

# Corporate Plan 2008 - 2011

Final Draft

## Introduction

Welcome to Northampton Borough Council's Corporate Plan for 2008/11.

Northampton is at the heart of one of the Government's Growth Areas. Over the next twenty five years Northampton is set to grow by 100,000 people. This will create both opportunities and challenges in terms of our economy, environment and infrastructure, as well as to our communities and neighbourhoods. Work is already underway to address the longer term challenges facing our communities.

This Plan focuses particularly on the next 12 months and builds on our recent progress and sets out our ambitions, challenges, our priorities and key targets for ensuring we respond to these and achieve success. Many of these will require effective working with public, private and voluntary sectors.

To achieve this, we must become a successful council. We have put in place robust systems and processes to ensure that we will deliver this Plan. These coupled with strong management and skilled staff will enable us to be one of the best councils in terms of the delivery of public service within five years.

To do this we will prioritise the following management aims of our business

- Providing excellent customer service
- Engage in meaningful dialogue
- Make best use of our resources
- Be a single effective team
- Focus on a better Northampton

## About our town

Northampton is a town of 200,100 people. It is made up of a diverse population where some 43 separate languages are spoken and where 5.9% of the population were born outside the EU.

- 800 year old market town with a thriving business centre
- Largest town in the UK - 21<sup>st</sup> largest place in England
- *80,856 homes with an average cost of £166,790*
- Top five employers: Barclaycard, Nationwide Building Society, Northampton County Council, Northampton Borough Council, St. Andrews Hospital
- 518 town centre retailers
- 825 hectares of parks and open spaces – over 1 million trees
- 70 schools
- Ethnically diverse communities
- 15.9% of the population who have a limiting long term illness
- Rugby Union, League Football and County Cricket clubs
- Major theatres which attract more than 350,000 visitors each year
- Three museums. 165,000 visit to the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, home to a world famous shoe collection as well as a prestigious collection of Italian art.

# The council and our partners in context

The Council works through a number of strategic partnerships with other service providers in the area. These include the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Safer Stronger Partnership and Children and Young People's Partnership. To be effective and to maximise the use of our shared resources, we develop shared priorities and deliver them in the most effective way for the people of Northampton.

Many activities which deliver shared priorities are agreed through the *Local Area Agreement* (LAA) for Northamptonshire. This focuses on delivering services and improvements to communities against four key themes. The current LAA has been in place for two years and is being renegotiated in line with government's requirements. The partnership is expected to approve the second LAA in June 2008. The LAA will identify the key priority outcomes for the whole county as well as informing local priorities for Northampton to be delivered by the Council and its partners.

This will focus on seven key areas:

- Stronger communities
- Safer communities
- Tackling exclusion and promoting equalities
- Children and young people
- Adult health and well-being
- Local economy
- Environmental sustainability

The *Local Area Agreement* is also the key delivery plan for the draft *Northamptonshire Sustainable Community Strategy*. This is the subject of consultation which will conclude in April 2008 and be considered for approval following that. Once agreed this will set out the vision and key objectives for the county between now and 2031. A Northamptonshire Public Service board has been established, replacing the previous LAA Board. This Board will take a strategic view for the county as expressed in the 'Sustainable Communities Strategy for Northamptonshire'. It brings the necessary partners together and informs, drives and champions the strategic view.

## **Our partnership vision for Northampton:**

We believe Northampton will be a successful and confident town where people feel they belong, feel they have a future, feel they have financial stability and, where appropriate, business opportunities. It will also be a place that has vibrant cultures and lifestyle opportunities and where everyone who chooses to live here, work here or visit the town feels at home.

To deliver this the Northampton Local Strategic Partnership have agreed the *Sustainable Communities Strategy for Northampton*, which incorporates the key themes from the county-wide strategy and focuses on key strategic objectives local to Northampton;

By 2011 Northampton will be:

- Safer
- Cleaner
- Healthier
- Recognised for good quality, environmentally friendly housing
- Well served by modern and efficient public services

By 2021 it will be a city and a place made up from caring communities

By 2031 it will be a place of Pride, Respect, Excitement, Vitality, Fun, and Passion. It will be defined by its excellent transport system and will be a major regional cultural and economic centre.

Our Corporate Plan 2008/11 sets out how the Council contributes to the achievement of these objectives. The following illustration shows the relationship between these key plans.

# How We Deliver Our Key Strategies

## REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

**The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Northamptonshire**

**The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Northampton**

## LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PRIORITIES

Stronger communities  
Safer communities  
Adult health and well-being  
Environmental sustainability

Children and young people  
Tackling exclusion and promoting equalities  
Local economy

## Northampton Borough Council Corporate Plan

### NBC strategic plans:

- Equalities Scheme
- Customer Services
- HR – Enabling Success Through People
- ICT Strategy
- Economic & Regeneration Strategy
- All other overarching strategic plans

### Medium Term Financial Strategy and Value For Money framework

### Council Annual Report

## Service Plan Priorities

## Team Plans

## Individual Work Plans

## **Opportunities and Challenges Facing Northampton**

The single biggest challenge facing Northampton is the planned growth and regeneration of the town and the wider area. This will present a range of opportunities for communities, councils and their partners. Together we need to ensure that new developments are fully integrated into existing communities and that employment, leisure opportunities and community facilities meet the needs of the town as it grows.

As well as planning services for the future growth of the area, we also intend to improve the quality and accessibility of our services to our customers now. By creating a 'fit for purpose council', the opportunities and challenges will be tackled effectively. These include managing the growth of the area in a way that enhances the quality of life, revitalises the town centre and local housing estates and puts Northampton on the map, both regionally and nationally. All of this can only be delivered by working hand in hand with our partners.

In order to ensure that this Corporate Plan meets the needs and aspirations of our local communities, and contributes to wider community outcomes, we engaged with local people in a series of consultation events. We used the feedback to inform the selection of our five priorities and underpinning commitments.

These are:

- **We will help our communities become safer, greener and cleaner**
- **We will improve housing and health to enhance the well-being of our communities**
- **We will be a well-managed organisation that puts our customers at the heart of what we do**
- **We will promote economic development and growth in Northampton**
- **We will strengthen our commitment to partnership working and engaging with our communities to deliver better outcomes**

## Priority 1: We will help our communities become safer, greener and cleaner

We want Northampton to be a place where people feel they are proud to belong. A range of factors contribute to the way in which communities experience that sense of belonging.

Safety is most local people's number one priority. There are few merits in aspiring toward being a vibrant and exciting place unless we feel safe and secure.

But the sense of safety is not something in the gift of the council. It is something we all experience when the conditions around us are right. Northampton Borough Council is working with a number of other public sector organisations as well as local communities and voluntary organisations to help foster a climate of personal and community safety.

We also need to feel that our town is clean and that we have green spaces where we can relax. Northampton has more acres of parklands and green space than any other town relative to its size.

*Detailed targets and milestones are set out in the action plan on page 14.*

*\*Targets for crime reduction will be confirmed in the Local Area Agreement to be published in June 2008*

We will:

- Reduce fear of crime and achieve an overall decrease in the numbers of people feeling unsafe in the town
- Reduce anti-social behaviour by 22 per cent by March 2009
- Reduce crime in the town by x% overall\*
- Improve recycling and composting rates to 40% by March 2009
- Reduce the Council's Carbon Footprint by 8.1%
- Influence our partners to work to improve air quality to meet the government's minimum targets in declared action zones
- Provide a reliable and cost-effective refuse collection and street cleansing service which promotes waste minimisation
- Target particular problem areas by supporting neighbourhood clean up operations
- Maintain a clean environment throughout the town by tackling fly-posting, fly-tipping, graffiti, and abandoned vehicles
- Provide a range of good quality open spaces and parks

## Priority 2: We will improve housing and health to enhance the wellbeing of our communities

We work with a number of other public sector organisations, local communities and voluntary organisations to help create a sense of well-being.

Health and well-being is a product of a number of key influences. The Primary Care Trust can have a significant impact on the health of local people. It provides health services to local people and commissions services through a variety of providers.

Our well-being can be significantly affected by our locality, our lifestyle and quality of life. A range of key factors include where we live, the standard of our homes, health, opportunity and income. Improved participation and access to leisure and culture facilities are also vital for wellbeing.

Activities and opportunities for children and young people are vital in creating a sense of well-being. We are leading, on behalf of partners across the town, to improve the quality of life for these groups.

*Detailed targets and milestones are set out in the action plan on page 14.*

We will:

- Approve a plan by June 2008 to achieve the Decent Homes Standard
- By March 2009 deliver an additional 400 affordable homes
- Provide support to those at risk of homelessness, and reduce homelessness and the time people spend in temporary accommodation
- Introduce choice based lettings by July 2008
- Provide a range of leisure and cultural activities for young people
- Improve participation and access to cultural opportunities
- Promote healthy living initiatives for young people, particularly obesity initiatives and promotion of participation in physical activities
- Contribute to improving the health of local people through GP referral schemes at our leisure centres
- Implement a prioritised programme for neighbourhood renewal to ensure all of our communities are places where people want to live by September 2009
- Release under-utilised council assets to support achievement of housing demand



## Priority 3: We will be a well-managed organisation that puts our customers at the heart of what we do

We are continually improving to provide modernised, efficient and accessible services. Our ambition is to improve the council and our services as quickly as possible.

We will continue to focus on our on performance and aim to be recognised as one of the best Councils, in terms of public service, within five years. We have committed to the following five management aims

- Provide excellent customer service
- Engage in meaningful dialogue
- Make best use of our resources
- Be a single effective team
- Focus on a better Northampton

This will be achieved by eliminating discrimination and actively promoting equality of opportunity for everybody who lives in, works in or visits Northampton as well as by ensuring that our culture is customer focused.

To achieve this we need an organisation where everyone works as team, knows what their job is, has pride in what they do and knows how they contribute to the Council's and partners' ambitions.

We will:

- Ensure that all of our customers have a range of choices for how services are accessed, including transactions on the website and opportunities to visit offices
- Increase the opportunities to consult with our customers
- Improve our CPA rating by March 2009
- Improve our financial management by achieving Level 2 of the Use of Resources judgement by March 2009
- Achieve Level 3 of the Equalities Standard by March 2009
- Strengthen our system for learning and improving through customer and employee feedback
- Improve the way we make decisions by using robust management information and having effective governance arrangements in place

*Detailed targets and milestones are set out in the action plan on page 14.*

## Priority 4: We will promote economic development and growth in Northampton

The Government's growth agenda, which is focused on meeting the national housing shortage, will enable Northampton's population to grow by 100,000 by 2031. Successful growth means:

- Building additional homes;
- Creating places and communities;
- Fostering a vibrant economy;
- Ensuring adequate physical and social infrastructure in the town to support sustainable growth for new and existing communities
- Celebrating and enhancing our unique history, heritage and culture
- Making the town more attractive to shoppers, investors, visitors and new residents;
- Promoting a diverse and adaptable skilled workforce;
- Stimulating ambition, and retaining skills within the Northampton economy.

As well as developing the town Northampton has a key role in contributing the economic performance of the Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub-Region.

We have in place a range of strategies to help deliver these outcomes. These include the Local Development Scheme, Economic Strategy and Cultural Strategy.

Together with partners we will work to deliver the needs of Northampton as a burgeoning city.

We will:

- Work with external partners to improve the vitality of the town
- Work with partners on identified key regeneration projects, ensuring that infrastructure needs are adequately addressed for new and existing communities
- Work with local businesses to improve the operation of the town centre by developing a joint operations team
- Promote the town centre as a destination for shopping, leisure and relaxation
- Promoting cultural facilities and events that put Northampton on the map
- Work with partners to improve education and skills attainment
- Work with partners to deliver major projects such as Grosvenor Greyfriars and St John's cultural quarter

*Detailed targets and milestones are set out in the action plan on page 14*

## Priority 5: We will strengthen our commitment to partnership working and engaging with our communities to deliver better outcomes

We can achieve more working with others than we can working in isolation. We are developing our partnership with a range of public, private, voluntary and community organisations. This will enable us to optimise the way in which we all use our combined resources to provide services for the community.

We are negotiating an agreement to achieve a range of improvements for all our communities through the Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement, which binds partners together in delivering jointly outcomes for local communities. Details of the specific targets within the agreement will be published in June 2008.

It is also vital that we engage with our communities in the development of our services. Last year we adopted a new Community Engagement Strategy. This outlines the principles that we will use to engage and involve people in our communities. This strategy is currently being used to inform the way we work with local communities and interests.

We will:

- Ensure wide engagement with local people on issues that affect their lives
- Deliver services with a more local focus
- Take a leading role in the Local Strategic Partnership and the implementation of our Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Review the way we work with the voluntary and community sectors to deliver services in line with best practice

*Detailed targets and milestones are set out in the action plan on page 14*

## How we make best use of our resources

Ensuring that our services are delivering value for money is a key priority for Northampton. This Corporate Plan emphasises that we put the customer and community at the heart of what we do. There will be clear links between our VFM activity and key Council plans and actions, for example:

- Our budget strategy will be linked to the Council's priorities and supporting value for money services.
  - Ongoing efficiency savings will be identified as part of our three-year planning and performance framework and subject to annual review and update. These efficiency savings will be used to fund new burdens, cost pressures and service improvements.
  - Strategic Business Reviews will be used to scope potential delivery options. VFM reviews will be used to target improvement in services and cross cutting areas in two ways.
  - Innovative methods of procurement will be explored and the value for money opportunities they present.
  - Our Asset Management Plan will be fully integrated with a Capital Strategy and will set out clearly how we will deliver effective asset management.
- Ensuring 'whole life costing' principles and options appraisals are a key part of making investment decisions in our capital programme.
  - Ensuring good quality data is essential for reliable performance and financial information to support effective decision-making. We are committed to ensuring the data we use to report on performance is fit for purpose and represents our activities in an accurate and timely manner.

Our employees are our biggest resource. During 2008 we will be reorganising the Council in order to promote more efficient working, better service delivery and improved customer outcomes. Our structure will result in professionally-based Directorates that are accessible to customers and partners.

Culture is as important as structures. Alongside the structural changes there will be a programme of organisational development – "Making It Matter" - aimed at ensuring that employees are supported, provided with opportunities for development and well managed.

## Action Plan

The following pages outline the targets and measures we will use to evaluate progress against our priorities. These are structured around the five Corporate Priorities.

Included within the table, are a range of National Indicators (NI) prescribed by government. For many of these indicators, specific targets will not have been set, as councils will need to establish baseline data upon which targets for continuous improvements can be identified.

In addition, the Council, working with its partners, will contribute to the achievement of a number of targets to deliver the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Work on preparing the new LAA will conclude in June 2008. At this point the specific range of targets will have been confirmed and the targets within this Plan will be amended to reflect the final agreement.

The references include:

BVPI (former Best Value Performance Indicator, now retained as a local indicator)

NI (National Indicator, a statutory measure introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008)

LPI (Local Performance Indicator, non-statutory measure developed by the Council to monitor progress)

## Priority One:

### We will help our communities to become safer, greener and cleaner

This supports the following Local Area Agreement priorities:

- Building Safer Communities
- Improved Environmental Sustainability

<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Reduce fear of crime and achieve an overall decrease in the numbers of people feeling unsafe in the town	Achieve an overall decrease in the number of residents feeling unsafe in the town* (NBC annual survey)  100% compliance with Domestic Violence Checklist ( Former BVPI 225)	Use survey results on citizen satisfaction with the Council and Police to establish a baseline and future action plan  Insert additional clause into the Tenancy Agreement	Community Safety, Leisure and Town centre Operations
Reduce anti-social behaviour by 22 per cent by March 2009	Reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour to 26,000 incidents (LPI )  Satisfaction with the police and council deal with anti-social behaviour (NI 24)  Satisfaction of different groups with how the police and council deal with anti-social behaviour (NI 25)  Perceptions of anti-social behaviours (NI 17)	Improved inter-agency management of casework; effective use of early intervention  Use survey results on citizen satisfaction with the Council and Police to establish a baseline and future action plan	Community Safety, Leisure and Town centre Operations

<p>Reduce crime in the town</p>	<p>X % reduction in number of burglaries to fewer than 13.9 per thousand households* (Former BVPI 126)</p> <p>X % reduction in the number of violent crime to fewer than 23.6 per thousand households* (Former BVPI 127a)</p> <p>X % reduction the number of robberies to fewer than 2.8 per thousand population* (Former BVPI 127b)</p> <p>X % reduction in vehicle crime to fewer than 15.3 per thousand population* (Former BVPI 128)</p> <p>Number of serious acquisitive crime rates per capita (NI 16)</p> <p>Number of most serious violent crime per capita (NI 15)</p> <p>Assault with injury crime rate (NI 20)</p>	<p>Work with the Safer, Stronger Northampton Partnership to reduce crime in the town</p> <p>Tackling causes through focused work on children and young people, drug and alcohol misuse, persistent offenders, environmental factors and community cohesion</p> <p>Extend community safety awareness training amongst staff at all levels in the Borough Council</p> <p>Use survey results on citizen satisfaction with the Council and police in order to establish a baseline and future action plan</p>	<p>Community Safety, Leisure and Town Centre Operations</p>
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<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Improve recycling and composting rates to 40% by March 2009	Household waste recycled and composted (NI 192)  24% Household waste recycled, including the collection of glass  16% green sent for composting	Commence glass collection in trial areas of the town  Continuing provision of recycling facilities and services	Streetcare and Waste Management
Reduce the Council's Carbon Footprint by 8.1%	Deliver the specific targets set out in the Carbon Management Action Plan	Carbon Management Board delivering a range of projects to achieve this target, including reduction in the number of servers used by ICT	Environmental Health
Influence our partners to work to improve air quality to meet the government's minimum targets in declared action zones	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the local authority area (NI 185)  % reduction in CO2 emissions from local authority operations (NI 185)  Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in local authority area (NI 186)  Improve the level of air quality – reduce levels of NOx and primary PM10 emissions through local authority estate operations (NI 194)	Continue the monitoring of air quality and communicate results to partners	Environmental Health
Provide a reliable, cost-effective refuse collection and street cleansing service which promotes waste minimisation	Municipal waste land-filled (NI 193)  Residual household waste per head (NI 191)  Number of refuse collections missed per month (LPI 10)	Continue the collection of household waste  Continue the education programmes aiming to promote the waste hierarchy	Streetcare and Waste Management



Target particular problem areas by supporting neighbourhood clean up operations	<p>Responding to performance information, including customer complaints</p> <p>The number of clean up operations completed each year</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Wardens service</p> <p>Working with local Residents Associations</p> <p>Continue to support Community Clean-Up initiatives</p> <p>Joint working between Customer Service and service areas to evaluate customer feedback</p>	Streetcare and Waste Management
<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Maintain a clean environment throughout the town by tackling fly-posting, fly-tipping, graffiti, and abandoned vehicles	<p>Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly-posting) (NI 195)</p> <p>Improved street and environmental cleanliness – (fly-tipping) (NI 196)</p> <p>90% of fly-tips removed within two working days (LPI 5)</p> <p>95% of reported abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours (former BVPI 218a)</p> <p>90% removal of abandoned vehicles within 24 hours (former BVPI 218b)</p>	Continue to provide a comprehensive street-care service	Streetcare and Waste Management
Provide a range of good quality open spaces and parks	Achieve a satisfaction level of 79% by March 2009 (annual survey)	Continue the maintenance and care services provided in parks	Streetcare and Waste Management

\* - Targets for crime reduction will be confirmed in the Local Area Agreement to be published in June 2008

## Priority Two:

### We will improve housing and health to enhance the wellbeing of our communities

This supports the following Local Area Agreement priorities:

- Stronger, empowered and cohesive communities
- Improved life chances for children and young people
- Improved adult health and well-being

<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Approve a plan by June 2008 to achieve the Decent Homes Standard	<p>Cabinet to approve the plan by May 2008</p> <p>Increase number of decent homes by March 2009 (NI 158). Specific targets will be identified following the completion of an asset management study in June 2008</p>		Housing
By March 2009 deliver an additional 400 affordable homes	<p>Increase the number of affordable homes delivered from 300 to 400 per year by March 2009 (NI 155)</p> <p>Net additional homes provided – increase from 1000 in 2007/08, to 1100 by March 2009 (NI 154)</p> <p>Increase the supply of ready to develop housing sites from 30 to 40 by March 2009 (NI 159)</p> <p>Processing of planning applications as measures against targets for major, minor and other applications (NI 157)</p>	<p>By negotiating affordable housing requirements with key stakeholders, including WNDC, developers and registered social landlords</p> <p>Maintain top quartile performance for minor and other applications.</p> <p>Achieve top quartile performance for major applications.</p> <p>Joint working with WNDC on housing schemes</p>	Housing

Provide support to those at risk of homelessness, and reduce homelessness and the time people spend in temporary accommodation	Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation from 80 to 50 by 2010 (NI 156)  Time taken to process housing benefit and council tax benefit (NI 181)		Housing
Introduce choice based lettings by July 2008	To be approved by Cabinet by March 2008 with an implementation date of July 2008		Housing
Provide a range of leisure and cultural activities for young people	Increase the number of young people visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups to at least 8000 by March 2009 (Former BVPI 170c)	Implementation of Cultural Strategy, including  Summer activities in museums, leisure and arts development  Street football initiatives  Delivering training opportunities to young people, including Community Sports Leadership Awards and volunteering opportunities leading to the Olympic Games 2012.	Community Safety, Leisure and Town centre Operations
Improve participation and access to cultural opportunities	Achieve National Status for the Boot and Shoe Collection by March 2009  Increase the number from around 800 per 1000 population, to around 900 by March 2009  Numbers of visits to museums and galleries (NI 10)  Numbers of adults who say they have attended arts or arts activities in the last twelve months (NI 11)	Developing a greater national and international profile for the Boot and Shoe Museum by achieving national status and associated marketing  Promotion of arts participation and exhibitions	Community Safety, Leisure and Town centre Operations

Promote healthy living initiatives for young people, particularly obesity initiatives and promotion of participation in physical activities	LAA measure – obesity of primary children in year 6 (NI 55)	Development of the Body for Life programme in partnership with Northamptonshire PCT	Community Safety, Leisure and Town Centre Operations
Contribute to Improving the health of local people through GP referral schemes at our leisure centres	Increase numbers of participants in the scheme from 360 to 400 by March 2009	Enhancement of the GP referral scheme	Community Safety, Leisure and Town Centre Operations
Implement a prioritised programme for neighbourhood renewal to ensure our communities are places where people want to live by September 2009.	% of people from different backgrounds who believe they get on well together (NI 1)  % People who feel they belong to their neighbourhood (NI 2)	Local priorities and targets to be delivered through Neighbourhood Management Action Plans	Governance and Communications
Release under-utilised council assets to support achievement of housing demand	By June 2998 Cabinet to adopt a new asset management strategy.	Options appraisals linked to Asset Management Strategy	Asset Management

## Priority Three:

### We will be a well managed organisation that puts our customers at the heart of what we do

This supports the following Local Area Agreement priorities:

- Tackling exclusion and promoting equalities

<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Ensure that all of our customers have a range of choices for how services are accessed, including transactions on the website and opportunities to visit offices	Numbers of website visits  Avoidable contact: Average number of customer contacts per resolved request (NI 14)	Implement self service modules on the Council's website  Continued improvements across customer operations	Customer Services
Increase the opportunities to consult with our customers	% of people who feel they can influence decision in their locality (NI 4)	Use Citizens Panel to consult on service delivery options  Increase our corporate consultations to an annual basis  Implementation and delivery of a Customer Engagement Strategy  Continue to support a network of customer forums	Governance and Communications
Improve our CPA rating by March 2009	CPA re-categorisation during 2008 to show the Council no longer rated as 'Poor'	Delivery of the Council's Improvement Action Plan	Chief Executive

<p>Improve our financial management by achieving Level 2 of the Use of Resources judgement by March 2009</p>	<p>Improve the specific elements of Use of Resources: financial management, internal control and financial reporting</p> <p>Value for Money – (NI 179)</p>	<p>Delivery of the Council's Use of Resources Action Plan</p> <p>Deliver the Value for Money review programme</p>	<p>Finance</p>
<p>Achieve Level 3 of the Equalities Standard by March 2009</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessments to be completed on all Council policies and services</p> <p>95% of authority buildings open to the public that are accessible to disabled people by March 2009 (former BVPI 156)</p>	<p>Delivery of the Equalities Standard Action Plan</p> <p>Deliver the objectives set out in the Council's Single Equalities Scheme</p>	<p>Asset Management</p> <p>Policy and Governance</p>
<p>Strengthen our system for learning and improving through customer and employee feedback</p>	<p>95% of complaints resolved on time</p> <p>20% reduction in front line customer service complaints by March 2009</p> <p>Reduce the number of Local Government Ombudsman's pre-investigations and investigations from 48 in 2007/ 08 to 38 by March 2009.</p> <p>Increase overall customer satisfaction rate to 53% by March 2009</p> <p>Increase employee satisfaction to 65% and advocacy rates to 36% by March 2009</p>	<p>Implementation and communication of defined service standards</p> <p>Improved communication about how customers can complain</p> <p>Implementation of a learning log process to inform service improvement</p> <p>Ombudsman case reviews</p> <p>Annual Customer Survey</p> <p>Annual Employee Opinion Survey</p>	<p>Customer Services</p>

<p>Improve the way we make decisions by using robust management information and having effective governance arrangements in place</p>	<p>Achieve Level 3 Data Quality by March 2009</p> <p>Ensure that no performance indicators are qualified by auditors</p>	<p>Delivery of the Data Quality Strategy</p> <p>Implementation of the Performance Management System</p> <p>Embedding the new Performance Management Framework</p> <p>Revise our Constitution to streamline decision making</p> <p>Provide training and development opportunities to officers and councillors</p>	<p>Performance and Improvement</p>
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## Priority Four:

### We will promote economic development and growth in Northampton

This supports the following Local Area Agreement priorities:

- A Stronger Local Economy

<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Work with external partners to improve the vitality of the town	<p>Delivery of the milestones and outcomes in the Economic Strategy</p> <p>Overall employment rate (NI 151)</p> <p>Working age people on out of work benefits (NI 152)</p> <p>VAT registered businesses in the area showing growth (NI 172)</p> <p>Changes in Housing Benefit/Council Tax benefit (NI 180)</p>	Delivery of the Economic Strategy	Regeneration
Work with partners on identified key regeneration projects, ensuring that infrastructure needs are adequately addressed for new and existing communities	<p>Meet the milestones within the Local Development Strategy</p> <p>Agree, with partners, a 'common tariff approach' to deliver the Local Development Scheme and to set out how each partner will contribute to the delivery of the scheme</p>	Development of a Joint Planning Unit	Planning
Work with local businesses to improve the operation of the town centre by developing a joint operations team	Create a Business Improvement District by 2010		Regeneration
Promote the town centre as a destination for shopping, leisure	Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem (NI41)	Shop front and Market Square enhancement schemes	Regeneration



and relaxation	Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing a problem (NI 42)	Improve promotions and communications  Deliver Economic and Cultural Strategies	
Promoting cultural facilities and events that put Northampton on the map	Stable budget for Royal and Derngate Theatres  Cultural Strategy for Northampton to contain specific projects, to be consulted and agreed by September 2008	Three-year investment plan for the theatre  Delivery of the Cultural Strategy	Community Safety, Leisure and Town centre Operations
Work with partners to improve education and skills attainment	Working age population qualified to specific levels (NI 164 and 165)  Average earnings – (NI 166)	Delivery of Economic Strategy  Delivery of Cultural Strategy	Regeneration  Community Safety, Leisure and Town Centre Operations
Work with partners to deliver the Government's growth agenda and major projects such as Grosvenor Greyfriars and St John's cultural quarter	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years (NI 170)	Complete Development Plan by March 2009	Regeneration and Planning

## Priority Five:

### We will strengthen our commitment to partnership working and engaging with our communities to deliver better outcomes

This supports the following Local Area Agreement priorities:

- Stronger, Empowered and Cohesive Communities

<b>Short-Term Priorities</b>	<b>Milestones/Measures – to achieve by March 2009</b>	<b>How will this be addressed?</b>	<b>Lead department</b>
Ensure wide engagement with local people on issues that effect their lives	% of people engaged in civic participation in the local area (NI 3)	Implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy	Governance and Communications
Deliver services with a more local focus	Reconfigure front line service delivery to area-based arrangements following organisational review	Implement Local Area working	Chief Executive's
Take a leading role in the Local Strategic Partnership and the implementation of our Sustainable Communities Strategy	Achievement targets in the LAA  Targets and measures to be agreed by June 2008	Delivery of the Local Area Agreement  Take a significant role in the new Public Services Board  Implement our Sustainable Communities Strategy	Governance and Communications
Review the way we work with the voluntary and community sectors to deliver services in line with best practice	Participation in regular volunteering (NI 6)  Environment for a thriving third sector (NI 7)  Amount of council money spent on grants (£1.1m in 2007/08)	Complete Strategic Business Review to identify opportunities  Use of community grants to support the voluntary sector	Governance