

REPORT TO CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 12 April 2007

Title: CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN /
BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007-2010
Report of: Head of Policy & Performance
Report reference: PPP28/07

Summary:

The report contains the second draft of the Corporate Improvement Plan, 2007 – 2010 (the Plan) incorporating comments on the first draft from the Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the results of the Cumbria wide Quality of Life Survey, 2006. Financial information has also been added to the Plan; further analysis linking spend to corporate priorities is required and will be contained within the final draft. The final version of the Plan will incorporate the requirements of the Best Value Performance Plan, including year end performance information when this is available.

Key Issues:

The Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. Consider and comment upon the presentation and the updated content of the second draft Plan (appendix 1) - with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the way the council delivers services to its local communities.
2. Consider the relevance of the Plan in accordance with the Carlisle profile, i.e. social and economic data, and what local people have told us.
3. Consider how the Plan, in defining the priorities of the Council, assists current and future allocation of resources in ways that are relevant to the delivery of the priorities, i.e. will make our decision making processes easier.

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

The Council last produced a Corporate Plan in 2004 although it has been updated annually in the form of the Best Value Performance Plan.

The Corporate Plan is a key publication for the Council and its stakeholders - including local people, as it sets out where the organisation is now, where it wants and needs to be in the future, and how it will get there. The Plan presents the priorities that the Council has set - which reflect what is most important to local people - and that will turn its Vision and ambitions into reality.

The Plan should set the context of Carlisle in its region, and as well as saying how it will improve quality of life locally, should include how the Council will contribute to the well-being of the sub region, the north west, and to targets set by the Government's national agenda.

The Plan should allow the Council to exercise its strategic leadership role and help to bring together local partners to improve local services that matter most to local people. It should align with and support delivery of the Community Plan for Carlisle, currently being developed by the Carlisle Partnership, and show how the Council will support delivery of the Cumbria Local Area Agreement.

The Plan will enable the Council to monitor progress towards its key priorities, and as such forms a substantive part of its performance management framework. In response to the recent White Paper, the Council is striving to give local people and communities a bigger say in the services they receive and therefore in shaping the places where they live. Further opportunities to involve local people as the Plan develops will be identified.

2. AMENDMENTS

The second draft of the Corporate Improvement Plan incorporates comments of the Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Inserts are highlighted throughout the document and include:

- Cemetery of the Year award added under achievements; flood recovery still to add
- Definition of Warm Front Scheme
- "Local people" amended to "you" where appropriate
- More on *how* the Council will reduce crime and disorder – and anti-social behaviour
- More detail on "carbon footprint" and how the Council will reduce its impact on the environment

Additionally, financial information has been added, however further analysis linking financial resources to our corporate priorities is required. A diagram has been added to "Governance," that shows the relationship between the Council's key plans and strategies.

Key findings from the Cumbria County Council, Quality of Life Survey, December 2006 have been added to "What you have told us" - links to our key priorities are explicit. The debate continues around our key priorities and particularly:

1. The role of our area based teams in ensuring a Cleaner, Greener Safer Carlisle and in engaging and empowering local communities in the design and delivery of services that effect them. The White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities (October 2006) referred to “Responsive services and empowered communities”, building on the current best value duty of consultation to ensure participation of local people in Council activities. Involving communities results in better decisions about how to provide services to meet the needs of different localities.
2. The Learning City strategy is currently under review, testing the continued relevance of the four themes. Access to Learning and Leading by Example are likely to emerge as areas where the Council can have the biggest impact.
3. Similarly, specific actions within the Carlisle Renaissance programme that the Council should lead continue to be defined.

3. CONSULTATION

- To date: Consultation with local people through the Citizen’s Panel, 2005-06, has informed the draft Plan; Cumbria wide Quality of Life Survey, 2006 added Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees
Best Value User Satisfaction survey, still to add
Senior Management team, Service Heads and staff
- Planned: Further consultation with Community, Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees
Local people through neighbourhood forums
Community Centre Management Committees - to be explored
Carlisle Local Partnership
Other key stakeholders including Parish Councils, Cumbria County Council, Cumbria District councils

Appendix 1

Carlisle City Council 2nd DRAFT Corporate Improvement Plan 2007 – 2010

Introduction

Welcome to Carlisle City Council's Corporate Improvement Plan, 2007-2010.

The Plan sets out where we are now, where we want to be in the future, and how we will get there. It reflects what you have told us about your aspirations and your priorities for the future of Carlisle and what the City Council, with its partners, is doing about them. We will report our progress to you every year so that you are able to judge the difference we are making. We will work hard at getting you more involved in planning for the future of Carlisle and in helping the City Council to improve. For more information on how you can get involved, or to give us some feedback on our plans, please contact the Policy and Performance team, tel. 01228 817000 or visit our website, www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Foreword by the Leader / Chief Executive

Carlisle City Council is not short on ambition for Carlisle. With its partners and by working with you, we will drive forward the economic, physical and social renaissance of Carlisle, making the city a vital and attractive place where people chose to live, work and visit. We are proud of what we have achieved so far – for a small district council we are doing big things. Over the last year there have been some things that we have achieved for our residents that we are particularly proud of:

- ✓ Things that you tell us are important to you: improvements to back lanes, residents parking and street lighting; achieved in partnership with the County Council, Carlisle Housing Association & the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- ✓ Area based maintenance teams forming closer links with the police to deliver local services in local neighbourhoods to ensure a Cleaner, Greener, Safer Carlisle. These services achieve high satisfaction levels in customer surveys
- ✓ **INSERT** Leading by example through reducing the environmental impact of what we do. We have developed an Environmental Policy Statement to demonstrate our commitment to the environment and signed up to the Nottingham Declaration – a voluntary commitment for local authorities wanting to tackle climate change. In recognition of our achievements we have been awarded the Gold Cumbria Business Environment Network Award for achieving excellence in environmental practice, for our Community Services.
- ✓ **INSERT** flood recovery
- ✓ Sure Start judged best in the country; a scheme that ensures the best possible start in life for young children and their parents.
- ✓ Investment in Talkin Tarn including renewable energy, in consideration of our impact on the environment, that will safeguard its future for you and for visitors.

- ✓ Sheepmount stadium opened in September 2006 by Prince Edward following a multi-million pound investment by the City Council, Sport England and the Football Foundation
- ✓ Multi-use games areas in Melbourne Park and Petteril Bank and Hammond's Park well used by young people.
- ✓ Activities during the summer holidays that attracted around 4000 young people between the ages of 5 and 24
- ✓ Green Flag awards, a national mark of quality, for Bitts Park, Kingmoor nature reserve and Tullie House Gardens
- ✓ Significant investment in the Sands Centre with our partners Carlisle Leisure Ltd which will improve access for all
- ✓ Significant investment in closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) giving us full coverage of the city centre
- ✓ Award for our residents' newsletter, Carlisle Focus
- ✓ Raised over £1million of external funding to support Carlisle Renaissance
- ✓ **INSERT** Cemetery of the Year, 2006; due to this success, we are currently advising Government on their publication, "How To Create Quality Parks and Open Spaces"
- ✓ ECONOMIC REGEN INCLUDING LONGTOWN MTI

Ambition

Carlisle is a city of regional status in the north of England and the Council continuously "punches above its weight" in the scope of services it provides. The City Council's Vision is to ensure a high quality of life for local people in all of our urban and rural communities [\[for Carlisle to be a vital and attractive place that drives Cumbria's economic, physical and social renaissance\]](#). so that:

- Our local communities are places where you chose to live and where you feel safe
- Everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential through learning
- Your skills match those required by business so the local economy can grow
- Local people, and those wishing to move to Carlisle, have a choice of decent, affordable housing
- Our local environments provide high quality, public spaces that are welcoming and that people enjoy and take pride in
- You have access to high quality, responsive Council services that provide value for money
- You are involved in, and can influence decisions about the places where they live

Carlisle Renaissance

Carlisle Renaissance is the partnership regeneration agenda for the whole of Carlisle. It is led by the City Council and is focused on achieving the following objectives:

- Establishing Carlisle as a Learning City
- Strengthening the local economy
- Tackling deprivation
- Revitalising the City Centre
- Expanding the tourism offer
- Improving movement into and around the city

The role of the City Council in realising these objectives is three-fold:

- ✓ Providing strong community leadership
- ✓ Ensuring that the City Council's activities fully support the renaissance of Carlisle
- ✓ Facilitating and encouraging other partners to support delivery of Carlisle Renaissance

Values

The City Council will achieve its ambitions for Carlisle through Leading by Example in the ways it delivers services.

- We will provide strong community leadership that sets out its stall on how we are going to achieve our ambitions for Carlisle
- We will put **INSERT** the needs of all our citizens first
- **INSERT** We recognise the increasing diversity of the area and will ensure that services are provided to all without discrimination
- We will develop our own staff so we become an "employer of choice" and we are able to deliver quality services that you expect
- We will consider all ways in which we can reduce the environmental impact of our operations to safeguard our city for future generations
- We will communicate regularly with you about our achievements so you are able to make a judgement about how effective we are
- We will encourage innovation and work together to find new solutions to old problems

Carlisle Local Strategic Partnership (Carlisle Partnership)

The Carlisle Partnership is the organisation that brings together the local councils that serve Carlisle, the Health Service, police and other public agencies, local businesses and voluntary and community organisations to improve the well-being of Carlisle. The Community Plan produced by the Partnership, sets out high level aims and ambitions for the area - and ensures that they are achieved by the Partnership.

The Community Plan will have Carlisle Renaissance at its heart and in particular will address the four themes identified in the Cumbria Local Area Agreement (LAA):

- Children and young people
- Healthy communities and older people
- Economic development and enterprise
- Safer and stronger communities

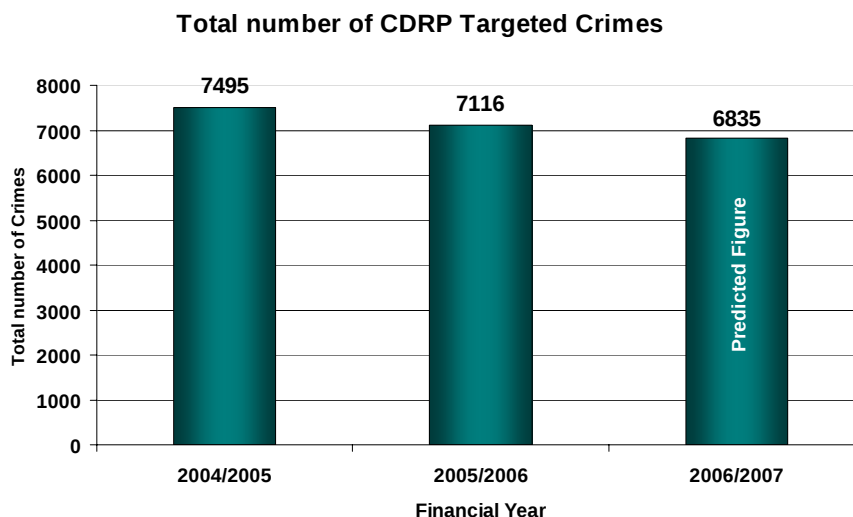
INSERT A number of cross-cutting themes have also been identified that the Partnership will have a strong regard for when planning and delivering its Vision for Carlisle; the environment, our rural communities and Learning City.

The Carlisle Profile – What the statistics are telling us?

We know the importance of good information or “intelligence” in planning, delivering and reviewing services in order to ensure their relevance to our local communities. We have produced profiles of social and economic data for all our wards in Carlisle that will enable more robust decision making about what, where and when services should be provided [\[web link to profiles\]](#). This information, along with what you have told us is important to you, has helped us to determine what the City Councils’ priorities should be for the next 3 years.

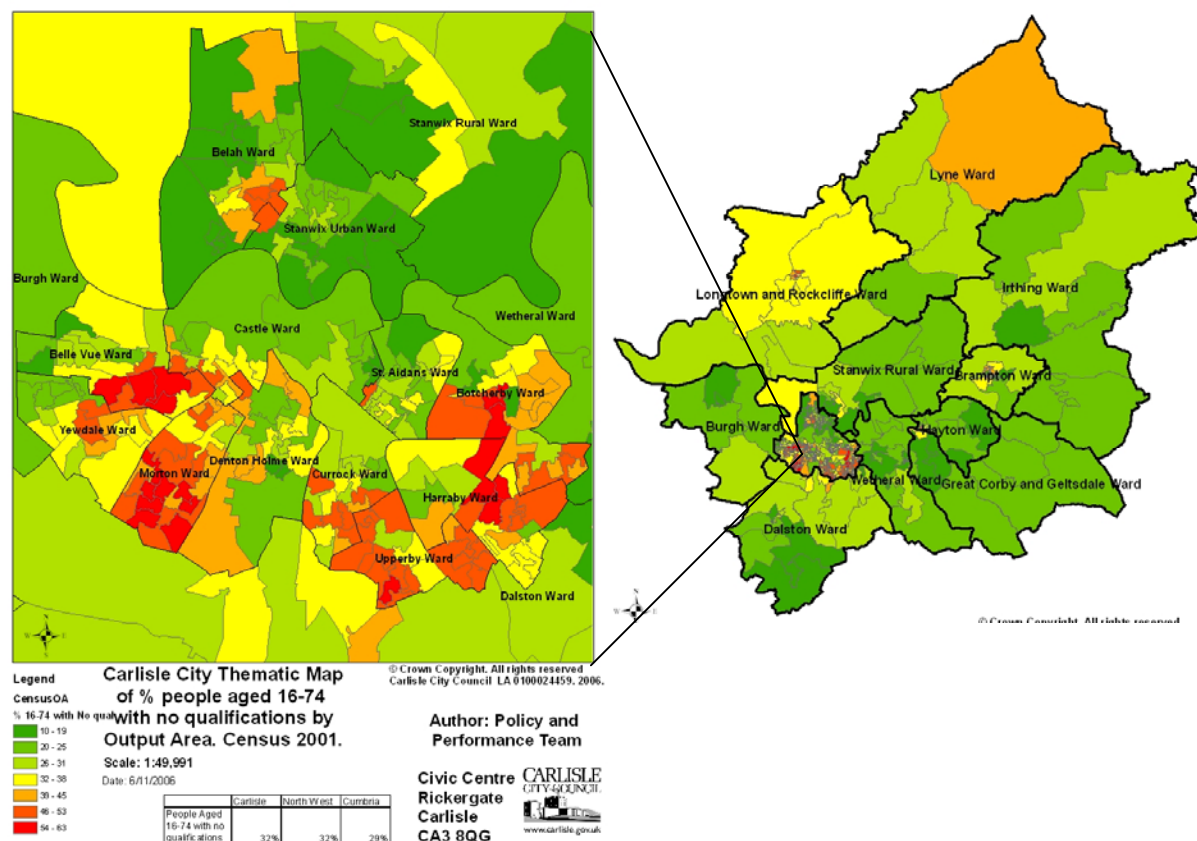
Headline indicators include:

- Post 16 retention rates (children staying on at school or going onto further education) in Carlisle are the lowest in Cumbria and lower than the national average
- Educational attainment in Carlisle is poor compared to the rest of Cumbria and England. Only 49% of pupils achieve 5 GCSEs Grades A-C in 2006 compared to 58% in Cumbria and 59% in England
- 5.2% of people in Carlisle claim disability allowance, below the regional figure of 6.4% but above the national figure of 4.6%
- 31% of people of working age in Carlisle are employed in managerial, professional and technical occupations, below the regional and Cumbria averages and well below the national figure of 40%
- 23% of our population is aged 60 and over, above the national average of 21%.
- Carlisle is ranked 108 out of 354 local authorities areas on the national deprivation score (Office of National Statistics, 2004). This is based on a number of indicators of deprivation including employment, health, education and access to services
- From the 22 wards in Carlisle, 6 are in the top 20% of most deprived wards (2004). Only Wetheral and Stanwix Urban are in the 20% of least deprived wards nationally
- Carlisle has average crime rates compared with the Northwest region (British Crime Survey)



- **INSERT** From 2004/5 - 2005/6, Carlisle had a 5.1% reduction in specific crime groups that are targeted by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. This was greater than the reduction in Cumbria (2.2%) and England and Wales (1.6%).

- One in six of the Super Output Areas ¹ in Carlisle feature in the worst ten percent in the country for education:
- 32% of people in Carlisle have no qualifications - the national average is 29%
- 49% of pupils in Carlisle achieve 5 GCSEs grade A-C compared with 58% in Cumbria



The map highlights the distribution of people with no qualifications. The red areas show neighbourhoods where the percentage of people with no qualifications is between 54 and 63%, almost twice the Carlisle average of 32%.

What you have told us

The City Council takes every opportunity to involve you in how services take shape and are delivered. One of the main ways in which we do this is through the Citizen's Panel².

In a recent survey (October 2006) all of the following were judged to be important or highly important:

- Reducing waste and recycling.
- Good public transport in and around Carlisle
- Promoting the quality and availability of housing in Carlisle

¹ Super Output Area (SOAs) are new, smaller geographical areas designed by the Office of National Statistics for the collection and publication of statistics. They are similar to each other in demographics and size so they may be compared.

² A panel of around 1200 local residents that are representative of the adult population of Carlisle

- Promoting opportunities for adult learning and training
- Improving existing cultural, leisure and sporting facilities
- Improving the quality of our local environments
- Enforcing environmental laws, e.g. fines for dog fouling and litter
- Improving quality of life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

INSERT Quality of Life Survey, 2006

From July - September 2006, Cumbria County Council commissioned a survey of 2,133 Cumbria residents³ to test how satisfied people were with the places where they lived and what they thought were priorities for improvement. In Carlisle:

- Levels of satisfaction with the local area were relatively high, 84% of residents said they were satisfied, although this is still slightly less than the Cumbria average of 88%
- Carlisle residents are broadly in line with those in the County as a whole on key health indicators, except they are more likely to smoke
- Concern about crime is more widespread in Carlisle than in Cumbria overall. An important factor underlying this and other differences is likely to be the urban make-up of the centre of Carlisle in contrast with the more rural nature of many other parts of the County.
 - Carlisle residents are more likely to be worried about being a victim of crime
 - Less likely to feel safe outdoors after dark; 34% of Carlisle residents say they feel unsafe outside after dark compared to three in ten people nationally⁴
 - Anti-social behaviour is a key concern for Carlisle residents, as it is for all of Cumbria – and most do not feel well informed about what is being done about it
- 61% said levels of crime were most important in determining quality of life followed by
 - affordable, decent housing (45%)
 - clean streets (39%)
 - education (35%)
 - health services (34%)
- 53% said activities for teenagers were top priority for improving their local area followed by
 - levels of traffic congestion (41%)
 - road and pavement repairs (37%)
 - clean streets (31%)
 - levels of crime (26%)
 - affordable, decent housing (26%)
- Satisfaction with some local services and facilities was higher among users of these services in Carlisle than in Cumbria including:
 - opportunities for adult education
 - bus services
 - leisure facilities for young people

³ Including 362 Carlisle residents

⁴ British Crime Survey 2005/6

- public toilets
- Satisfaction with playgrounds and play areas, libraries, hospitals, train services and social services, was lower in Carlisle than in Cumbria

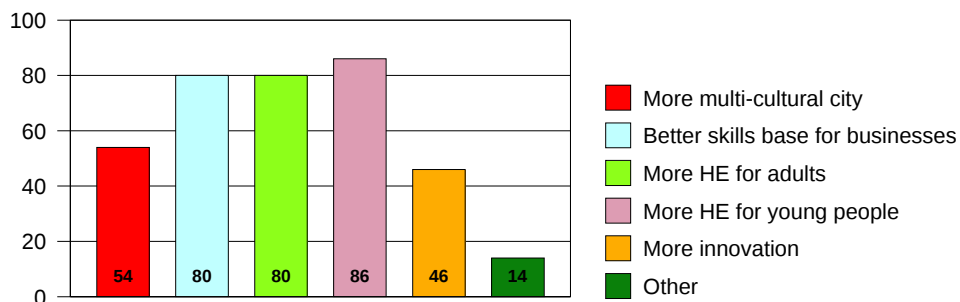
Not all of the areas important to you are the responsibility of the City Council, such as education, health and social services. However, in our role as community leader, we will work with others through the Carlisle partnership to ensure that all of the issues that you tell us are important, or where quality of services should be improved, are addressed.

A University of Cumbria

In 2005:

- 84% of the Citizen's Panel thought that Carlisle would benefit from having a University of Cumbria in the city
- 86% said having a University would be beneficial as there would be more educational choices for young people
- 80% said we would benefit from better skills for businesses and greater choice for adults

In what ways would having a University be beneficial?



[Insert best value survey \[including comparisons with 3 / 6 years ago so we can identify trends\]](#)

- ✓ Survey results⁵ from 2000 and 2004 showed on both occasions that nearly 62% of you were satisfied overall with the way Carlisle City Council runs things. This compared very favourably with a national average of 55%.

Our Priorities

Considering what you have told us is important to you and what the statistics are telling us, the City Council has identified a number of priorities where it will focus its efforts over the next 3 years that will turn its Vision into a reality. We will achieve our Vision for our Carlisle through:

⁵ Best Value User Satisfaction Survey carried out by district councils throughout the country every 3 years

1. Cleaner, greener and safer Carlisle; promoting sustainable, local communities where people want to live and work and where they feel safe, and
2. Promoting Carlisle as a Learning City where individuals and organisations have the opportunity to reach their full potential in order to “grow” the local economy

There are fewer priorities than in the past, following CPA⁶ feedback in 2003 which said we had too many, i.e. trying to do too much considering the resources we have. A smaller number of priorities will allow us to focus our efforts and our resources on areas where we can achieve the biggest benefits for the people of Carlisle.

1. Cleaner, Greener, Safer

Cleaner, Greener, Safer means places where people choose to live, where they feel welcomed and safe and are part of the fabric of the community. It means places that are well connected and well designed and built, and that are sensitive to their environments. We believe Cleaner, Greener, Safer Carlisle is at the heart of thriving local communities that are tolerant and inclusive, and offer opportunities for all to improve their quality of life.

The Environment

One of the biggest threats to our well being is global warming and climate change. Recent research has shown that the economic benefits of early action on climate change outweigh the costs. Costs incurred in reducing emissions now should therefore be viewed as an investment to avoid the risks in the future⁷. Local authorities have a significant role to play in enabling early action on climate change.

INSERT Leading by example, the Council will reduce its own carbon footprint, i.e. consider the effect on the environment of everything it does. We will encourage others to do the same through the Carlisle Partnership, the Cumbria Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, and working as a member of the Cumbria Climate Change Task Group.

The Council's Community Services team has already achieved the Gold award from the Cumbria Business Environment Network (CBEN) while the Council as a whole was awarded the Bronze award. The Council has a target to achieve the Gold standard for all of its operations by 2009.

Reducing waste

In response to public concerns about environmental issues, an Act of Parliament⁸ that provides local authorities with a wide range of powers to deal with environmental issues was passed in 2005. The council tested local public opinion on the new powers of the Act (August 2005).

Over 90% of the Citizen's Panel said the Council should use new powers within the Act, such as charging fixed penalty notices for abandoned vehicles and litter. Around

⁶ Comprehensive Performance Assessment of district councils by the Audit Commission

⁷ The Stern Review, The Economics of Climate Change, October 2006

⁸ Clean Neighbourhood & Environment Act, 2005

70% thought the council should adopt a zero tolerance approach to enforcing the Act. Most felt that the new Act, including fines, should be advertised to the public to raise awareness.

In 2006, the majority of you told us that reducing waste and recycling more, and enforcing environmental laws were very important.

What can you expect and when?

The City Council, with its many partners, will ensure a Cleaner, Greener, Safer Carlisle with local neighbourhoods where people want to live. It will do this through:

- Area based teams **DELETE** and neighbourhood wardens

Liveability issues such as clean streets are important to Carlisle residents' satisfaction with the local area⁹. Litter, dog fouling, pavements blocked by parked cars, **INSERT** damage to kerbs and grass verges, are all concerns for people in Carlisle.

Using new powers under the Clean Neighbourhood & Environment Act, our maintenance teams based in our local communities throughout Carlisle, provide a range of services in local communities that ensure high quality, clean, safe environments free from litter and dog fouling, graffiti and fly tipping. We have employed 2 new **INSERT** Environmental Enforcement officers to help us to do this. Our area based teams work with other agencies, particularly the police and housing associations, as well as with local people to further improve services that are based on the needs of different neighbourhoods.

We will maintain our parks and open spaces to a high standard. We have given you the opportunity to have a stake in the places where they live through "friends of parks" groups in Hammonds Pond, Chances Park. **INSERT** This will be extended to other areas including Talkin Tarn.

Working with our partners, and particularly through Carlisle Renaissance, we will improve our built environment through **INSERT** encouraging commissioning of high quality public artworks.

Measures

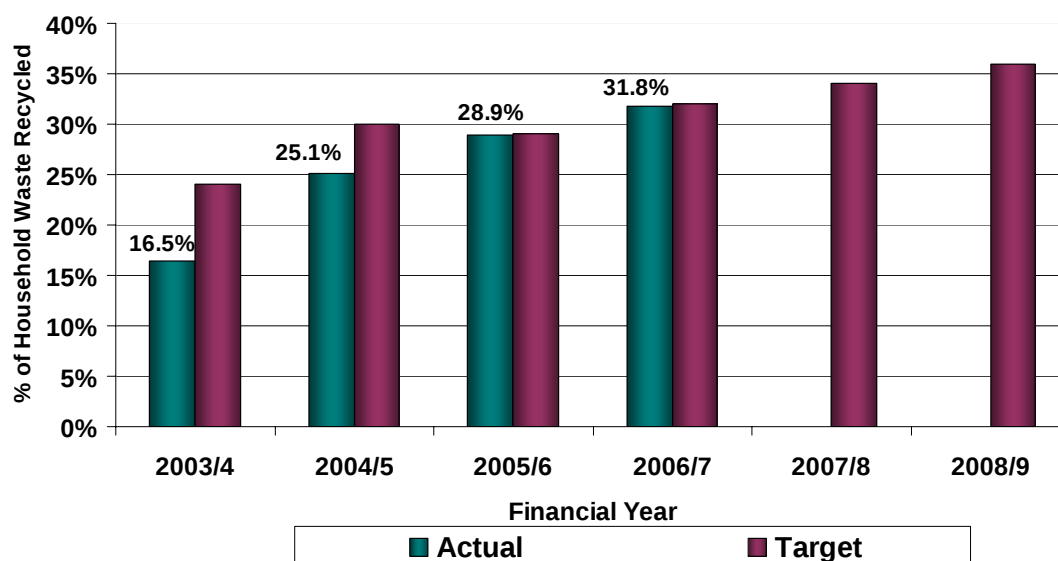
- ✓ How satisfied you are with the place where you live [do this anyway through BV survey & various citizen's panel]
- ✓ Whether you feel you can influence decisions that affect your area [LAA stretch target; also % delivery points mystery shopped by children & young people; % feel informed about what is being done to tackle anti-social behaviour in their area; number of young people feel engaged in democratic process]
- ✓ Awards for quality received by our parks, open spaces and sports facilities

⁹ Cumbria Quality of Life Survey, Cumbria County Council, 2006

- Increasing the amount of waste recycled.

The Council is not afraid to make difficult decisions to achieve its objectives, but will make them in consultation with local people. Alternate weekly collections of household waste were introduced in 2007 along with plastic recycling and other recycling schemes so we can achieve stretching targets set by the Government to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. **INSERT** We have employed two new Waste Advisors who will work with local people to help us to do this. **INSERT** targets to 2009

**Percentage of all Household Waste Recycled
(Including Green Bin and Green Box)**



Measures

- ✓ Amount of household waste we collect
- ✓ Amount of waste you recycle
- Leading by example, the Council will reduce its carbon footprint

We will reduce the impact of Council business on the environment, **INSERT** making environmental and biodiversity enhancements where possible; the Council already monitors the status of local wildlife through the biological records database at Tullie House Museum, in partnership with the Cumbria Biological Data Network.

The Local Plan will seek to ensure that development takes place in sustainable locations that safeguard the natural environment and unique heritage of Carlisle.

INSERT Through the Movement Strategy and Development Framework – part of the Carlisle Renaissance programme – we will promote more sustainable means of moving into and around the city, including “safe routes” to work and school and public transport. Through the Movement Strategy and Development Framework - part of the Carlisle Renaissance programme - we will promote more sustainable means of moving

into and around the city, including “safe routes” to work and school and public transport.

The Council already provides free bus transport, 24/7 throughout Carlisle for over 60s & the disabled, and a 60% reduction in fares throughout the rest of Cumbria, a better deal than the national scheme. [\[LAA target, journeys on community transport\]](#)

Measures

- ✓ Energy usage **INSERT** and carbon footprint of our own buildings and operations
- ✓ The success of our own Green Travel Plan – a package of measures to encourage more sustainable ways of travelling and changes in travel to work patterns. 15% of people already walk to work in Carlisle, compared to the national average of 10%¹⁰ [\[LAA targets - better ways to school; increased access to countryside and ease of use of rights of way\]](#)
- ✓ Take-up of renewable forms of energy in our own operations and through the planning system
- Housing

INSERT Decent, affordable housing in both our rural and urban areas is vital for the well-being and growth of our local communities and impacts on health, the economy and doing well at school.

We will bring back into use or demolish empty and derelict properties to extend housing choices and to improve local neighbourhoods. We will reduce the number of “non-decent” homes in Carlisle, in partnership with Carlisle Housing Association, and improve access to accommodation for young people.

We will improve the built environment and the places where you live through investment and renewal of privately owned housing. This includes a programme of works aimed at increasing the thermal comfort of properties through a number of energy efficiency works, contributing to the Government’s Decent Homes target. The majority of these works are aimed at properties occupied by the least well off. By March 2007, over £900,000 had been spent on these works with a further £800,000 planned during 2007/08.

Starting in April 2007, the Housing Service will be carrying out a Group Repair scheme in Denton Holme. Works will be done to improve the fabric of up to 30 houses including roofs, windows and external walls. Investment will be in the region of £200,000.

Affordability of quality housing to local people, and to those wishing to move to Carlisle, is essential to ensuring vibrant, sustainable communities. House prices, in line with national trends, have risen significantly in recent years. The City Council will

¹⁰ <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

use its powers through the planning system, and will work with others who provide housing, to encourage affordable housing choices¹¹.

[LAA target reduce 16-19 year olds seeking accommodation – focus on care leavers; reduce need for emergency accommodation].

Measures

- ✓ Funding provided for home insulation for vulnerable people **INSERT** including success of the Warm Front Scheme, a national scheme that helps people to pay for heating and insulation improvements. [LAA target % older people helped to live at home; number of referrals to Warm Front scheme]
- ✓ Reduction in non-decent homes [LAA target housing market renewal]
- ✓ Reduction in empty and derelict properties [LAA target increase affordable housing]
- ✓ Young people seeking accommodation

- **INSERT** Crime and Anti-social behaviour

Concern about crime is more widespread in Carlisle than in Cumbria overall; 61% of you said levels of crime were most important in determining quality of life. The Council is already working closely with others to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through its area based teams that provide a local response to local issues. Following a review of anti-social behaviour by our Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we have set up a dedicated anti-social behaviour team comprising of the City Council, the police, Carlisle Housing Association, Victim Support and the Fire Service, to provide, a quicker, more co-ordinated response to your concerns.

The Council will continue to work with partners on projects such as “Streetsafe”, that provides crime prevention advice and support in response to residents’ concerns about anti-social behaviour.

We will continue to invest in closed circuit TV cameras (CCTV) that have been shown to reduce anti-social behaviour, including mobile cameras able to respond to specific problems; CCTV now covers all of the city centre. Other measures, such as extra lighting will be provided to combat anti-social behaviour, making people feel safer.

The Council also has a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to consider the impact on community safety of all its activities with a view to improving the safety and general well-being of local people and the places where you live. The Council will plan all of its services to take this into account.

We will also support Cumbria wide initiatives to reduce domestic violence and to reduce the numbers of offences carried out by prolific offenders¹².

¹¹ For more information, please refer to The Housing Strategy for Carlisle, www.carlisle.gov.uk or telephone the Housing Manager, 01228 817000

¹² Offenders who commit most crimes and most anti-social behaviour, and therefore pose the biggest risk to our local communities

Measures

- ✓ Levels of crime and anti-social behaviour [LAA target with focus on violent crime; also target of reducing number of children & young people who are victims of crime; % young people feel safe during the day & after dark]
- ✓ How safe you feel during the day and at night [LAA target]
- ✓ Convictions for domestic violence [LAA stretch target]
- ✓ Offences committed by prolific offenders [LAA stretch target]

This is how we will know that we have succeeded:

- ✓ You are highly satisfied with the places where you live
- ✓ You feel safe
- ✓ You feel you are able to influence decisions that effect your local area
- ✓ Incidents of crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour reduce
- ✓ Local people, particularly vulnerable groups [LAA target, proportion of those in drug treatment or leaving treatment in suitable accommodation] can find appropriate, decent housing that meets their needs
- ✓ CBEN Gold award for minimising the environmental impacts of Council business
- ✓ Reduced carbon footprint of council operations
- ✓ More people walk and cycle and use public transport to move into and around Carlisle
- ✓ Our parks and sports facilities rated as excellent - Green flag awards for Bitts Park, Kingmoor Nature Reserve, Hammonds Pond and Tullie House gardens
- ✓ Recycling rates increase and less space is taken up in landfill sites with domestic rubbish

2. Learning City

The City Vision partnership (2002) first stated the Vision for Carlisle as a Learning City, “....Our ambition is to create a lifelong learning society in Carlisle that will benefit our citizens and future generations. We will work together to promote learning and encourage all members of our communities to take pride in their city and understand its cultural value.”

The Learning City priority is in response to a number of key economic, social and cultural issues facing Carlisle that have the potential to prevent growth, including:

- Post 16 retention rates (children staying on at school or going onto further education) lowest in Cumbria and lower than the national average
- Low waged, low skilled economy
- Cumbria the 4th poorest sub-region in the UK in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA)¹³ - a measure of economic prosperity

Learning City for Carlisle means **INSERT** (under review):

1. Promoting access to learning
2. Developing skills to support, nurture and attract businesses
3. Making Carlisle the hub of the University of Cumbria

¹³ Sustainable Cumbria, 2004-2024, Cumbria Strategic Partnership, 2004, p.28-29

4. The City Council Leading by Example

Learning City will address the whole spectrum of learning and help Carlisle to develop as a city of regional significance. Learning City includes the Council leading by example as an employer - serving as a role model within the community in the way it develops its own employees.

The City Council should be as specific as possible about **its** role in Learning City, lots of activity will take place through the LSP, and especially through the children and young people's strand of the LAA - to which the Council will be a contributor.

What can you expect and when?

The City Council will achieve Learning City for Carlisle through:

1. Promoting access to learning

The City Council in partnership, aims to tackle social exclusion by developing the learning infrastructure, including information, guidance and support for community based learning that will enable all residents of Carlisle to access learning opportunities. The Council already promotes the use of its community centres for community based learning and provides sports, cultural and play activities that help children and young people to learn. The Council owned Tullie House Museum provides a wide range of opportunities to learn about our local heritage and environment through access to collections, displays and various learning and outreach programmes. INSERT FUNDING DRAWN DOWN.

The Council invests significant funding into sports and leisure facilities, including the Sheepmount Athletics Stadium, Sands Centre, swimming pools and golf course, and in providing sport and play schemes for children and young people.

We will continue to develop these services in areas of specific need.

Planning powers

The Council will use its planning powers to ensure a supply of safe and secure accommodation that meets the demands of a growing student population; there is more information on this in the Housing Strategy for Carlisle [\[link\]](#).

The same powers will be used to promote opportunities for more diverse cultural experiences in Carlisle for both young and old, and in particular to identify a site for an arts centre in the city.

We will measure:

- ✓ Number of people taking part in the Tullie House Community Outreach programme
- ✓ Number of children and young people visiting Tullie House
- ✓ Number of children taking part in the Tullie House Schools Outreach programme
- ✓ Learning in community centres
- ✓ Children and young people taking part in sport, play and cultural activities [LAA targets – reducing increase in childhood obesity 4-11 year olds; reducing under 18 conception rate; increased take-up of sport & culture activities in & out of school]

- ✓ Adults taking part in sport and cultural activities [LAA targets - % adults taking part in moderate sport 30 mins 3 times per wk; encourage Cumbrians to adopt healthier lifestyle that enhances quality of life]
- ✓

How will we know we have succeeded?

- ✓ Number of people in work or training increases [LAA target % 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training; reduction in benefits claimant rate]
- ✓ Number of people claiming incapacity benefit decreases [stretch target in LAA- into employment]
- ✓ Increase in numbers of children, young people and adults taking part in sport, play and cultural activities (CLL, summer play schemes, multi-use games areas)
- ✓ Arts centre opens in Carlisle

2. Developing skills to support, nurture and attract businesses

The City Council has a duty to promote the economic well being of its area. Carlisle, like every other City, is influenced by national and global economic trends that result in growth or decline of different employment sectors. It is increasingly the case that the prosperity of an area will depend on the knowledge and skills of its workforce as well as on other assets such as transport links or the availability of land and premises for business.

It is inevitable that Carlisle's economy will change and the Council has organised programmes that have helped people during the recent spate of redundancies, using its own finances and funding from the North West Development Agency, Cumbria County Council and the Job Centre. Successful Jobs Fairs were held at the Sands Centre THAT RESULTED IN.... The Council with its partners will continue to support people in this way providing it is able to draw in funding to do so.

But what is the Council going to do about securing Carlisle's long term prosperity in a competitive global economy? On behalf of the Local Partnership, the City Council is leading a process that will produce a new economic strategy for Carlisle in the spring of 2007. This will determine what the City Council and its partners need to do to encourage private investment, develop a stronger economy, move away from a reliance on a diminishing manufacturing economy and develop Carlisle's wider appeal as a sub regional centre¹⁴. Among other things, this will require a greater emphasis on transferable skills and knowledge. The City Council's role in this is to work with partners and local businesses to understand what is needed to build a resilient local economy and to draw down public funds for programmes that enable and encourage the workforce to improve their skills.

The role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is a big one in promoting business within and outside Carlisle, particularly in a County as geographically isolated as Cumbria. The City Council will promote the use of ICT to encourage access to products and services within Cumbria, and access to markets outside Cumbria for local business. INSERT INFO ON WIFI.

We will measure:

¹⁴ An area of significant importance in Cumbria

- ✓ Number of people unemployed
- ✓ Number of people claiming incapacity benefit
- ✓ Number of people helped into training and employment – jobs fairs, Longtown MTI
- ✓ Business start-ups [LAA target, also increase in people self-employed; increase in social enterprises]
- ✓ Increase in “gross value added” – economic prosperity – in Cumbria
- ✓ External funding (£s) for programmes that improve the skills of the workforce in Carlisle
- ✓ People back into work or training [LAA target % 16-18 year old not in education, employment or training; reduction in benefits claimant rate]
- ✓ People moving from incapacity benefit into work or training [stretch target in LAA- into employment]
- ✓ Businesses supported
- ✓ Broadband access for business and domestic users
- ✓ Low cost, public wireless access points (WIFI) in and around the city
- ✓ Outcomes of the Market Town Initiative in Longtown
- ✓ [Targets in economic strategy]
- ✓ Growth of creative industries in Carlisle?

How will we know we have succeeded?

- ✓ Number of people in work or training increases [LAA target % 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training; reduction in benefits claimant rate]
- ✓ Number of people claiming incapacity benefit decreases [stretch target in LAA- into employment]
- ✓ Gross value added, a measure of economic prosperity, increases

3. Carlisle – the hub of the University of Cumbria

In developing Carlisle as a city of regional significance in Cumbria and the north of England, the City Council will use its planning powers and its own significant, property portfolio to identify a site for the development of the University of Cumbria in Carlisle.

We will measure:

- ✓ External funding attracted for the University of Cumbria
- ✓ Range and diversity of the curriculum

This is how we will know that we have succeeded:

- ✓ University of Cumbria established in Carlisle

4. Leading by Example

The City Council is committed to developing all of its staff which includes Skills for Life training, apprenticeships and management development. In Leading by Example we will ensure that all staff are encouraged to reach their full potential within the workplace in an environment of mutual respect and trust. Equally, we must ensure that our Councillors have a range of opportunities to develop their skills in order to fulfil their community leadership role effectively.

We will measure:

- ✓ Percentage of employees with no National Qualification Framework (NQF)¹⁵ level qualifications [[LAA target, Skills for Life qualification](#)]
- ✓ Percentage of employees whose highest qualification is at NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 [[LAA target adults without level 2 entering a learning opportunity; number of adults gaining level 2, level 3](#)]
- ✓ Number of employees working towards a higher qualification
- ✓ Number of apprenticeships and work placements [[LAA target number of 16-25 year olds completing an apprenticeship framework; number of graduates in Cumbrian workforce](#)]
- ✓ [Something about Go-Mo?](#)
- ✓ Funding received from the Government's "Renaissance in the Regions" programme to develop our own workforce (Tullie House)

This is how we will know that we have succeeded:

- ✓ All our employees **INSERT** encouraged to qualify to at least Level 2¹⁶ by 2010
- ✓ The Local Government Go Award¹⁷ for Skills for Life by May 2007
- ✓ Level 2 of the North West Member Charter for Member Development by November 2008
- ✓ Investors in People Profile¹⁸ for 2009 as set out within the Workforce Development Plan achieved
- ✓ All employees participating in learning or development each year
- ✓ All councillors participating in learning or development each year
- ✓ Ability to "grow our own" staff to counter national skills shortages in areas like planning

Carlisle Renaissance

Over the period of this Plan, we will work with and through the Carlisle Partnership to lay the foundations of the renaissance of Carlisle and seek to maximise investment in its economic, physical and social infrastructure. In early 2007 two new strategies will be published that will mark a step change in our ambition for Carlisle.

Economic Strategy

A new Economic Strategy for Carlisle in its city-region will set the framework for intervention by the public sector, including the City Council, to expand and diversify the local economy. It will demonstrate how we can achieve new investment by the private sector and create new employment opportunities in Carlisle. [UPDATE HERE](#)

The City Council has a major role to play in the local economy, not least through the delivery of a wide range of statutory and non-statutory services. The Economic

¹⁵ Qualifications at Level 1 of the NQF include GCSE grades D – G and NVQ1; Level 3 include 'A' and 'AS' levels and NVQ3

¹⁶ Equivalent to GCSE

¹⁷ Get On Local Government Award – for Local Authorities that effectively address Skills for Life

¹⁸ A tool that will help the Council to achieve continuous improvement

Strategy will challenge us to ensure that these services are “fit for purpose” in supporting the needs of the local economy whilst delivering value for money.

During 2007 we will be overseeing a £1.5m programme of economic activity, including support for new businesses, and education and training projects for those made redundant and out of work. We expect this to be followed by a more extensive programme from 2008 onwards, as we use the Economic Strategy to secure external funding and support.

Development Framework and Movement Strategy

A City Centre Development Framework & City-wide Movement Strategy will set out how we will revitalise the city centre and improve the infrastructure for all modes of transport into and around the city. The Development Framework will guide investment in the physical regeneration of key areas within the city centre and the public realm that binds it together.

Redevelopment of major sites such as Rickergate will be subject to the Local Plan Inquiry in mid 2007. During this year we will seek to bring forward development opportunities on sites owned by the City Council and actively encourage investment by the private sector where it supports our overall objectives.

In 2007 we will prepare detailed plans for a series of major public realm schemes that can be implemented from 2008 onwards at key locations within the city centre. These will have maximum impact on the attractiveness of the city centre and in stimulating or supporting complementary private sector investment.

The Movement Strategy sets out a long term plan for a more balanced pattern of movement within Carlisle, one that addresses the environmental and economic impact of congestion, extends the quality, frequency and reach of public transport provision, and encourages walking and cycling. It also links land use and transport policy in a way that will enable some of the financial benefits from development in the city centre to be invested in the city-wide movement infrastructure.

Area Transport Plan

In 2007 a new Area Transport Plan for Carlisle will be published by Cumbria County Council, which will link the Movement Strategy into transport planning for the District and the County. The City Council has committed resources to the Carlisle Northern Development Route (CNDR) to support its implementation from 2007 onwards. It is also supporting the Environment Agency to integrate walking/cycling routes into the flood defence works and funding a study into reducing the severance impact of Castle Way. The Movement Strategy will prioritise further work on movement schemes from 2007 onwards.

Tourism

Tourism is an important sector within the local economy and the Renaissance Agenda. During the period of this plan we will be seeking to extend the tourism offer and the visibility of Carlisle to a wider audience. In addition to improvements to the public realm in the city centre, we will take steps to expand the cultural, leisure and

retail offer and encourage investment in high quality hotel and conference facilities, attractive to both leisure and business visitors.

The role of Hadrian's Wall Heritage in extending Carlisle's tourism offer, and Cumbria Tourism in marketing and promoting it, are fundamental and during 2007 we will seek a more robust and effective mechanism for engaging these key partners. During 2007 we will:

- ✓ Work with local tourism operators to develop their businesses
- ✓ Extend the scope and scale of tourism festivals within the city centre
- ✓ Examine the potential of a Business Improvement District (BID) [define] in Carlisle City Centre.

Social Inclusion

Tackling deprivation is a key objective of the Renaissance Agenda and the Carlisle Partnership. The pattern of deprivation within Carlisle is a complex one. Only two wards (Botcherby and Upperby) fall within the top 10% most deprived in England as measured by The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)¹⁹. However, many wards across the district exhibit at least one IMD indicator in the top 10-20% most deprived, for example in rural wards this is typically around access to services and housing.

The complexity of deprivation and therefore what it takes to address it requires partnership working between a wide range of organisations. The four priority groups of the Carlisle Partnership have identified priorities for action across the IMD indicators via the LAA and during 2007 the partnership will be expected to make specific, measurable progress on achieving these targets. Carlisle is not eligible for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding from Central Government (available to the most deprived areas) to support this activity and therefore we will need to be innovative in generating new funding streams, and creative in maximising the value of existing funding.

Funding

The City Council has committed £1.050m to 2008/09 to support the delivery of Carlisle Renaissance, supplemented by a further £0.3m from English Partnerships. In 2007, the North West Development Agency (NWDA) committed £1m to an interim programme of activities, to which the City Council added a further £0.5m. The NWDA, via Cumbria Vision, has made a provisional allocation of a further £10m to Carlisle Renaissance in the period to 2008/09. The use of these resources will be guided in part by the Economic Strategy, the Development Framework & Movement Strategy and the Community Strategy for Carlisle being developed by the Carlisle Partnership.

During 2007, the City Council will examine the range of mechanisms available to support the delivery of the Renaissance Agenda, including those identified in the Local Government Act (2007), and work with partners such as RENEW²⁰ to strengthen local capacity and expand the use of best practice. It will continue to demonstrate its commitment to effective consultation and engaging the local residents and business community in shaping the future of their City.

¹⁹ The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures levels of deprivation across the country within each SOA according to 7 different domains Income, Employment, Health, Education, Barriers to housing and services, Crime and Living Environment. For more information on IMD <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1128439>

²⁰ Regional Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Communities

Use of Resources and Value for Money INSERT

(As per the Summary of Accounts Booklet updated for 2007/08 & expanded to include 05/06 Actual and 2008/09 & 2009/10 budgets)

Spending on Services

The Council has approved a net budget requirement of £16.122 million for 2007/08 to run its services, an increase in of £0.466 million (or 3%) over the previous year.

In arriving at this figure, the Council has included money to meet a series of ongoing commitments, new initiatives and priorities including: -

- Estimated ongoing costs for Job Evaluation, £1 million
- Additional costs of the Concessionary Travel scheme, which was enhanced in 2006/07 above the minimum level set by the Government, £145,000
- A commitment to Carlisle Renaissance, £340,000
- Increased energy costs, £100,000
- Money to replace reductions on Government grants to ensure essential services are maintained, £191,000
- Inflationary increases to meet salary and wage awards of 3% p.a. and of 2.1% p.a. to meet inflationary increases for other costs, £950,000
- A shortfall in income from car parking, £180,000

To offset these increases, the Council has reviewed other areas of its services and has:

- Identified savings in spending of £173,000
- Identified areas where additional income can be raised by increases in fees and charges to provide £245,000
- Increased the interest received on its investments by £409,000

However, the major source of additional income to the Council has been provided by increases in Government grants with the Government providing an extra £1.728 million through its Revenue Support Grant (£340,000) and Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (£1.388 million).

Overall, these changes to spending and income has enabled the Council to set a net budget requirement that means an increase of 3.5% in the Council Tax to be paid by residents of Carlisle in 2007/08. The Band D equivalent for 2007/08, which is the measure that is monitored at a national level, has therefore increased by £5.99 in the year to £177.02.

The Council is also developing a strategy to deliver recurring savings within its revenue budget. This will include:

- Service Improvement Reviews designed to achieve a 5% reduction in the gross revenue budget or level of support provided by Council reserves for years 2008/09 and 2009/10, whilst at the same time maintaining effective services

- A review of the assets used by the Council to deliver a reduction in recurring costs or provide additional ongoing income yields
- Develop shared services, with other public sector agencies to achieve cashable savings
- Proposals to reduce the Council's base budget by £130,000 p.a. in proportion to underspends by services in the previous financial years

The Executive will monitor the development of the strategy and progress towards the achievement of its objectives.

Consultation on budget

The Executive issued its draft budget proposals on 18 December 2006 and held a formal consultation period between 19 December 2006 and 18 January 2007 when stakeholders, including local people, were invited to submit their views on the budget proposals to the Council. Also, during this period, formal consultation meetings with the Larger Employers Affinity Group, Trades Unions and the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Risk assessment

Budgeting is inherently a risky business and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan has identified the level of risk associated with the budget setting process. Table 1 below sets out the key risks that have been identified and the level of control that is in place to reduce the risks to a minimum: -

Risk	Likelihood	Level of Risk	Severity	Control
The assumptions contributing to the Financial Plan prove to be incorrect.	Low/Medium	Low/Medium	Medium	Review budget forecasts regularly and continually adjust for known and likely variations that impact on the forecast
Spending exceeds budget or assumed income levels not achieved	Medium	Low	Medium	Regular budgetary monitoring reports. Updates to medium term financial strategy
Unforeseen spending	Low	Low	Medium	Budget Monitoring. Adequate contingency reserve. Updates to medium term financial strategy
New Schemes / Initiatives	Low	Medium	Medium	Review priorities. Assess effects on budget. Updates to medium term financial strategy
Dependence on reserves and general balances	Low	Low	High	Compliance with CIPFA / Audit Commission recommendations on level of balances and reserves
Efficiency Savings or budget savings not achieved	Medium	Medium	High	Review budget forecasts regularly and continually adjust for known and likely variations that impact on the forecast
Changes to existing Government grant regimes e.g. RSG, Housing Benefits	Medium	Medium	High	Review service priorities, assess other funding opportunities, update medium term financial strategy
Changes to the local government finance system as a result of the Lyons review	Medium	Medium	High	Report due in 2007. Assess implications of proposals and impact on medium term financial strategy

Table 1: Risks and means of control

Sensitivity Analysis

Any of these risks can potentially have a significant impact on the Council's budget. Particularly sensitive areas include: -

Change	Cost (+)/ Saving (-) £'000
1. Every 1% change in Revenue Support Grant	+ / - 101
2. Every 1% change in the level of income received from fees & charges	+ / - 45
3. Every 1% change in the cost of employing staff	+ / - 185
4. Every 1% change in general inflation	+ / - 127
5. Every 1 % increase in Council Tax raises	+ 60

The Council's ability to set a balanced budget needs to take out account of as many of these factors as possible. If incorrect or inaccurate assumptions are made then the increase in the level of Council Tax required to meet the costs of running Council services could rise by a proportionately greater amount. Based on 2007/08 budget assumptions, a 1% increase in the level of Council Tax would raise approximately £58,000, far lower than the potential movements in costs and income in the risk areas highlighted.

The Council's Budget

This section deals with the analysis of the Council's budget over its priorities. The information contained here also projects the current year's budget over the following two years to give an indication of likely spending on Council priorities over a three-year period.

Where does the money come from?

	2007/08 Estimate		2008/09 Estimate		2009/10 Estimate	
	£000's	%	£000's	%	£000's	%
Local Taxes - Council Tax	6,390	10	6,627	10	6,873	10
Local Taxes - Council Tax Surplus	11	0	11	0	11	0
Business Rates	8,658	14	8,658	13	8,658	13
Revenue Support Grant	1,453	2	1,453	2	1,453	2
	<u>16,512</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>16,749</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>16,995</u>	<u>25</u>
Grants & Receipts	32,179	52	35,940	53	36,617	53
Fees & Charges	12,531	20	13,996	21	14,259	21
Reserves	563	1	629	1	641	1
	<u>61,785</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>67,314</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>68,512</u>	<u>100</u>

Note – The 2008/09 and 2009/10 figures at this stage are for indicative purposes only.

Where does the money go?

By Statement of Accounts Format:

	2007/08 Estimate			2008/09 Estimate			2009/10 Estimate		
	(Gross) £000's	(Net) £000's	%	(Gross) £000's	(Net) £000's	%	(Gross) £000's	(Net) £000's	%
Culture, Economy & Environment	18,336	10,650	30	19,984	11,607	30	20,338	11,814	30
Highways, Roads & Transport	2,808	659	5	3,060	718	5	3,115	731	5
Housing Services	27,425	606	44	29,891	660	44	30,421	672	44
Central Services	12,826	4,770	21	13,979	5,199	21	14,227	5,291	21
Exceptional Item (Flood)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Money Requested by Parish Councils	390	390	1	400	400	1	410	410	1
Money taken from reserves	-	(563)		-	(1,836)		-	(1,923)	
	61,785	16,512	100	67,314	16,749	100	68,512	16,995	100

Note – The 2008/09 and 2009/10 figures at this stage are for indicative purposes only.

By Priority

Further analysis is required on attaching spending to our key priorities.

Capital Spending

In addition to its revenue budget, the Council spends significant amounts on money investing in its assets and in providing grant assistance to homeowners to improve the standard of housing within the borough. This spending is not paid for through Council Tax but from money received from the sale of land and property owned by the Council and in some cases from grants from the government and other agencies.

This section deals with the analysis of the Council's programme over its priorities. The information contained here also projects the current year's capital programme over the following two years to give an indication of likely spending on Council priorities over a three-year period.

Capital Spend by Priority

Further analysis is required on attaching the capital programme to our key priorities.

Efficiencies achieved and planned 2005/06 to 2007/08

[To be completed when an up to date position has been reported to SMT](#)

Value for money

A number of "core" services are provided by local councils that you expect to be of a high standard. The City Council pledges to provide high quality, customer focussed services that offer value for money to our local taxpayers.

[\[Insert service standards for the following:\]](#)

Housing benefit applications
Collect council tax & business rates
INSERT Concessionary fares
Pay invoices
Planning applications
Food hygiene inspections

Health and safety inspections at places of work
First point of contact
Complaints
Respond to requests for information
Stays in hostels
Not use bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families
Disabled adaptations applications
Ensure transparency in our operations by sending out committee papers 5 working days in advance of meetings
Ensure access to our buildings for all where this is possible

We shall publicise our service standards and regularly report to you on our progress. In this way, you are able to make a judgement on how well the Council is performing and through providing feedback, can work with us to help us to improve.

[SOMETHING ABOUT building the brand / reputation of Carlisle City Council, publicising and celebrating success](#)

Equality and diversity

Carlisle City Council is committed to ensuring the delivery of excellent public services to everyone living, working, studying and visiting the area. For us, the work we are doing on equality and diversity is part and parcel of our efforts to improve the services we offer to our local communities.

To do this properly it means that the Council must ensure that the varied needs and circumstances of residents and employees are met and that its services are provided to all without discrimination.

The Council recognises the increasing diversity of the area and is committed to ensuring that all groups within the community are able to participate in the design and delivery of Council services.

In response to the legal requirements and to ensure that the Council's approach to equality and diversity is fully understood in the context of the provision of excellent public services the Council has adopted an **Equality and Diversity Policy**. In addition, there is a **Race Equality Scheme** and a **Disability Equality Scheme** which detail what the Council is doing to ensure that the needs of different racial groups and disabled people are taken into account when planning and delivering services. In April 2007, the Council will also have agreed a **Gender Equality Scheme**.

The Council's **Corporate Equality Plan 2007 – 2010** combines the commitments and actions contained within each of these schemes. The purpose of this is to ensure that there is real and practical change in the way the Council delivers its services, in the way it recruits, employs and promotes people within the organisation and in the way that the Council seeks to engage with the community

Carlisle City Council has adopted the **Equality Standard for Local Government** as a mechanism for continually developing our work on equality and diversity. The standard helps to ensure that considerations of equality are built into all our decision making as an employer, service provider and community leader.

Carlisle City Council is currently at Level 1 of the standard and hopes to achieve Level 2 by March 2008.

Governance

People

Carlisle City Council has 785 employees. Significantly reducing the number of days lost to sickness has meant we have improved our capacity to deliver services. We are also “growing our own” to counter national skills shortages in some areas like planning. We are increasing the skills of our existing workforce through Learning City and Leading by Example, and encouraging others in the Local Partnership to do the same.

Hierarchy of Plans

The Community Plan for Carlisle and the City Council’s Corporate Improvement Plan (this Plan) contain the vision, the high level aims for Carlisle.

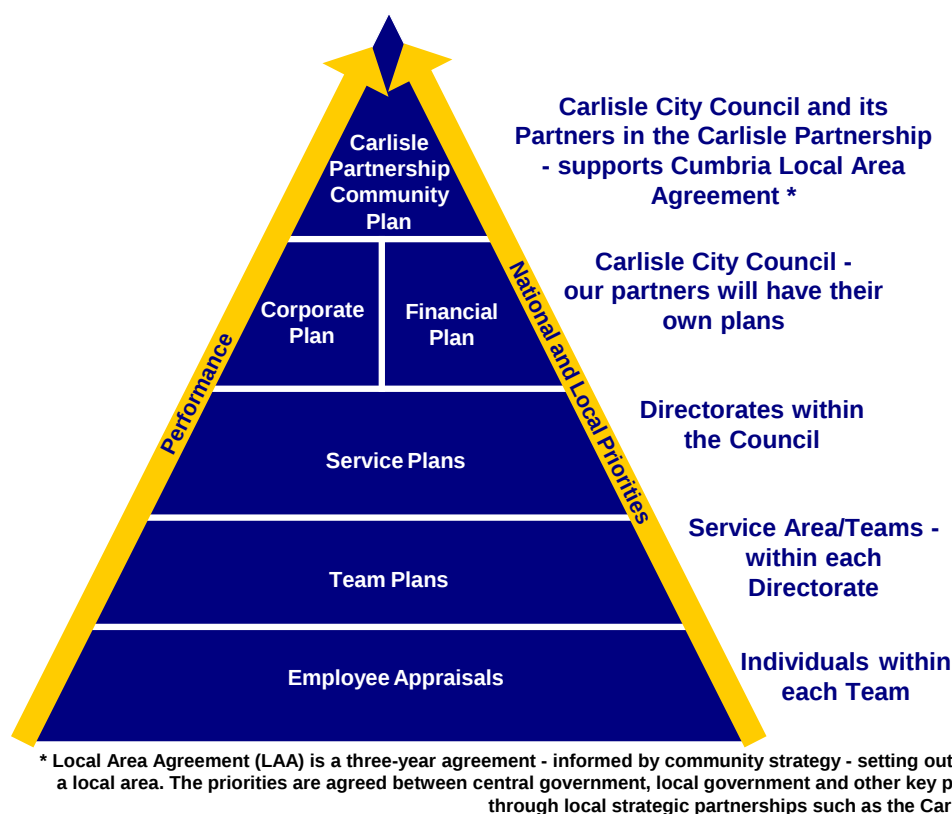
However, it is only through the more detailed service and financial planning that these will be achieved.

The service planning process is our opportunity to make rational and co-ordinated decisions about levels and types of service delivery - and how and where to use resources, i.e. finance, people, land, buildings. It is also a means of assessing risks to achieving our objectives and ways in which to manage those risks.

Allocation of funding should be based on a clear set of priorities so service plans need to be integrated with budgeting and financial planning.

The diagram below shows how our plans fit together, how service planning and team planning link in, and how all employees’ appraisals feed into the overall priorities.

Hierarchy of plans



Continuous Improvement

Performance management is defined as – “taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes for users and the public better than they would have been.” All councils have a “Best Value²¹” duty to plan for continuous improvement. The City Council is ensuring that it improves its performance in a number of ways:

- Leading by example in promoting a Learning City and reducing our impact on the environment
- Developing “best practice” service planning which includes ensuring best use of our resources to deliver services that local people want – and to the right standard. Service planning is our opportunity to make decisions about levels and types of services that we are going to provide and how and where we are going to use our resources²². It is also a means of assessing risks to achieving our priorities and ways in which we can manage those risks. Allocation of funding should be based on our clear set of priorities so appropriate financial resources are allocated to achieving what we say we are going to do so we can meet expectations of local people.
- Managing our performance and taking action when things are not going well
- Learning from how others do things
- Reviewing our services on a rolling programme to assess value for money [\[insert findings of Community Development review if available\]](#)

²¹ Local Government Act, 2000

²² Resources include finance, people and the skills they have, and assets such as buildings, land and equipment

Peer Review

As part of the Council's drive for continuous improvement, we invited a peer review team²³ to spend a few days with us to highlight areas where we thought we were performing strongly and those areas where we felt we still faced challenges. The review involved our own staff and councillors, but also many others from outside the Council.

Initial recommendations were around defining our key priorities, engaging middle managers in performance management, and visible community leadership [\[and how we will tackle these should be reflected in the corporate plan....\]](#)

What happens next?

Progress on our plans is reported every quarter to our Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees. We will ensure that this information is accessible to you to encourage your involvement in decisions about how the Council can improve. Our plans will be reviewed every year, taking into account progress we have made, as judged by you, and by external inspection, the changing needs of our local communities, and what you have told us. It is important to the Council that you play a key role in this process and we will do what we can to make this easier by regular communications.

²³ Chief Executive and Leader from other good or excellent councils and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDEA)