators in the first and second quartile, and 19 (51%) in the lower two quartiles. When compared to our position last year, we see some evidence of improvement; 14 of our indicators have improved quartile position, with 25 remaining the same. Two have deteriorated. We are not content with this position, and the targets for services set out in this plan are based on our aim to improve our overall performance. Our Recovery Plan also sets out actions which contribute to the improvement programme.

Quartile category (Where data available)	Northampton Borough Council Total	Street scene and property maintenance	Housing Services	Environmental health and Leisure	Human Resources	Citizen Engagement	Finance and Asset management	Regeneration and growth	Performance and Improvement	Legal and Democratic services
Top	14	5	1	3	4	3	0	0	1	1
Median (U)	6	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median (L)	5	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Bottom	12	1	6	0	2	2	1	0	0	0
Improved	14	4	2	3	4	0	0	0	1	0
Same	25	2	10	4	3	5	1	0	0	1
Worse	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Quart. data		14	11	6	3	10	1	6	0	0

Those indicators where we have the lowest levels of performance when compared with other councils are set out below:

- Percentage council tax collected in the year
- Housing benefit – the number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload
- Housing benefit – average time for processing new claims
- Housing benefit – average time for processing changes in notification
- Housing benefit – accuracy of processing
- Housing – rent collection and arrears – the proportion of rent collected
- Number of working days lost to sickness absence
- Percentage of employees retiring early
- Percentage of invoices for commercial goods paid within 30 days of receipt
- Number of vehicle crimes per 1,000 population
- Number of domestic burglaries per 1,000 households
- Cost of waste collection

We have already undertaken action to address these areas of under-performance. We have engaged in partnerships with external consultants to bring about significant and rapid improvements to our benefits service – this areas accounts for 50% of our worst performing indicators. We have also implemented a new sickness absence policy that is beginning to have an impact on reducing absence levels. Our number of early retirements last year reflected the unique circumstances around our 'root and branch' review of our staffing structure, and will not be repeated again. In relation to our payment of invoices, we have implemented a new financial system which has helped us to achieve much higher performance in our processing times. As a district council, we have an important contribution to make to crime reduction, but are not solely responsible for this area. We do, however, have one of the most extensive CCTV systems in the country, and the car parks provided by us have achieved high levels of security specifically to prevent vehicle crime. We have also increased the number of neighbourhood wardens as a further contribution to community safety.

Our corporate priorities for this year (see page 11 of this plan) specifically address these areas of under-performance.

5.5 Detailed report on Performance

The tables below represent our outturn (results) for 2005/06 by service area and performance indicator.

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIAN QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
Streetscene and Property Maintenance - Customer and Service Delivery												
↑	BV218a	Percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24hrs of notification.	Environmental Health	0	95% [set 2006]	New 05-06		4	1	1	1	4
↑	BV218b	Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the Authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	Environmental Services	0	95% [set 2006]	New 05-06		4	1	1	1	4
↓	Bv199a	The proportion of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	Environmental Services	3	10%	↑ 12		12 MEDIAN (U)	10	15	21.5	3 TOP
↓	BV199b	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	Environmental Services	10	5% [set 2006]	New 05-06		4	1	1	1	4
↓	BV199c	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly posting are visible	Environmental Services	1	3% [set 2006]	New 05-06		4	1	1	1	4
↓	BV199d	The year on year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly tipping	Environmental Services	0	No Target Set	New 05-06		4	1	1	1	4
↑	BV82ai	Percentage tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	Environmental Services	19.82	18.09 %	↑ 18.67		18.67 MEDIAN [U]	19.35	15.6	12.36	19.82 TOP
↑	BV82aii	Total of tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	Environmental Services	15509.95	15262.82 Tonnage	↑ 13814.3		4	1	1	1	4
↑	BV82bi	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste sent for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	Environmental Services	16.30	17.77 %	↑ 9.45		9.45 MEDIAN [U]	10.56	4.28	0.4	16.30 TOP

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↓	BV82bii	Total tonnage of household waste sent for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	Environmental Services	12752	14966.53 Tonnage	↑ 6998.38		4	1	1	1	4
↓	BV84a	Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head	Environmental Services	401.7	432 Kg	↓ 379		379 TOP	380.8	411	443.1	401.7 MEDIAN (U)
↓	BV84b	Percentage change from the previous financial year in the number of Kg of household waste collected per head of population	Environmental Services	5.96	13.47 %	↑ + 11.76		+ 11.76	3	3	3	3
↓	BV86	Cost of waste collection per household	Environmental Services	51.72	45 Pounds	↑ 55.73		55.73 BOTTOM	35.62	42.01	48.13	51.72 BOTTOM
↑	BV91a	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of recyclables	Environmental Services	100	100 %	→ 100		100 TOP	100	97.7	89.8	100 TOP
↓	BV91b	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables	Environmental Services	100	100 %	→ 100		100	1	1	1	1
↑	BV184a	The proportion of local authority homes which were non-decent at 1st April	Housing Services	25%	20%	↑ 28.7		28.7 MEDIAN	17	29	42	25 MEDIAN (U)
↑	Bv184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent local authority homes between 31 March and 1st April	Housing Services	15.7	12.5% [set 2003]	↑ 12.7		12.7	3	3	3	3
↑	BV63	Energy efficiency - the average SAP (standard assessment procedure) rating of local authority owned dwellings	Housing Services	67	67%	↑ 65.9		66 MEDIAN (U)	67	65	60	67 TOP
↓	BV212	Average time taken to re-let local authority homes	Housing Services	72	45 Days	↓ 43.75		4	1	1	1	1
↑	ELPI5	Percentage of flytips removed within two working days	Environment Services	99.37	90 %	NO TREND DATA	Slight change in definition hence not comparable to last year outturn	0.8	2	2	2	2
↓	ELPI6	Number of refuse collections missed per 100,000 collections	Environment Services	487	120	↓ 273		273	2	2	2	2

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↑	HLPI9	Night time repairs completed on target	Housing Repairs	98	98 %	NO TREND DATA		4	2	2	2	2
Regeneration and Growth - People, Performance and Regeneration												
↑	BV106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	Culture Planning	No data provided	65 %	69.4		69.4 MEDIAN (L)	90.1	72.09	52	No data
↓	BV200a	Did the local planning authority submit the Local Development Scheme by 28th March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3 year rolling programme?-	Culture Planning	Yes	Yes	NO TREND DATA		3	3	3	3	3
↓	BV200b	Has the local Planning authority met the milestones which the current local Development scheme set out?	Culture Planning	No	Yes	NO TREND DATA		3	3	3	3	3
↓	BV200c	Did the local Planning authority publish an annual monitoring report by December of the last year?	Culture Planning	Yes	Yes	NO TREND DATA		3	3	3	3	3
↓	BV219a	The total number of conservation areas in the local authority area	Culture Planning	18	18	↑ 17		17	4	4	4	4
↑	BV219b	Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up to date character appraisal-	Culture Planning	16.67	25 %	↓ 22.2		4	4	4	4	4
↑	BV219c	Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals	Culture Planning	0	25 %	NO TREND DATA		4	4	4	4	4
Environmental Health and Leisure - Customer Service and Delivery												
↑	BV109a	Percentage of planning applications determined : 60% of major applications in 13 weeks	Culture Planning	66.17	60 %	↑ 64.5		64.5 MEDIAN [U]	71.25	59	46.87	66.17 MEDIAN [U]
↑	BV109b	Percentage of planning applications determined in line with the government's new development control targets to determine: 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks	Culture Planning	75.57	65 %	↑ 70.7		70.7 MEDIAN [U]	75.33	69.05	61	75.57 TOP
↑	BV109c	Percentage of planning applications determined: 80% of other applications in 8 weeks.	Culture Planning	85.54	80 %	↑ 79.4		80.7 MEDIAN [L]	88.03	84.52	79.97	85.54 MEDIAN (U)

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIATEAN QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↑	BV188	The number of decisions delegated to officers as a percentage of all decisions.	Culture Planning	84	85 %	↓ 85		85	3	3	3	84
↓	BV204	Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications	Culture Planning	34.8	40 %	↑ 41		41 BOTTOM	24	29	37	34.8 MEDIAN [L]
↑	BV205	Quality of Service checklist for Planning	Culture Planning	77.7	89%	↓ 83		83 Median (U)	3	3	3	77.7
↑	BV166a	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	Culture Planning	100	100	↑ 96.7		96.7 TOP	93.4	85.7	75	100 TOP
↓	BV216a	Number of sites of potential concern within the local authority area with respect to land contamination	Culture Planning	975	850	New 05-06		1	1	1	1	1
↑	BV216b	Number of sites for which detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all "sites of potential concern"	Culture Planning	6	9.6	New 05-06		1	1	1	1	1
↑	BV217	Percentage off pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time	Culture Planning	97	No Target Set	New 05-06	new indicator no target to assess against	1	1	1	1	1
↑	BV64	Number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during the year as a direct result of action by the local authority	Culture Planning	59	43	↑ 55		55 TOP	25	9	2	59 TOP
↑	ELPI7	Number of swims and other visits per 1000 population	Leisure	4821	4752	No trend data		4	2	2	2	2
↑	ELPI8	No of Neighbourhood Wardens	Environmental Services	13	15	↑ 5	4 posts offered to take up roles in April	4	2	2	2	2
Performance and Improvement - People, Performance and Regeneration												
↑	BV157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery	Corporate Health	90.06	82.44	↑ 40.39		40.39 BOTTOM	84.69	75	64.27	90.06 TOP

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
Legal and Democratic Services - Citizens, Governance and Finance												
↑	BV179	The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days.	Culture Planning	100	100 %	→ 100	Indicator withdrawn for 2006.	100 TOP	100	99.7	96.06	100 TOP
Housing Services - Customer and Service Delivery												
↑	BV9	Percentage of council tax received in the year	Corporate Health	95.45	98.5 %	↑ 95%		95 BOTTOM	98.5	98.1	97.31	95.45 BOTTOM
↑	BV10	% of non domestic rates due for the year which were received by the authority	Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit Services	99.23	99.12 %	↓ 99.67		99.7 TOP	99.2	98.81	98.22	99.23 TOP
↔	BV76a	Housing Benefit Security: the number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	53.24	457	↑ 42.3		42.3 BOTTOM	296.6	222	173.06	53.24 BOTTOM
↔	BV76b	Housing Benefit Security: the number of fraud investigators employed per 1,000 caseload	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	0.29	0.33	↑ 0.24		0.24 [MEDIAN [L]]	[0.4]	[0.3]	[0.2]	0.29 [MEDIAN [L]]
↔	BV76c	Housing Benefit Security: the number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	51.08	43	↑ 38.51		38.51 MEDIAN [L]	59.53	41.2	29	51.08 MEDIAN [U]
↔	BV76d	Housing Benefit Security: the number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1,000 caseload.	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	4.64	3.4	↑ 2.48		2.48 [MEDIAN [L]]	[5.3]	[3.5]	[2.1]	4.64 [MEDIAN [U]]
↓	BV78a	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing new claims	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	57.6	50 Days	↑ 63.4*		63.4 * BOTTOM	28	33	40.6	57.6 BOTTOM
↓	BV78b	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing notifications of change in circumstances	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	24.4	15 Days	↓ 20.9		20.9 * BOTTOM	6.8	8.8	12.4	24.4 BOTTOM
↑	BV79a	Accuracy of processing (a) Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available for the decision for a sample of cases checked post-decision	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	78.6	95 %	↓ 89.6		91.80 BOTTOM	99	98	96.8	78.6 BOTTOM

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↑	BV79bi	The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of hb deemed recoverable overpayments during that period	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	106.2	53 % (set 2003)	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1
↑	BV79bii	Housing benefit overpayments recovered during the period as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of hb overpayments identified during the period	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	62.51	53 %	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1
↓	BV79biii	Housing benefit overpayments written off during the period as a percentage of the total amount of hb overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus amount of hb overpayments identified during the period	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	12.14	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1
↓	BV164	Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing and follow the Good Practice Standards for social landlords on tackling harassment included in Tackling Racial Harassment Code of Practice in Social Landlords	Housing Services	Yes	Yes	NO TREND DATA		3	3	3	3	3
↓	BV183a	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	Housing Services	3.25	6 weeks	↑ 4 weeks		4 MEDIAN (L)	3	3	3	3.25 MEDIAN (L)
↓	BV202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	Housing Services	8	4	↓ 7		3	3	3	3	3
↓	BV203	The percentage change in the number of families which include dependent children or pregnant women, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average in the previous year	Housing Services	9.86	No Target Set	↑ 37		37 BOTTOM	-9.4	6.31	25.21	9.86 MEDIAN (L)
↑	BV213	Number of household who considered themselves homeless who approached the local authority housing advice service and for whom advice casework intervention solved their situation	Housing Services	5	1.28	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↓	BV214	Proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless by the same authority within the last 2 years	Housing Services	0.54	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA		1	1	1	1	1
↑	BV66a	Local authority rent collection and arrears – proportion of rent collected.	Housing Services	96.04	97 %	↓ 96.2		96.2 BOTTOM	98.74	97.8	97.15	96.04 BOTTOM
↓	BV66b	The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants	Housing Services	12.43	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA	First year of collection	4	1	1	1	1
↓	BV66c	The percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	Housing Services	44.58	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA	First year of collection	4	1	1	1	1
↓	BV66d	The percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	Housing Services	0.83	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA	First year of collection	4	1	1	1	1
↑	BENLPI1	Percentage of cases from complete to determined within 14 days	Housing Revenues and benefits	0	0%	NO TREND DATA	Plan to report from 1st April 2006	4	2	2	2	2
Human Resources - People, Performance and Regeneration												
↑	BV11a	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	Corporate Health	32.83	26.69 %	↑ 28.4		28.4 MEDIAN [U]	28.93	23.07	16.1	32.83 TOP
↑	BV11b	The percentage of top 5% of earners who are from an ethnic minority	Corporate Health	8.89	6.76 %	↑ 6.76		6.76 TOP	1.98	0	0	8.89 TOP
↑	BV11c	The percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability	Corporate Health	4.38	4 %	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1
↓	BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	Corporate Health	16.12	8.93	↓ 13.48*		13.48* BOTTOM	8.48	9.59	11.1	16.12 BOTTOM
↓	BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce	Corporate Health	2.64	0.14 %	↓ 2.26		2.26 BOTTOM	0	0.41	1.04	2.64 BOTTOM
↓	BV15	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce	Corporate Health	0.41	0.5 % [set 2000]	↑ 0.55		0.55 BOTTOM	0	0.28	0.5	0.41 MEDIAN (L)

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↑	BV16a	The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition	Corporate Health	5.55	4.54 %	4.54		4.54 MEDIAN [U]	5.1	2.8	1.86	5.55 TOP
↓	BV16b	The percentage of economically active minority ethnic community in the authority area	Corporate Health	12.25	No Target Set	12.25		12.25	1	1	1	1
↑	BV17a	The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities	Corporate Health	4.9	5.25 %	5.53		5.53 TOP	2.5	1.4	0.7	4.9 TOP
↑	BV17b	The percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area	Corporate Health	8.1		9.3		9.3	1	1	1	1
Finance and Asset Management- Citizens, Governance and Finance												
↑	BV156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	Corporate Health	90	88 %	86		86	3	3	3	3
↑	BV8	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services paid by the authority within 30 days of being received	Corporate Health	86.89	95 %	81.1		81.1 BOTTOM	97	94.69	91.06	86.89 BOTTOM
	AMLPI1	Energy consumption /m2 of local authority operational property compared with comparable buildings in the UK as a whole		No data provided	No Target Set		Definition requires comparison with other authorities and as local PI no comparison now available- revised definition advised for 06-07					
Citizen Engagement - Citizens, Governance and Finance												
↑	BV226a	Total amount spent by the Local Authority on Advice and Guidance services provided by external organisations	Community Legal Services	368860	0	NO TREND DATA		4	1	1	1	1
↑	BV226b	Percentage of monies spent on advice and guidance services provision which was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark at general help level and above	Community Legal Services	92.18	90%	NO TREND DATA	new definition for 2005/06	4	1	1	1	1
↑	BV226c	Total amount spent on Advice and Guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters which is provided directly by the authority to the public.	Community Legal Services	Not Required to report 05-06	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA	new definition for 2005/06	4	1	1	1	1

GOOD TO BE HIGH / LOW	BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05	COMMENTS	NBC 04/05 RESULT & QUARTILE POSITION	04/05 TOP QUARTILE	04/05 MEDIUM QUARTILE	04/05 BOTTOM QUARTILE	NBC 05/06 RESULT & PROSPECTIVE QUARTILE POSITION
↓	BV126	Domestic burglaries per year per 1,000 households in local authority area	Community Safety	22.1	16.94 per 1000	↑ 26		26 BOTTOM	6.18	8.18	10.76	22.1 BOTTOM
↓	BV127a	Violent crime per year, 1000 population	Community Safety	27.0	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA		7.5 BOTTOM	2.45	4.31	7.28	1
↓	BV127b	Robberies per year, 1000 population	Community Safety	3.34	No Target Set	NO TREND DATA		15.2 BOTTOM	0.55	1.1	1.68	1
↓	BV128	The number of vehicle crimes per year, per 1,000 population in the local authority area.	Community Safety	21.6	20.37	↑ 25.23		25.2 BOTTOM	6.84	8.84	11.58	21.6 BOTTOM
↑	BV174	The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 populations.	Community Safety	18.48	22	↓ 22		22	3	3	3	3
↑	BV175	The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action.	Community Safety	100	100 %	→ 100		100	3	3	3	3
↑	BV225	Domestic violence checklist- The percentage of questions answered 'yes'; (to answer 'yes' the local authority must have fully achieved the goal described; it is not enough that the authority is working towards the goal) 1. Has the local authority	Community Safety	63.6%	2.73	NO TREND DATA	Amended definition formerly BV176	4	1	1	1	1
↑	BV2a	The level of the Equality Standard for local government to which the authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability	Corporate Health	Level 1	1	NO TREND DATA	Definition change for 2005/06 - Not adopted for 03/04, 04/05	4	1	1	1	1
↑	BV2b	The quality of an authority's Race Equality Scheme and the improvements resulting from it's application	Corporate Health	37%	52%	NO TREND DATA	Definition change for 2005/06	26 BOTTOM	1	1	1	1
↑	BV170a	The number of visits to/usage's of local authority funded or part funded museums per 1,000 population	Cultural and Related Services	1287	2725	↓ 2126		2126 TOP	811	322	98	1287 TOP
↑	BV170b	The number of those visits to local authority funded or part funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population	Cultural and Related Services	800	860	↓ 1055		1055 TOP	466	234	71	800 TOP
↑	BV170c	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	Cultural and Related Services	14067	12375	↑ 13917		13917 TOP	3181	1179	300	14067 TOP

Tri-Annual Satisfaction Performance Indicators

Data reported below relates to last survey completed in 2003/2004 – the next survey will be available 2006/2007

BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05
Streetscene and Property Maintenance - Customer and Service Delivery					
BV119e	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority Cultural Services: parks and open spaces	Cultural and Related Services	79%	70% [set 2003]	NO TREND DATA
BV89a	The percentage of people satisfied with the cleanliness standard in their area	Environmental Services	44%	59% [set 2003]	NO TREND DATA
BV90a	The percentage of people with: [a] Household Waste Collection	Environmental Services	76%	80% [set 2003]	NO TREND DATA
BV90b	The percentage of people satisfied with: Waste Recycling	Environmental Services	55%	60% [set 2003]	
Environmental Health and Leisure - Customer Service and Delivery					
BV119a	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority Cultural Services: sports and leisure facilities	Cultural and Related Services	59%	60% [set 2003]	
Housing Services - Customer and Service Delivery					
BV80a	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the benefits office	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	68%	70% [set 2003]	
BV80b	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the service in the actual office	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	75%	75% [set 2003]	
BV80c	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	52.5%	65% [set 2003]	
BV80d	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the staff in the benefits office	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	72%	75% [set 2003]	
BV80e	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understanding of the forms, letters and leaflets	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	55.6%	65% [set 2003]	
BV80f	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service: Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took them to tell me whether my claim was successful	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	53.6%	70% [set 2003]	
BV80g	Overall satisfaction with the Benefits service	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Services	67%	70% [set 2003]	
BV111	The percentage of applicants satisfied with the service	Culture Planning	84%	90% [set 2003]	NO TREND DATA
BV74a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	Housing Services	72.3%	77% [set 2003]	
BV74b	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord with results further broken down by ethnic minority tenants	Housing Services	65.3%	71% [set 2003]	
BV74c	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord with results further broken down by non ethnic minority tenants	Housing Services	73.3%	77% [set 2003]	
BV75a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	Housing Services	57.7%	56% [set 2003]	

BVPI / LPI REF	DESCRIPTION OF INDICATOR	SERVICE AREA	RESULTS 05/06	TARGET	RESULTS 04/05
BV75b	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord: with results further broken down by ethnic minority tenants	Housing Services	57.4%	NO TARGET SET	
BV75c	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord: with results further broken down by non ethnic minority tenants	Housing Services	58%	NO TARGET SET	
BV3	Percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the authority	Corporate Health	38.2%	75 % [set 2003]	
BV4	Percentage of citizens satisfied with the handling of their complaint[s]	Corporate Health	30.4%	41% [set 2003]	
BV119c	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority Cultural Services: museums	Cultural and Related Services	57%	60% [set 2003]	
BV119d	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority Cultural Services: arts activities and venues	Cultural and Related Services	72%	No target set	

5.6 Amended and Reserved Indicators 2004/05

A number of our indicators related to performance in the year 2004-05, and detailed in our last Best Value Performance Plan, were amended or reserved by our auditors. This is because data quality for certain indicators at that time could not be assured. We are required to set out this information in this year's Performance Plan. During the past year we have made improvements to the way we collect and verify this type of data. The changes made were as follows

Amended BVPI's

BVPI	Submitted Figure	Amended Figure	Reason for amendment
Corporate Health			
BV11a	31.08%	28.4%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
BV14	1.33	2.26	Indicator incorrectly calculated
BV157	59.77	40.39%	Indicator revised during audit to be measured more accurately.
Housing			
BV183(i)	4 wks	3.7wks	Rounding error.
BV184a	Figure not submitted prior to audit visit	28.7%	N/A
BV184b	Figure not submitted prior to audit visit.	12.7%	N/A
BV203	152%	37%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
BV74a	N/A	72.3%	Figure not entered initially

BVPI	Submitted Figure	Amended Figure	Reason for amendment
BV74b	N/A	65.3%	Figure not entered initially
BV74c	N/A	73.3%	Figure not entered initially
BV75(i)	N/A	57.7%	Figure not entered initially
BV75(ii)	N/A	57.4%	Figure not entered initially
BV75(iii)	N/A	58%	Figure not entered initially
Environment: Waste Management			
BV82a	18.64%	18.67%	Wrong figure submitted
BV84	380	379	Rounding error
Environment: Planning			
BV109a	64.6%	64.5%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
BV109b	71.80%	70.7%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
BV205	83%	89%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
Community Legal Service			
BV177	91%	93.4%	Indicator incorrectly calculated
Community Safety			
BV174	19.97	22	Indicator incorrectly calculated

Reservations

	PI	04/05 Actual	Reason for Reservation (comments from our external auditors)
Corporate Health			
1	BV12 Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence	13.48	Weaknesses exist within the data collection system. As a result of this no reliance can be placed on the data used to calculate the performance indicator.
Housing			
2	BV212	37.8	The Council has included in the calculation of this indicator cases that have not been re-let during the period.
3	HIP HSSA Private sector homes vacant for more than 6 months.	836	The Council does not have the systems in place to enable them to collect this data.
Benefits			
4	BV78a Average time for processing new claims	59.21	The data used to calculate the indicator unreliable.
5	BV78b Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstances	12.01	The data used to calculate the indicator unreliable.

The BVPP – Frequently Asked Questions

What is a BVPP?

Best Value Performance Plan. It is a statutory plan, required under the Local Government Act 1999. All local authorities are required to produce an annual performance report such as this, although there are increased freedoms for councils rated as 'excellent' or 'good.'

What areas does the BVPP cover?

It has to address specific areas laid down by the Government – these include: describing our corporate priorities; arrangements for improving our weaker areas; details on our performance on best value performance indicators (BVPIs) during the last year; our targets for BVPIs for the next three years and a statement on contracts. The ODPM (now Department for Communities and Local Government) produces guidance on the production of the BVPP – this is available from Dale Phillipson, Corporate Manager – Performance and Improvement.

When should a BVPP be produced?

The BVPP has to be published by 30 June each year. Because it has to include the end of year results for all our BVPIs (the outturn data), this part can only be completed during the period April to May. However, other elements of the report can be started earlier.

How does the BVPP link with other plans we produce?

The BVPP is one of our three strategic plans – the others being the *Corporate Plan* and our *Recovery Plan*. The Corporate Plan should set out the Council's priorities and objectives for a three to five year period and is usually pitched at a high, strategic level. A Recovery Plan is required because we were rated as a 'poor' Council in 2004. The Recovery Plan should specifically address a range of actions to improve our weaker services. Neither of these plans need to evaluate the previous year's performance as the BVPP does, nor do they have set out targets for all BVPIs. Although there is a different emphasis on each of the different plans, they should all reflect the priorities of the Council and be consistent in addressing our improvement needs.

Why has there been so little time to consider the BVPP in the past?

As a Council rated as 'poor', our short-term priorities have been to focus on preventing service failure and improving the performance of the weakest services. This has resulted in us not having a 'typical' corporate planning cycle. However, we will be changing this and moving to a new planning cycle this year – this will improve our consultation processes for all our strategic plans.

Who sets the targets in the BVPP?

The targets are set out by officers in the service areas. There is a host of guidance on how to set useful targets, but in summary the targets should represent continuous improvement in service provision. They should aim to achieve the levels of performance attained by the highest performing councils – 'top quartile performance'. This year we collected around 112 BVPIs set by the Government across all the Council's services, in addition to a range of local indicators set by the council.

Who evaluates the BVPP?

External audit is responsible for auditing our BVPP. The aim is to achieve an 'unqualified' BVPP, which means that the data set out in our plan is reliable and accurate, and that the report was published within the required format and timescale. Last year the BVPP was qualified because it was late.

How does Government use the BVPP?

As the BVPP sets out an evaluation of performance for the past year, and targets for improvement for the next three years, each Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and service inspection will routinely consider our BVPP.

Do Councillors – including Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny – have ownership and oversight of the BVPP?

Yes. The report is circulated in draft form to Improvement Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report will be circulated to all Councillors on the 15 June this year. Finally, the report is presented to Full Council for approval – on 26 June this year.

Does the BVPP have any effect on future Forward Plans?

Not necessarily. The Forward Plan is required to set out key decisions the Council is needed to make. The BVPP provides targets for all services, but this does not always require key decisions.

How can the BVPP help councillors in their work?

The plan provides performance results for each service area, showing how our services compare with other council's services. Councillors are able to use this information as one source of evidence about the council's performance. However, Councillors are able to receive more frequent reports on our performance – for example, we produce monthly reports, broken into service areas and showing how services are performing in relation to their targets.



Council

Date: 26th June 2006

Item No:

Directorate: Finance, Governance and
Citizens

Mario Abela

Author/Contact Officer:

Francis Fernandes

Solicitor to the Council

Ext. 7334

Title of the Report:

CONSTITUTION

Purpose of the Report

To seek Council's approval to various changes to the Constitution.

Recommendations

1. Note the Constitutional Review Working Group's intention, at a later stage, to set up a Ways and Means Committee, subject to further consideration by the Group.
2. Agree the various changes to the Constitution outlined in the body of the report
3. Agree to disestablish the Local Joint Committee and agree changes to the way Human Resource Policies for the Employee Handbook are ratified.
4. Appoint Cllr Palethorpe to the Chair of the Community Enabling Fund Advisory Panel instead of Cllr Hadland.

Background

Council will be aware that a cross party Constitutional Review Working Group (CRWG) was charged with reviewing aspects of the Council's Constitution, in order to make it modern and fit for purpose. Since the last Council meeting, the CRWG has met on two occasions. The first meeting on 1 June 2006 was a full day meeting to discuss the priority areas for changes to the Constitution. The second meeting on 15th June refined the thinking on the matter further.

A major priority area chosen by the CRWG was the functioning of Council meetings. This report contains recommendations from the CRWG, in relation to changes to the Constitution for the relevant priority area. The report also contains further suggested amendments which were not discussed by the CRWG, but are recommended for amendments for the reasons stated in the report.

Recommendations from CRWG

(i) Ways and Means Committee

The CRWG very carefully considered the operation of Council meetings. It was agreed that processes needed to be in place to ensure that the business before Council was proactively managed prior to the meeting. The CRWG discussed the establishment of a "Ways and Means Committee". Although styled a Committee, this would not formally be constituted as a committee but would be an internal meeting, with cross party membership, to allow pre-consideration of the Council agenda and associated business.

Suggested Membership:

Group Whips

Mayor

Leader or Deputy Leader

Chief Executive

Director Governing (as the Director responsible for the service area)

Monitoring Officer

NB Substitutes would be able to attend and in exceptional cases the Mayor's nominee could attend instead of the Mayor.

(ii) Business of the Ways and Means Committee

The Ways and Means Committee would comment or set the agenda for Council meetings; determine the order of motions; consider petitions and decide how these would be dealt with. For example petitions with extensive public interest could be referred to a sub-committee of Council and the Ways and Means Committee could, if appropriate, refer a petition to another decision-making body, for example Cabinet.

The above represents the line of thinking of the CRWG. However, it is important to note that the CRWG has not completed its deliberations on this the issue, and implementation of the Ways and Means Committee will take place at a later stage. The CRWG will consider a full paper outlining the possible workings of the Ways and Means Committee, taking into account best practice from other Councils. A further report outlining the final recommendations will, in due course, be brought to Council for authority to implement the changes.

(iii) Council Meetings – Changes to the Constitution

The operation and conduct of Council meetings were considered by the CRWG.

It was agreed that there needed to be clear timeslots for various aspects of the Council meeting.

Timeslots would be agreed by the Ways and Means Committee for motions and amendments. The allotted time period would be flexible, depending on how many motions were to be considered by the Council meeting, the business to be considered by Council and the actual content of the motion.

The intention is for the timeslots for motions to be implemented immediately. Pending the establishment of the Ways and Means Committee, it is proposed

that the constitution be amended to enable the mayor to make the decision on the allocation of time slots in consultation with the Leader and the Chief Executive. The way it will work in practice is that the Mayor will announce the allocated timeslots for motions at the start of the meeting. After the allotted time the guillotine will fall and the item will automatically be put to the vote. Constitutional changes will be made to implement all the above, including the use of the guillotine.

Question Time

The CRWG have developed a major innovation in the way Council deals with questions from Councillors and members of the public. This innovation is supported by research which shows that many councils, including many highly rated councils have a “question time” slot.

It is proposed that a public question time will provide for a slot for questions from members of the public and Councillors to the Leader and Chairs (or if unavailable the deputy chairs) of the Council’s committees, for example, Overview & Scrutiny, Improvement Board, Cabinet etc. The questions will have to be related to the work of the individual (in the case of the leader) and the Committees concerned.

Given the quasi-judicial nature of decisions by the regulatory committees i.e. Planning and Licensing committees questions on the work of these committees will **not** be allowed.

Questions will have to be submitted, to Meeting Services, in writing, at least five clear days before the Council meeting. The questions will be responded to in the order they are received. A maximum thirty-minute timeslot will be allotted for this question time.

In relation to public questions, protections will be drafted into the Constitution that will give the Monitoring Officer powers, which will be used in consultation with the Chief Executive and Group Leaders, to decide whether public

questions should be excluded because they are either not relevant to the Council's functions, are vexatious, libellous or otherwise repetitious.

Questions will be read out and once responded to, only one supplementary question, based on the response will be allowed, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Once the timeslot for the question time has been reached the guillotine will automatically fall and questions not considered at the meeting will be responded to in writing.

After the thirty-minute public question time, ten minutes maximum will be allotted for Councillor questions for Portfolio Holders. The questions will be based mainly on the presentations given by the Portfolio Holders. There will **not** be a requirement for these questions to be provided in advance.

Motions - Public Speakers

Members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak on motions. However, a maximum of two will be allowed to speak for and a maximum of two will be allowed to speak against any motion. Proposed speakers will need to give notification to meeting services by 12 noon, on the working day before the Council meeting of their intention to speak. The right to speak will be based on the order the requests are received by meeting services. Each speaker will be allowed a speaking time of three minutes.

It is important to note that apart for speaking on motions and utilising the facility under question time, members of the public will not, as of right have an opportunity to speak at Council meetings.

Portfolio Holder Presentations

Portfolio Holders presentations will be made, to each Council meeting, outlining areas, and activities of interest to the relevant Portfolios. Eighteen minutes maximum will be allotted for these presentations. This amounts to three minutes maximum for each Portfolio. It is anticipated that Portfolio

Holder presentations will be submitted prior to the meeting and will be in bullet point format. Portfolio presentations can be taken as “read”, should the Portfolio Holder wish.

Protocols

It was agreed by the CRWG that the following protocols, which have been agreed by Overview and Scrutiny committee would form part of the Constitution:

- Call-in Protocol
- Co-Optees Guidance Booklet
- Inclusion of Non-Executive Councillors in the Scrutiny process
- Public Address at Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Witness Protocol and Guidance Notes
- Witness Protocol and Guidance Notes
- Work Programme Protocol

Councillors should already have seen or received copies of these documents and in order to save unnecessary duplication the documents have not been appended to this report. However, copies will be provided to any councillors you require them.

Particular Amendments to Standing Orders

The CRWG discussed Standing Order 3.4. This Standing Order automatically refers a matter to Cabinet. In practice, this Standing Order has required an almost automatic request for suspension of the Standing Order concerned. Therefore, the CRWG were of a view that this Standing Order had no useful purpose and should be deleted.

Standing Orders were also to be amended to require motions to be submitted in a pre-determined format, i.e. properly structured and paragraphed. The point of the exercise is to ensure that the motion communicates each idea within it, clearly and effectively, so as to enable proper and effective debate on

the various facets of the motion. It is proposed that an additional Standing Order item be inserted into the constitution.

Standing Order 3.6.8 is to be amended to require amendments to motions to be provided in writing and available to all members, at or prior to the Council meeting itself.

The Right of Councillors to Speak at Improvement Board/Cabinet Meetings

The CRWG also considered whether Councillors should speak, as of right, at Cabinet and Improvement Board meetings. It was agreed that Councillors should be given a right to speak at Cabinet and Improvement Board meetings, although they would not sit at the table.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to this. For example, where Cabinet type decisions are being made the legislation has set up a system whereby Cabinet would be clearly identified to and therefore accountable for decisions made by Cabinet. By allowing other Councillors to participate in the debate, there is a danger that the accountability lines may become blurred. The CRWG therefore agreed to trial this for six months following which a decision will need to be made as to whether this should be a permanent arrangement.

Length of Council Meeting

It was agreed by the CRWG that the guillotine would automatically fall at 10:30 pm unless Council agreed by vote, prior to the guillotine falling, to extend the Council meeting. This would mean that the Council meeting would automatically end at 10:30 pm. All business not transacted when the guillotine falls, would either be deferred to the next Council meeting or would be deemed to be agreed. It is important to note that the Constitution will be amended so that items not considered will automatically be deemed to be agreed unless Council specifically identifies items to be deferred to a future meeting.

Key Decisions

The term “key decision” has a specific technical definition in law. Key decisions are in essence the large, more important decisions made by the Cabinet. A number of implications flow from the categorisation of the decision as a key decision. A key decision needs to appear on the Council’s Forward Plan before it can be made (unless the emergency provision in the Constitution applies). The reason being that members of the public and other Councillors should have clear, prior warning of the larger more important decisions. There is a definition of key decision in the Local Authorities’ (Executive Arrangements) (Etc) (England) Regulations 2000. However, the definition is not extensive and it is permissible for the Council to define further what it means by key decisions in its Constitution. It would be of benefit to have a definition that is a bit more extensive and substantive than the statutory definition. It is therefore proposed that the following definition be adopted at Council’s definition of key decision.

- *Any decision in relation to an Executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. For these purposes the minimum financial threshold will be £50,000.*
- *Where decisions are not likely to involve significant expenditure or savings but nevertheless are likely to be significant in terms of their effects on communities in two or more wards or electoral divisions.*
- *For the purposes of interpretation a decision which is ancillary or incidental to a Key decision which has been previously taken by or on behalf of the Council shall not of itself be further deemed to be significant for the purposes of the definition.*

Call-In Times

Members of the CRWG were concerned about the requirement for call-in hearings to be completed within seven working days, failing which a decision could be implemented. There are sound reasons why very tight timescales apply. A balance needs to be struck between the rights given to a Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise an Executive decision and the ability of the Executive to go about its business. An effective call-in, in effect, suspends the decision. Therefore, too long a call-in hearing period could slow down implementation of

Executive decisions and thereby slow down the decision-making processes of the council.

It was agreed by the CRWG that amendments to the Constitution should be made to enable call-in hearings to take place between seven and twenty one days. Seven days would be the norm, but there would be a facility, in exceptional cases for this to be extended to twenty-one days at the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer's discretion.

It is proposed that Changes to the Constitution be allowed to enable this to happen.

CHANGES NOT CONSIDERED BY THE CRWG BUT WHICH ARE RECOMMENDED

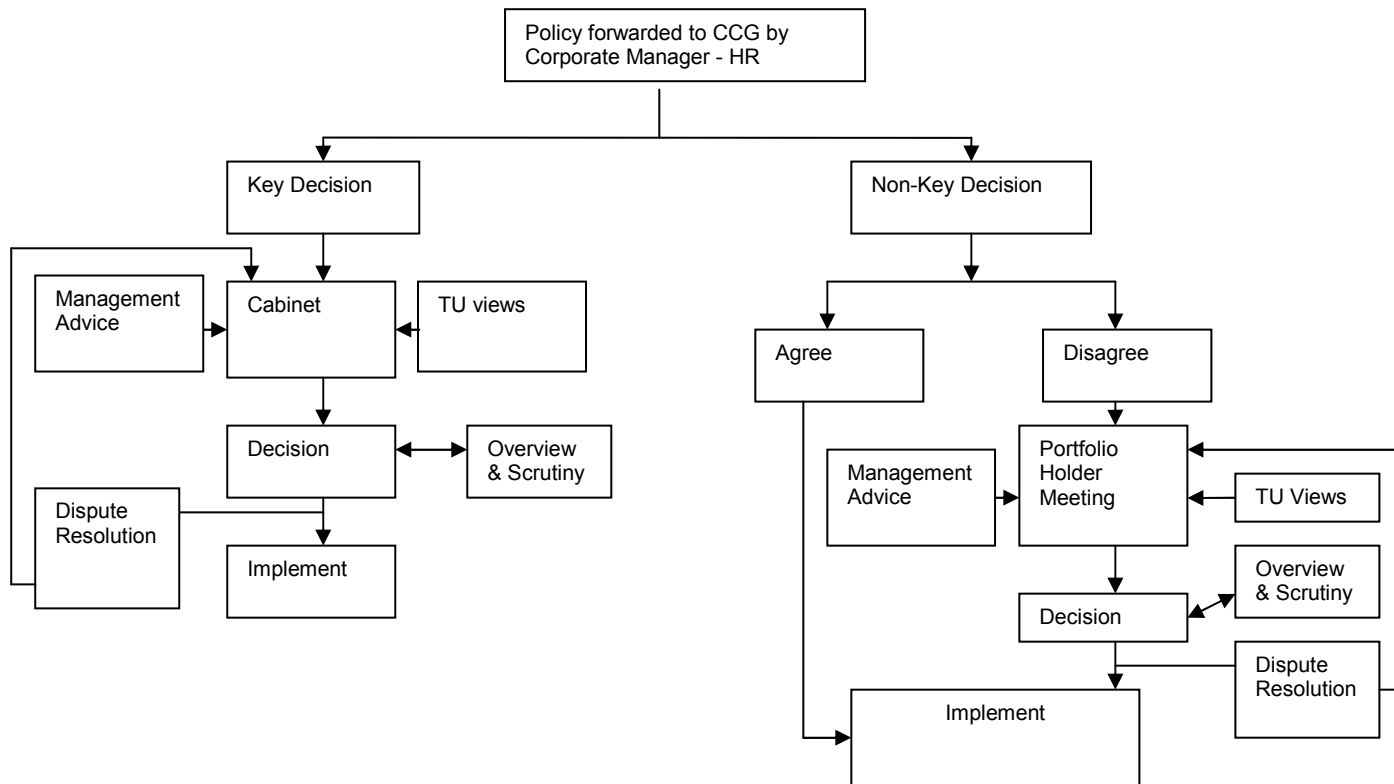
As stated earlier the CRWG met to consider priority changes to the constitution. However, there are other changes required which could not, because of time constraints be considered by the CRWG but which are nevertheless required. The suggested changes are outlined below.

Local Joint Committee

Trade Unions and Management have recently revised the Corporate Consultative Group which has become the forum for the exchange of information, views, communication and formal consultation and negotiation. Specifically discussion at the Corporate Consultative Group will take place on major strategic plans and priorities, HR policies and their application, and structural changes. It acts as a link for other joint forums, e.g., Pay and Grading Review Project Team, HR Policy Review Group and local consultative bodies. The CCG meets monthly to a jointly agreed agenda.

Local Joint Committee (LJC) has met quarterly and involves nominated Councillors in addition to the Trade Union and Management sides. It is a further consultative body but does not have formal decision-making powers. Agendas usually derive directly from CCG and often duplicate the same items.

In order to rationalise and increase the effectiveness of decision-making in this area it is proposed that the LJC be disestablished and the route for the adoption and consultation on human resource policy follows the route outlined diagrammatically below.



By way of explanation, it is proposed that Human Resources policy ratification for the employee handbook be referred to Cabinet (for Key decisions) and to the Portfolio Holder for non-key decisions. In accordance with good industrial relations practice there will be the facility for Trade Union and management views to be fed into the decision-making process with a dispute resolution procedure, which could include mediation through ACAS, or any such similar body. Where the dispute resolution procedure changes the cabinet or portfolio holder decision, there will be a need for the decision-making to taken through the cycle and back to Cabinet and Portfolio holder for decision.

Certain employment type decisions cannot be made by Cabinet or the portfolio Holder, because they are excluded from so doing by the Local Auths (Functions & Responsibilities)(England) Order 2000 . For example the determination of terms and conditions on which employees hold office. Where such decisions are required then it

is proposed that the Officers Scheme of delegation be amended to allow these decisions to be made by a Corporate Director or the Head of Paid Service.

Changes in Nomination Community Enabling Fund Advisory Panel

At the Annual Council meeting, Cllr Hadland was appointed to this group. This was an error as Councillor Palethorpe, whose portfolio responsibility this group falls under should have been nominated to the group. Council is asked to appoint Cllr Palethorpe instead of Cllr Hadland as the chair of the group.

Background Papers

Constitution File FJF

Various Government Circulars



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Name of Committee
CABINET

Directorate: Citizens Governance & Finance

Corporate Manager: Finance & Asset Management

Date: 26 June 2006

Report Title

Statement of Accounts 2005/2006

Key Decision

YES/NO

1. Recommendations

That Councillors recommend to Council for approval the Statement of Accounts for 2005/2006.

2. Summary

The Statement of accounts are required to be approved by 30th June, this report sets out those accounts for approval.

3. Report Background

The Council has a statutory duty to approve and publish the Statement of Accounts for the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006. The Statement of Accounts complies with recommended practice from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the format is largely prescribed. To comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulation 2003, the Council is required to have received and approved the Statement of Accounts by the end of June 2006.

Some improvements have been made to the Statement of Accounts for this year to improve both clarity and compliance with regulations.

4. Options and Evaluation of Options

None

5. Resource Implications (including Financial Implications)

The Statement of Accounts is a historic record of the Council's financial position for the year ended 31st March 2006. The key impact on current and future resources is the position on reserves at the end of the year.

General Fund Balances

General Fund Balances stand at £2.9M at the 31st March 2006. This represents an improvement of £0.4M on the previously forecast position after taking into account capitalisation of expenditure and external financing savings. This is largely as a result of management action to curtail expenditure in year. It should be noted that the underlying revenue budget was still overspent in the year and the budget moving forward remains constrained.

Housing Revenue Account

The HRA Working Balance stands at £4.8M at 31st March 2006 compared to a projected balance of £2.2M, mainly as a result of slippage on capital expenditure forecast to be funded from revenue in 2005/2006.

6. Risk and Opportunity Issues

None

7. Consultees (Internal and External)

Internal	N/a
External	It is intended to publish a summary of the Statement of accounts once approved.

8. Compliance Issues

A: How Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes

Recovery Plan

Improvements to the Statement of Accounts and associated working papers are necessary to improve the Use of Resources judgement.

Corporate Plan
Forms part of improved Financial Management.

B: Other Implications

Other Strategies
None

Finance Comments

Legal Comments

9. Background Papers

Title	Description	Source
None		

Alison Betts
Corporate Manager Finance & Asset Management
ext. 8718

Name	Signature	Date	Ext.
Author	A.Betts		
Corporate Manager	A.Betts		
Director			
Monitoring Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			
Section 151 Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			

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A. Auditor's Report

A. Auditor's Report

B. Explanatory Foreword

1. Introduction

The Council has a statutory duty to approve and publish this Statement of Accounts document for the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006.

This document complies with recommended practice from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; the format is largely prescribed.

To comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulation 2003, the Council is required to have received and approved the Statement of Accounts by the end of June 2006. The Council met and approved the accounts at its meeting on 26th June 2006 and also approved changes to the accounts made during the audit on 2006.

This foreword outlines the key individual accounts that comprise the Statement of Accounts in addition to highlighting the main activities/variations that took place during 2005/06 in each of the main activity areas.

The details accounts and related information are shown on pages 19 to 72 and consist of the following: -

Consolidated Revenue Account (pages 19 to 28)

Reports the Council's net revenue costs for the year (combining the General Fund Account, Housing Revenue Account and the associated sources of funding). The balances left on this Account, after appropriation of HRA surpluses, relate entirely to the General Fund.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) pages 29 to 36)

Summarises the transactions relating to the provision and maintenance of Council housing.

Collection Fund (pages 37 to 40)

A separate account showing income collected from Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates and how this is distributed between Northampton Borough Council and the other precepting bodies (i.e. the County Council and the Police Authority).

Consolidated Balance Sheet (pages 41 to 52)

Given the overall financial position for the Council at 31 March 2006, showing the Council's assets, liabilities, reserves and balances.

Statement of Total Movement in Reserves (pages 53 to 58)

Summarises the movement on revenue and capital reserves.

Cash Flow Statement (pages 59 to 64)

Summarises the overall movements in the Council's cash position during the year.

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts (page 65)

Outlines the Authority's and the Responsible Finance Officer's responsibilities when preparing the accounts.

Statement of Internal Control (pages 67 to 72)

This statement outlines the Council's main systems of internal control and any resultant actions arising for next year.

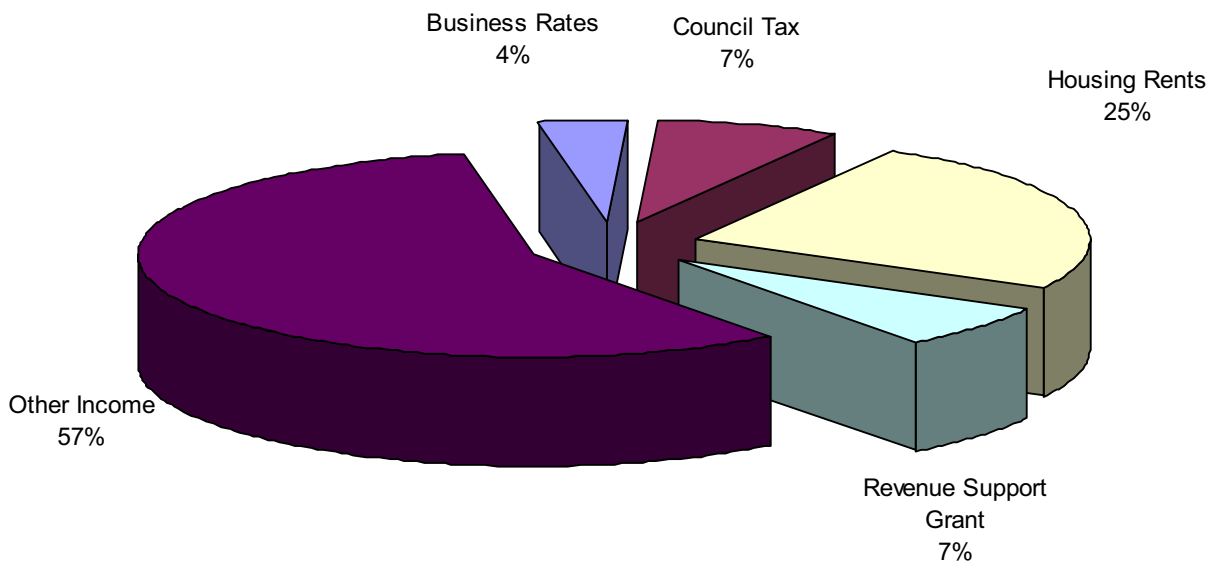
B. Explanatory Foreword

2. Financial Summary 2005/06

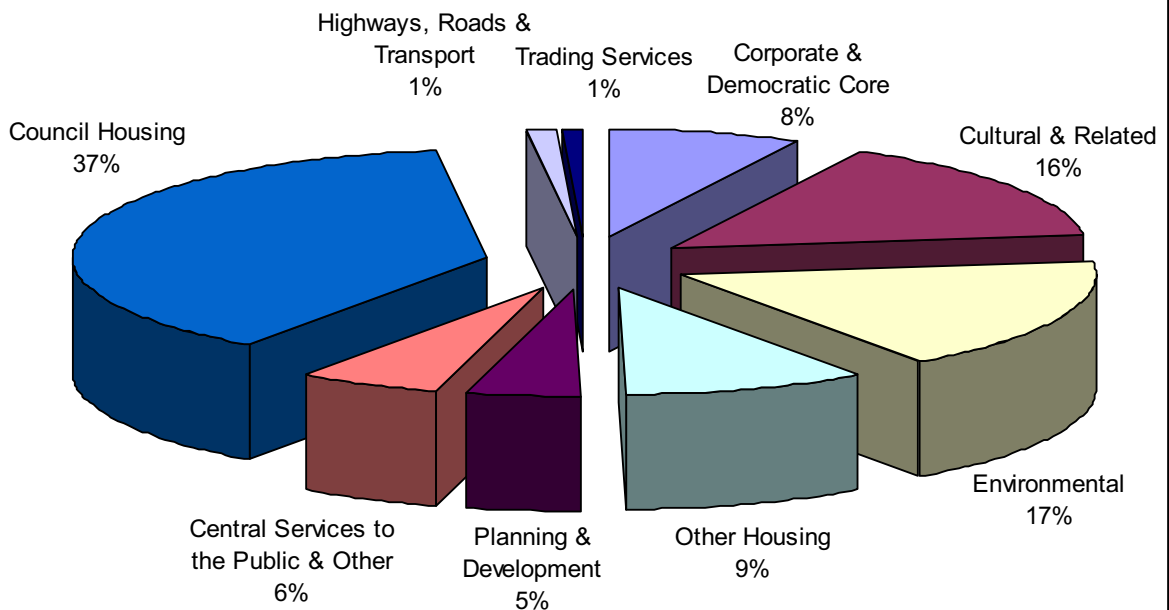
a) Revenue Spending and Sources of Income

The following charts outline where the Council's revenue money came from, how it was spent and on which services. The charts show the overall position of the Council's revenue budgets for 2005/06 (i.e. both General Fund and HRA).

Where The Money Came From



What Services Have Been Provided With The Money



B. Explanatory Foreword

b) General Fund Account

The following table summarises the position for the General Fund for 2005/06.

	Budget	Actual	Variance
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Expenditure			
Net Service Expenditure	36,183	38,153	1,970
Capital Financing Adjustments	-8,418	-10,149	-1,731
Total Net Expenditure	27,765	28,004	239
Income			
Business Rates	-5,637	-5,637	0
Revenue Support Grant	-10,584	-10,550	34
Met by local Council Taxpayers	-11,438	-11,438	0
Collection Fund Deficit	9	9	0
Total Income	-27,650	-27,616	34
(Surplus)/Deficit for the year	115	388	273
Balance brought forward	-2,242	-3,288	
Balance carried forward	-2,127	-2,900	

c) Housing Revenue Account

The following table outlines the outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2005/06.

	Budget	Actual	Variance
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Expenditure			
Net Service Expenditure	21,648	22,253	605
Capital Financing Adjustments	-21,796	-23,540	-1,744
(Surplus)/Deficit for the year	-148	-1,287	-1,139
Balance brought forward	-2,017	-3,555	
Balance carried forward	-2,165	-4,842	

B. Explanatory Foreword

d) Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure relates primarily to spending on Council assets (i.e. an item with an expected life of more than one year). In 2005/06 the Council spent £22.2 million on capital projects, compared with a budget of £27 million.

	Budget	Actual	Variance
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Expenditure			
Housing Revenue Account Schemes	11,571	8,672	-2,899
General Fund Housing Schemes	2,425	2,116	-309
Other General Fund Schemes	12,994	11,500	-1,494
Total Capital Expenditure	26,990	22,288	-4,702
Sources of Financing			
Major Repairs Allowance		7,198	
Revenue Contributions to Capital Expenditure		1,761	
Grants & Contributions		5,531	
Capital Receipts		5,449	
Supported Borrowing		1,653	
Unsupported Borrowing		696	
		22,288	

Budget Variations

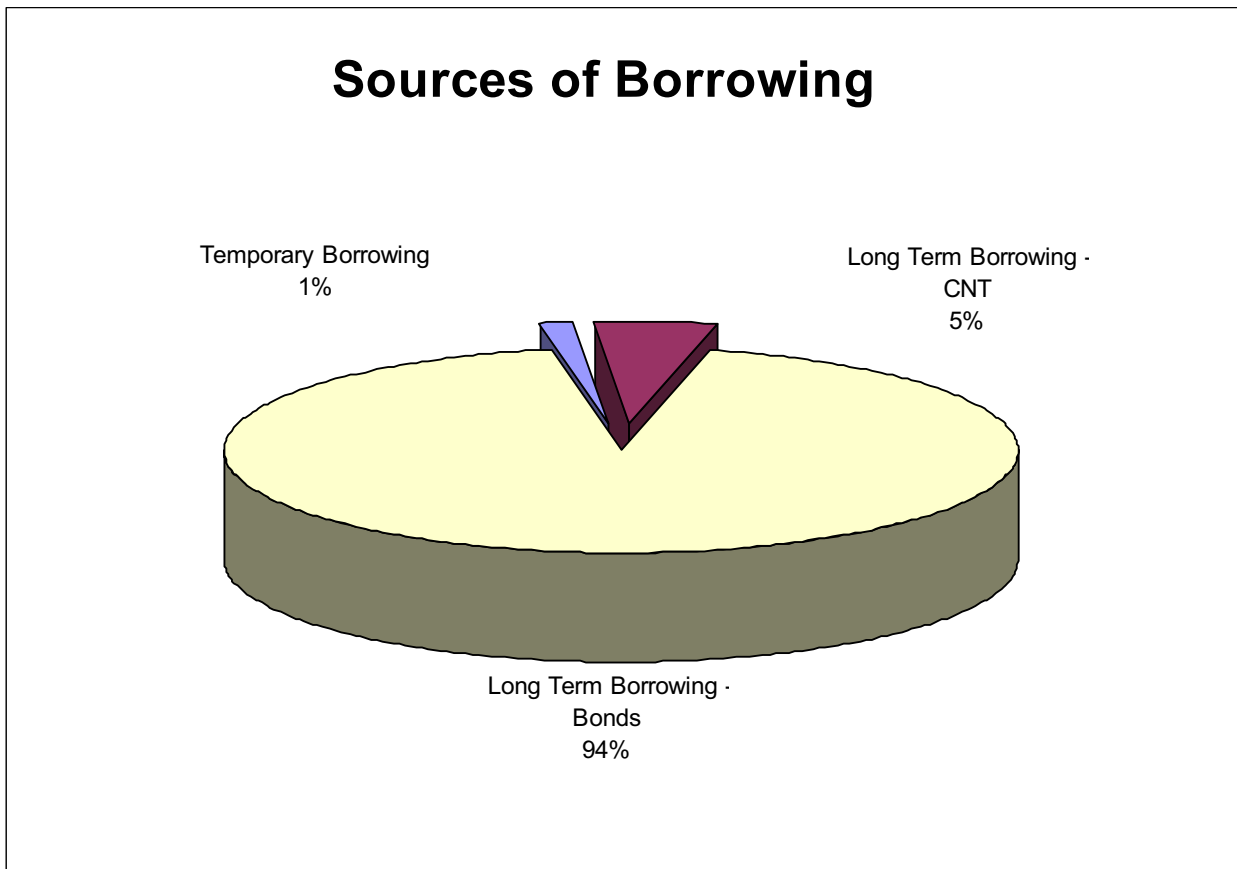
The spend on the capital programme was approximately £4.7m below the budget for the year. Budget changes will be requested for any schemes that are currently under way or still planned to take place but have effectively "slipped" into the next financial year (i.e. 2006/07).

B. Explanatory Foreword

e) Current Borrowing Facilities

Current borrowing facilities are as detailed below: -

Description	£000s
Long Term Borrowing - Bonds	24,600
English Partnerships	1,291
Temporary Borrowing	392
	26,283



f) Sources of Capital Finance

The Council's capital expenditure for 2005/06 was £22.288m. This was financed by the use of borrowing (£2.349m), capital receipts (£5.449m), Major Repairs Allowance (£7.198m), other grants and contributions (£5.531m) and internal revenue resources (£1.761m).

B. Explanatory Foreword

3. Major Changes in 2005/06

a) Assets acquired or Liabilities incurred

Capital expenditure relates primarily to spending on Council assets (i.e. an item with an expected life of more than one year). In 2005/06 the Council spent £22.288 million on capital projects, compared with a budget of £26.990 million. Prior to 2004/05 the funding of capital expenditure was on a cash basis. The Prudential Framework, which came into force on 1 April 2004, requires financing to be undertaken on an accruals basis. The accounts reflect this change.

Capital Expenditure	£000s
Housing	
Council Housing	8,672
Other Housing	1,829
	10,501
General Fund	
Caspar	448
Royal Theatre - re-roofing work	150
Lake Clearance	168
Kingsthorpe Cemetery Extension	199
Uniclass Upgrade to Enterprise Version	206
Mounts Baths Showers	214
Payroll System Replacement	238
Guildhall IT Recabling Project	259
Upgrade Recycling Facilities	413
Camp Hill Community Centre	614
Housing/Council Tax Replacement System	710
Northampton Theatres Trust Lottery Development	898
One Stop Shop, CRM	902
Far Cotton Resource Centre	1,174
Blueberry Hill Diner & Studio 1 Purchase	1,750
Other	3,444
	11,787
	22,288

b) Pensions

The pension fund was subjected to a formal revaluation during 2004 as part of the scheduled three year valuation exercise carried out by the pension fund actuary. The valuation was carried out in accordance with new accounting / valuation rules (including the use of a different discount factor). Like most authorities, this has resulted in the notional pension fund deficit decreasing in the Council's accounts from £75.8m in 2004/05 to £73.2m in 2005/06. The Council has agreed a stepped increase in its pension fund contributions over the next few years to help address the pension funding position in the medium term. Increased contributions have been planned for, and factored into the Council's medium term financial strategy.

B. Explanatory Foreword

c) Accounting Policies

Developers' contributions unapplied were moved from creditors to a separate place in the accounts for the 2004/05 Statement of Accounts. Clarification on the Statement of Recommended Practice has led to reclassification of these between Grants and Contributions Unapplied, Creditors, and Receipts in Advance (depending on the form of any agreement or conditions and the status of activity). The principle is detailed in the Statement of Accounting Policies and the effect of this is detailed in a separate note to the balance sheet.

d) Statutory Functions

The Licensing Act 2003 replaced the Licensing Act 1964. Under the new Act, the Council now has the powers to grant or refuse licenses for the sale of alcohol. Previously the Magistrates Courts administered this function, although the roles and responsibilities also changed under the same Act so that the licensing requirement has moved from an individual licensee to both individual and premises licenses.

Under the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005, the Police are no longer responsible to temporarily kennel animals, with the duty passing to local authorities. This has not been implemented yet as negotiations between the Police and Northampton Borough Council regarding the handover of responsibilities are still taking place.

There has been no other change in the statutory functions of the authority.

e) Unusual charges or credits in the accounts

None.

4. Conclusion

The Council is committed to continually improving and strengthening its internal governance arrangements. To this end, improvements to budgetary control and performance management processes have been made during 2005/06 and will continue to be made during 2006/07 as new procedures become fully operational. The Council's budget for 2006/07 was set on the basis of cash limits and placing full responsibility for the delivery of the Council's services within those cash limits to Corporate Managers. Overall, the outturn position reported in these accounts for 2005/06 are in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and forecasts.

5. Further Information

Further information about these accounts is available from: -

Bill Lewis Technical Finance Manager Northampton Borough Council Cliftonville House, Bedford Road Northampton NN4 7NR	Alison Betts Chief Finance Officer Northampton Borough Council Cliftonville House, Bedford Road Northampton NN4 7NR
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In addition, interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed and the availability of the accounts is advertised in the local press.

B. Explanatory Foreword

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

1. General Principles

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2005, a Statement of Recommended practice (SORP), issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003.

2. Provisions and Reserves

a) Provisions

The Authority considers making a provision if the following circumstances occur:-

- A present legal or constructive obligation results from a past event;
- A probable transfer of economic benefit is required to settle an obligation;
- A reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

b) Reserves

The Council maintains reserves to finance expenditure on future projects and to protect the Authority against unexpected events and change in legislation.

In accordance with the Council's Audit Commission's recommended minimum level of working balance, the level of the General Fund working balance should not fall below £2.3m. The Council also holds a small number of earmarked reserves that are held for a specific purpose.

To comply with legislation the Council has two "capital" accounts that are incorporated into the Consolidated Balance Sheet. These are: -

- The Fixed Asset Restatement Account (FARA) mainly represents the changes in asset values arising from revaluations.
- The Capital Financing Account (CFA) mainly represents amounts set aside from revenue resources or capital receipts, and used to finance capital expenditure.

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS 17) on pensions, the Council is required to maintain a Pensions Reserve to reflect the net asset or liability of the Council's proportion of the Northamptonshire County Council's Pension Fund.

3. Fixed Assets

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets if capitalised on an accruals basis. The Council has a general de-minimus limit of £6,000 for capital expenditure purposes, which results in the capitalisation of expenditure, above that limit, as an asset in the balance sheet.

a) Intangible Assets

The SORP 2004 introduced a requirement to separately identify Intangible Assets, e.g. software licences, goodwill, brand. Intangible Assets are amortised to revenue over between three and ten years depending on the scale and perceived benefit arising from the asset.

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

b) Valuation methods

Fixed Assets are valued on the basis recommended by CIPFA and in accordance with the Statement of Asset Valuation Principles and Guidance Notes issued by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The basis of valuation for assets is shown below: -

Intangible Assets	Historic Cost
Operational Assets	
Council Housing	Existing Use Value - Social Housing
Other Land & Buildings	Existing Use Value Depreciated Replacement Cost
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	Depreciated Historic Cost
Infrastructure Assets	Historic Cost applied where possible but where unable to determine the historical cost, the asset is valued at £1
Community Assets	Historic Cost applied where possible but where unable to determine the historical cost, the asset is valued at £1
Non-Operational Assets	
Investment Properties	Open Market Value
Surplus Properties	Open Market Value
Assets Under Construction	Historic Cost

c) Revaluation

All assets, other than those valued at historic cost and Vehicles, Plant and Equipment which are valued at depreciated historic cost, are revalued as part of a 5 year rolling programme. A schedule of properties valued at more than £0.4m is revalued annually. Valuations are undertaken by the Council's retained qualified valuer, Richard Lewis FRICS.

d) Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for all assets with a useful finite life, which is determined at the time of acquisition or revaluation. Depreciation is calculated using the Straight-Line method over the determined life of the asset.

e) Charges to Revenue

General Fund service revenue accounts, central support services and trading accounts are charged with a capital charge for the fixed assets used in the provision of their service. The charge covers the annual provision for depreciation plus a capital financing charge determined by applying a specified notional rate of interest (4.95% for historic cost assets and 3.5% for all other assets for 2005/06) to net asset values. The principle applied relating to intangible fixed assets is shown at 3a) above.

Capital charges have a neutral impact on the amount to be raised from local taxation as the income from these charges is credited back to the Asset Management Revenue Account (AMRA).

4. Deferred Charges

Deferred charges are payments of a capital nature where no fixed assets are created. They include private sector renewal grants and advances to other parties to finance capital investment.

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

Expenditure relating to deferred charges is written off to revenue in the year the expenditure is incurred.

5. Capital Receipts

Capital receipts from the disposal of fixed assets are accounted for on an accruals basis.

Receipts reserved for the repayment of external debt are included on the balance sheet in the capital financing account.

From 2004/05 75% of receipts from council house sales is payable to the National Housing Pool, administered by the Government.

6. Government Grants

Revenue government grants are accounted for in the year in which they arise. They are credited to the service where the expenditure to which they relate is charged.

Where the acquisition of a fixed asset is financed by a government grant, the amount of grant is credited to the government grants-deferred account. This is then written off to the asset management revenue account over the useful life of the asset to match depreciation of the asset to which it relates. The grant is not written down in the year that it is received.

7. Internal Interest

The figure quoted in the Consolidated Revenue Account is the total interest receivable from third parties, principally due to the investment of capital receipts and revenue balances. Interest on revenue balances is credited to the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account based on the level of their balances, and using average interest.

8. Redemption of Debt

The required Minimum Revenue Provision for the repayment of debt has been made in the revenue accounts for the General Fund. No minimum Revenue Provision was required for the Housing Revenue Account, and no voluntary provision for the repayment of debt was made in 2005/06.

9. Leases

Leases have been assessed under the requirements of SSAP21 and treated as Finance Leases or Operating Leases accordingly. Finance Leases are generally treated as Capital Expenditure.

Operating lease rentals are charged to service revenue accounts on a straight line basis. Operating leases are not shown as capital assets.

10. Current Assets and Liabilities (Debtors and Creditors)

The revenue accounts of the Council are maintained on an accruals basis in accordance with the SORP and FRS 18. Sums due to or from the Council during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year.

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

11. Stocks and Work in Progress

The stocks held at the Council's main stores at Westbridge Depot are valued at current prices. This accounting policy does not comply with SSAP 9 (Statement of Standard Accounting Practice 9). Other stocks and stores are valued at the lower of actual cost or net realisable value, in line with the SORP and SSAP9.

Work in progress on uncompleted jobs is valued at cost.

12. Cost of Support Services

The costs of support services are fully allocated to services using the most appropriate basis (i.e. time allocations, activity levels, floor area, etc.). The bases of allocation are continually being refined and developed to accurately reflect the service received.

Following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the Council, the Council has been involved in a recovery process. Some funding from the Government has been made available to support the costs of this recovery process. The net costs of recovery have been recharged to services to reflect the full cost of the services provided by the Council.

13. Pensions

In accordance with statute, the Council uses the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) administered by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC). The Scheme operates on a defined benefits basis relating to pay and service.

The Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS 17) Retirement Benefits was introduced to ensure the financial statements reflect at "fair value" the assets and liabilities from an employer's retirement benefit obligations and any related funding. It does this by requiring employers to recognise an asset or liability based on the balance of assets and actuarial liabilities in the fund. Pension scheme assets are measured at market value at the balance sheet date and scheme liabilities are discounted at the current rate.

The operating costs of providing retirement benefits to employees are recognised in the accounting period(s) in which the benefits are earned by the employees. This is achieved by replacing the contributions paid to the pension fund, used under the previous standard, with a Current Service Cost an actuarial calculation based upon the increase in present value of the scheme's liabilities expected to arise from an employee's service in the current period.

14. Investments

Investments are shown in the Consolidated Balance Sheet at cost.

15. Developers' Contributions

The Council has received a number of contributions from developers, mostly in settlement of their planning (section 106) obligations. Where the contribution is repayable to the developer within a specific time period if, by the end of that time period, certain works have not been completed, the contribution is treated as a creditor. The contributions will remain in creditors until such a point that the money is not repayable (i.e. the works have been completed) or until the contribution is repaid.

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

Where the contribution is not repayable to the developer within a specific time, there is a different treatment depending on whether the agreement relates to capital or revenue works. Any revenue contribution is treated as a receipt in advance and is held in the balance sheet until there is related expenditure in revenue. At this point the contribution is credited to the service accounts to support the revenue expenditure. Any capital contribution is treated as a Contribution Unapplied and is written down when the contribution is used to finance a relevant capital project. This treatment is in compliance with the SORP.

C. Statement Of Accounting Policies

D. The Consolidated Revenue Account

2004/05		2005/06			Note
Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	
	EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES				
2,937	Central services to the public	15,301	-12,157	3,144	
	Cultural, environmental & planning				
10,230	Cultural & related services	13,893	-4,890	9,003	
9,963	Environmental services	15,620	-5,530	10,090	
2,503	Planning & development services	5,454	-2,825	2,629	
840	Highways, roads & transport	8,256	-7,525	731	
	Housing				
17,866	Housing Revenue Account	55,792	-33,539	22,253	
4,313	General Fund Housing	45,984	-40,626	5,358	
3,965	Corporate & democratic core	4,476	-100	4,376	
875	Non distributed costs		-2,884	-2,884	
28	Other Services	50		50	
-479	(Surplus)/deficit on insurance provision		-406	-406	
53,041	Net Cost of Services	164,826	-110,482	54,344	
521	Parish precepts			563	
-96	Parish grants			-93	
53	(Surplus)/deficit on trading undertakings			435	
-21,319	Asset Management Revenue Account			-27,583	1
-1,891	Interest & investment income			-1,836	
	Contributions to housing pooled capital receipts			6,347	
7,506	Premia on early settlement on borrowing				
	Pension interest & expected return on assets			2,565	
2,606					
40,421	Net Operating Expenditure			34,742	
579	Transfer to HRA balances			1,287	
-1,005	Depreciation Appropriations			-2,849	
351	Capital Financing Account Adjustments			2,715	
-56	Transfers to / (from) earmarked reserves			877	
1,939	Capital expenditure financed from revenue			1,761	
-2,621	Deferred charges			-2,935	
-3,176	Provision for repayment of external loans			-3,504	
-2,112	Appropriations to / from pension reserve			2,257	
	Transfer from UCRR re: housing pooled capital receipts			-6,347	
-7,506					
	Amount to be met from Government Grants & Local Taxation			28,004	
26,814					
-10,449	Revenue Support Grant			-10,550	
-5,288	Non-domestic rates redistribution			-5,637	
-11,044	Demand on the Collection Fund			-11,438	
115	(Surplus)/deficit on Collection Fund			9	
148	Net General Fund (surplus)/deficit			388	
-3,436	Balance on General Fund b/fwd			-3,288	
-3,288	Balance on General Fund c/fwd			-2,900	

D. The Consolidated Revenue Account

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

1. Transactions on the Asset Management Revenue Account

This account enables notional capital charges, used to calculate the Net Cost of Services, to be reversed out and replaced with actual costs for External Interest to produce Net Operating Expenditure.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Expenditure	
1,683	External Interest payable	1,408
118	Impairments	0
12,041	Depreciation	13,892
13,842		15,300
	Income	
-34,692	Capital charges (Asset Rentals & Depreciation)	-40,168
-469	Grants Deferred	-2,715
-35,161		-42,883
-21,319	(Surplus)/Deficit to Consolidated Revenue Account	-27,583

2. Leases

The Council uses equipment financed under the terms of an operating lease. The amount charged to revenue under these arrangements in 2005/06 was £2.1m. The Council no longer has any financing leases.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
4	Finance Lease Rentals	0
338	Operating Lease Charges	321
127	IT Operating Lease Charges	0
1,948	Vehicle Operating Lease Charges (including Maintenance)	1,783
2,417		2,104

The Council received £xm in the year from the lease of property to third parties under operating leases.

3. Trading Undertakings

The Council operates the following trading undertakings: -

2004/05		2005/06		
		Exp.	Income	Net
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
250	Property Management	-1,787	2,341	554
-184	Highways	-4,585	4,466	-119
-30	Electrical Services	0	0	0
16	Consortium Audit	0	0	0
1	Building Cleaning	0	0	0
53	(Surplus)/Deficit to C R A	-6,372	6,807	435

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

During 2005/06 the Council carried out works to the value of £2.938m for WS Atkins. WS Atkins provide the Highways Maintenance service to Northamptonshire County Council with whom the Council previously held a Highways Agency agreement. Of the £2.938m income from WS Atkins, £2.662m relates exclusively to work carried out for them on County Council related work. The remaining £0.276m relates to work carried out on both County Council and third-party related work. The legality of these contracts has been questioned and the Council is currently considering the legal arrangements underpinning all of these contracts in the context of its trading powers.

The following services are also deemed to be trading services but are allocated to main service areas within the accounts: -

2004/05		2005/06		
Net		Exp.	Income	Net
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
758	Trade Refuse	-1,220	1,473	253
-90	Markets	-723	809	86
668	(Surplus)/Deficit to C R A	-1,943	2,282	339

4. Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, empowers local authorities to make contributions to certain charitable funds, not-for-profit bodies providing a public service in the United Kingdom and mayoral appeals. This expenditure is limited to £5.30 per head of population for 2005/06.

The Council was permitted to spend £1.034m under this power in 2005/06 (£0.971m in 2004/05). The actual expenditure was nil since all expenditure was undertaken using the Council's well-being powers granted in the Local Government Act (2000). The detail of the amount allowable is shown below: -

2004/05		2005/06
£5.00	Maximum Allowable Expenditure per head	£5.30
194,122	Relevant Population	195,047
970,610	Maximum Allowable Expenditure	1,033,750
0	Actual Expenditure	0

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

5. Publicity Expenditure

Within the requirements of section 5(1) of the Local Government Act 1986, the Council's spending on publicity was: -

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Expenditure	
434	Recruitment Advertising	105
278	Other Publicity	71
249	Public Relations	185
106	Publicity Unit	98
1,067	Total	459

6. Building Control Trading Account

The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 require the disclosure of information regarding the setting of charges for the administration of the building control function. However, certain activities performed by the Building Control Unit cannot be charged for, such as providing general advice and liaising with other statutory authorities. The statement below shows the total cost of operating the Building Control Unit divided between the chargeable and non-chargeable activities.

2004/05		2005/06		
		Chargeable	Non-Chargeable	Total
Net				
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
	Expenditure			
4	Employees	2	0	2
0	Premises	0	0	0
0	Transport	0	0	0
44	Supplies and services	19	0	19
702	Support service charges	476	270	746
750	Total Expenditure	497	270	767
	Income			
-455	Building Regulation fees	-399	0	-399
-455	Total Income	-399	0	-399
295	(Surplus)/Deficit	98	270	368

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

7. Agency Services

A new Agency agreement with the County Council commenced on 1 July 2003, which allows the Council to undertake a much smaller range of functions than under the previous Highways Agency Agreement. The costs for 2005/06 include the residual enquiries for the public and Highways Agreements (section 38s) plus grass cutting on highways land and inspection and maintenance of highways trees.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
377	Administration costs and ancillary services	789
-142	Income including transfer fees from NCC	-339
235		450

8. Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970

The Council is empowered by this Act to provide goods and services to other public bodies. The Authority provides a variety of services to other local authorities, the income from this is outlined below: -

2004/05			2005/06	
Exp	Income		Exp	Income
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
3	-7	Highways	8	-24
259	-151	Call Care	254	-142
56	-56	Print Services Unit	50	-50
318	-214		312	-216

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

9. Pension Costs

The Council's pension scheme is a defined benefit scheme. The following table outlines the cost for 2004/05 and 2005/06: -

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Net Cost of Service	
4,297	Current Service Cost	4,522
302	Past Service Cost	-3,103
556	Gains and losses on settlements or curtailments	
	Net Operating Expenditure	
10,330	Interest Costs	10,755
-7,724	Expected Return on Assets	-8,190
	Amount to be met from Government Grants and Local Taxation	
-2,112	Contribution From Pension Reserve	2,257
	Amount Charged to Council Tax for Pensions	
5,649	Employers Contributions	6,241

Note 6 to the Balance sheet and Note 3 to the Statement of Total Movement in Reserves also consider the effect of pension costs on the Council.

The information included for all of the pension disclosures is provided by Mercers, the Actuary for the Pension Fund. Further information can be found in the County Council's Pension Fund's Annual Report which is available on request from the Pensions Section, Resources Directorate, PO Box 136, County Hall, Guildhall Road, Northampton, NN1 1AT.

10. Members' Allowances and Officers' Emoluments

The total amount of members' allowances paid in the year ending 2005/06 was £0.332m. Detailed allowances are listed below:-

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Expenditure	
25	Mayor/Deputy Mayor Allowance	25
253	Members' Allowances	332
30	Expenses	32
308	Total	389

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

The number of employees whose remuneration (excluding pension contributions, including election fees) was £50,000 or more in bands of £10,000 were: -

2004/05 No. of Employees	Remuneration Band	2005/06 No. of Employees
9	£50,000 - £59,999	10
5	£60,000 - £69,999	10
2	£70,000 - £79,999	2
0	£80,000 - £89,999	0
0	£90,000 - £99,999	0
0	£100,000 - £109,999	1
0	£110,000 - £119,999	0
0	£120,000 - £129,999	0
1	£130,000 - £139,999	0

11. Minimum Revenue Provision

The Authority is required by Section 63 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to set aside a Minimum Revenue Provision ((MRP) for the redemption of debt. The method of calculating the provision is defined by statute.

The minimum revenue provision for 2004/05 was £0.419m and £0.340m in 2005/06.

12. Contributions to Earmarked Reserves

The net contributions to earmarked reserves in 2005/06 was £0.877m (£0.056m contribution from in 2004/05) leaving an overall balance of £4.087m at 31 March 2006. The movement and purpose of the reserves is set out in detail in the notes to the movement on reserves on page 53.

13. Related Party Transactions

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties, bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

Central Government has effective control over the general operations of the Council. It is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. housing benefits). Details of transactions with government departments are set out in a note to the Cash Flow Statement.

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. During 2005/06 grants to the value of £0.945m were made to parties where Members had an interest. Contracts were entered into in full compliance with the Council's Standing Orders. All transactions are recorded in the Register of Members' Interest, open to public inspection at The Guildhall, Northampton.

Officers of the Council – no material disclosures.

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

Other Public Bodies – there were no grants paid to Parish or Town Councils in 2005/06.

Pension Fund – in 2005/06 the contributions paid to Northamptonshire County Council in respect of employers' contributions, added years' contributions and lump sum payments were

Assisted Organisations – no material disclosures.

14. External Audit Fees

Fees payable for external audit services are detailed below. The Authority's auditor is KPMG and the amounts paid to the auditor for the various functions are: -

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
215	Fees payable to the Audit Commission with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor (Section 5 Audit Commission Act 1998)	292
18	Fees payable to the Audit Commission in respect of statutory inspection (Section 10 Local Government Act 1999)	13
46	Fees payable to the Audit Commission for the certification of Grant Claims and Returns (Section 28 Audit Commission Act 1998)	26
1	Fees payable in respect of other services provided by the appointed auditor	0
280		331

E. Notes To The Consolidated Revenue Account

F. Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) summarises the transactions relating to the provision, maintenance and sale of Council houses and flats. The account has to be self-financing and there is a legal prohibition on cross subsidy to or from local taxpayers.

Net Expenditure 2004/05		Net Expenditure 2005/06	Note
£000s		£000s	
	INCOME		
-36,138	Dwelling Rents	-36,825	
-1,128	Non Dwelling Rents	-1,130	
-1,530	Charges for services & facilities	-1,646	
-762	Contributions Towards Expenditure	-636	
-7	Housing Revenue account subsidy receivable	-7	
-39,565	Total Income	-40,244	
	EXPENDITURE		
9,062	Repairs & Maintenance	10,548	
	Supervision & Management		
4,710	General Management	5,027	
4,657	Special Services	4,703	
195	Rent, Rates, Taxes & other charges	71	
8,104	Negative Subsidy	7,071	7
332	Increased provision for bad/doubtful debts	124	
18,786	Cost of Capital Charge	22,594	5
8,136	Depreciation	10,048	6
16	Deferred Charges	0	
	Sums directed by the Secretary of State		
3,433	Rent Rebates transfer to General Fund	2,310	9
57,431	Total Expenditure	62,496	
17,866	Net Cost of Services	22,252	
-18,790	Net Income on Asset Management Revenue Account	-22,594	5
186	Amortised Premiums & Discounts	186	
-616	HRA Investment Income	-586	
-1,354	Net Operating Expenditure	-742	
1,845	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	1,761	4
-65	Transfers to / (from) Reserves	544	
-1,005	Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	-2,849	3
-579	(Surplus)/deficit for the year	-1,286	
-2,976	Balance on HRA b/fwd	-3,555	
-3,555	Balance on HRA c/fwd	-4,841	

F. Housing Revenue Account

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

1. Housing Stock

- a) At 31 March 2006 the Council was responsible for managing units of accommodation: -

Type of Property	Number of Bedrooms				Total
	One	Two	Three	Four+	
Flats-Low Rise	1,418	352	2	1	1,773
Flats-Medium Rise	1,942	919	124	3	2,988
Flats-High Rise	399	85	22	0	506
Houses & Bungalows	879	2,637	3,302	347	7,165
Totals	4,638	3,993	3,450	351	12,432

- b) The movement in housing stock can be summarised as follows: -

Type of Property	Stock at 01/04/2005	Stock Movements			Stock at 01/04/2006
		Sales	Transfers	Additions	
Flats	5,310	-43			5,267
Houses & Bungalows	7,246	-81			7,165
Dwellings (excl. Shared)	12,556	-124	0	0	12,432
Shared Ownership	103	-4			99
Totals	12,659	-128	0	0	12,531

- c) The gross balance sheet of housing assets at 31 March was as follows:-

2004/05	Gross Balance Sheet Value	2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Operational Assets	
196,068	Land	159,871
448,380	Dwellings	373,031
8,295	Other Property	15,777
652,743	Total Operational Assets	548,679
348	Non Operational Assets	540
653,091	TOTAL	549,219
1,027,897	Vacant Possession Value as at 1st April	1,064,478

2. Vacant Possession Value

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

The Vacant Possession value of dwellings within the HRA as at 1 April was £1,064m. For the balance sheet, the figure has been reduced to 50% of this value, i.e. £532.9m. This shows the economic cost of providing Council housing at less than open market rents.

3. Major Repairs Reserve

Authorities are required to maintain a Major Repairs Reserve (MRR). The MRR has two functions; the first is to act as a credit entry for the cost of depreciation on Council dwellings. The second is to hold unused balances of Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), which can be used in future years. The MRA is a grant paid through the Housing Subsidy mechanism which can only be used to finance capital expenditure and represents the estimated annual cost of maintaining an Authority's stock at its existing level.

Council dwelling depreciation is lower than MRA, therefore an adjustment is required to ensure there is no bottom line impact on the HRA. The transactions on the MRR are detailed below:-

Major Repairs Reserve	£000s
Balance at 1 April 2005	0
HRA Depreciation	-10,048
Depreciation adjustment to agree to MRA	2,850
	-7,198
Amount used to finance Capital Expenditure	
Dwellings	7,198
Other Property	0
	7,198
Balance at 31 March 2006	0

4. Capital Expenditure, Financing and Receipts

a) Housing capital receipts in 2005/06 were as follows:-

2004/05	Housing Capital Receipts	2005/06
£000		£000
41	Land Sales	147
9,633	Dwelling Sales	7,452
730	Other Property Sales	320
10,404	Total	7,919

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

- b) A summary of Housing Revenue Account capital expenditure and how it was financed in 2005/06 is shown below: -

2004/05	HRA Capital Expenditure and Financing	2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Expenditure	
0	Land Purchase	0
10,548	Dwellings	8,365
269	Other Property	594
10,817	Total Expenditure	8,959
	Financing	
	Dwellings	
1,841	Borrowing	0
0	Useable Capital Receipts	0
1,624	Revenue Contributions	1,167
7,083	Major Repairs Reserve	7,198
10,548		8,365
	Other Property	
0	Borrowing	0
0	Useable Capital Receipts	0
221	Revenue Contributions	594
48	Major Repairs Reserve	0
269		594
10,817	Total Financing	8,959

5. Cost of Capital and Asset Management Revenue Account

Resource accounting in the HRA requires that a charge is made to the HRA for the use of fixed assets. The charge is determined by applying a specified notional rate of interest, 3.5% for 2005/06 to the net valuation of fixed assets in the Balance Sheet. This charge is included in the expenditure section of the HRA within net cost of services and reversed out via the Asset Management Revenue Account (AMRA). It is replaced by the 'actual' interest payable by the HRA, calculated in accordance with the Item 8 Determination (Local Government and Housing Act 1989), to ensure that the new cost of capital does not have a cost implication to Council tenants. The HRA AMRA transactions are shown below: -

2004/05	HRA Asset Management Revenue Account (AMRA)	2005/06
£000s		£000s
18,786	Cost of Capital Charges	22,594
	Less:	
0	Item 8 Interest calculation	0
18,786	Total transfer from AMRA	22,594

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

6. Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets

- a) The total charge for depreciation of HRA fixed assets is shown below split into asset type: -

2004/05	Depreciation	2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Operational Assets	
0	Land	0
7,896	Dwellings	9,749
239	Other Property	245
8,135	Total Operational Assets	9,994
	Non Operational Assets	
0		54
8,135	TOTAL	10,048

- b) The Council's Valuation Officer, a member of FRICS, has advised that there were no impairments in 2005/06.

7. Housing Subsidy

The Government operates a "subsidy system" in relation to the Housing Revenue Account. It is based upon a notional account representing the Government's assessment of what the Council should be collecting and spending. A breakdown of the elements in the subsidy calculations is shown below: -

2004/05	Housing Subsidy	2005/06
£000s		£000s
5	Prior Year Adjustment	0
-15,282	Management and Maintenance Allowance	-16,577
-7,131	Major Repairs Allowance	-7,198
-842	Charges for Capital	-949
-91	Other Allowances	-60
31,434	Notional Rent	31,847
11	Interest on Receipts	8
8,104	Total Amount to be paid to Government	7,071

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

8. Rent Arrears

During 2005/06 rent arrears as a proportion of gross rent income was 7.5%. This represents a reduction of 0.1% since 2004/05 when the proportion was 7.6%. The figures for rent arrears are detailed below: -

2004/05	Rent Arrears	2005/06
£000		£000
3,257	Gross Rent Arrears at 31 March	2,804
-480	Prepayments of Rent	-600
2,777	Net Rent Arrears at 31 March	2,204
1,861	Provision for bad debts at 31 March	1,505

The reduction in rent arrears has been achieved following the implementation of a rent arrears action plan. Measures taken include the establishment of a specialist team of officers, a review and update of rent arrears' procedures, a campaign to promote greater take up of direct debit payments, more efficient processing of Housing Benefit applications, the introduction of improved performance monitoring systems and the provision of advice and assistance to tenants with financial difficulties.

9. Sums Directed by the Secretary of State

Since rent rebates transferred to the General Fund, any authorities who had rent rebate subsidy limited have had to, under a special determination, transfer an amount equivalent amount from the HRA to the General Fund. There is a further transfer relating to incentive area costs which will only apply for 2004/05 and 2005/06 as a transitional measure.

2004/05	Secretary of State Determinations	2005/06
£000		£000
3,006	Rent Rebate Subsidy Limitation	2,096
427	Rent Rebate Transitional Measures	214
3,433	Total Effect of Special Directions	2,310

G. Notes To The Housing Revenue Account

H. The Collection Fund

Income and Expenditure Account

The Collection Fund account reflects the statutory requirement for billing Authorities to establish and maintain a separate fund for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR).

2004/05		2005/06	Note
£000s		£000s	
	INCOME		
-64,261	Council Tax (net of benefits, discounts & transitional relief)	-67,176	2
	Transfers from General Fund		
-9,134	Council Tax benefits	-9,195	
-81,956	Income collectable from business ratepayers	-92,095	
	Contributions		
-750	Towards previous years' Collection Fund deficit	-60	3
-156,101		-168,526	
	EXPENDITURE		
	Precepts & demands:-		
52,513	Northamptonshire County Council	54,355	
9,417	Northamptonshire Police Authority	9,794	
11,044	Northampton Borough Council	11,438	
	Business Rates		
81,635	Payments to national pool	91,780	
321	Cost of collection	315	
	Bad & Doubtful Debts / Appeals		
701	Write-offs	474	
150	Provisions	643	
	Contributions		
0	Towards previous years' Collection Fund surplus	0	
-301	Prior Year Adjustments		
155,480		168,799	
-621	(Surplus)/deficit for the year	273	
1,387	Fund balance b/fwd	766	
766	Fund Balance c/fwd	1,039	

H. The Collection Fund

I. Notes To The Collection Fund

1. National Non Domestic Rates (NDR)

The Council collects non-domestic rates for its area that are based on local rateable values multiplied by a uniform rate in the pound. The total amount, less certain reliefs and other deductions, is paid to a central pool (the NNDR pool) managed by Central Government, which in turn pays back to Councils a standard amount per head of the local adult population.

The total non-domestic rateable value as at 31 March 2006 was £247.974m and the equivalent figure for 2004/05 was £209.729m.

The National Domestic Rate multiplier for 2005/06 was 42.2p and the equivalent figure for 2004/05 was 45.6.

2. Council Tax

The Council's tax base, i.e. the number of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band (adjusted for dwellings where discounts apply) converted to an equivalent number of band D dwellings for 2005/06 calculated as follows: -

2004/05 Band D Equivalents	Band	Estimated number of taxable properties 2005/06 after discounts	Ratio	2005/06 Band D Equivalents
20.1	A(-)	34.5	5/9	19.2
15,937.9	A	23,886.6	6/9	15,924.4
13,266.9	B	17,108.6	7/9	13,306.7
15,754.1	C	18,147.8	8/9	16,131.4
8,382.6	D	8,491.6	9/9	8,491.6
5,656.8	E	4,727.4	11/9	5,777.9
2,885.9	F	2,034.7	13/9	2,939.0
1,666.9	G	1,025.5	15/9	1,709.2
86.5	H	46.8	18/9	93.6
63,657.7				64,393.0
636.6	Non-collection provision			965.9
63,021	Council Tax Base			63,427

The provision for non-collection was set at 1.5% for 2005/06 (1% for 2004/05).

I. Notes To The Collection Fund

3. Analysis Of In-year Contributions To Fund Deficits

The in-year end contributions to collection fund deficits from the precepting authorities is detailed below: -

2004/05	Allocation Of Collection Fund Deficits	2005/06
£000s		£000s
115	Northampton Borough Council	9
546	Northamptonshire County Council	43
89	Northamptonshire Police Authority	8
750	Total Deficit Recovered	60

J. The Consolidated Balance Sheet

2004/05		2005/06		Note
£000s	Fixed Assets	£000s	£000s	
1,420	Intangible Fixed Assets		3,615	1
	Tangible Fixed Assets			1
	Operational Assets			
643,929	Council dwellings	547,317		
64,581	Other land and buildings	67,805		
6,472	Vehicles, plant, furniture & equipment	4,927		
366	Infrastructure	351		
2,904	Community Assets	3,138		
	Non-operational Assets			
31,285	Investment Properties	37,099		
283	Assets Under Construction	2,456		
1,017	Surplus Assets Held for Disposal	973		
750,837			664,066	
752,257			667,681	
5,505	Long-term Debtors		4,982	
757,762	Total long-term Assets		672,663	
	Current Assets			2
398	Stocks & work in progress	393		
21,775	Debtors	27,554		
33,336	Investments	22,078		
718	Cash and bank	3,654		
56,227		53,679		
	Current Liabilities			3
-1,361	Borrowing repayable within 12 months	-392		
-27,330	Creditors	-32,260		12
-28,691		-32,652		
27,536	Net Current Assets		21,027	
785,298	Total Assets less Current Liabilities		693,690	
-25,893	Long-term borrowing	-25,881		4
-833	Provisions	-920		
-75,847	Pension Liability	-73,180		6
-102,573			-99,981	
682,725	Total Assets less Liabilities		593,709	
	Financed by			
506,034	Fixed asset restatement account	416,289		
234,968	Capital financing account	235,288		
6,470	Grants & contributions – unapplied	163		9,12
2,968	Grants & contributions – deferred	5,491		
-1,492	Deferred premiums	-1,305		
125	Deferred credits	93		
125	Usable capital receipts reserve	80		
-75,847	Pension reserve	-73,180		6
3,297	Earmarked reserves	4,088		
3,288	General fund balance	2,900		
3,555	Housing revenue account balance	4,841		
-766	Collection fund balance	-1,039		
682,725	Total Equity		593,709	

J. The Consolidated Balance Sheet

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

1. Long-Term Assets

a) Movements on Fixed Assets Operational Assets

	Council Dwellings	Other land & buildings	Vehicles plant, etc.	Infra-structure	Com-munity Assets	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Certified Valuation 31st March 2005	652,046	65,390	9,066	514	2,926	729,942
Accumulated depreciation & impairment	-8,117	-809	-2,594	-148	-22	-11,690
Net book value 31st March 2005	643,929	64,581	6,472	366	2,904	718,252
Movement in 2005/06						
Additions	7,198		340		244	7,782
Disposal	-5,306	-185				-5,491
Revaluations	-106,551	3,116				-103,435
Depreciation	-9,999	-1,700	-1,855	-15	-10	-13,579
Depreciation Written Back	17,983	1,599				19,582
Impairments						0
Adjustments/Transfers	63	394				457
Net book value 31st March 2006	547,317	67,805	4,957	351	3,138	623,568
Gross Valuation at 31st March 2006	539,333	67,906	6,812	366	3,148	617,565
Impairments at 31st March 2006	0	0				0
Depreciation at 31st March 2006	7,984	-101	-1,855	-15	-10	6,003
Net Book Value 31st March 2006	547,317	67,805	4,957	351	3,138	623,568

Non-Operational Assets

	Works In Investment & Surplus Progress Commercial Assets			Total	Intangible Assets
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Certified Valuation 31st March 2005	283	31,287	1,019	32,589	1,835
Accumulated depreciation & impairment			-2	-4	-415
Net book value 31st March 2005	283	31,285	1,017	32,585	1,420
Movement in 2005/06					
Additions	2,172	116		2,288	2,456
Disposal				0	
Revaluations		6,161	-44	6,117	
Depreciation		-21		-21	-261
Depreciation Written Back		15		15	
Impairments				0	
Adjustments/Transfers	1	-457		-456	
Net book value of assets 31st March 2006	2,456	37,099	973	40,528	3,615
Gross Valuation at 31st March 2006	2,456	37,105	973	40,534	3,876
Impairments at 31st March 2006	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation at 31st March 2006	0	-6	0	-6	-261
Net Book Value 31st March 2006	2,456	37,099	973	40,528	3,615

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

b) Movements on Deferred Charges

	Balance at 1st April 2005	Expenditure	Written off	Balance at 31st March 2006
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Improvement Grants	0	1,732	-1,732	0
Other deferred charges	0	1,492	-1,492	0
Total	0	3,224	-3,224	0

c) Capital Expenditure & Financing

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Capital Investment	
1,175	Intangible Assets	2,456
	Tangible Assets	
17,279	Operational Assets	14,436
301	Non-operational Assets	2,172
3,040	Deferred Charges	3,224
21,795		22,288
	Sources of Finance	
1,609	Supported Borrowing	1,653
0	Unsupported Borrowing	696
9,211	Capital Receipts	5,449
8,042	Government Grants	8,563
1,939	Revenue Contributions	1,761
994	Other Contributions	4,166
21,795		22,288

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

d) Fixed Assets Held

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
Number	Operational Assets	Number
12,556	Council Dwellings	12417
30	Council Houses not used as dwellings	26
103	Shared Ownership Properties	99
3,076	Council Garages	3049
26	Other Housing Properties	26
69	Operational Shops	69
194	Other Garages	194
1	Guildhall	1
4	Local Area Offices	4
5	Central Administrative Offices	5
1	Depots	1
18	Sub-Depots	18
5	Multi-Storey Pay & Display Car Parks	5
15	Surface Pay & Display Car Parks	16
4	Sports & Leisure Centres	4
2	Museums, Art Galleries	2
6	Pavilions	6
2	Theatres *	1
24	Community Centres	24
	Markets	
1	Open	1
1	Indoor	1
6	Cemeteries	6
1	Bus Station	1
331	Commercial Property (Units)	276
26	Public Conveniences	24
1	Golf Course	1
1	Gypsy Site	1
Hectares		Hectares
63.42	Allotments	62.88
754.00	Parks and Open Spaces	887.45
65.97	Agricultural Land	65.97

* Royal Theatre and Derngate now merged into one asset

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

e) Valuation Information

Net Assets are shown in the Council's Consolidated Balance Sheet at Asset Valuation less depreciation (where applicable), in accordance with the Capital Accounting Regulations.

The various valuation bases are as stated in the Accounting Policies section. The statements below show the progress of the Council's valuation programme for Fixed Assets, which includes the annual valuation of the top properties, plus the continual valuation of enhancements and work in progress. Valuations are to be carried out by the Council's retained valuation officer, namely Richard Lewis, FRICS.

Operational Assets

	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Build.	Vehicles Plant & Equip.	Infra-Structure Assets	Comm. Assets	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Valued at Historic Cost	0	0	0	292	2,423	2,715
Valued at Current Value in: -						
2005/06	545,394	57,578	120	0	0	603,092
2004/05	266	3,686	1,541	0	169	5,662
2003/04	435	2,465	2,350	59	368	5,677
2002/03	228	3,910	892	0	178	5,208
2001/02	994	13	21	0	0	1,028
Previous Years	0	153	3	0	0	156
Total	547,317	67,805	4,927	351	3,138	623,538

Non-Operational and Intangible Assets

	Non-Operational Assets			Total Assets	Intangible Assets
	Works in Progress	Investment Property	Surplus Property		
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Valued at Historic Cost	2,254	0	0	2,254	0
Valued at Current Value in: -					
2005/06	0	27,638	276	27,914	3,615
2004/05	202	3,632	408	4,242	0
2003/04	0	1,665	289	1,954	0
2002/03	0	1,546	0	1,546	0
2001/02	0	2,346	0	2,346	0
Previous Years	0	272	0	272	0
Total	2,456	37,099	973	40,528	3,615

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

f) Capital Contracts

There were no significant capital contracts committed at 31 March 2006.

g) Finance Leases

The Council has no ongoing Finance Leases.

h) Operating Leases

The authority was committed as at 31st March 2006 to make payments of £0.2m under operating leases in 2006/07 comprising the following: -

	31/03/2006
	£000s
Plant and Equipment	
Leases Expiring within 1 year	21
2 – 5 years	54
Exceeding 5 years	129
	204

2. Current Assets

a) Stocks & Work in Progress

Stocks held at the main stores at Westbridge Depot and the sub-stores are valued at current prices. Each time a commodity is purchased, the entirety of the stock holdings are revalued at that delivery price. Stocks held at the Council's other stores are valued at cost price.

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
£000s		£000s
147	Westbridge Depot Main Stores	230
65	Sub Stores	59
186	Other Stores	104
398	Total	393

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

b) Debtors

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
£000s		£000s
7,079	Sundry Debtors	7,003
5,641	Government Departments	9,487
3,069	Other Local and Public Authorities	3,772
8,406	Local Taxpayers	9,825
2,681	Housing Tenants	2,734
145	Loans to Employees	85
27,021		32,906
	Provisions for Bad Debts	
-2,052	Local Taxpayers	-2,581
-2,680	Housing Tenants	-1,504
-514	Other	-1,267
-5,246	Total Provision for Bad Debts	-5,352
21,775		27,554

c) Investments

31/03/2005	Investment Type	31/03/2006
£000s		£000s
292	Gilts	0
100	UK Equities	3,547
18,020	Building Societies	5,520
18	Cash On Deposit	54
14,906	Banks	12,957
33,336	Total	22,078

3. Current Liabilities

a) Short-term Borrowing

31/03/2005	Funded by	Period Invested	31/03/2006
£000			£000
620	Eastern Orchestral Board	7 day	200
500	Eastern Orchestral Board	364 days	0
75	Billing Parish Council	7 day	3
52	Billing Parish Council	3 Month	75
114	Northampton Volunteer Bureau	7 day	114
1,361			392

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

b) Creditors

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
£000s		£000s
9,319	Sundry Creditors	12,417
5,873	Government Departments	3,929
5,616	Other Local and Public Authorities	5,485
4,543	Local Taxpayers	3,313
725	Tenants	705
	Developer's Contributions	5,662
1,254	Deposits	749
27,330		32,260

4. Long-term Liabilities

a) Borrowing

31/03/2005	Source of Loan	Range of Interest Rates (%)	31/03/2006
£000			£000
0	Public Works Loans Board	-	0
24,600	Money Markets	4.85 - 7.03	24,600
1,293	New Towns Commission	9.75	1,281
25,893			25,881
	An analysis of loans by maturity date		
11	Maturing in 1-2 years		12
39	Maturing in 2-5 years		43
94	Maturing in 5-10 years		15,703
25,749	Maturing in over 10 years		10,123
25,893			25,881

5. Financed by

a) Movement on Reserves

For details of movements on reserves see the Statement of Total Movements on Reserves (page 53).

b) Deferred Credits

These deferred capital receipts are amounts derived from sales of assets that will be received in instalments over agreed periods of time. They arise principally from mortgages on sales of council houses that form the main part of mortgages under long-term debtors.

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

6. FRS 17 Retirement Benefits

The Authority's pension scheme is a defined benefit scheme operated by Northamptonshire County Council. The date of the last actuarial valuation was 31st March 2004.

a) Main Assumptions

The main financial assumptions adopted as at 31 March 2006 were:-

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
% pa		% pa
2.9	The inflation assumption	2.9
4.4	The rate of increase in salaries	4.4
2.9	The rate of increase for pensions	2.9
5.4	The rate used to discount scheme liabilities	5.4

b) Fund Assets and Expected Rate of Return (for the fund as a whole)

31/03/2005			Asset	31/03/2006		
Market Value	Expected Rate of Return (%)	Proportion Of Assets (%)		Market Value	Expected Rate of Return (%)	Proportion Of Assets (%)
91,911	7.5	74.4	Equities	108,425	7.0	70.1
4,571	4.7	3.7	Gilts	17,478	4.3	11.3
17,542	5.4	14.2	Other bonds	14,385	4.9	9.3
4,941	6.5	4.0	Property	8,043	6.0	5.2
4,571	4.8	3.7	Cash	6,342	4.5	4.1
123,536		100.0	Total	154,673		100.0

c) Reconciliation to the Balance Sheet

31/03/2005		31/03/2006
£000s		£000s
-199,423	Funded benefits under the LGPS regulations	-227,855
123,576	Market Value of Fund Assets	154,673
-75,847	Surplus/(deficit) in the Fund	-73,182

The deficit on the scheme will be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees, as assessed by the scheme actuary.

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

7. Contingent Liabilities

- a) The Council has received Deposits under Section 106 agreements, which may be repayable if the conditions for each agreement are not met. No provision has been made in the Accounts for any interest that may become repayable under the terms of the individual agreements. In the event that every one of these deposits becomes repayable with interest, the Council's maximum liability for interest payable as at 31st March 2006 was estimated to be £0.813m (£0. 547m as at 31st March 2005).
- b) The Council has an outstanding loan with the Roadmender, which went into liquidation during 2005/06, of £63,980. The liability for the loan now rests with the Roadmender trustees and it may transpire that the loan is not repaid.

8. The Euro

The Council recognises that there may be costs associated with the introduction of the Euro if this is required by UK law. The purchase of new computer systems must take account of Euro issues and compliance. No other preparations have been made nor has any money been earmarked for the introduction of the Euro. There has been no direct expenditure to date on Euro conversion and it is anticipated that prior to possible introduction of the Euro, all systems will be Euro compliant.

9. Provisions

a) Insurance Provision

The provision covers the following risks :-

- Liability claims under the policy excess arising from 1992/93 onwards.
- Claims under the policy excess on the Council's own dwellings.
- Claims over the "paid locally" figure but under the excess on the Council's motor vehicles.
- Death in service cover for employees who have council loans for the purchase of cars required for essential purposes.
- Other small miscellaneous items arising from time to time.

External premiums are charged direct to the revenue accounts, as are the costs of the internal Insurance Provision. This provision is reduced as claims are settled.

The estimated cost of outstanding claims on the Insurance provision as at 31 March 2006 is shown below. These sums represent the balance on the Insurance Provision, with any surplus being transferred to the Insurance Reserve.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
-727	Ongoing Liability Claims under the policy excess	-741
-3	Motor Vehicle Claims over the "paid locally" figure, but under the policy excess	-8
0	Car Loan Accounts for employees who died in service	0
-4	Housing Stock Claims under the policy excess	-7
-734		-756

K. Notes To The Consolidated Balance Sheet

b) Utilities

The provision was written back to revenue during the year and is netted off against payments to utilities.

c) DWP Grants

The amount processed in the benefits system for emergency accommodation payments has been processed gross of VAT. The information being fed into the subsidy claims has therefore been overstated and too much subsidy claimed. The estimate of overstated claims for the 6 financial years from 1998/99 to 2003/04 is £160,000.

d) Other

The balance represents small provisions in respect of the Rent assistance and Rent Guarantee Schemes.

A summary of the transactions on the Provisions for the year is shown below.

Provisions	Balance 01/04/2005	Costs	Income	Balance 31/03/2006
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Insurance	-734	714	-736	-756
DWP Grants			-160	-160
Utilities	-96	96		0
Other	-3			-3
	-833	810	-23	-919

10 Trust Funds

The Council acts as sole trustee in respect of two Trust Funds for the Northamptonshire Regiment and the Northamptonshire Yeomanry Museum Collections. The Trust funds are used to finance expenditure on the museum collections, which are housed at Abington Museum. Surplus funds are invested externally and no money is expended unless there are funds to do so.

11. Developers' Contributions

Contributions received from developers have been classified for 2005/06 depending on whether the contribution is repayable and whether the contribution is for a revenue or capital purpose, in line with the treatment described in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	0 Creditors	-3,525
	0 Receipts in advance	-2,136
-382	Grants & Contributions - Unapplied (Government Grants)	0
-6,088	Grants & Contributions - Unapplied (Developers)	-163
-6,470		-5,824

L. Statement Of Total Movement In Reserves

	Balance As At 1 April 2005	General Move- ments	Unrealised Gains & Losses	Impair- ment Losses	Effects of Disposals	Housing Capital Receipts Pooling	Financing of Fixed Assets	Surplus / Deficit In Year	Balance As At 31 March 2006
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s
Capital Reserves									
Fixed Asset Restatement	506,034		-84,439		-5,306			-89,745	416,289
Capital Financing Account	234,968	-17,222					17,542	320	235,288
Developers' Contributions Deferred	1,039	-2,041					4,166	2,125	3,164
Government Grants Deferred	1,929	-674					1,072	398	2,327
Deferred Premium	-1,492	186						186	-1,306
Useable Capital Receipts	43				10,842	-6,347	-4,457	38	81
Developers' Contributions Unapplied	0	163						163	163
Government Grants Unapplied	464	3,295					-3,759	-464	0
Major Repairs Reserve (HRA)	0	7,198					-7,198	0	0
	742,985	-9,095	-84,439	0	5,536	-6,347	7,366	-86,979	656,006
Revenue Reserves									
General Fund Balance	3,288	-388						-388	2,900
General Fund Earmarked Reserves								0	0
Insurance Reserve	2,243	406						406	2,649
Capital Reserve	87	-87						-87	0
New Technology Reserve	240							0	240
Building Maintenance Reserve	388	-60						-60	328
General Reserve	231							0	231
Arts Reserve	41	-13						-13	28
Collection Fund Balance	-766	-273						-273	-1,039
HRA Balance	3,555	1,286						1,286	4,841
HRA Earmarked Reserve	67	544						544	611
Pensions Reserve	-75,846	2,666						2,666	-73,180
Deferred Credits - Mortgages	125	-32						-32	93
	-66,347	4,049	0	0	0	0	0	4,049	-62,298
Balance at 31/03/06	676,638	-5,046	-84,439	0	5,536	-6,347	7,366	-82,930	593,708

M. Notes To The Statement Of Total Movement In Reserves

1. Analysis of Fixed Asset Restatement Account movements between General Fund and HRA

	General Fund	Housing Revenue Account	Total
			£000s
Balance at 01/04/05			506,034
	£000	£000	
Revaluation adjustments	5,780	-90,219	-84,439
Disposals of fixed assets		-5,306	-5,306
			0
	5,780	-95,525	-89,745
Balance at 31/03/06			416,289

2. Analysis of Capital Financing Account movements

	General Fund	Housing Revenue Account	Total
			£000s
Balance at 01/04/05			234,968
	£000	£000	
Depreciation	-3,583	-10,048	-13,631
Write down of Deferred Charges	-2,935	0	-2,935
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	-261	0	-261
Other	-316	0	-316
MRP	340	0	340
Financing of Fixed Assets	8,164	8,959	17,123
	1,409	-1,089	320
Balance at 31/03/06			235,288

M. Notes To The Statement Of Total Movement In Reserves

3. Pension Disclosures

a) Components of Defined Benefit Cost

	31/03/2006
	£000s
Analysis of amounts recognised in the Statement of Recognised Gains & Losses (STRGL)	
Gain and (Losses) on Assets	21,709
Experienced (gain)/loss on liabilities	-4,102
(Gain)/loss on change of assumptions (financial and demographic)	-17,198
Total (gain)/loss recognised in STRGL before adjustment for tax	409
Contribution to CRA	2,257
Movement on Pension Reserve	2,666

b) History of Experienced Gains and Losses

	31/03/2006
	£000s
Gain/(Loss) on Fund assets	21,709
% of fund assets at end of period	14%
Experienced (gain)/loss on scheme liabilities	-4,102
% of fund liabilities at end of period	1.80%
(Gains)/loss on scheme liabilities from changes in demographic and financial assumptions	-17,198
% of fund liabilities at end of period	7.50%

4. Revenue Earmarked Reserves

a) Insurance Reserve

The Insurance Reserve has been set aside using surplus money from the insurance provision which is used to meet known insurance claims. This reserve is to be used for future insurance or risk management requirements including initiatives to mitigate and manage significant risks.

b) Capital Reserve

The Capital Reserve exists to enhance the Authority's ability to finance capital expenditure. It is made up of contributions from surpluses on the General Fund revenue account.

c) New Technology Reserve

M. Notes To The Statement Of Total Movement In Reserves

The New Technology Reserve was set up to encourage departments, through the use of technology, to obtain reductions in expenditure and to streamline the administrative processes, in order to preserve or improve the level of services.

- d) **Building Maintenance Reserve**
This consists of balances set aside from revenue accounts for major maintenance projects.
- e) **General Reserve**
The General Reserve allows the Council to commit funding to individual projects which may spread across more than one year.
- f) **Arts Reserve**
This is used to finance the purchase of exhibits for the Museum and Art Gallery.
- g) **HRA Earmarked Reserve**
This reserve contains amounts specifically set aside to finance HRA revenue projects. The money in this reserve must be used on the Housing Revenue Account.

M. Notes To The Statement Of Total Movement In Reserves

N. Cashflow Statement

The cashflow statement is supposed to demonstrate the movements in cash for the year for various purposes including a split between revenue and capital.

2004/05		2005/06		Note
£000		£000	£000	
	Revenue Activities			
	Cash Outflows			
-38,097	Cash paid to & on behalf of employees	-38,827		
-81,107	Other operating cash payments	-69,306		
-12,274	Housing benefits paid out	-14,877		
-8,142	Negative Housing Subsidy	-7,081		
-77,342	Non-domestic rate payments to national pool	-91,566		
-61,720	Precepts paid over	-64,568		
-5,466	Payments to capital receipts pool	-5,609		
-284,148			-291,834	
	Cash Inflows			
15,509	Rents (after rebates)	16,016		
63,975	Council Tax receipts	65,047		
5,288	Non-domestic rate receipts from national pool	5,637		
86,347	Non-domestic rate receipts	90,753		
10,449	Revenue Support Grant	10,550		
41,590	DWP grant for benefits	43,001		
119	Other government grants	283		
65,175	Other operating cash receipts	61,938		
288,452			293,225	
4,304	Revenue Activities Net Cash Flow		1,391	1
	Return on Investments & Servicing of Finance			
	Cash Outflows			
-1,453	Interest paid	-1,252		
	Cash Inflows			
1,735	Interest received	2,108		
282	Net Interest		856	2
	Capital Activities			
	Cash Outflows			
-18,756	Purchase of fixed assets	-19,698		
-7,639	Other capital cash payments	-3,224		
-26,395		-22,922		
	Cash Inflows			
10,414	Sale of fixed assets	2,690		
1,955	Capital grants	8,298		
16,270	Other capital cash receipts	2,335		
28,639		13,323		
2,244			-9,599	3
6,830	Net Cash (Inflow)/Outflow before financing		-7,352	
	Management of Liquid Resources			
-8,380	Net increase / decrease in short term deposits		11,258	4
	Financing			
	Cash Outflows			
-1,460	Repayments of amounts borrowed	-6,424		
	Cash Inflows			
1,405	New loans raised	5,453		
-55	Financing Net Cash Flow		-971	6
-1,605	Net(Increase)/Decrease in cash		2,935	

N. Cashflow Statement

O. Notes To The Cashflow Statement

1. Reconciliation Revenue Activities Net Cash Flow to Surplus on Revenue Account

2004/05		2005/06	
£000		£000	£000
	(Surplus)/deficit for the year		
-148	Consolidated Revenue Account	-388	
579	Housing Revenue Account	1,286	
621	Collection Fund	-273	
1,052			625
	Non-Cash Transactions		
36	Contribution to provisions	-38	
-6,694	Financing Transactions	-1,733	
-57	Transfers to Reserves	790	
-6,715			-981
	Items classified elsewhere in the Cash Flow Statement		
-1,735	Interest received	-2,108	
1,453	Interest paid	1,252	
-282			-856
	Items accrued		
-117	Increase/(decrease) of stock & work in progress	5	
-1,491	Increase/(decrease) in debtors	1,181	
11,857	(Increase)/decrease in creditors	1,417	
10,249			2,603
4,304	Revenue Activities Net Cash Flow		1,391

2. Reconciliation Movement in Cash to the Movement in Net Debt

For the purposes of the Cash Flow statement, the Management of Liquid Resources is limited to Short Term Investments, i.e. Investments of less than 1 year.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
-1,605	Increase in Cash in the Period	2,935
55	Cash to Repurchase Debt	971
8,380	Cash to Reduce Liquid Resources	-11,258
6,830	Change in Net Debt	-7,352
-30	Net Debt as at 1 April	6,800
6,800	Net Debt as at 31 March	-552

O. Notes To The Cashflow Statement

3. Analysis of Changes in Net Debt

	Balance 1 April 2005	Cashflows	Other Changes	Balance 31 March 2006
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Cash in Hand and at Bank	718	2,935	0	3,653
Debt due within one year	-1,361	971	-2	-392
Debt due after one year	-25,893	0	2	-25,891
Current Asset Investments	33,336	-11,258	0	22,078
Net Debt	6,800	-7,352	0	-552

4. Management of Liquid Resources

For the Purposes of the Cash Flow statement, the Management of Liquid Resources is limited to Short Term Investments, i.e. Investments of less than 1 year.

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Short Term Investments	
24,956	Balance Brought Forward 1 April	33,336
33,336	Balance Carried Forward 31 March	22,078
-8,380		11,258

5. Analysis of other Government Grants

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
-139	Rent Allowances	4,063
36	Non-HRA Rebates	-15
-601	Rent Rebates	291
462	Council Tax Benefit	257
25	Benefit Administration	-388
-30	Challenge Funding	-30
-18	Housing Subsidy	0
-6	Homelessness Funding	-6
-271	Net Cash (In)/outflow	4,172

O. Notes To The Cashflow Statement

6. Financing Reconciliation

2004/05		2005/06
£000s		£000s
	Balances Brought Forward	
25,903	Long Term Borrowing	25,893
1,406	Temporary Borrowing	1,361
27,309		27,254
	Balances Carried Forward	
25,893	Long Term Borrowing	25,891
1,361	Temporary Borrowing	392
27,254		26,283
-55	Net Cash (In)/outflow	-971

O. Notes To The Cashflow Statement

P. Statement Of Responsibilities For The Statement Of Accounts

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required to:-

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Head of Finance and Corporate Development;
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets
- approve the Statement of Accounts

The S.151 Officer

The S.151 Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom ('the Code of Practice').

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Section 151 Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- complied with the Code of Practice.

The Section 151 Officer has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date;
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities

I certify that this Statement of Accounts presents fairly the position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2006.

Alison Betts Section 151 Officer	Councillor Timothy Hadland Leader of Northampton Borough Council
Date	Date

P. Statement Of Responsibilities For The Statement Of Accounts

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL (2005/06)

1. Scope and Responsibility

Northampton Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control that facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions (including arrangements for effective risk management).

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminating risk altogether; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control have been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2006 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

3. The Internal Control Environment

The following table outlines the key elements of the internal control environment:

INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT	
Key Element:	Comments:
Establishing and monitoring the achievements of the Council's objectives.	<p>The Council set out its objectives for 2005/2006 in both its Corporate Plan and its Recovery Plan. An Interim Medium Term Financial Strategy was also produced in 2005/2006.</p> <p>The Council will continue to develop its planning processes to ensure that it sets clear objectives with measurable targets for achievement.</p>
The facilitation of policy and decision-making.	<p>The Council has arrangements in place to facilitate effective policy decision-making.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political arrangements based on the Cabinet and leader (as reflected in the Council's constitution) - A cross-party Improvement Board to

	<p>drive forward the Council's improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised Overview and Scrutiny arrangements to provide for focussed working in support of the Councils objectives. - Improved mechanisms to support the process of decision-making, including legal financial and performance management arrangements.
<p>Ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations.</p>	<p>The Council's constitution outlines the policies, procedures and regulations that must be adhered to by Officers and Members of the Council. These have recently been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>The Council has three statutory officers (Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Responsible Insurance Officer) who have specific duties to ensure that the proper controls are in place and that there is compliance with the roles and regulation that exist.</p> <p>The Council has investigated some previous decisions during the year to ensure that these comply with legislation.</p>
<p>Ensuing the efficient, effective and economic use of resources.</p>	<p>Significant steps were taken in 2004/05 largely through a "Root and Branch Review" of its senior staff structure, to improve efficiency. Presently the Annual Efficiency Statement returns to the Government highlight the extent to which the Council is meeting and exceeding national targets.</p> <p>The Council remains a partner of the joint procurement consortium with Kettering and Wellingborough Councils. Together, continuous improvements in procurement practices are developed and implemented.</p> <p>The Council has recently held a two-day workshop with leading Councillors from all political parties to look for savings from its non-priority areas to allow for re-investment in its priorities. In addition the Council has started a three year Service Review Programme to help drive value for money and service improvement.</p>
<p>Ensuring adequate arrangements for Financial Management</p>	<p>The Council has recognised the need to improve its financial management and set out it strategy in its Recovery Plan</p>

<p>and Financial Reporting.</p>	<p>starting with the Medium Term Financial Strategy. During 2004/2005 the Council carried out a Zero-base Budget review of the General Fund staffing budgets and set up revised budget management arrangements for 2006/2007.</p> <p>A similar zero-base budget exercise is currently underway for the Housing revenue account.</p>
<p>Ensuing adequate arrangements for Performance Management and Reporting.</p>	<p>The Council has established performance management arrangements to ensure that performance is regularly reported and monitored. The arrangements in place ensure that performance reports are regularly considered by the Councils Management Team and Improvement Board.</p>
<p>Ensuring that the Council has an adequate Risk Management programme in place and is taking steps to embed this into the mainstream activities of the Authority.</p>	<p>The Council has established a Risk Management Strategy and a corporate Risk Register detailing the key strategic risks that the Council faces. The Council is currently working with its Internal Auditor's PricewaterhouseCoopers to develop risk registers throughout the organisation and embed risk management throughout the organisation including the establishment of a Corporate Risk Management Group.</p>

4 Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The work of internal audit, senior managers of the Council and the external auditors inform the review.

The key processes that the Council uses / will use to continuously review its systems of internal control are outlined in the following table;

<p>CONTINUOUS PROCESS ON INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW</p>	
<p>Body:</p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Internal Audit (via the Consortium Audit and Price Waterhouse Coopers arrangements)</p>	<p>Undertakes an annual audit plan that has been constructed using a "risk based" approach to help the Council's statutory finance officer discharged their duties.</p> <p>Audit reports contain an action plan agreed by management split between priority "High, Medium and Low" together with an assessment of the internal control</p>

	<p>environment pre and post the implementation of the agreed recommendations. Audit reports will then be followed up to ensure agreed action has been taken.</p>
<p>External Audit</p>	<p>Undertakes an annual review and inspection based upon the agreed audit plan for the year (to meet statutory requirements).</p> <p>The resultant Annual Audit letter identifies any areas of internal control that require action together with identifying any continuing trends from the previous year.</p> <p>Provides an audit opinion on the Councils Accounts.</p>
<p>Management Team:</p>	<p>Reviews and advises the Council on issues of strategy and policy and also receives regular reports of performance.</p> <p>Collectively reviews performance information on a regular basis in addition to dealing with individual audit reports for their area.</p> <p>Responsible for the updating and ongoing monitoring of delivering key Recovery and Improvement targets in line with the Recovery Plan and Corporate Priorities.</p>
<p>Statutory Officers:</p> <p>Head of Paid Service</p> <p>Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Responsible Finance Officer</p>	<p>The Council's Chief Executive is the Authority's Statutory Head of Paid Service.</p> <p>The Council has a qualified solicitor who acts as the Council's Monitoring Officer. The key role of this post is to ensure that the Council always acts within the law and takes reasonable measures to properly protect itself from possible litigation issues.</p> <p>In accordance with s151 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has a suitably qualified officer in place that is responsible for the overall financial affairs of the Council.</p>
<p>Committee/ Member Arrangements:</p> <p>Full Council</p>	<p>Has overall responsibility for the approval of policy and strategy changes (new and existing) together with the Councils budgets, Statement of Accounts and Corporate Plan.</p>

Executive Committee	Receives policy and strategy information (incl. Budget) together with any issues that need to be referred to it as per the Council’s Constitution (incl. Financial Regulations).
Audit Committee	Receives periodic information on the work of Internal and External Audit (and any significant issues), the performance framework, risk management and also the Annual Audit Letter and Audit Plan.
Standards Committee	Responsible for things such as the Council’s “whistle blowing policy”, Members and Officer protocols and Conduct.

5 Internal Control Action Plan

The following table outlines the actions proposed to deal with any outstanding material internal control issues that have been identified during the year:

ACTION PLAN – INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES	
Issue:	Action:
BVPIs	The Council recognises that it needs to improve the accuracy and collection processes for a number of its BVPIs, as highlighted early in the financial year as a result of work carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers on the Council’s behalf. Work has been on-going to address systematic weaknesses throughout the year and internal audit has been asked to review progresss in the first quarter of 2006/2007.
Westbridge Depot	The Council’s Internal Auditors have highlighted some weaknesses in the procurement arrangements of the Council’s DSO. An action plan will be put into place by management to address these concerns by the end of July 2006.
Core Financial Systems	Weaknesses have been identified in the administration of some core financial systems, in particular sundry debtors. The Council is addressing these weaknesses and is looking to implement a new debtors system by the end of 2006/2007.
Risk Management	Although risk management techniques and processes have existed in the organisation for a number of years, they require recording more formally. To this

	<p>end a new Risk Management Strategy was approved and an action plan approved that included the establishment of risk registers within each area by the end of June 2006.</p> <p>The Council is also currently looking at its Business Continuity Arrangements and will be refreshing these during 2006.</p>
<p>Internal Audit</p>	<p>Internal Audit coverage was provided via consortium arrangements with neighbouring authorities. During 2005/2006 the Council withdrew from this arrangement and appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers as Internal Auditors. The Council is currently out to tender for a long-term provider. The new arrangements are due to commence in October 2006.</p>
<p>The Improvement Agenda</p>	<p>As a poor rated Council, there is an on-going need to make improvements across overall control environment of the Council. This is reflected in the number of systems and process that have been identified as needing improvement. This year has seen the bedding down of the corporate manager structure which should enable control improvements to be implemented going forward. Responses to internal audit reports need to be timely, and then a process put in place to track implementation of agreed actions. Internal Audit will be implementing a web-based tracking system for 2006/2007 to allow easier monitoring of this.</p>

Declarations

I confirm that the information contained within this Statement of Internal Control presents a true and fair reflection of Northampton Borough Council for the Financial Year 2005/06.

Name	Position	Signature	Date
A Betts	Responsible Finance Officer		Jun - 06
M McLean	Chief Executive		Jun - 06
Cllr T Hadland	Leader of the Council		Jun - 06