

PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28 JULY 2003
CABINET – 30 JULY 2003

COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – SELF-ASSESSMENT

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 589: Preparing for Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Cabinet - 5 March 2003)
CAB 660: Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Cabinet - 21 May 2003)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report seeks comments from the Principal Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on the Council's self-assessment that will form the basis for its Comprehensive Performance Assessment later this financial year.

The draft self-assessment considered by Cabinet in May 2003 has been updated to take on board initial feedback raised in the Peer Review and comments made by Councillors, staff and partners. Overall, the Peer Review did not identify any major issues that had not been raised in the draft self-assessment but has helped to give a stronger evidence base for conclusions and focus attention on key matters.

The self-assessment continues to show that, overall, the Council has much to be proud of, with evidence of good performance in a number of key areas. It demonstrates that the Council is aware that its system of performance management has some elements that are not fully developed, with work taking place to address these. Other areas identified for improvement include communications and better alignment of strategy and plan development.

At the time of writing, the final report on the Peer Review has not been received and further amendment may be required to the text to reflect points raised in this.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To: Principal Scrutiny Committee

- 1 That the Committee informs Cabinet of any amendments or additions required to the attached self-assessment required to give an accurate picture of the Council.

To: Cabinet

- 2 That the draft self-assessment attached as Appendix 1 to this report be agreed as giving an accurate picture of the Council, subject to any further information that comes to light by the deadline date for its submission to the CPA team;
- 3 That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, Chair of Principal Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Member for Performance Management, be given authority to amend the self-assessment in light of any new information received prior to the deadline date for its submission to the CPA team.

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COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – SELF ASSESSMENT

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report seeks comments on the self-assessment document that will form the background to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the City Council, taking place this year.

2 Background

- 2.1 CPA brings together disparate external inspections of local authority services into one process, to give a single judgement as to how well each authority is operating. Authorities found to be operating well will be granted additional flexibility and freedoms, while those identified as 'poor' or 'weak' will be provided with additional support and inspection to help them improve.
- 2.2 To make this judgement, the CPA Inspection Team will draw on information from a variety of sources, key of which are:
- a) a self-assessment document prepared by the local authority (see below);
 - b) a 'Peer Review' of the authority carried out by an accredited independent agency;
 - c) an assessment of 'corporate governance' prepared by the Council's external auditor;
 - d) information from the Government Office of the South East (GOSE) on their formal assessment made of Council strategies and plans;
 - e) the authority's performance against national performance indicators and other national targets;
 - f) a separate inspection of the Council's benefits service carried out by the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate.
- 2.3 Much of this information will be gathered in advance of the Inspection Team's on site work, which is due to take place between 29 September and 3 October this year. The on site inspection will be used to check and validate the overall performance of the authority, following up issues raised in the information collected in advance and testing how 'self-aware' the authority has shown itself to be in its self-assessment.

3 Self-Assessment

- 3.1 Information originally given in report CAB 660 about the content and form of the self assessment is repeated here for ease of reference, updated where necessary to reflect development in our understanding of what is required.
- 3.2 The self-assessment document consists of a number of different elements, as indicated below:

3.3 **Setting the Scene**

- 3.3.1 This introductory section sets out, in a maximum of four pages, the general context in which the Council operates, the key challenges and opportunities it faces and the impact of these.

3.4 **Corporate Assessment**

- 3.4.1 The Council is required to assess its own performance against the following four questions and ten underlying themes. Answers to each of the key questions (a – d) must be no more than four sides of A4, giving a maximum of 16 sides for this section.

- a) What is the Council trying to achieve?
 - i) Ambition
 - ii) Prioritisation
 - iii) Focus
- b) How has the Council set about delivering its priorities for improvement?
 - i) Capacity
 - ii) Performance Management
- c) What improvements has the Council achieved to date?
 - i) Achievement in quality of service
 - ii) Achievement of improvement
 - iii) Investment
- d) In light of what the Council has learnt to date, what does it plan to do next?
 - i) Learning
 - ii) Future Plans

3.5 **Diagnostic Assessments**

- 3.5.1 The Council is next required to assess its performance in three cross cutting service areas.

- 3.5.2 *Public Space:* This diagnostic has a total of four sides of A4 to cover the key questions shown below.

- a) How well does the Council contribute to the management of the physical environment?
- b) Does the Council help keep the locality clean?
- c) Does the Council work with partners to improve community safety?
- d) Does the Council contribute to activities to positively engage children and young people?

- 3.5.3 *Decent Homes Standard:* Authorities that still retain their own housing stock are required to complete an assessment looking at the work they are undertaking to ensure that the stock meets the Decent Homes Standard by 2010, answering the questions shown below on no more than four sides of A4.

- a) How well does the Council know the condition of the housing stock and its compliance with the Decent Homes Standard? What is the Council trying to achieve in relation to the standard?
- b) What are the Council's actions and what outcomes have been achieved to ensure homes meet the standard?
- c) How does the Council monitor its progress and the impact of meeting the standard, and how does this feed into future strategies and plans?

3.5.4 *Balanced Housing Markets*: The final diagnostic looks at how well the Council plays its role in providing a balanced housing market. In no more than five sides of A4, the Council is asked to respond to the following questions:

- a) How well does the Council understand its housing market and from its understanding has the Council developed the right proposals to help balance its housing markets?
- b) What are the Council's actions and what outcomes has it achieved in helping to balance housing markets?
- c) How does the Council monitor its progress and impact in helping to balance housing markets and how effectively does this feed into future strategies and plans?

3.6 **Self Scoring Summary**

3.6.1 The Council is also asked to give itself a score for each of the ten themes that make up the corporate assessment element of the self-assessment and indicate its strengths and weaknesses against each of these. The scoring is based on the following scale:

- a) 4. Strong (no major weaknesses)
- b) 3. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
- c) 2. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
- d) 1. Weak

3.6.2 The Council is also asked to score its performance in each of the diagnostic assessments, with each of the three or four questions being rated against the following scale (using lower case letters) and then the overall service being rated against the same scale, using capital letters:

- a) a/A – very low risk of service or function failure and poor outcomes
- b) b/B – low risk of service or function failure and poor outcomes
- c) c/C – high risk of service or function failure and poor outcomes
- d) d/D – very high risk of service or function failure and poor outcomes

3.7 **Summarised Initial Improvement Plan**

3.7.1 The final element of the self-assessment is a high level improvement plan on one side of A4, showing the actions that the Council is going to take over the next three years around its key priorities.

4 Overall Assessment

4.1 The final assessment for the Council will be based on the total of points achieved in the scoring of the corporate assessment element. The diagnostics and the benefits inspection will be used as 'case studies' to advise this scoring, with evidence from these fed into the themes used in the corporate assessment.

4.2 In addition, the public space and decent homes standard diagnostic will be scored in their own right, using the system shown in 3.6.2 above. If either of these only achieves a 'D' as its overall score, the authority will not be given an overall judgement of 'excellent' even if this is justified by the total number of points gained.

4.3 Similarly, if the Council is assessed as 'poor' in the separate BFI inspection or by the external auditor in his corporate governance assessment, it cannot gain 'excellent' status even if this is justified by the total number of points gained.

4.4 Since CAB 660 was written, the Audit Commission has announced the final scoring framework. This has changed the weighting given to the elements of the corporate assessment, with the themes of 'achievement in quality of service' and 'achievement of improvement' now only being weighted at 3 and 'investment' being weighted at 2. All other themes have a weighting of 1. This has affected the overall bands on which the final judgement is based, which are now set as follow:

- a) excellent: score 48 – 60
- b) good: score 42 – 47
- c) fair: score 36 – 41
- d) weak: score 30 – 35
- e) poor: score 15 – 29

5 Final Self-Assessment

5.1 Cabinet considered the draft self-assessment on 21 May (report CAB 660 refers) and agreed it for submission as background to the Peer Review, which took place from 23 – 25 June 2003.

5.2 The draft self-assessment was also published on the Council's Intranet, with comments invited from Councillors and staff and was sent to key partners for their views.

5.3 The peer review presented their initial findings to members of the Informal Member/Officer CPA Working Party, with key issues raised being fed back to all Councillors in a briefing session following the full Council meeting held on 25 June. Overall, the Peer Review did not raise any major new issues, although the process helped to provide a firm evidence base and give clearer focus to the process. The initial feedback from the Peer Review was considered in more depth at a meeting of the Informal Member/Officer CPA Working Party held on 27 June.

5.4 A revised self-assessment (draft 3.1) is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The corporate assessment elements have been significantly reworded to reflect action taken since the draft was produced, and take on board comments made in the initial feedback from the peer review and through the wider consultation exercise. Some changes have also been proposed to the scores to reflect comments made previously by Cabinet and confirmation of performance through the Peer Review. Some amendments have also been made to the diagnostics sections. The reference section is currently omitted, as it requires further work.

5.5 At the time of drafting this report, the final report from the Peer Review has not been received and further adjustment to the text of the self-assessment may be required in light of this.

5.6 The Council has also started to receive information from the Audit Commission on its analysis of performance against national performance information, and some adjustment to the text may be required to address issues raised.

5.7 When completed, this document will form the basis of questions raised in the CPA Inspection. It is therefore very important that Members feel comfortable with the content of the self-assessment and able to support what it says.

6 Corporate Strategy

- 6.1 The CPA process seeks to ensure that the Council has processes in place to both determine and deliver its corporate aims and identify areas where these could be improved.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 At its meeting on 5 March, Cabinet agreed that £50,000 be made available to support the CPA process. Some of this budget allocation has already been directed to carrying out additional research into Members views, providing some additional support in the Chief Executive's Department and communicating with staff. It will also be used to pay for the CPA team's tour of the District and meet other costs incurred in preparing for the inspection. The Audit Commission is grant aiding the Peer Review costs of £5,000.
- 7.2 Notwithstanding this, the short deadlines that the Council is working to are putting pressure on staff who are preparing self-assessment documentation and making arrangements for the CPA team's work. This is likely to continue throughout the rest of the summer and the autumn and will be difficult to overcome, given the nature of the work involved. It may mean that other areas of work are delayed.

Background Documents:

Audit Commission Guidance Documents available from the Audit Commission website: (<http://www.audit-commission/cpadistrict>)

Feedback slides from Peer Review

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Self-Assessment Draft 3.1



Winchester
City Council

Self-Assessment

for

**Comprehensive
Performance Assessment**

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Setting the Scene

The District

1. The Winchester District lies at the heart of Hampshire, with good strategic road and rail links and easy access to air travel and the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth. It is primarily rural, covering 250 square miles (65,934 hectares) of countryside, from the top of Portsdown Hill in the south through to Micheldever Station in the north.

Its Environment

2. The special quality of the natural and built environment is recognised both locally and nationally.

3. Approximately half the District falls within the East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a national designation that recognises the special visual quality of the area. The Council has also designated eight Areas of Special Landscape Quality (ASLQs) within the District, although it is now moving towards a more holistic approach to protecting the special quality of the landscape through its Landscape Assessment. The Countryside Commission is currently consulting on the formation of a 'South Downs National Park' that would stretch from Brighton through to Winchester, covering the AONB. The City Council has opposed this proposal, because it is not convinced of the benefit it would give¹³⁰.

4. Other areas within the District are recognised for their importance in terms of the wildlife they support. There are two National Nature Reserves (NNRs), 22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and 506 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). The Itchen Valley is being considered for European Designation as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

5. The District also contains nine Historic Parks and Gardens listed on English Heritage's National Register and a further 113 that have been designated locally. This Council and its predecessor authorities have made about 1,500 Tree

Preservation Orders (TPOs), with about 50 new TPOs being created each year.

6. The built environment is equally special. There are around 3,000 listed buildings and 37 designated Conservation Areas, including England's first, the historic heart of Winchester.

7. The Council, through its planning service, seeks to protect and enhance this unique environment, in response to the wishes of the local community.

Its Communities

8. Winchester is the main settlement in the District and forms a focus for villages and communities in the north of the District, with the historic town of Alresford forming a smaller centre to its east.

9. Main settlements in the south of the District include the old market towns of Bishops Waltham and Wickham, the growing village of Denmead and the new communities at Whiteley and Knowle. Another major development area is planned in the south east of the District, abutting the town of Waterlooville in the Borough of Havant. Communities in the south of the District tend to look to major centres outside the District for work, shopping and larger leisure facilities.

10. The difference in community focus is reflected in the boundaries of many of the other organisations serving the area and is an enduring problem when working in partnership to meet the needs of the community. The District falls within parts of three Police Divisions, two Primary Care Trusts and different area education offices. It is served by Hospitals in Winchester, Basingstoke, Southampton and Portsmouth. The two main business communities in Winchester and Whiteley come under different Chambers of Commerce and local transport networks focus on the nearest main centre of population. The work of the voluntary sector is co-ordinated through Winchester Area

Setting the Scene

Community Action (WACA), who operates within the District boundary.

11. The geography of the District also provides a challenge for communications, with different newspapers and local radio stations covering parts of the area. Even telephone directories differ, with those in the south east coming under the Portsmouth Directory and those elsewhere covered by the Southampton Directory.

12. There are 47 civil parishes within the District that recognise its diversity and allow people a say in the government of their local community. In four areas, the population of the parish is small enough to allow a participative democracy, with all residents able to take decisions through a Parish Meeting. The other 43 parishes elect representatives to form a Parish or (in the case of Alresford) Town Council. This network of parishes is continuing to develop, with the City Council recently establishing a separate parish for the new community of Whiteley, with its first Council being formed in May 2003. As well as providing a 'voice' for their communities, Parishes are responsible for providing local recreation facilities.

13. The historic town of Winchester does not have a Parish or Town Council, with the City Council taking responsibility for parish level services. A 'Winchester Town Forum' has recently been established to give a voice to the Winchester community and give it a more direct influence over local services within the town and the separate tax collected to pay for these. All Councillors elected to Town Wards serve on this Forum.

14. The District has the lowest population density in Hampshire, which gives particular challenges to the Council in terms of its service provision.

Its People

15. The 2001 census found that the District was home to some 107,000 people¹²³ of whom about half live in or

around Winchester, with the remainder living in the market towns, rural villages and countryside.

16. Overall the population is better educated, more affluent and healthier than in the south east in general¹²³. The Index of Multiple Deprivation identified half of the Wards that then existed in the District as being in the 10% least deprived in England, with none falling below the 50th percentile¹²⁴. (The District has since had a boundary review.) Notwithstanding this, deprivation does exist within the District, with 10% of households in receipt of Housing or Council Tax Benefit and four former Wards falling within the most deprived 10% in terms of access to basic facilities¹²⁵. The affluence of the area makes this relative deprivation more keenly felt.

17. The age profile of the population is broadly in line with that for the south east as a whole¹²³. In comparison with other Hampshire authorities, there is a bias towards the older age groups, in particular those aged over 75, with a slightly lower percentage in the 25 – 59 age range. Younger age groups are in line with the Hampshire average, possibly benefiting from the presence of further education establishments in the District. As with other areas, there is concern about the ageing population and the implications this has for care for the very elderly.

18. The population is predominantly white, with 2.2% coming from black and minority ethnic backgrounds¹²³. A further 3.0% of people come from non-British or Irish white backgrounds¹²³. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have diverse ethnic backgrounds and are scattered throughout the District.

19. Visitors swell the population of the District, with some 3,500,000 day visitors and 400,000 staying visitors attracted to the area in 2000¹⁷. It is important for their presence to be properly managed to maximise the gains to the local economy while minimising inconvenience caused to residents.

Setting the Scene

Their Homes

20. There are some 43,132 homes in the District, of which 5,047 are Council owned. Overall the housing stock, both privately and publicly owned, is in good condition^{15, 20}, with energy efficiency ratings above the national average. Constant investment is required to ensure that this continues to be the case.

21. House prices are high, creating a barrier to first time buyers. Nearly 30% of households rent their accommodation, with over half of these renting from the Council or a Registered Social Landlord. This proportion of rented accommodation is higher than the average for Hampshire and the south east¹²³.

22. A recent housing needs survey¹³ identified a continuing need for more affordable homes in the area, with new developments currently failing to replace those lost through 'Right to Buy'.

Their Jobs

23. Overall levels of unemployment are low¹²³, although there is variation between different parts of the District. While a number of rural Parishes enjoyed unemployment rates as low as 0.2% and 0.3% in March 2003, four of the six town Wards and three areas in the south of the District, had unemployment at over 1% and in one town Ward this rose to over 2%¹³². The pattern of work is complex, with many who live in the District commuting to London and elsewhere, while those living elsewhere commute into the District, in particular to Winchester and Whiteley.

24. Public services are a major source of employment, with Winchester being home to Hampshire County Council, the City Council, a General Hospital, a Community Prison, the Police Headquarters and the Crown Court. The Environment Agency is based at Colden Common, and the National Air Traffic Control System (NATS) is establishing its Head Office at Whiteley. There are

also three higher education establishments. King Alfred's College and the School of Art (part of Southampton University) are in Winchester and Sparsholt (agricultural) College, is five miles outside it. Winchester is also a major ecclesiastical Centre, with the Cathedral forming the heart of the Winchester diocese.

25. The District is home to three important Ministry of Defence sites, with the headquarters of the Adjutant General's Corps and the Army Training Regiment located near Winchester and the Navy's technical and weapons training base at HMS Dryad at Southwick. All of these may be moved or changed as part of the current round of the Defence Review.

26. There are a number of large private sector employers at the Solent Business Park, Whiteley, which is second only to Winchester as a centre of employment within the District. IBM's internationally renowned laboratory is at Hursley near Winchester, and NTL's research centre is at Crawley Court on the western edge of the District. There is little manufacturing industry with the greatest concentration being at Winnall on the northern edge of Winchester town.

27. There is a strong tourist industry, centred on Winchester, that is extending more into the rural areas as agriculture, the major land use in these parts, now employs relatively few people.

28. This broad service base, with little reliance on manufacturing, has proved resilient to economic down turns in the recent past.

Their Security

29. Levels of crime and disorder are generally low, particularly in the rural areas, although fear of crime remains an issue²². Winchester, with its retail and business centre, attracts most incidents but still remains a safe place to live, work in and visit.

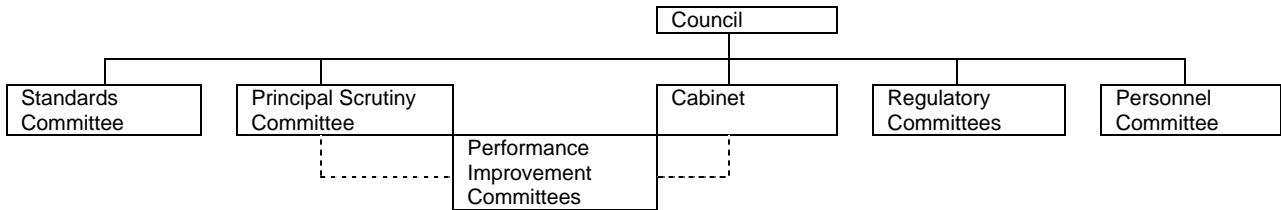
Setting the Scene

Their Local Council

30. The community elects 57 local residents to serve as their representatives on Winchester City Council. Elections are held annually, with a third of Councillors elected each year. The turn out at the local elections in May 2003 was 40%, which compares well with other areas using traditional approaches to voting.

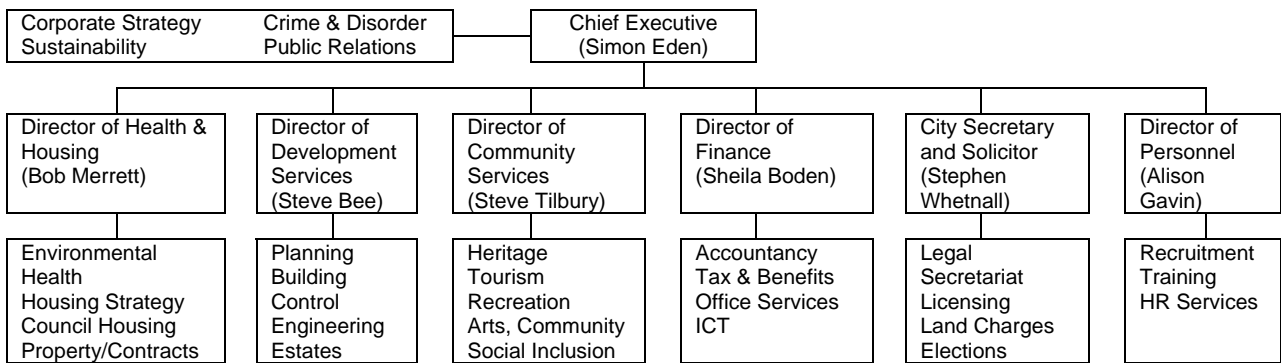
31. Following the elections in May 2003, the Liberal Democrats maintained a slim majority, holding 29 seats. The Conservative Party has 18 seats and the Labour Party and Independent Group have five seats each.

32. The Council operates under a Cabinet with Leader model, with the structure indicated below:



33. The Council appoints officers to carry out its day to day work. The Chief Executive leads the officer team through the Corporate Management Team. A new Chief Executive took up post on 19

May 2003, following the retirement of the previous incumbent. The Directors of the six Council departments (see below) make up the Corporate Management Team.



34. The Council employs 515 staff directly operating out of five main locations (City Offices, Avalon House, Abbey Mill, Car Park Office and Hyde Historic Resources Centre) in and around the centre of Winchester.

35. It has also let a number of key contracts for services, including

- Refuse collection, cleansing, grounds maintenance, housing maintenance – 10 year contract to SERCo let in 2000
- Management of the River Park Leisure Centre – 10 year contract to DC Leisure let in 1997
- Management of IT – 5 year contract to Steria let in December 1998 and extended for two years in 2003.

36. The Council is responsible for a small conference centre (Winchester Guildhall), major recreation facility (River Park Leisure Centre) and two museums (City Museum and Westgate Museum) in Winchester and a local community centre (Meadowside) at Whiteley.

37. The Council aims for a balanced budget, with service growth proposals financed by savings and through managed contributions from reserves. In 2003/04 it is raising a Council Tax of £99.45 for a Band D property an increase of x% from 2002/03. Its General Fund net revenue budget for 2003/04 is £12 million and its capital budget is £12 million, of which £8 million is housing related. The Council became debt free in March 2002.

Our Aims for the District

A broad vision, shared with partners

“Our vision for the Winchester District is of diverse and dynamic communities, where people work together to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life now and in the future.”

38. This vision statement has been developed and agreed with key partners as part of the work on a community strategy for the District¹ and has been adopted by the Council as part of its statement of overall aims and objectives for the area². The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is working to develop and interpret that vision so that it is shared and owned by all partners.

39. The Council has led the development of the community strategy for the District with its strategic partners. Building on work with an informal partnership¹⁰⁷ and a major conference held with a broad spectrum of partner organisations³, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the area was formally established in February 2003⁴. The City Council's leadership was recognised by the new LSP when it elected the Leader of the Council as its Chair⁴.

40. The LSP is now developing as an inclusive network of organisations and is seeking to produce a first version of the community strategy in time for its priorities to influence the business planning and budgets of the Council and its partners for 2004/05^{5,6}. This work is building on and will link to the wide range of evidence based strategies produced by the Council and other organisations within the District, with priorities identified following a number of public consultation exercises designed to encourage participation from all sections of the community.

Clear aims and priorities for the Council within this process

41. Flowing from the vision for the District, the Council has identified its long term key aims for the District² as:

- To promote a healthier, safer and more caring community;
- To promote a thriving local economy throughout the District;
- To protect and improve the natural and built environment for the benefit of present and future generations and
- To encourage more varied cultural and sporting activities for all across the District.

42. These are due to be reviewed in the early autumn, in consultation with the LSP, to take on board priorities arising from work to develop the community strategy.

43. To help implement these aims, the Council has identified eight key medium term priorities for improvement during 2003 – 2006², with annual targets for improvement set out in its Performance Plan¹⁹. These priorities reflect local concerns⁶⁴, in particular the need for more affordable housing, while also responding to the national agenda in key areas such as recycling, performance standards and the greater use of electronic systems.

Confidence in the Leadership

44. A key priority for the Council is to continue to develop its leadership role within the LSP and the wider community.

45. It is already recognised as a leader with partner organisations and was able to put this to good use when given short notice that the district was eligible for some £450,000 under the Children's Fund. The Council demonstrated its leadership role by pulling together a partnership of organisations across the seven areas identified as eligible for support and starting its commissioning plan within a one month of notification. The first of the projects is now underway, delivering benefit to the children in one of the more deprived areas of the District.

46. The Peer Review¹⁶⁴ identified that the Council was self effacing in its leadership. The Council had already recognised a

Our Aims for the District

need to strengthen its community leadership role, with its vision being:

“The City Councillors will provide leadership for the area and the Council will work with partners to ensure that services are provided in ways that best meet the needs of the residents, both now and in the future.”

47. To work towards this aim the Council chose to increase the number of Councillors in the recent review of Ward Boundaries¹⁶¹ to ensure that there were good levels of community representation. It also created the Winchester Town Forum⁶³ in 2002 to give a more specific voice to the unparished part of the district (the Winchester town area). Further development of the role of Members within their communities is included in the 2003/04 Member training programme¹⁶².

48. When considering leadership within the Council, the final follow-up report from the Local Government Improvement Programme (LGIP) review⁸ in October 2001, said

“The skills and ability are there in both the political and managerial leadership to take forward the organisation.”

and suggested that Cabinet and CMT should together establish the longer term agenda for the Council. Regular meetings are now taking place to allow informal discussion on performance and budget issues and consider future plans⁶⁵, with plans in hand for these arrangements to be more fully developed¹⁶³. The Peer Review undertaken in June 2003¹⁶⁴ confirmed that the authority was becoming more politically led.

49. The 2003 staff attitude survey showed that 62% of staff felt confident about the way the Council is run, with a positive year on year increase in this score¹⁰. The Council managed the recent retirement of the long serving Chief Executive to minimise uncertainty for the organisation, with a direct hand over to his successor. The annual staff attitude survey in 2004 will help to provide a check that confidence has been maintained during this period of change.

Communicating Our Aims

50. The LGIP October 2001 follow-up report⁸ drew attention to the need for better communication of the Council's strategy. There is some evidence that this is happening within the organisation. Member focus groups carried out in March 2003 showed a good level of awareness of the Council's aims⁶⁶ and in the 2003 Staff Attitude Survey¹⁰ 68% of staff agreed with the statement 'I feel that the Council has clearly defined aims and objectives'. Only 2% disagreed.

51. However, the 2003 Peer Review¹⁶⁴, while recognising good practice within departments, drew attention to the need for stronger corporate systems to ensure that there is a good two way flow of information between senior managers and front line staff. Initial work on an internal communications system has been given greater priority in light of these comments.

52. The Peer Review also drew attention to the need for the Council to review its general communications to ensure that everyone receives a balanced picture of its work and that its successes are properly recognised and celebrated. This is being addressed.

A Clear Focus on what matters

53. The Council has a good track record of sustained focus on its broad aims for the District. It recognises that further development of its performance management system, in particular in setting and monitoring progress against targets, will help it maintain its focus more effectively. This is being incorporated into ongoing work to continue development of performance management, referred to in the section looking at 'Delivering our Priorities'.

54. In terms of promoting a **healthier, safer and more caring community**, the Council has:

- given clear priority to supplementing the stock of affordable housing and ensuring that its own stock is in good condition¹⁵.
- recognised the importance of good health and the role it can play in this by

Our Aims for the District

developing Winchester 'Health for All', an innovative partnership approach with the health service, voluntary sector and others that recently celebrated its tenth anniversary¹⁴;

- focussed on providing quality services such as refuse collection and benefits administration as described on pages 15 and 17.

55. The Council has made full use of Government funding to meet national targets for community safety but, recognising that local levels of crime and disorder are low¹⁶, has directed its own resources to higher priorities.

56. To promote a **thriving local economy** throughout the District, the Council has:

- recognised that the rich heritage of the District, and Winchester town in particular, will always attract visitors, and has invested in managing tourism, taking an evidence-based^{12, 17} strategic approach¹⁸ to maximise the economic benefit in a sustainable way, for which it may seek Beacon Council status;
- promoted the regeneration of the Broadway/Friarsgate area in Winchester town centre;
- initiated and subsequently supported the development of a strong City Centre management process, in partnership with the private sector;
- used its planning policies to encourage the creation of new employment opportunities in the south of the District close to areas of higher unemployment;
- provided a quality parking service that balances the needs of residents, workers and visitors.

57. With generally low levels of unemployment (see page 3 above), the Council has attached lower priority to general economic development work, and has no current economic development strategy. Instead it uses the Local Plan to maintain a framework within which businesses can thrive. The Council is a member of the Hampshire Economic Partnership and has worked with neighbouring authorities on joint initiatives

such as the South Hampshire Economic Strategy and the Southampton Area Vacant Commercial Property Register. The Council recognises that there are risks associated with this approach and that it should understand the dynamics of the local economy and be in a position to anticipate future trends, both positive and negative. It is therefore currently undertaking a best value review of *People and Work* due to report in December 2003. It has also extended the 'environment' portfolio role to cover the local economy and has given a stronger economic focus to the role of the Director of Development Services.

58. In order to **protect and improve the natural and built environment**, the Council has

- invested in its planning service, putting emphasis on the development of a robust Local Plan and working with developers and other stakeholders to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the quality of its setting. The current challenge for the service is to maintain the quality of decisions made while meeting Government targets for speed of decision making.
- maintained focus on recycling of domestic waste, using a twin bin system.
- taken pride in keeping the area clean and tidy through a quality cleansing service and initiatives to reduce dog fouling in public areas.

59. The Council also invests significantly in the District's unique heritage, running its own museums and archaeology service, and providing grant aid to the repair of historic buildings and features. In recent years it has reduced the overall amount of grants given, focussing resources on buildings that are identified as being at risk. The level of priority being given to this work overall is being assessed through a best value review, due to report in December 2003.

60. As set out in its cultural strategy⁷, the Council encourages **varied cultural and**

Our Aims for the District

sporting activities across the District through

- provision of the River Park Leisure Centre and a sports development service, working in partnership with voluntary organisations;
- arts initiatives, including 'artists in residence', the lottery funded three year 'light art' project in Winchester and support for the Theatre Royal.
- supporting annual and special events, varying from the Homelands Festival to celebrations of literature.

61. The Council has allocated funds to develop better indoor sports provision in the southern parishes, working in partnership with Swanmore College of Technology and the County Council, rather than investing in a purpose built facility for the southern Parishes.

An evidence-based approach

62. The Council draws on extensive research and consultation when developing its strategies and services.

63. Examples include the housing needs survey¹³, private sector house conditions survey²⁰ and stock condition survey¹⁵ that inform the housing strategy²¹; the community safety audit²² that underpins the community safety strategy¹⁶ and a range of studies²³ in support of the Local Plan Review²⁴.

64. The Council also has a strong record of public consultation. It has been carrying out regular residents' perceptions and satisfaction surveys since 1993, initially through MORI and, since 2000, through its own Citizens' Panel. The Citizens' Panel comprises some 1,600 randomly selected residents who have agreed to complete two or three questionnaires a year. The recruitment process ensures that results obtained are statistically reliable.

65. In addition, the Council carries out regular visitor surveys¹², has engaged the community in a variety of ways in the review of the District Local Plan¹¹, routinely consults with housing tenants

and held a number of 'road shows' in preparing the cultural strategy¹³.

66. The Council recognises that this work tends to have a strong service, rather than strategic focus. The Management Letter for 2001/02²⁵ produced by the Council's external auditor said

"The Council's formal mechanism to co-ordinate consultation still requires further development"

and the 2003 Peer Review identified a need for a more inclusive approach to consultation with stronger feedback mechanisms.

67. In response to the comments in the Management Letter, the Council's Principal Scrutiny Committee has been undertaking a review of the overall consultation process and a consultation strategy is being prepared for adoption later this year.

Flexible allocation of Resources

68. The financial strategy, updated annually, sets the context for the preparation of detailed budgets. For some years, the Council has sought to invest in areas of recognised corporate priority, where possible funding this through savings found throughout the organisation. The move to a Cabinet system has led to a further development of this approach, working through the regular meetings between Cabinet and senior managers referred to in paragraph 11 above.

69. The Council recognises the importance of using its resources to draw in contributions from elsewhere in the community to support delivery of key priorities. It has developed a pooled 'Health Improvement and Social Inclusion' (HISI) budget to support its 'Health for All' work, drawing in contributions from Hampshire County Council Social Services and the Mid Hampshire Primary Care Trust. It also contributes to a pooled budget with other Hampshire authorities as part of the Active Sports Partnership. It has attracted contributions from the Winchester City Trust, English Heritage and Hampshire County Council to fund planning studies.

Delivering our Priorities

Capacity to Deliver

70. The ability of the Council to deliver its priorities rests primarily with its Councillors and staff.

71. The independent team undertaking the 2003 Peer Review said that it was very impressed by the quality of Member and officers, finding them to be capable and effective with good officer/ member relations¹⁶⁴.

72. This supports the Investors in People (IIP) assessment undertaken in April 2002⁹ that strongly endorsed the Council's commitment to its people, covering staff, Councillors and others who contribute to the Council's aims. In approving the Council as an 'Investor in People', the independent recognition panel stated:

"This organisation should be positively congratulated on the way it has gone about embracing the standard both in terms of the 'word and spirit'."

73. As demonstrated below, the Council supports its people capacity with effective decision making structures, a developing scrutiny role, sound financial systems, an increasing ICT capacity, strong use of partnership working and a positive approach to different delivery methods.

74. It recognises that at times it is over ambitious about what it can achieve and has put in place training in project management^{##} to help address this.

A Modern Member Structure

75. The Council moved to a 'Leader and Cabinet' system in May 2000, adopting it formally in November 2001 and further adapting and improving it in May 2002⁴³ in response to issues raised in an external Audit assessment⁴² undertaken at the Council's request. A further internal review was carried out in April 2003^{##} with the system continuing to evolve in response to this.

76. As a result of these developments the Council now has

- A single party Cabinet with clear portfolio roles. Job descriptions are being drawn up for portfolio roles and delegation of decision making to individual portfolio members is being actively considered.
- A Principal Scrutiny Committee, chaired by an opposition Member, with a clear programme of work⁴⁴, designed to drive improvement in key areas, as demonstrated throughout this document.
- Five Performance Improvement Committees (PICs) with responsibility for performance monitoring and undertaking specific studies.
- A Standards Committee, chaired by the Deputy Mayor (a role that is traditionally operated in a non-political way), that works closely with the Monitoring Officer and recognises the full width of its responsibilities⁶⁷.
- 57 committed and articulate Members who work hard on behalf of their communities.
- A Member training package designed to ensure that all Councillors are given the information and skills to continue to develop their role. This has included attendance by the Leader and Chair of Principal Scrutiny at the Warwick University Leadership Academy.
- A clear system of delegation to officers⁴⁶ that allows the Council to operate effectively, but with appropriate recording and accounting.

77. The need for policy support for the work of the Scrutiny Committees and better office accommodation for Members in general has been recognised and ways of delivering these are being considered.

A dedicated, well trained work force

78. The Council faces staffing pressures, being in an area of very low unemployment, high housing costs and within commuting distance of other major employers requiring similar skills. The Council's People Policy⁴⁷ emphasises work-life balance and the training and

Delivering our Priorities

development of the existing workforce as means of overcoming these pressures.

79. The annual staff attitude survey¹⁰ demonstrates that staff are generally well motivated, find their work interesting and would describe their morale as good. They also believe that the Council is a caring employer. National Performance Indicators^{48, 49} looking at staff sickness and staff turn over both showed improvement between 2000/01 and 2001/02 although the staff sickness figure has deteriorated in 2002/03 and the Council is taking action to address this.

80. As a medium-size District, with a wide range of functions, the Council relies on having the right individuals in post, and cannot afford a contingency component in its staffing. Consequently, it can find it difficult to meet commitments when key people, with specialist skills, are absent.

81. The Council's external auditor has also raised concerns²⁵ about the Council's corporate capacity and active consideration is being given to ways of making more effective use of the resources currently available.

Sound Financial Management

82. In concluding his audit of the 2001/02 accounts, the Council's external auditor²⁵ confirmed that

“The Council's financial position remains secure over the medium term ...”

and issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements.

83. The Council's Capital Strategy⁵⁰ and Asset Management Plan⁵¹ were both assessed as 'Good' by the Government Office for the South East⁵², being described as 'robust' documents meeting all primary and almost all of the secondary criteria used in the judgement.

84. The Council takes a long-term approach to financial planning⁵³, projecting both revenue and capital budgets over a six-year period, so that issues can be flagged up and addressed at an early stage. Budget planning runs in parallel with service planning. The

Council has systems in place to pool budget savings and direct available resources towards its agreed priorities. It is continuing to develop and refine these systems. It uses its performance management system to ensure that agreed priorities are being achieved.

85. The Council takes a cautious approach to budget setting, with particular regard to income. Investment income and income from planning and building control fees are both significant elements of the budget where the Council has little control over final figures achieved. As a result it allows for a degree of underspend within its overall financial framework.

Increasing use of electronic systems

86. The Council has a well-established network for electronic communications. Most staff have access to e-mail, the Council's Intranet and the Internet. All Councillors are linked to the Council's network. Both staff and Councillors receive basic training as part of their induction process.

87. The Council is developing its Intranet as the main source of information within the authority and its Internet as a key point of information and contact by the public. It is currently investing in a content management system to support this development. The focus on electronic systems for holding information and communications helps to support home working, both for Councillors and staff.

88. Through the IEG⁵⁵ process the Council is continuing to develop systems to support the work of the authority and streamline its processes, including the introduction of an authority-wide document management system and development of a corporate Geographic Information System (GIS).

Strong commitment to Partnership Working

89. The LGIP follow up report⁸ found that

“Partnership working is a strength of the council that is being built on and there are improved relationships with both the county and parish councils.”

Delivering our Priorities

90. The Council has a positive approach to partnership working as a means of increasing its capacity to deliver key corporate priorities as indicated below:

91. To promote a **healthier, safer and more caring community**, the Council has

- helped to establish a number of local 'alliances' between local authorities, health providers and the voluntary and business sectors to address identified threats to health. This includes an 'Asthma Alliance' and a group working to help older people 'Stay on their Feet'.
- worked with a number of other agencies, community and voluntary groups to develop community capacity in some of the more deprived areas of the District through the Winchester Neighbourhood Initiative⁵⁸ and the Wickham Partnership⁵⁹.

92. To promote a **thriving local economy** throughout the District, the Council has:

- established the 'Discover Winchester' PR consortium, with 20 private sector members and the County Council, generating over £5million advertising equivalent of marketing for the area in its six year life^{##};
- helped found the City Centre Partnership with the business community, which works to ensure the future viability of Winchester's retail centre.

93. To **protect and improve the natural and built environment**, the Council has

- been fully involved in the inter-authority Project Integra partnership, working through it to achieve recycling rates in the national top quartile, recognised through the award of Beacon Council status⁵⁶
- worked with BTCV, a conservation organisation, and local Parish Councils to support a network of volunteer tree wardens who help protect trees and encourage new tree planting.

94. To encourage **varied cultural and sporting activities** across the District the Council

- works closely with other agencies to ensure that events such as the Homelands Festival and Hat Fair run smoothly and safely.

95. In addition, the Council uses partnerships to improve its business efficiency.

- It works in partnership with SERCo, through a formal contract⁵⁷ to deliver many core services, including waste collection and Council house maintenance.
- In response to a Best Value review it has entered into an innovative partnership with Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council⁶⁰ to provide a shared internal audit service.
- It worked with Test Valley Borough Council to attract savings from economies of scale⁶¹ through the joint purchase of a benefits system and is working with Eastleigh Borough Council on the possible joint purchase of a content management system.

Translating aims into achievements

96. The diagram on the following page sets out the Council's performance management system.

97. The Council has recognised its past weaknesses in performance management and has been working to improve the system, with year on year progress being made. Evidence of improvement was recognised in the LGIP follow up visit⁸ and the audit of the 2001/02 accounts²⁵. Stronger leadership in 2002/03 through Cabinet and CMT also resulted in all department business plans for 2003/04 being approved by Cabinet before the end of March 2003, the first time this has been achieved.

98. The Council recognises that further improvement is still required. It is working to firm up the performance management framework to ensure that it is operating consistently throughout the organisation, with effective use of Best Value fully integrated into the process and that all involved are clear about their role. This work will also look to ensure that the

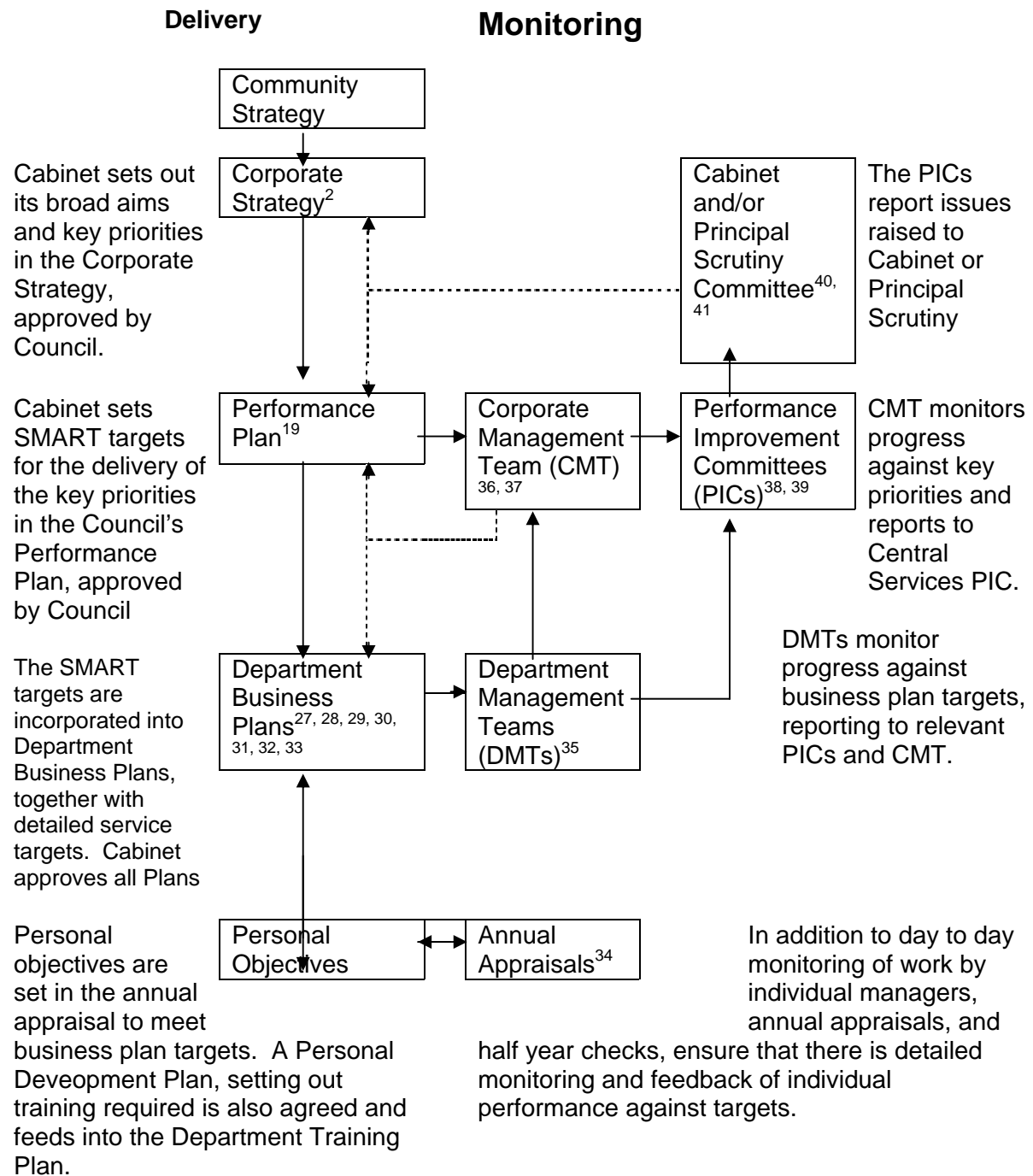
Delivering our Priorities

system fully supports work on issues that cut across department boundaries.

99. The Principal Scrutiny Committee is currently reviewing the Council's approach to business planning, drawing on work being undertaken by Hampshire County Council.

100. Further work to develop a formal risk management strategy is planned for the autumn, with a dedicated officer appointed to drive this process.

101. Further work is also required on the Council's Procurement Strategy and ways of resourcing this are being investigated.



Our Achievements

A focus on good quality services

102. The Council takes a pride in delivering good quality services that seek to sustain the quality of life in the District and improve it where necessary.

103. The Council recognises that its activities are among many that influence the quality of life experienced in the District and puts great emphasis on partnership working to draw together all resources available to the community to give the best possible impact. It follows that much of the credit for the achievements demonstrated in this section is shared with residents, visitors, contractors, developers and other partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

104. The Council can point to many areas of achievement against its key aims. The following are amongst those that the Council is most proud of.

105. To promote a **healthier, safer and more caring community**, the Council, working with others, has

- enabled about 400 units of affordable housing between April 2000 and March 2003⁷⁰
- provided a well-maintained Council housing stock¹⁵, with an average energy efficiency rating well above the national average.

Case Study

The Winchester Centre

Working with Winchester Area Community Action (WACA) and Hampshire County Council, the Council helped establish a shared home for many key voluntary sector organisations in the heart of Winchester, building capacity in this sector. This has helped develop networks across the voluntary sector and between public, private and voluntary sector bodies to the benefit of their clients.

- achieved a town centre (Winchester) that was the first in Hampshire to achieve 'Safe

Shopping Area' Accreditation⁷⁷, with comprehensive CCTV linked to Shop Watch, Pub Watch, the Police Command Centre, Winchester Station and Hampshire County Traffic Control.

Case Study

Makins Court, Alresford

The Council's sheltered housing scheme at Makins Court was below modern standards and proving hard to let. Initial plans to revamp the scheme met with local resistance. After further consultation with residents, a more ambitious rebuilding scheme was drawn up and additional resources attracted from a partner Housing Association.

The completed scheme, opened in January 2003, provides

- 16 modern, wheelchair friendly flats
- 12 bungalows, run by a partner Housing Association.

Scrutiny of the process has also led to improvements in the Council's approach to project management.

- delivered a high quality refuse collection service, which is in the best performing quartile with regard to the number of missed bins^{48, 49} (10 per 100,000 collections in 2001/02)
- promoted a customer focussed environmental health service, awarded Citizens Charter status for the third time consecutively in April 2003⁷⁶.

106. In terms of promoting a **thriving local economy** throughout the District, key achievements to date are:

- Working with partners to develop and support a tourism industry that attracted over 3,500,000 day visitors and 400,000 staying visitors to the District in 2000, contributing some £135 million to the local economy and supporting over 3,000 local jobs¹⁷. Winchester has been cited in a recent United Nations Environment Programme study as an example of best practice in sustainable tourism⁸⁰.

Our Achievements

- Providing over 4,200 off-street public parking places, including an increasing number through ‘park & ride’, to serve Winchester and other larger towns and villages in the District. This quality assured⁸³ parking service was the first outside London to take responsibility for control of on-street parking.
- Providing early access to broadband for businesses in Alresford by bringing together suppliers and users through Winchester Broadband, a public/private sector partnership aimed at helping smaller towns and rural areas take advantage of this technology. The Council was a founder member of the partnership, which has evolved into *Broadband Wessex* – a company limited by guarantee⁷¹.

107. In its bid to **protect and improve the natural and built environment**, the Council has

- helped to sustain and create a quality of natural environment judged to be excellent or good by three quarters of local residents with very few rating it as ‘poor’ or ‘unacceptable’⁷⁸.

Case Study

Solar Car Challenge

To promote understanding and use of solar power from a young age, the City Council took a leading role in

organising the first Hampshire wide ‘Solar Car Challenge’ in 2002.

Schools were provided with a ‘solar’ car kit and challenged to develop the fastest sun powered car, qualifying for the grand final at Thruxton race track through a series of local heats. The event attracted good local media coverage and proved a hit with all involved⁶⁸.

- guided new building such that, in September 2000, over 67% of Citizens’ Panel members said they were very or fairly satisfied with the

character and design of buildings erected in the last five years⁷⁹

- achieved recycling rates in the best performing 25% of local authorities⁴⁹, with our local indicator showing 27% of domestic waste being recycled through City and County Council actions or home composting in 2002/03.

108. To encourage more **varied cultural and sporting activities** across the District, the Council has

- established a system of securing contributions from developers of new housing to fund the provision of additional public open space in areas shown to be deficient⁸¹. The Council works with Parish Councils to implement such schemes and some £1million has been spent since the scheme was introduced in 1997. Other Local Planning Authorities have used the scheme as a model.
- given continued support for the Theatre Royal, Winchester, in particular during its recent reconstruction, with capital grants totalling £175,000 between 2000 and 2002 and revenue grants of £200,000 in 2002/03 and 2003/04⁷²
- supported an ‘artist in residence’ to develop innovative public art and furniture in Whiteley, and the ‘Theatre in the Tent’ summer community project.

High levels of customer satisfaction

109. Over 78% of residents said they were satisfied with the Council in a survey in October 2000⁴⁸. This placed the Council in the best performing 25% of local authorities both when comparing results directly and when allowance is made for relative deprivation. ^{##}.

110. The Council also came in the top quartile for general public satisfaction with its waste collection service* (93% satisfied), recycling facilities* (79%), cleanliness of streets (79%)*, three aspects of the benefits service (staff in office – 90%; service in office – 88%; and access to service – 87%), and cultural and recreation services (62%). In the first three (marked *) the Council was also in the top quartile for exceeding the score

Our Achievements

predicted when weighting for deprivation is taken into account. For the remainder this information was not available.

111. Users tended to be more positive about services than non-users. The Council was placed in the best performing quartile by users of parks and open spaces (84%), museums and galleries (81%) and sports and leisure facilities (76%).

112. The Council only came within the poorest performing 25% of authorities with regard to one satisfaction indicator, that covering processing of planning applications. Further work has been undertaken in this area, as detailed below.

113. The Council has a strong record of carrying out its own market research to check customer satisfaction with services (see page 10). It has been less methodical in recording issues raised through complaints. It has recognised this weakness and is in the process of adopting a new complaints procedure⁸⁶ and a corporate approach to recording, reporting on and analysing complaints.

A drive for continuous improvement

114. The Council is not complacent about what it already achieves for the communities it serves. In many of the areas highlighted above, it is continuing to improve services to keep abreast of customer expectations, learn from good practice elsewhere and grasp new opportunities.

- As part of the European funded 'Visit' Project partnership, the Council has been at the forefront of developing a new destination management system for tourists that is now being supported by SEEDA and Tourism South East⁸⁴. This project saw the recent launch of the 'visit Winchester' website and the Council is now piloting on-line bookings and an interactive events guide.
- action has been taken to increase paper recycling and explore options

for green waste to raise recycling rates to meet Government targets⁸⁵;

- a number of key town centre car parks have been converted from 'pay and display' to 'pay on foot' in response to customer and business requests for a more flexible payment system.

115. There are some areas where the Council has failed to achieve the quality of service to which it aspires, or where its performance compares poorly with others or against targets.

- Performance in the benefits service fell due to the implementation of a new computer system and the loss of key staff in a difficult recruitment market. Building on a best value review of the service⁸⁹, the Council has addressed the problems and significant improvements have been achieved. In 2002/03, new claims were processed in 36 days (compared with 43 for 2001/02) and 75% of renewal claims were processed on time (compared with 66% in 2001/02). In early 2003/04 over 85% of renewal claims are being processed on time.

Case Study

Meadowside Centre, Whiteley

The Meadowside Centre in Whiteley was procured through planning gain from the new development. There was uncertainty about its future when it first opened, resulting in poor levels of use and a failure to meet financial targets. The Council recognised the problems that were occurring and prepared a revised business plan for the centre. New staff were appointed on permanent contracts and more effective marketing undertaken. As a result there is now a continuing growth in the numbers using the centre, with financial targets being met¹³⁴.

- In line with residents' views⁸⁸, the planning service had focussed on the quality rather than speed of decision making. In response to Government targets, it used a best value review⁹⁰ to identify opportunities to improve the speed of decision making. Substantial

Our Achievements

changes to the handling of planning application introduced good practice identified through benchmarking and from staff and public suggestions. The Council funded additional staff to meet the increasing workload while also improving the speed of the service. The Council's 2003 ODPM Planning Delivery Grant was in the national top ten, reflecting the improvement achieved in the service. Further improvement is still required, particularly with reation to 'minor' applications and this is now being addressed.

- The Council's speed in determining homeless applications has been in the poorest performing 25% of authorities. The Council has addressed this, with performance improving from 65% determined within 33 days in 2001/02 to 83% for the first quarter of 2003/04.
116. In other areas improvement is harder to achieve.
- Although the whole budget for affordable housing was committed in 2002/03, the number of units built was below the target due to higher than anticipated development costs. Recent changes in the Government approach to financial support for social housing has thrown future funding into doubt and created uncertainty about resources, particularly for small local schemes.
 - With a number of military bases in the area and a local prison, new homelessness legislation will require the Council to accept more applicants as homeless and vulnerable, at a time when pressure for housing remains very high. It is seeking to develop more supported housing to provide accommodation for some vulnerable groups in response to this, but this is meeting resistance from local residents.

Investing in the future

117. The Council is developing the District LSP and its own Performance Improvement Committees as key

building blocks to drive future improvement.

118. The authority is accredited as an Investor in People⁹, undertakes medium term financial planning⁵³, has sound asset management^{51, 52}, makes good use of partnership working⁸ and is making good progress with scrutiny and performance management. It continues to refine its best value reviews, from an early focus on services to a thematic approach in recent years. It has used external challenge to drive improvement, as shown on page 19 below and this is recognised by both staff¹⁰ and Members⁶⁶. The Council can show evidence of a wide range of procurement approaches and it has been involved in a number of quality initiatives^{9, 76, 83, 93, 94}.

119. The Council invests in its ICT systems⁵⁵ and is in the process of letting contracts for the provision of corporate Document Management and GIS systems. A recent review has shown the need for infrastructure improvements and a new switchboard. The Council has an ICT reserve and has made provision in the capital budget to fund such requirements.

120. With tight budgets, the Council is alert to opportunities to draw in external finance. It attracted private sector funding to upgrade the River Park Leisure Centre as part of the management contract and its commitment to improvement in benefits and planning has been recognised by additional Government grants to support these areas of work.

121. The Council is investing in a new post to specialise in drawing in external funding both to the Council and to community groups. This post will also ensure that best practice systems, to ensure that grants given by the authority are used to support the agreed priorities for the community, are operating effectively throughout the Council.

Planning for the Future

A self aware authority

122. The Council believes that it is self aware and the recent Peer Review¹⁶⁴ found the culture to be honest and open, qualities that support a self aware and learning approach. As demonstrated below, the Council has good links with the community that allow it to understand current concerns and areas for attention and reflect these in its future plans. It uses both informal and formal partnerships to gain views on areas for further development. It keeps abreast of the national agenda and reflects this in its work in a way that best meets local aspirations and needs, as demonstrated by the key priorities identified for action during 2003 – 2006 in its Corporate Strategy².

123. Because of the desire to check that internal perceptions of achievement and progress reflected the views of the community, the Council undertook regular reviews of residents' satisfaction with local services, starting in 1993. Independent market research surveys were carried out by MORI in 1993, 1995, 1997 and 2000⁹⁷ and were then replaced by the satisfaction surveys required for national performance indicators that were first collected in 2000⁴⁸ through the Council's Citizens' Panel (see page 10) and are due to be repeated in 2003.

124. This is only one strand of consultation, with other examples shown throughout this document. The Council recognises that it could get greater overall information from the consultation it carries out if this was better co-ordinated and results more widely disseminated. This is being addressed in work to develop a consultation strategy.

125. The Council also seeks and responds to external challenge on its own performance. It was an early participant in the Local Government Improvement Programme (LGIP), with

the initial review in November 1999, and follow up visits taking place in 2000 and 2001. A comparison of the original review report⁹⁸ and the final follow up report⁸ demonstrates the improvements made to points raised and the recent Peer Review¹⁶⁴ confirmed continued progress in response to issues raised.

126. Similarly, it has made use of external audit studies to gain an independent view on areas of importance, such as the review of the new Member decision making structures⁴². Where such studies have been undertaken the Council has made changes in response to the points raised⁴³.

127. The Council also makes selective use of independently audited quality systems. It has used the IIP process to check that its mechanisms for staff development are effective⁹ and has applied for beacon status on three occasions, one successful and the other two providing valuable feedback on areas for improvement¹²⁶. The Environmental Health Service has successfully applied for 'Citizens' Charter' status on three consecutive occasions and the Council's traffic and transport services are accredited under ISO9000.

128. The Council's developing system for performance management, described elsewhere in this document, has strengthened internal processes that lead to self awareness. The improvements achieved in turn round times on benefits, planning applications and homelessness applications, referred to in the section above, have all been possible because the Council has recognised its weaknesses, analysed their causes and taken action to address these.

129. The Council's appraisal system³⁴ ensures that awareness of strengths and weaknesses extends to the individual level, with discussions on skills and training designed to allow all staff to develop and thereby enable the authority continuously to improve its performance. There are opportunities for staff and

Planning for the Future

Members to receive feedback on the progress that the authority is making through a variety of briefing notes and talks.

A learning Council

130. The Council has a positive attitude towards learning throughout all levels of the organisation, as evidenced by its liP accreditation.

131. Officers are fully engaged in networks with colleagues from neighbouring authorities and beyond to learn from and build on their experience, drawing on these links to help in the development of services⁹⁸. The Council also encourages staff to get involved in external professional and local government organisations. Officers and leading Members regularly attend county, regional and national events to keep abreast of developments both generally and in their professional areas.

132. The Council seeks out examples of good practice as part of processes to develop services.

- A visit was made to an Area Committee operating in East Hampshire District Council in background to work that led to the establishment of the Winchester Town Forum⁹⁹.
- A Member working group set up by the Council's Principal Scrutiny Committee met with the Performance Manager at Hampshire County Council to learn about the approach to business planning being developed by that 'excellent' authority. As a result firm proposals are being developed to further strengthen the City Council's business planning process.
- Best Value Reviews draw on good practice in other authorities. For example, the Council has been in close touch with Eastleigh Borough Council, a local Beacon, to support its 'People and Work' review.
- The Council's new complaints procedure⁸⁶ draws on good practice

guidance produced by the Local Government Ombudsman.

- Council members and officers researched practice in other authorities before introducing public speaking to the Planning Development Control Committee. It has kept the practice under review and made subsequent changes to balance public engagement in the planning process with the efficiency of the Committee and equality of representation.

133. In return, the Council recognises the role it can play in passing on its experience and good practice to others. It is recognised as a leader in decriminalised car parking, having been the first authority outside London to take responsibility for control of on-street parking. It acts as a reference site in this respect. It is also a national leader in the creation of a National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). The Council has updated its own local land and property records to comply with BS7666, and has assisted the IDeA and others in promoting the NLPG by presenting the benefits to other Local Authorities. At a local level, it provides training for Parish Councils to help improve understanding of the Planning system.

134. Within the authority there are opportunities for sharing learning. The Management Forum draws together some 40 senior managers about four times each year to look at cross cutting issues such as customer care¹⁰², equalities and diversity¹⁰³ and developments in electronic governance¹⁰⁴. Seminars are also arranged by departments to share learning in particular areas. Recent examples have addressed customer relationship management¹⁰⁵ and Planning Policy Guidance on building density (PPG3)¹⁰⁶.

135. Both staff¹⁰ and Members⁶⁶ identified scope to improve the degree to which the Council shares learning and this is being picked up in the work to develop a corporate internal communications strategy.

Planning for the Future

136. The process of learning is ongoing, with the Council building on its own experience, for example by developing stronger plans to respond to floods^{127, 128}, following the very wet winter in 2001/02.

137. It also seeks to learn from its mistakes. Recent community anger at the way proposals to build specialist supported housing units on two Council estates were communicated has led to a review of the process by the Principal Scrutiny Committee to identify lessons for the future^{##}.

Planning for the Future

138. The Council works within a structured framework of planning, monitoring and performance review as outlined in the section looking at 'Delivering our Priorities'. In addition to the documents identified in that section, it also produces a range of strategies and plans setting out its ambition and future proposals in key service areas.

Case Study

Planning for a New Community

The Council is working with partners to prepare a master plan for a Major Development Area on the south eastern edge of the District that will be an urban extension to Waterlooville, in Havant Borough. The Council has established a Member level forum with Havant Borough and Hampshire County Councils to guide progress¹²⁹.

The Forum is served by a project officer employed by this City Council, but with costs shared by the developers and Havant BC. The master plan will establish the most sustainable way of developing the area, consistent with the need to address local concerns about infrastructure and traffic, and to bring forward development in time to meet Regional Planning Guidance requirement. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has selected the project as a national case study, allowing it to draw in additional external support.

A Strong Local Plan

139. The most significant plan produced by the authority is the **Winchester District Local Plan**²⁴. As well as being the key document setting out the Council's policies for protecting and improving the natural and built environment, it recognises that land use policies can help deliver other corporate priorities. Policies within the Local Plan are used to encourage a thriving local economy^{##}, increase the supply of affordable homes^{##} and provide new recreation space within communities⁸¹. The current review, which has now reached its second deposit stage, has a strong focus on sustainable development, efficient use of land, and providing a high quality built environment.

140. The Local Plan is built on strong community engagement and consultation¹¹³. Prior to the review of the Local Plan, the Council spent over a year working with people in the Winchester town area on establishing what the aspirations for the town should be, looking up to 30 years ahead (the 'Future of Winchester'¹¹ study). The results of the study informed the initial stages of the Local Plan Review, which started in 2001.

141. This began with a questionnaire sent to every household in the District seeking suggestions on the broad principles for the review. In the light of the response, initial proposals were prepared, with soundings taken from a professional officer group drawn from across Council departments, the County Council and other interested agencies. An exhibition of the first draft plan toured a number of different villages, drawing a large response. A further exhibition covering the revised proposals was held in May and June 2003.

142. Community involvement in land use planning goes beyond just the Local Plan preparation. To support its Local Plan, the Council encourages local communities to produce **Village Design Statements** (VDSs) that can be adopted as supplementary planning guidance. To date 15 VDSs have been adopted, with a further four in preparation and three communities showing an interest in undertaking them.

Planning for the Future

143. The Local Plan has a strong evidence base. For example, the authority has produced a **Landscape Character Assessment**¹¹² of the whole District in partnership with the County Council. This has followed best practice promoted by the Government and the Countryside Agency, with the findings incorporated in the relevant policies of the Review Local Plan.

A Network of Service and Internal Strategies

144. The same principles of a strong evidence base, coupled with community and partner involvement, also underpin production of other key Council strategies¹³⁰.

145. The Council's **Housing Strategy**²¹ responds to the **Housing Needs Assessment**¹³, and draws on the **Urban Capacity Study**¹³⁵. It looks at housing needs in the District and sets the framework for addressing these, supported by the **HRA Business Plan**⁷⁵ and **Supporting People Strategy**¹¹¹.

146. The **Cultural Strategy**⁷ sets out the Council's plans to encourage more varied cultural and sporting activities for all across the District and sets the framework for its **Tourism Strategy**¹⁸, which is being updated at present.

147. The **Waste Strategy**¹¹⁴ underpins the Council's work, within the Project Integra partnership, to minimise, reuse and recycle domestic waste..

148. A **Social Inclusion Strategy**¹⁰⁹ is also in preparation, which should be agreed in the autumn of 2003.

149. The Council also seeks to contribute positively to plans and strategies produced by partners. In addition to the **Community Safety Strategy**¹⁶ that is shared with the Police and County Council, it provides input to the **Health Improvement Plan**¹⁰⁸ produced by Mid Hampshire Primary Care Trust and the County Council's **Local Transport Plan**¹¹⁵.

150. In addition to its plans for the community, the Council produces a number of plans and strategies that help direct the work of the authority. Key amongst these are its **constitution**¹¹⁸, **financial strategy**¹¹⁹, **capital strategy**⁵⁰, **asset management strategy**⁵¹, **people strategy**⁴⁷, and **training plan**¹²⁰. It is currently reviewing its **communications strategy**¹²¹ and developing a new **consultation strategy**. It has recently produced a **'Work Travel Plan'**¹²² that seeks to reduce the impact on the environment of commuting and travel during work undertaken by Council staff.

151. The Council has not produced a separate 'LA21 Strategy', preferring to embed the principles of sustainability into all its other documents. The emerging community strategy¹ is based on the themes of sustainability and the Council's Corporate Strategy² sets out aims for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the District.

Developing the Process

152. The Council recognises that, while it has a good range of interrelated plans and strategies in place, it may gain added value by taking a more strategic approach to ensure that the right plans are being produced.

153. To start this process it is mapping existing plan coverage but recognises that it will take time to achieve a position where there is an established community strategy, with relevant supporting documentation working towards the aims identified therein.

154. The Council recognises that existing plans vary in the degree to which they contain clear, measurable targets for improvement, reflected in business plans and monitored on regular basis. The Peer Review also drew attention to the need to ensure that it has the corporate capacity to deliver against the full range of plans. These issues are being addressed as part of the continuing development of the performance management system.

How well does the Council contribute to the management of the physical environment?

Inspection Focus:

Does the Council secure a high quality environment through new build and maintenance work?

The Council has set out in its Corporate Strategy¹ that it will seek to achieve a high quality physical environment for all residents and actively engage them in the choices and decisions which that requires. This has been informed by detailed research into the views of residents, most recently through questions posed to the Citizen's Panel¹³⁶ and through major consultation exercises¹³⁷. A Best Value review is being undertaken to test ways to improve our work in this area. Residents support the values of 'sustainability' but translating national priorities into local action can be testing. The Council has clearly articulated its position on difficult issues such as the implementation of PPG3 through briefings to Members and parish councils. Major strategic documents such as the emerging Local Plan²⁴ (now nearing Public Enquiry stage) and the Community Strategy being developed with the Local Strategic Partnership embody principles of sustainability and direct policy towards achieving a high quality environment. To put its policies into practice the Council has:

- adopted a cross-cutting 'Charter for the Environment'¹³⁸ which sets out its key objectives in relation to sustainability issues and is supported by the employment of a Sustainability Officer to lead policy and practical projects. This will be superseded by the Community Strategy, which will incorporate sustainability as a cross-cutting aim of local partners.
- an emerging Local Plan which has been subject to a sustainability assessment and which will be in conformity with the County Structure Plan despite the difficulties this has caused. We have also formally adopted a contaminated land strategy¹¹⁶.
- a successful record of using Section 106 agreements to secure community benefits in accordance with national guidance which is cited as good practice by in national guidance, in particular through the Open Space Fund. We have promoted the preparation of village design statements by communities which are now being adopted as supplementary planning guidance
- a development control service which has improved its performance indicator score for processing planning applications in all categories¹³⁹
- produced a major development area in Whiteley which has very high levels of satisfaction from its new residents as shown in a recent County Council survey¹⁴⁰
- is working on a new major development area in active co-operation with partner local authorities, regional agencies and in extensive consultation with neighbouring communities – this includes proposals to incorporate an large scale sustainable drainage scheme promoted by the Environment Agency
- won an RIBA award for its one of its own building projects¹⁴¹
- almost all income generated from off-street car parking is recycled into improvements in the quality and maintenance of car parking provision, a recent example being a major partnership project with a community group to improve car parking and to create a new landscaped garden at the River Park Leisure Centre.
- begun a major programme of improvements to play areas, introduced public art to new areas and taken a positive attitude to making active use of public spaces
- consulted residents and businesses on the development of tourism which is crucial to the local economy but which brings pressure to the environment¹⁴²
- developed Environmental Health Services that deal with nuisance through a variety of approaches including mediation, a 'hit squad service' for litter and fly-tipping and a partnership approach to air quality issues. The service has achieved (and been reawarded) a Charter Mark.
- developed a major partnership with Serco, our private sector maintenance services provider, which ensures that Serco staff and the Council's role in maintenance are clearly visible to service users.

- taken an active approach to the Disability Discrimination Act with a lead officer identified to lead on physical adaptations to Council property and equality of access to services embodied in corporate and departmental plans. Begun a series of access audits to facilities.

We are aware of areas in which we can improve. Although we are clear about our priorities internally we know that we could do more to communicate these to the people we work with. We also believe that we could do more to make contacting the Council easier and take more steps to encourage people to report problems at an early stage. We are looking at this through our customer care group. The best value review has also identified the desirability of more work on countryside and biodiversity issues that have not been a high priority to date.

Does the Council help keep the locality clean?

Inspection Focus:

Does the Council deal effectively with household and other waste?

How effectively is the Council cleaning streets and other public places?

The Council recognises the key role it plays in ensuring a high quality environment in both urban and rural areas. It understands that the way in which it deals with issues relating to waste, litter, street-cleaning and general maintenance contributes to the social and economic success of the District as well as helping to meet important national targets. The Council works strategically and at a local level to help ensure that it meets its obligations in this area.

- The Council is a full member of Project Integra, the partnership of local authorities set up to provide an integrated waste management service for household waste in Hampshire. The volume of waste generated per household is, on average, rising across the country and Winchester follows that trend. The Council has begun to address this issue and the need to make faster progress against its recycling targets. Fortnightly kerbside recycling is already available throughout the District and the Council is developing proposals for a new approach to waste collection and recycling.
- There are 61 recycling sites of various descriptions around the District. Improvements are being made to household waste recycling centres in the District to improve recycling and composting options.
- We believe that the quality of parks, play areas, car parks and other public spaces managed by the Council is good and is perceived as good by the public, as evidenced by public satisfaction research.¹⁴³
- A 'hit squad' team operates to deal with fly-tipping and to clear up other areas which become littered. Ward councillors and parish councils are active in reporting problems and ensuring that they are dealt with effectively. Community volunteers such as the 'Winchester Litter Pickers' are encouraged and supported. The Council's web-site carries details of departmental responsibilities, direct line telephone numbers and emergency services.
- The Council is now developing an Air Quality Management Strategy for part of central Winchester in response to air quality reviews based on results from two permanent monitoring stations.
- The emerging Local Plan embodies the principles of sustainable development and reflects the importance of 'planning' for an District which is well maintained and as free as possible from problems such as noise, inconsiderate parking, or lack of open space.
- The Council has an active 'in-house' programme of waste minimisation, recycling and reduction in energy consumption, including Energy Action Audits of all its principle buildings. The replacement of major plant at the River Park Leisure Centre is being planned with reductions in energy consumption and CO2 emissions a prime consideration.

The Council recognises that it has considerably more work to do in consulting its residents and publicising the changes which are required in waste collection, recycling and minimisation services. It is also possible for us to do more to make the reporting of incidents and complaints easier. For example, our grounds maintenance service will be preparing new information for the public on the service levels they can expect.

Does the Council work with partners to improve community safety?

Inspection Focus:

Does the Council provide an effective contribution to the local crime and disorder reduction partnership?

Has the Council (in partnership) been able to secure impact on outcomes as a result of the local community safety work?

The Council has worked closely with the police and other partners to audit community safety issues and to ensure that it is aware of other community issues which relate to the cohesiveness of the community. Over the course of the 1998 – 2001 Community Safety Strategy the rate of domestic burglary fell by 10%¹⁴⁴, but drug related crime rose slightly. Overall Winchester District has lower than average levels of crime against people and property and some parts of the District have very low reported crime figures indeed. However the fear of being a victim of crime remains high, particularly in relation to burglary in rural areas and fear of violent crime in and around the city centre. Concern about young people with ‘nothing to do’ getting into trouble is a common thread across the District. The Council’s approach to community safety issues is proportionate and evidence based. It has provided resources and taken action where this is justified. It seeks to make best use of all the resources available but ensures that the level and nature of expenditure is proportionate the issues.

The Council has:

- published its 2002 – 2005 Community Safety Strategy¹⁶ in partnership with the County Council and Hampshire Constabulary which identifies key issues and mechanisms for dealing with them, and clear targets – such as reducing the number of thefts from vehicles in the city centre by 5%.
- established formal ‘cross-reporting’ mechanisms between community safety work and the work of drug and alcohol misuse services, including those in the voluntary sector. Used community safety funding in partnership, for example to support the monthly non-alcohol SNAPs disco for young people at the River Park Leisure Centre
- formed positive relationships with key owners of property, such as Winchester Cathedral, to address specific crime and disorder issues associated with particular public areas
- developed and implemented a Winchester Pubwatch scheme
- agreed a protocol for the involvement of the police in relevant licensing applications and in the management of major local events, such as the Homelands festival and the Winchester Hat Fair
- installed a comprehensive CCTV system with over 70 cameras covering the city centre and its car parks linked to a 24 hour control room. Park and Ride car parks and The Brooks town centre car park have won secure car park awards
- created a Community Relations Officer post within the housing service to work on resolving crime and nuisance issues
- worked with city centre traders to develop a diverted giving scheme to discourage begging.
- promoted Neighbourhood Watch schemes particularly in rural areas
- supported the provision of a new women’s refuge to provide accommodation for female victims of domestic violence through the Domestic Violence Forum
- all departmental management teams have been briefed on the Council’s section 17 responsibilities by the Community Safety Officer and
- supported safety campaigns aimed at discouraging dangerous and anti-social activities amongst children
- provided financial support for projects to provide safe places for young people to meet and to participate in recreational activities such as the wheeled-sports facilities at River Park Leisure Centre and grant aid provided to parish council schemes.
- worked closely with licensed premises and placed specific crime reduction requirements on those where this is justified

The Council and its partners intend to remain vigilant in relation to community safety issues and to tackle specific ‘hot-spots’ and ‘hot-topics’ as and when they arise.

Does the Council contribute to activities to positively engage children and young people?

Inspection Focus:

Does the Council have a clear idea about the needs of children and young people?

What is the Council doing to secure a range of activities for young people and encourage their positive engagement?

The Council recognises the importance of creating a social and economic environment in which young people have opportunities to fulfil their potential and to use their free time in a way which suits them without being destructive to the peace of others. Citizen's panel research and research for the Cultural and Community Safety Strategies has identified this as a high priority issue across the District.¹⁴⁵ The Council sees young people as an integrated part of the community and the Community Strategy will incorporate aims and objectives relevant to young people. A separate 'youth strategy' has not been prepared because the Community Strategy should be able to fully address the range of relevant issues. In addressing its responsibilities to young people:

- the Council's Cultural Strategy⁷ identifies better leisure and cultural provision for young people as a particular priority. As a first step this is being reflected in funding being set aside for new outdoor facilities in Winchester and in Whiteley (where we are working with Fareham Borough Council).
- the Winchester Town Forum (consisting of the 18 elected members representing Winchester town wards) recently surveyed school children at the three state secondary schools on a range of issues generating over 2,500 replies. The information received was fed into a public session on youth issues which has been considered by Cabinet. As a direct result work has begun to establish a new website, run for and by young people, about issues and activities in the District.
- we are an active member of the Winchester Young Person's Agency Group which brings together statutory and voluntary agencies which work with young people, including the County Youth Service, YMCA, Connexions and our council of voluntary service
- we financially support a large number of organisations working with young people in urban and rural areas through our annual revenue grants programme¹⁴⁶
- the Council's emerging Social Inclusion Strategy will highlight the importance of measures to ensure a good start in life for children and young people
- giving real decision making to young people through consultation on facility projects; for example very well 'Highcliffe Goes to the Polls' exercise in June 2003 which used a mock election to give young people the chance to choose between playground schemes
- the Council has actively supported the development of new Children's Fund projects at seven locations across the District
- the Council runs a Rural Youth Theatre Network which gives young people in rural areas opportunities to create and perform their own work
- young people have been consulted specifically about the content of the proposed city centre development through the attendance of local councillors with publicity material at a regular young people's disco held at the River Park Leisure Centre
- the council has adopted Child Protection measures for its own staff and volunteers and has actively promoted child protection awareness to sports and arts organisations with which it works.

Co-ordination of the many services being aimed at young people is difficult, especially in rural areas where they are small in scale and fragmented. The role of the County Council's Youth Service, which receives funding to provide services specifically for young people, is extremely important and we are continually working to improve our partnership working with them. More formal mechanisms for consultation, such as a youth council, are under active consideration but may not appeal to young people from all backgrounds and are not seen as an alternative to direct consultation on individual issues.

Decent Homes Standard Diagnostic

How well does the council know the condition of their housing stock and their compliance with the decent homes standard? What is the council trying to achieve in relation to the standard?

<p>What is the council trying to achieve in relation to the standard?</p>	<p>Background - The City Council is committed to providing a high quality Landlord service which maintains all Housing stock to a decent standard, meets the expectations of tenants and achieves a top 25% performance when compared with other local authority landlords nationally. Achieving the DHS by 2010 is clearly stated in the Council's Key Strategic Priorities².</p> <p>History - The Council carried out a Stock Condition Survey in 1988 and embarked on a major repairs programme that commenced in 1990 and has been on-going since¹⁴⁷. The objectives of this Repairs plan had similar goals to that of the DHS, e.g. "to make homes wind and weather tight, warm with modern facilities". It is anticipated that the Capital enhancement works carried out since 1990 will significantly contribute towards meeting the DHS by 2010.</p> <p>Updating Stock Condition Information - The Council has commissioned a Stock Condition Survey¹⁵ to be carried by surveying consultants David Adamson & Partners in 2003. The survey will be based on a 30% stock sample and the Survey information will be "robust" and "validated" to ensure accuracy. It will establish the Council's position with respect to Decent Homes, The Housing, Health & Safety Rating System and the Disabled Discrimination Act (DDA) (where applicable). Following the survey the Council and its tenants will be in a position to determine what can be achieved in relation to the Decent Homes standard by 2010. Early indications from a high level overview undertaken at the outset of the Stock Condition Survey suggests that the condition is generally in line with the Council's expectations. An Asbestos Survey is currently being out to further advise the Council's Asbestos Management plan.</p> <p>The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan⁷⁵ - The Council's HRA Business Plan has been drafted in conjunction with the Tenant's Rents and Business Planning Forum and provides a clear action plan for service delivery and long term financial projections. The provision of a £6m repairs programme is a key priority in the Plan. GOSE have assessed the Plans approach to "Strategic Context" and "Effective Consultation" as "Fit for Purpose" although 8 further factors require development to achieve the "Fit for Purpose" standard¹⁴⁸, including having a clear strategy for achieving the DHS and completing a comprehensive appraisal of housing options. The Plan achieved an overall score of 20 out of 30.</p> <p>Stakeholder Involvement¹⁴⁹ - Views have been sought through direct involvement of Property and Contracts Forum, Rents and Business Planning Forum, TACT, and surveys of all tenants on their priorities. A further opinion survey will be completed as part of Stock Condition Survey.</p>
	<p>Community Leadership</p> <p>DDA Compliance - The Council has a proactive and well resourced Aids & Adaptations service and has close links with Social Services (joint funded OT) and is carrying out a survey of its sheltered properties (common parts) to ensure its compliance with DDA.</p> <p>Energy efficiency – A comprehensive work programme has been substantially completed in recent years (windows, heating, insulation etc) resulting in excellent National Home Energy Rating (top 25% nationally)¹⁵⁰. Also, all tenancies have had the opportunity of central heating installation, complete with "insulation package" and affordable warmth design criteria.</p> <p>Sustainability - The Council has regard to sustainability in the specification of materials used for works, although Corporate LA21/Sustainability strategies are out of date and subject to review by the High Quality Environment Best Value Panel¹⁵¹</p> <p>Equal Opportunities – The Council's BME Strategy for Housing¹⁵² now approved and a Focus Group is being established to concentrate on steps to work with hard to reach groups.</p>

Decent Homes Standard Diagnostic

	<p>Environmental Improvements – A programme of work on estates will commence in 2003 with £75k resource already identified. A Community Planning exercise has been completed on two estates identifying needs¹⁵³.</p>
<p>What base information is available to understand what needs to be done to meet the DHS?</p>	<p>Property Information - To date since the commencement of the major repairs plan in 1990 an annual update of elemental improvements against that identified by the Condition Survey has been reported to elected Members¹⁴⁷. Further, this information has been utilised year on year to inform the maintenance and property enhancement planning process, and subsequent year's programmes. Base information is available to analyse levels of reactive and cyclic repairs that count towards meeting the D.H.S.</p> <p>Future Demand for Housing - Housing Needs Survey completed in 2002⁵⁰. Demand for family homes is very high. Some low demand for sheltered accommodation resulting in small amount of long-term voids. Currently reviewing future of sheltered stock and potential for alternative use of void flats. In isolated cases demolition has taken place of low demand sheltered accommodation followed by "appropriate" redevelopment to maximise site potential.</p> <p>The Decent Homes Standard - The stock survey will build on existing data and provide all necessary base information for achieving DHS. Information collected will be in elemental form (when installed or replaced) with corresponding life expectancy. It will be uploaded onto the Council's IT Integrated Housing Management system. Also, an additional Asset Management module will be procured for future interrogation and updating. It is proposed that when the stock survey is completed, property that is decent, non-decent or potentially non-decent will be readily identified via its Asset Management system linked to its integrated Housing Management IT system.</p>
<p>What strategies does the council have to help them meet the DHS and are these robust?</p>	<p>Whilst DHS plans are still at an early stage, the commitment to maintaining stock in a key principle of HRA Plan. A number of strategies are in place that contribute to meeting the standard. The Housing Strategy²¹ and HRA Plan link very closely to the Council's Capital Strategy⁵⁰ and Asset Management Plan (AMP)⁵¹ (both of which have been assessed as good by the Govt office). AMP concentrates on non-Housing assets but principles are the same. Capital Strategy very closely linked with Housing with clear sections on HRA resources and the Housing Strategy generally. In addition to these strategies and those referred to above, further relevant strategies include:</p> <p>Procurement Strategy¹⁵⁴ – The Corporate Procurement Strategy needs developing to address issues such as partnering and contract management. In the housing context term contracting and project partnering contract approaches are being utilised to procure works, including awarding contracts on price/quality basis and involving tenants. Further work is planned to maximise project-partnering principles as recognised in the Best Value Review.</p> <p>Maintenance and Enhancement Strategy¹⁴⁷ - This has been developed through full tenant consultation regarding 10 years Term maintenance Contract for Responsive and Void works that commenced in 2000, utilising "shared" IT contract management systems. A similar approach to the letting of a 5 year Term Maintenance Contract for Gas and Solid Fuel Heating Appliance Service Contract, utilising "shared" IT contract management systems.</p>
<p>How do the council develop their strategies?</p>	<p>All housing related strategies are developed in close liaison with tenant representatives. The Corporate Capital Assets Group are responsible for ensuring the co-ordination of the Housing Strategy, HRA Business Plan, Capital Strategy and AMP. Also, all strategies are approved by Council's Corporate Management Team and Cabinet who have responsibilities for ensuring that they work towards the overall strategic aims of the Council. A tenant representative attends all Cabinet meetings and TACT comments are included in all Housing committee reports.</p>

Decent Homes Standard Diagnostic

What is the council doing to deliver its plans and meet the decent homes standard?	
What action is being taken to maximise the council's financial capacity to deliver the DHS	<p>Resources – The Council has agreed resources of £6m to fund the Housing Repairs and Maintenance¹⁵³. This is met by Major Repairs Allowance (£3m) and HRA revenue (£3m). The Council's overall Capital Programme is reviewed and monitored by the Corporate Capital Assets Group in accordance with the Capital Strategy which takes full account of Housing requirements. Future programmes will be dependent on the results of the Stock Condition survey expected in August 2003. A risk assessment will be carried out following the results of the Stock Condition Survey, having regard to gap analysis and potential funding (e.g. revenue and MRA).</p> <p>The HRA Business Plan includes long-term financial projections which indicate the overall sustainability of the Landlord service. The Plan also includes a detailed sensitivity analysis to identify the key pressures on the HRA.</p> <p>Service charges have been reviewed in detail and limited de-pooling has been agreed with effect from April 2003¹⁵⁵. The Housing Service has been subject to Best Value Review. This review included a detailed review of overheads and management costs. Also, interrogation of repair costs and most frequently used trade codes are undertaken regularly to inform areas of future capital investment.</p>
	<p>Asset Management - The Council utilises Orchard as its integrated housing management software system. It is currently carrying out a feasibility exercise to ascertain the most appropriate asset management software tool to link with this system. As part of the Stock Condition survey, David Adamson & Partners will advise on the Council's position relative to the D.H.S., and produce an asset management plan to achieve the standard by 2010 and a 30-year investment needs plan for HRA Business planning purposes.</p> <p>The Council has a nucleus of staff to manage data and procure works. An appraisal of resources required will be carried out following the results of the 2003 Stock Condition Survey. It is anticipated that works will be procured via partnering based term contracts utilising contractors and consultants as necessary. (As identified in BV review).</p> <p>Training – an in-house course on partnering was conducted by Trowers and Hamlins, who have also acted as a Partnering Advisor on a "flagship" project.</p>
	<p>Partnerships - Depending on the outcome of the Stock Condition Survey and balance of programme objectives, an appropriate procurement regime will be implemented from April 2004.</p> <p>The Council has recently completed a redevelopment of a sheltered scheme in partnership with Eastleigh Housing Association, which has "added" 12 bungalows to the Council's lettings asset base.</p>
How have work programmes been prepared and have these been delivered.	<p>Through Tenant forums such as Property and Contracts Forum, Rents and Business Planning forum etc and through main TACT Group.</p> <p>A ten year + programme was set out in 1990 and has been subjected to annual review. Programmes are detailed for one year but 30-year projections have been completed. The planned maintenance programme carries out works to vacant properties having regard to relet times and restoring the property to a reasonable condition. It also carries out related works together e.g. central heating installation and insulation and achieves linkages between cyclical maintenance works and capital replacement e.g. boiler replacement. The programme links and incorporates other related works programmes e.g. disabled and elderly persons adaptations.</p>
How does the council ensure that it is making	<p>Best Value – The Best Value review of Housing was completed in 2002/03 and a comprehensive 5 year Improvement Plan¹⁵⁶ has been agreed. Progress will be monitored through the Council's Housing Performance Improvement Committee (PIC). The review included detailed benchmarking against top performing authorities¹⁵⁷.</p> <p>The Council monitors progress against key best value and local performance indicators through the Housing PIC and has a clear objective</p>

Decent Homes Standard Diagnostic

<p>the best use of its resources</p> <p>What has the council achieved in service delivery</p>	<p>to achieve top 25% performance where possible.</p> <p>Targets set as part of HRA Plan and then fed to staff through Appraisal process</p> <p>All Out-turn information¹⁵⁸ is reported through Housing PIC and Cabinet. Such information includes Budget out-turn against prediction, Works completed against prediction, Works completed to programme and also Satisfaction of residents with the works undertaken</p>
<p>Has the council evaluated a range of options which would enable it to achieve its aims</p>	<p>Options Appraisal</p> <p>The Council has yet to undertake a full appraisal of current options for the management of landlord services. A detailed Options Appraisal exercise is planned for 2003/04 and £50k resources have been identified to support the project¹⁵³. This will include the procurement of an Independent tenants advisor to work with and inform tenants of all options. The whole project will be managed jointly with tenant representatives to ensure that tenants views are taken into account.</p>

How does the council monitor its progress and how does this feed into future strategies and plans?

<p>How does the council monitor its progress towards meeting the standard</p>	<p>Following the 2003 Stock Condition Survey, it is anticipated that by interrogation of stock data the Council will be able to identify over time which properties are decent and those becoming non-decent. Elemental enhancement programmes to achieve DHS will need to be identified and structured accordingly.</p> <p>In addition to reporting progress to the Housing PIC, an Annual report is prepared for all tenants including information on the repairs programme, how the money has been spent and what has been achieved in the year¹⁵⁹.</p>
<p>How does the council learn from itself and from others?</p>	<p>The Council is a member of the Housing Quality Network and regularly takes part in benchmarking exercises with a group of landlords in the Southern region¹⁵⁷. It is also a member of the CIPFA Rents Benchmarking club.</p> <p>The Performance monitoring systems compare against targets, previous performance and top 25% where information exists. All maintenance and capital programme works have been subject to continuous comments from tenants since 1993. A specific tenants forum, the Property and Contracts Forum established in 1999. Meets bi-monthly and involves Tenants, Contractors and Officers.</p> <p>The Council is liP accredited and committed to supporting professional development. CPD and update training for all staff is well resourced¹⁶⁰.</p>

Balance Housing Market Diagnostic

1. Understanding the Housing Market

1.1 Does the Council have the right research base to understand its housing market?

Housing Needs Information

The Council uses three main sources of information to determine housing needs:

- Joint Housing Register with 1300 annual enquiries and 1600 home visits to assess housing need
- Parish Surveys
- 2002 Housing Needs Survey (HNS) jointly commissioned captures local and sub regional housing market data

The information used to inform policies is updated regularly:

- Joint Housing Register updated annually - 450 new affordable tenancies created add to met needs data.
- Property prices under constant review with prices high even for South East. Access to home ownership beyond reach of around 86% of concealed households. Incomes and house prices monitored regularly through Land Registry, County Council & Halifax Index.
- Private Rented Sector is expensive and makes only a limited contribution to access to affordable housing.
- As a result Winchester's "Key Workers" scheme extends to all categories of employee and specific research isn't necessary.

Stock Condition

- Private Sector House Condition and Energy Efficiency Survey undertaken in 2001 by specialist consultant
- Data will be up dated - based on renewal activity outcomes from housing enforcement, home improvement grant completions and HECA activities.
- Council has limited knowledge of RSL partners stock
- Council has empty property strategy but to share information with Council Tax to make this comprehensive.

Sub-Regional Housing Markets

HNS commissioned across 3 LA boundaries to produce a sub-regional analysis.
Gives accurate picture of local labour mobility and effects on local housing market.

Supported Housing

- Supporting People exercise identified and prioritised a number of supported housing projects for future development.
- 5 new supported housing schemes included in the Housing Strategy.
- All supported housing requires endorsement by local supported housing panel and Winchester Housing Needs Forum.
- A gap in local provision is availability of accommodation and support for continuing drinkers.

1.2 How well does the Council develop & evolve its strategies and plans?

Stakeholder Consultation

- Local Plan Review started with an 'Issues' consultation exercise questionnaire to all households in District and various workshops to enable key planning/housing issues to be explored.
- West of Waterlooville MDA is largest housing development proposal in District and has used 'planning for real' workshops
- A range of approaches used to engage partners, stakeholders and residents in Housing Strategy Process.
- Consults Housing Needs Forum to establish priorities in Supported Housing, Private Landlords Forum for lead in private sector housing and Tact, Council tenants forum.
- Draft Housing Strategy distributed to an extensive list of stakeholders and citizens panel and responses used in finalising report. Draft also sent to local authority neighbours consulted on sub regional issues where they exist.

Links to regional and national priorities

- Key Local Priorities correspond with and make a significant contribution to tackling the National and more particularly South East Key Regional housing priorities as detailed in their Housing Statement 2002-05.
- The regional issue which authority has only a limited impact on is that of regeneration. Employment levels are high and depressed areas do not exist to same scale as major cities in the Region.
- Local Plan Review heavily influenced by Government policy on achieving sustainable development and making the best use of previously developed land.

Mechanisms to help balance housing markets

Various methods used to prioritise options for investment to balance markets:

- Private & Public sector Housing Stock Condition Surveys
- Levels of Home Energy Conservation

Balance Housing Market Diagnostic

Evaluation of options takes place by Cabinet. For example, arising from Private Sector Stock Condition Survey Members decided to approve additional revenue and capital resources to meet demands for additional Disabled Facilities Grant activity and to work on licensing and enforcement work in relation to Houses in Multi Occupation.

1.3 Right Strategies & PlansAll Strategies & Plans

- Council's highest priority is provision of affordable housing
- This is supported by housing needs survey and public consultation and reflected in Local Plan (LP) review
- Corporate working at officer and Member level to ensure that all policies are consistent with highest priority
- LP reflects key Government priorities for housing and planning.
- LP seeks to meet strategic housing requirements and ensure that major areas of development are examples of high quality sustainable urban extensions.
- LP Review seeking to apply lower affordable housing thresholds than those advised in Circular 6/98 to meet severe affordable housing needs in area, as demonstrated in housing need surveys.

Local Plan

- 1998 Local Plan being replaced by Winchester DLP Review (deposit published October 2001, Revised Deposit May 2003).
- Adopted Plan met Structure Plan housing land requirements to 2001
- LP Review makes provision to meet Structure Plan Review housing requirements to 2011. Includes planning for development of MDA West of Waterlooville and a 'reserve' MDA at Winchester City (North).
- Remaining housing requirements met by 'urban capacity' sites.
- Policies on affordable housing in LP review modified to seek increased provision to meet needs identified by studies.
- Achieving a Better Housing Mix' SPG adopted to influence size and type of market & affordable housing being developed
- Seeks minimum of 50% of units as 2 bedrooms or less, in order to address imbalances in housing market.
- LP Review includes 'exceptions' site policy, modified from equivalent policy in adopted Plan - now more positive.

Housing Strategy Statement

- Housing Strategy reflects Council's knowledge of Housing Market
- Describes what Council is doing in addressing priorities for intervention.
- Housing Strategy doesn't include SMART action plan, however covered in Health and Housing Department's General Fund annual Business Plan.
- Housing Strategy addresses needs of rural population by Promotion of Sustainable Rural Communities.
- Council has enabled through partnership with Countryside Agency, six neighbouring authorities and Housing Corporation identification of Parishes where additional housing will help sustain local community.

Private Sector Housing Strategy

- Revised Strategy will be formally adopted in July.
- Will incorporate changes introduced by RRO and include intervention and enforcement powers, renewal activities through informal action, discretionary assistance and loan facilitation.
- Effective DFG programme will be maintained.
- Revised HECA strategy will be included.
- Clear links to Supporting People programme established through proposed, joint local authority Home Improvement Agency.
- HIA will facilitate loan provision/equity release options.
- Discretionary, means -tested assistance will be targeted at elderly and vulnerable groups (including low-income benefit recipients)
- Council operate a Homecheck scheme and will negotiate funding support from joint partners including Social Services and PCT.
- Council will use a range of enforcement powers, including compulsory purchase.
- HMOs are high priority both as proactive risk-assessment task and reactive service for tenants and landlords - in addition to recently introduced Council Accreditation scheme for HMOs and for student lettings. Mandatory licensing will be implemented.
- HECA and Fuel Poverty strategies promote home energy issues by close partnership working with the local EEAC.
- With production of new Private Sector Housing Strategy SMART action plan will be included.

Balance Housing Market Diagnostic

2 What are the Council's actions and what outcomes has it achieved in helping to balance housing markets?

2.1 How well is the Council working corporately to help balance the housing market?

Use of Resources

- Council conducted a comprehensive Urban Capacity Study of potential "brownfield" development opportunities across whole District including all land still owned by Council. Council is working with partner RSLs to produce development opportunities.
A joint funded Project Officer progresses Council owned sites.
- Council's medium term financial strategy based on achieving "debt free" status in March 2002 and increasing investment in affordable housing. Local Authority SHG was used to bring forward Urban Capacity Sites on a rolling programme.
- Abolition of LASHG caused Council to appraise ways to fund the long term provision of affordable housing which remains key corporate priority.
- Council bid successfully for Safer Communities Funding rounds 1 & 2, Challenge Funding, Starter Home Initiative and substantial annual ADP allocation to meet affordable housing needs.
- Council successful in obtaining additional funds from discontinued schemes such as Capital Challenge fund and Cash Incentives Schemes. For supported housing Council bids for resources through Winchester Housing Needs Forum.

Capacity to deliver strategies and plans & Partnerships

- Council created Corporate Housing Enablement Group (CHEG) with representatives from key service.
- Housing, planning and other relevant officers work closely together in several other forums
- CHEG is to be supplemented by an officer and Member group
- Forward Planning currently has 8 FTE involved with Local Plan preparation and planning for MDAs.
- When the Council moved debt free, it increased housing enablement staff to 3.5 FTEs.
- Appropriate training is given to all staff and members to ensure they maintain an appropriate and up-to-date knowledge.

Community Leadership, Equalities & Social Inclusion

- Council has sold some of its land to one of its partners for supported housing for some vulnerable groups. This followed a difficult public debate, but Council took a robust approach to make difficult decision despite local opposition.
- Housing BME/Diversity strategy has recently been agreed to better meet needs of minorities.
- Community Planning exercises have been undertaken to consider provision of a sheltered scheme together with provision of general needs housing on two estates. This process will be considered for other sites in future.

2.2 Is the Council pursuing the right actions & initiatives to help balance markets and are outcomes making the right kind of difference?

Housing Development

- LP Review has a key objective of provision of adequate housing to meet strategic requirement.
- Government target for 'brownfield' development regularly exceeded, but percentage of previously developed sites will fall once the Major Development Area starts
- LP Review requires housing densities of at least 30dph
- To implement MDA a 'Capacity Study', 'Southern Access Road Study' and 'Masterplan Framework Options' report
- Council has constructive relationship with County Council and is represented at officer level on a strategic planning Joint Advisory Panel and Local Transport Plan advisory group. County Council officers are part of LP Officer Group and give advice to Local Plan Committee, Cabinet and full Council.
- Council encourages pre-inquiry discussions on development and DCI officers operate a 'surgery' system to give such advice.
- LP Review promotes 'design-led' approach to new development and seeks submission of design statements with planning applications and Council places great emphasis on the quality of urban design
- Several villages have produced Village Design Statements which have been adopted as SPG
- Other guidance is published on housing mix, open space provision, etc.
- Members are positive in seeking that affordable housing is 'pepperpotted' within development sites.

Balance Housing Market DiagnosticSocial/Affordable housing development & partnerships

- Since 1995 Council has produced 466 units of affordable accommodation
- Council has 5 RSL partners each selected to reflect their specialities and strengths.
- Council has no specific building standards, but relies on Scheme Development Standards enforced by Housing Corporation.
- Council has used private sector leasing schemes and continues to do so mainly to house homeless families to avoid use of B&B.
- Local RSLs have provided non-grant funding single persons housing at market rents and student accommodation.
- Council has enabled/ encouraged RSLs to provide Key Worker accommodation (under the Starter Home Initiative), exception schemes (140 units provided and a further 90 units in pipeline) and Live/ Work units.

Supported housing schemes, Supporting People and front line services

- Winchester does not administer Supported People. Hampshire County Council (HCC) achieved a FAIR rating by the ODPM.
- Two of the schemes from Safer Communities bid, intended for mother and babies and ex offenders are at the planning stage.
- In last 3 years the Council has helped provide a Women's Refuge and commissioned more floating support services.
- Council is committed to a 'pilot' study of allocating 'difficult to let' ground floor sheltered accommodation to single parent households to release more accommodation at its hostel.
- Supporting People programme administrated by HCC, but is overseen by a partnership comprising the eleven District Councils in the County, Health and Hampshire Branch of the National Probation Service. A rolling 5 year strategy with annual review process is now being prepared.
- Council has established an Officer/ Member Working Party to ensure that new duties and proposals contained in Homeless Act 2002 are implemented by 31st July 2003.
- Council will meet Government's Target of nil use of B&B for families except in exceptional circumstances.

Private Sector Housing

- Discretionary grants targeted at elderly and vulnerable groups.
- Because of the scattered nature of the problems area action is not appropriate.
- Increase in DFG capital allocation, resources and better liaison with Social Services we are meeting demand from 'ageing population' for adaptations and improvements.
- Joint local authority Home Improvement Agency being created.
- Homecheck scheme involves external agencies and the voluntary sector for client referrals.
- HECA strategy requires direct input/contribution from local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre.
- Council adopted CPO powers in 2000 and is using this power for long-standing vacant dwellings as part of an Empty Property Strategy.
- There are around 500 HMOs and there is a voluntary Accreditation Scheme for HMOs and student lettings.
- Council's HECA Strategy includes an action plan for home energy promotions, events. 6.45% energy savings has been achieved over the base-line figure for 1996.

Balance Housing Market Diagnostic

3. How well does the council monitor its progress and impact in helping to balance housing markets and how effectively does this feed into future strategies and plans?

3.1 How well does the council monitor its progress and assess the impact of its work to help balance the housing market?

Local Plan Monitoring

- Housing land supply monitored on regular basis by County Council.
- Council has identified need for more detailed monitoring and so producing annual housing Monitoring Reports
- Council has undertaken to re-survey urban capacity sites every 5 years from 2006.
- Extensive monitoring undertaken as part of preparation of LP Review preparation.
- Future Monitoring Reports will address improving amount of information about affordable housing needs and provision.
- Implications of failure of key aspects of Plan were considered in preparing LP Review.
- Consideration given to prospects of adequate housing land being brought forward to meet strategic housing requirements and options available if this is not achieved.

Housing Strategy/Private Sector action plans

- Housing Strategy does not have a SMART action plan but targets are in the General Fund Business Plan.
- The Private Sector Housing Strategy however does and so does the Health and Housing Departmental General Fund Services Plan.
- All strategies and plans produced are adopted by Council and depending upon their respective status, strategic or operational are either regularly monitored by Cabinet or via the Housing Performance Improvement Committee.
- In future Strategies and Plans will also go to LSP.
- Procedures and Systems for tracking elements of the Action Plan are in place
- Housing Strategy is reviewed annually in conjunction with General Fund Service Action Plan.
- Resource needs also considered and when and where appropriate linked to meeting the Council's Corporate Needs
- No systematic approach to risk management analysis yet in the Housing Strategy

3.2 Has the Council learnt from what it is doing to help balance the housing market to develop and improve its future strategies and plans?

Mechanisms for Learning

- Council is contributing to the Government Panel looking to improve housing completions.
- Council takes account of partners and stakeholders views in helping to determine the priorities contained in its Housing Strategies.
- Council has introduced many changes through LP Review. For example, percentage of affordable housing sought and thresholds of qualifying sites are being adjusted to try to ensure that housing needs can be better met.
- 'Better Housing Mix' SPG was introduced following previous housing needs survey to address imbalances
- Arising from discussions with Social Services over 'Supporting People', the Council, East Hants DC and Social Services have decided to include Home Improvement Agency in new Private Sector Housing Strategy.
- The last two housing needs surveys were jointly commissioned by Housing and Planning which helped improve officer and Member learning and understanding.
- In light of abolition of LASHG and as a 'debt free' authority with a new requirement to set aside capital receipts, Council is once again faced with having to reconsider its capital expenditure which will affect the Council's future Housing Strategies.

Methods for gathering and assessing best practice

- Council uses published research papers to analyse output from bodies such as Housing Quality Network.
- We share information with other best practice authorities.
- Officers attend Regional and County Forums including SHECANE, Strategic Housing Officer Group Hampshire, Homelessness Sub Group Hampshire and Supporting People County Core Group.
- Annual attendance at professional summer schools as well as conferences
- Planning officers similarly represent the City Council on relevant professional groupings, such as Hampshire and Isle of Wight Planning Officers Group and Development Plans Group.

Self Scoring Summary

Corporate Assessment

Theme	Score	Key Strengths	Areas for Improvement
Ambition	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision and long term aims • Strong leadership role with partners and within the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of vision and successes • Community leadership role
Prioritisation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good evidence base and use of consultation • Clear priorities linked to local and national aims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination of research and consultation.
Focus	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained focus in key areas of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems for setting and monitoring targets.
Capacity	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed, well trained Members & staff • Sound financial management • Well developed partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching organisational capacity to ambitions. • Policy support for scrutiny role
Performance Management	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System in place and working to translate aims into actions • Effective departmental performance monitoring systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development and refinement of performance management system • Risk management strategy • Further development of procurement strategy
Achievement in Quality of Service	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of customer satisfaction • Good quality services in many key areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service standards in areas currently not meeting performance targets • Better internal communications.
Achievement of Improvement	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement plans in place in key areas. • Proven ability to improve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better developed approach to cross cutting agendas
Investment	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key building blocks in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of Local Strategic Partnership • Continued development of scrutiny process
Learning	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and responsive to external challenge • Positive attitude to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Future Plans	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of well evidenced plans in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger corporate overview and direction

8 Public Space Diagnostic

Question	Score
How well does the Council contribute to the management of the physical environment?	a
Does the Council help keep the locality clean?	b
Does the Council work with partners to improve community safety?	a
Does the Council contribute to activities to positively engage children and young people?	b
Overall Score	B

Decent Homes Standard Diagnostic

Question	Score
What is the council trying to achieve in relation to the standard? Does the council know the condition of their housing stock and their compliance with the decent homes standard?	b
Is the council delivering its plans to meet the decent homes standard?	a
How well does the council monitor its progress and how effectively does this feed into future strategies and plans?	a
Overall Score	B

Balanced Housing Market Diagnostic

How well does the council understand its housing market and from its understanding has the council developed the right proposals to help balance its housing market?	a
What are the council's actions and what outcomes has it achieved in helping to balance housing markets?	b
How well does the council monitor its progress and impact in helping to balance housing markets and how effectively does this feed into future strategies and plans?	b
Overall Score	B

Summary Improvement Plan

What?	Who?	By when?
<i>Community Leadership</i>		
• Continue development of the Local Strategic Partnership	Leader/ CX	On-going
• Continue development of Ward Member Role	CSS	On-going
<i>Strategy Development</i>		
• Finalise and publish community strategy	LSP/CX	31.01.04
• Review and integrate strategies and plans	CX/CSO	31.03.04
• Align strategies and plans to community strategy	Various	From 30.09.03
• Review community strategy	LSP	To be agreed
<i>Performance Management</i>		
• Firm up performance management cycle , roles and responsibilities, including target setting & monitoring	PFM(PM)/ CX/CSO	30.09.03
• Improve clarity of business plans	PSP	30.09.03
• Improve systems for integrating service and financial planning and links to organisational capacity.	CX/DF	30.09.03
• Implement improved systems	CX/CMT	From 01.10.03
• Develop risk management strategy	DF	30.11.03
• Develop procurement strategy and procedures	CSS	To be agreed
• Review systems for addressing cross cutting agendas	PFM(PM)/ CX/CMT	To be agreed
• Further review of performance management systems, learning from experience in 2003/04	PFM(PM)/ CX/CMT	30.09.04
<i>Scrutiny</i>		
• Review policy support for scrutiny role	CSS	31.12.03
<i>Communications</i>		
• Introduce corporate system for internal communications.	DP/ Directors	31.08.03
• Review external communications	CX	31.03.04
• Review internal communications and make recommendations for further development.	DP	31.07.04
• Develop consultation strategy	CX	30.09.03
• Implement consultation strategy	Directors	From 01.10.03
<i>Customer Care</i>		
• Roll out customer care charter and training	DHH	30.03.04
• Review business case for customer relationship management.	DHH	To be agreed
<i>Service Development</i>		
•		
• Deliver service improvements as set out in agreed business plans	Directors	As set out in business plans

CX – Chief Executive, CMT – Corporate Management Team, CSS – City Secretary & Solicitor; DF – Director of Finance; DP – Director of Personnel; DHH – Director of Health & Housing; DDS – Director of Development Services; DCS – Director of Community Services; Cab – Cabinet; PSP – Principal Scrutiny Panel; PFM(PM); Portfolio for Performance Management; CSO – Corporate Support Officer; LSP – Local Strategic Partnership.