OXFORD
CITY
COUNCIL

# The Oxford Plan

## Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan

### 2005/2008- (Draft)

This document sets out the objectives and priorities for Oxford City Council for 2005 to 2008 based on public priorities, local and central government priorities and audit and inspection advice. It brings together the council's ambitions for Oxford and for the Council as an organisation. It brings together the higher level aims within other key documents:

- Our Vision

- Our Improvement Plan

- Our Community Strategy

To help minimise the number of planning documents that we have The Oxford Plan will also become our Best Value Performance Plan for 2004/2005 by the addition of performance data for 2004/2005 as soon as it becomes available at the end of the year.

We intend that the Oxford Plan should provide one central access point to the plans of the Council and act as a basis for the rest of our business planning and budget process. Whilst this document aims to bring the high level aims of the Council together it is necessarily supported by more in-depth strategies, plans and policies, many of which we are required to provide by law, central government guidance or accepted best practice. The key supporting document to this plan is the Budget Book. The Budget Book provides details of the resources allocated to deliver the statutory duties of the council and the priorities outlined in this plan. The budget 2005/2006 is currently being finalised through the Council's decision-making process.

The Oxford Plan for 2005-2008 is our first corporate plan and the process of drafting it has itself proved to be a learning opportunity for the organisation. We intend to build on what we have learned from this experience in future years, developing our business planning processes to establish a robust, timely review of our direction and performance and building an open structure around which we can further coordinate the review of the Oxford Plan next year and in years to come.

# The Oxford Plan (Draft)

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# 1.0  A Statement by the Leader of the Council

The city of Oxford is a dynamic and exciting place to live and work and the council is working hard to ensure it plays its part in creating a lively, clean and safe city that meets the needs of all citizens – and particularly those who have previously been excluded from city life.

Disappointingly, we were deemed to be a 'weak' council by the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment earlier this year and the inspection helped us to realise we have not always focused as much as we should on the needs of our residents and the customers of our services. For example, our satisfaction survey in October 2003 showed we had increased resident satisfaction by only two percentage points – a small amount but notable when compared with other district councils who, on average, witnessed a reduction of 10% during the same period.  However, we recognise we have still a long way to go and I can definitely say that all elected members, irrespective of political party, are determined to put every effort into improving our services and making sure we prioritise those which our citizens tell us are the most important. Our determination is shown in our commitment to do all we can to make sure we move up the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment scale to 'fair' and 'good' over the next two years with our ultimate aim being to be seen as an 'excellent' council of which all the people living and working in the city can feel proud.

This, our first corporate plan, therefore describes our priorities for the next three years and sets the scene for the future.  We have listened to what the people of Oxford have told us and we have set our objectives and our actions in ways we think and hope will meet these aspirations.

We want to work in close partnership with individuals, faith and voluntary groups, businesses, health, police, the ambulance and fire services, the universities and colleges and the County Council to deliver our priorities.  These are to:

- Improve the local environment
- Make Oxford a safer city
- Provide more affordable and better quality social housing
- Create prosperity and full employment
- Improve transport and mobility
- Provide more and affordable leisure facilities
- Improve dialogue and consultation

We hope you will work with us to make this an even greater city.  If you have any comments on this plan we welcome your contribution.  You can either write to me at the town hall or email us at improvement@oxford.gov.uk.

**Alex Hollingsworth, Leader of the Council**

22/12/2004

# 2.0 Your Council – How it works

Oxford City Council is a district council covering only 17.6 square miles. It is the county town of Oxfordshire and has historic assets of international significance. It is a world-class educational centre, an international business hub, a global tourist destination and a world-renowned centre for medical science.

Few cities contain more magnificent buildings, gardens and open spaces within such a restricted area. Watercourses, including the River Thames or Isis, add to the attraction of the city and provide ecological value and opportunities for leisure. This is all part of the distinctive character of Oxford. It is an affluent city but contains pockets of severe deprivation. Oxford is however undergoing evolutionary change to deliver urban regeneration, such as the West End Renaissance programme which will unlock the city's economic potential.

The people of Oxford tell us they feel a strong sense of community and of the city's history and identity. Across all ages, people feel the city is cosmopolitan, are proud of the universities, our parks and open spaces and generally feel the city is comfortable and safe.

## 2.1 What the council does

Our responsibilities include local planning, housing and environmental health, electoral registration, refuse collection, leisure and parks services, markets and fairs, tourism and cemeteries. We are also responsible for collecting the Council Tax and, on behalf of government, Business Rates.

In partnership with other agencies (public, private and voluntary) we provide a wide range of services for our 134,600 residents, the 100,000 people who work in Oxford and the additional 7.6 million people who visit the city every year. One of the other major service providers in the city is Oxfordshire County Council. With two different council's providing services within the city it can be difficult for people to know which organisation provides which service.

Services provided by Oxfordshire County Council are:

- Schools
- Social services
- Fire service
- Roads
- Libraries and museums
- Trading standards
- Transport planning
- Waste disposal
- Planning and monitoring land use

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We spend over £113 million a year providing services. Some of this we receive in subsidies and grants from central government and some through the fees, charges and rents we levy, but £9 million has to be funded locally from our share of the Council Tax. Not all of the Council Tax comes to us; most goes to the County Council and some to Thames Valley Police. A significant increase in the funding required for County and police services has resulted in a high rate of increase to Council Tax in Oxford over the last few years. To help pay for the services you receive from Oxford City Council we get only 17p of every pound of Council Tax we collect. For a band D Council Tax payer that came to £215 of a £1,261 bill for 2004/2005, or £17.92 per month.

## 2.2 Representing the people of Oxford - political structure of the council

The council is composed of 48 councillors representing the 24 wards that make up our city. Every two years half the council seats are up for election. Councillors are democratically elected by residents of their ward and whilst the overriding duty of councillors is to the whole community they have a special duty to those who live in the ward they represent. The elected council also represents the interests of the people of Oxford to the County Council, the South East Region government office and national government. Councillors have made a commitment to listen carefully to all points of view in the city and to defend the rights of Oxford Citizens.

Following the 2004 local elections, the council's political makeup is:

*Figure 1 – Political representation of Oxford City Council as at November 2004*

**Number of Council Seats by Political Party**

IWCA 3

Green 7     Labour 20

Lib Dem 18
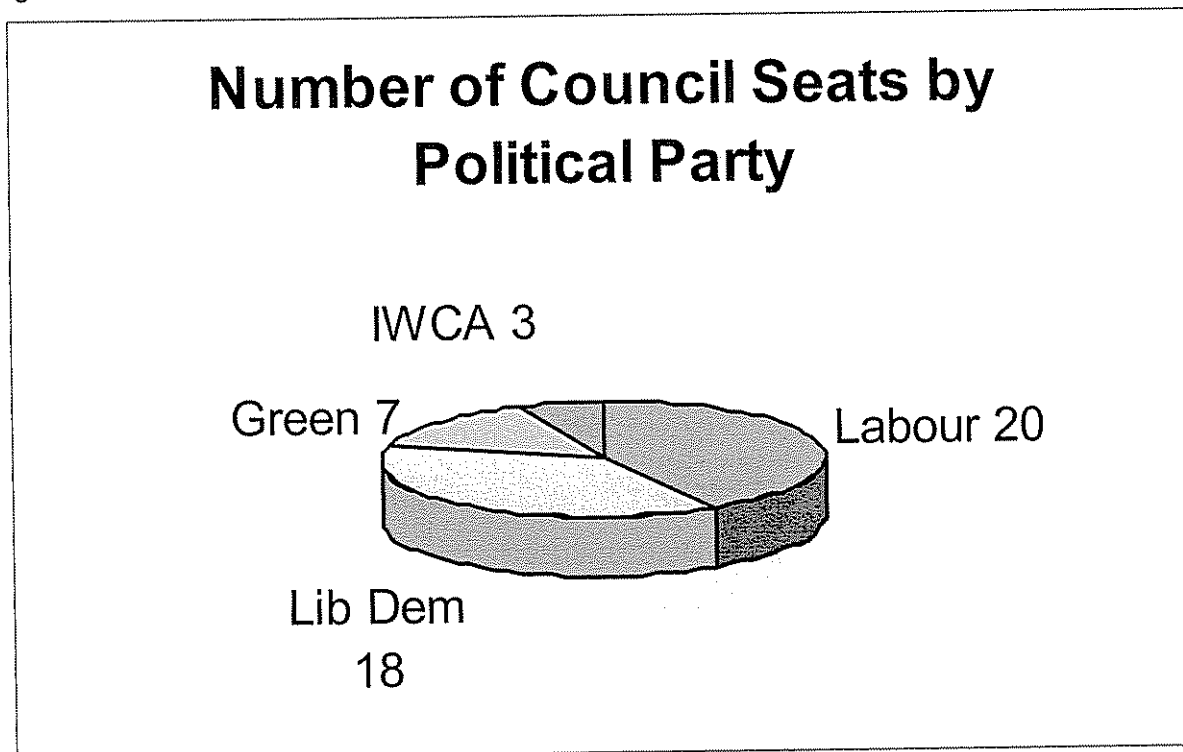
[1] IWCA are the Independent Working Class Association

## 2.2.1  The Decision Making Structure of the Council.

The council's decision-making structures are based on four key elements supported by additional committees charged with making decisions on some specific issues. Examples include the Licensing Committee and advisory boards such as the Improvement Board the housing advisory board and the 'Housing Revenue Account Management Board'.

The four main elements in the decision-making structures are:
- **Full Council** is made up of all the elected members of the council and it decides on policies, priorities and budgets and elects the Executive Board members.
- The **Executive Board** is a cabinet of councillors and a leader who aims to provide clear and accountable leadership.
- There are six **Area Committees** with some devolved powers and budgets.
- **Scrutiny Committees** examine and review decision-making of the council.

*Figure 2 – The decision-making structure of Oxford City Council*
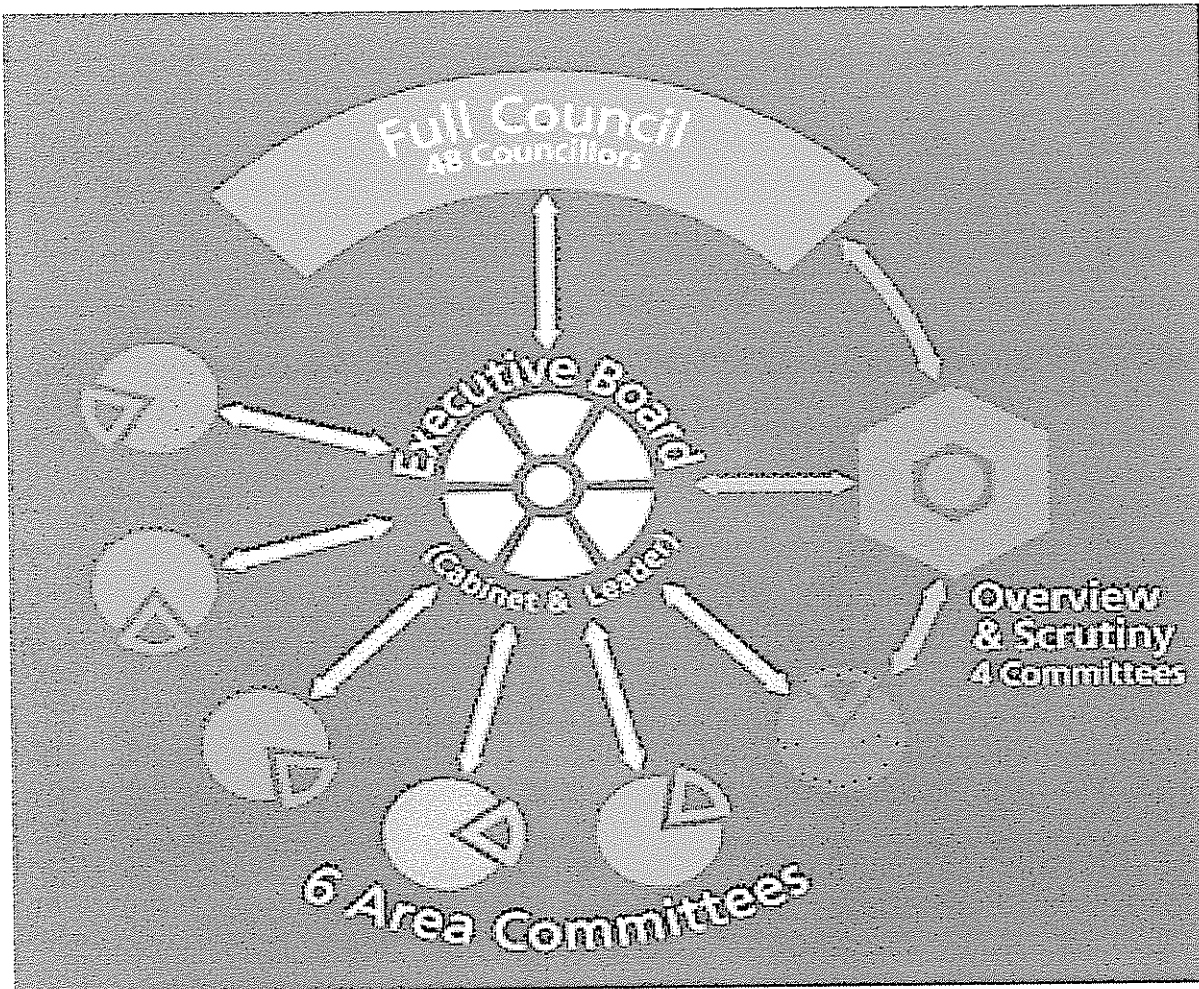


## 2.2.2 More about the Executive Board

The Executive are the decision making body of the council for most decisions. Whilst the majority of its members are from the Labour Party, this being the political party with the largest number of seats on the council, there are two councillors from opposition parties.

*Figure 3 – The members of the Executive Board as at November 2004*

| Member | Portfolio |
| --- | --- |
| Alexander Hollingsworth | Chair and Financial Stability and Asset Management |
| Alan Armitage | Liberal Democrat Opposition |
| William Baker | Corporate Governance & Procurement |
| Susan Brown | Crime & Community Safety |
| Maureen Christian | Culture, Events and Tourism |
| Mary Clarkson | Local Environment |
| Daniel Paskins | Social Inclusion |
| Craig Simmons | Green Opposition |
| John Tanner | Performance and Service Quality |
| Edward Turner | Strategic Planning, Housing and Economic Development |

### 2.2.3  More about Area Committees

Since November 2001 area committees have been meeting on a regular monthly basis. There are six Area Committees each covering several wards of the city as shown below in Figures 4 and 5.

*Figure 4 – The Area Committees for each Ward*

| Area Committee and name of Chair | Wards Represented |
|---|---|
| **North** – Jim Campbell | Summertown, Wolvercote, St. Margaret's and North |
| **North East** – Dee Sinclair | Marston, Headington Hill & Northway, Headington, Barton & Sandhills, Quarry & Risinghurst and Churchill. |
| **East** - Craig Simmons | St. Clement's, St. Mary's and Iffley Fields |
| **South East** - Jill Sanders | Rose Hill & Iffley, Littlemore, Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook |
| **Central, South and West** - Paul Sargent | Jericho & Osney, Carfax, Holywell and Hinksey Park |
| **Cowley** - Bryan Keen | Cowley Marsh, Lye Valley and Cowley |

Each Area Committee is made up of the ward councillors for its area. The County Councillors for the area and parish council representatives are also members but on a non-voting basis. Partnerships are being developed with the Police and the Oxford City Primary Care Trust who are usually present at the Area Committees too. Each Area Committee appoints its own Chair and Vice-Chair and is supported by an Area Co-ordinator.

The Area Committees form part of Oxford City Council's democratic structure and are responsible for the following services in their areas:

- Planning applications
- Street cleaning
- Abandoned vehicles
- Public toilets
- Parks, play areas and countryside/green spaces

- Off street car parking
- Dog wardens
- Community centres
- Ditches and streams

Each area is developing an Area Plan to shape and improve services in each area.

**When and where does your Area Committee meet?**

Find out about which is your area committee, when and where they meet and more about how to have your concerns heard, from:

- Our website at www.oxford.gov.uk, under 'Your Council', 'Area Committees'

- By telephoning 01865 249811 and asking for Area Committee Co-ordinators

*Figure 5 : Political wards within Oxford City grouped by Area Committee.*
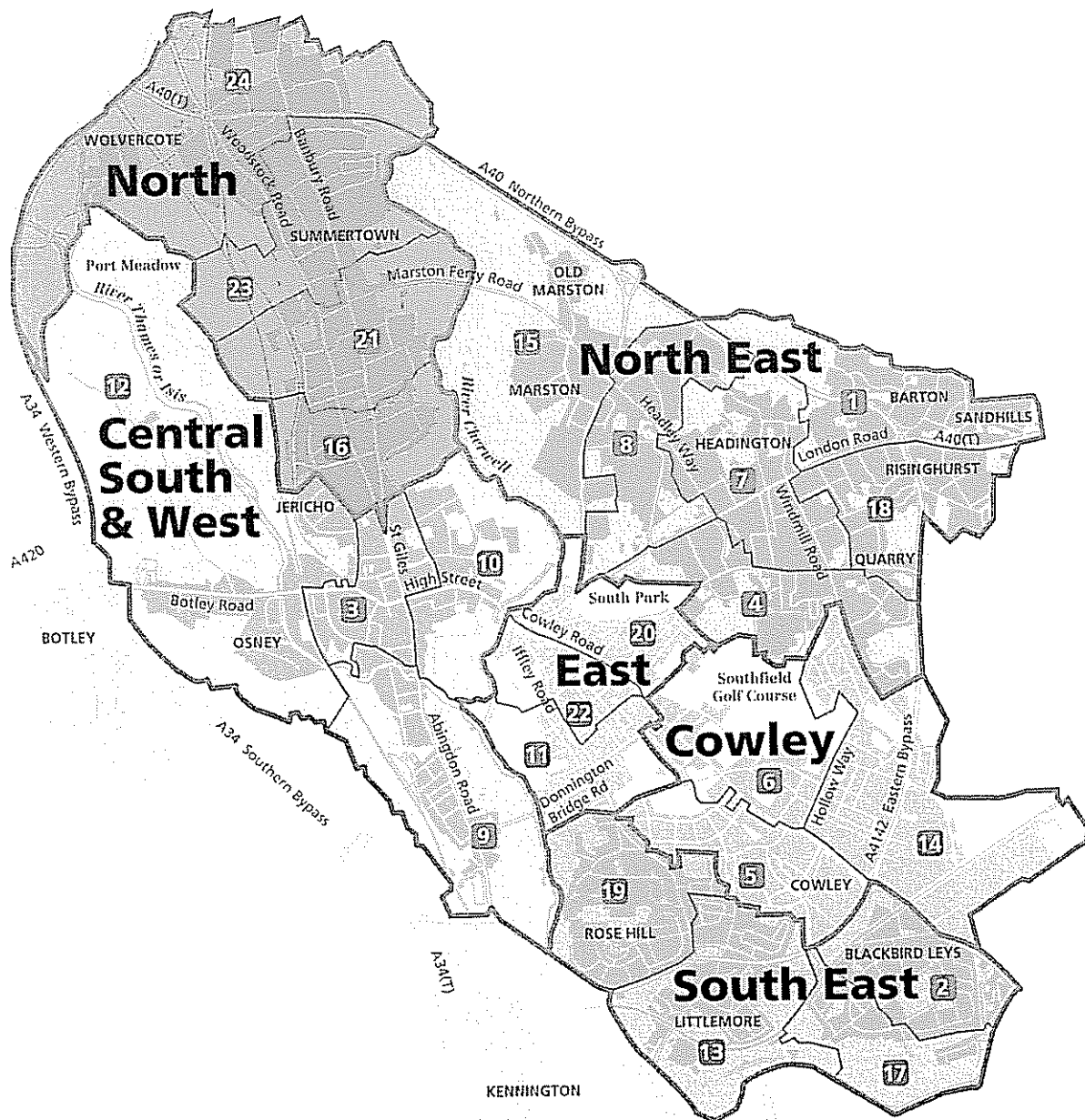
### 2.2.4 More about Scrutiny Committees

The City Council has five Scrutiny Committees. These hold the Executive Board to account by reviewing their decisions, reviewing the policies of the council and helping develop emerging policies.

Each committee has nine councillors. To avoid any conflict of interest none of these councillors can be members of the Executive Board. Committee members are drawn from all the political parties that make up the full council.

There are 5 scrutiny committees that focus on different aspects of the council's work:

- Finance
- Housing
- Community
- Environment
- Health

The meetings are open to the public. Anyone attending may address the committees, either on an item already on the agenda or on any other matter within the remit of that particular committee.

### 2.2.5 The Council's Constitution

Oxford City Council agreed a new constitution in 2001 that sets out procedures for how the council operates and how decisions are made to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by law, while others are chosen by the council.

The constitution is grouped into sixteen parts or 'Articles'. These set out the rules governing the council's business. More detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in separate rules and protocols.

| Want to know more about the constitution? |
| --- |
| The constitution and attached rules and protocols can be obtained from:<br><br>- Our website at www.oxford.gov.uk, under 'Your Council', 'Strategies and Policies'<br>- By telephoning 01865 249811 and asking for Democratic Services Team |

## 2.2.6 Details of Council Meetings

The Council publishes details of the dates for meetings for the forthcoming four months, including information on the key decisions expected to be made. Nearer the date of the meeting, the agenda is published. The Council also publishes a record of what was discussed and the decisions taken.

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**Want to see more about what is happening at Council meetings?**

- You can see the Forward Plan, Agenda and Minutes of council meetings on our website at www.oxford.gov.uk , under 'Your Council'
- If you do not have access to the internet copies can be found at libraries, the Town Hall, Local Services Shops and a range of community organisations.

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**You can go to any council meeting.**

All meetings that form part of the Council's decision-making process are open to the public. You are entitled to attend any of them that you wish to. You may even be entitled to speak at the meeting. Find out more from:

- Our website at www.oxford.gov.uk, under 'Your Council'
- By telephoning 01865 249811 and asking for Democratic Services Team

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## 2.3    Delivering Services to the people of Oxford - Officer structure of the council

Elected councillors (often called 'members') set the policies and priorities of the council and the officers are charged with carrying them out. In total we have 1400 staff working to deliver council services to the people of Oxford.

The work of the council is currently divided into eighteen different service areas that we call Business Units. Each unit has a Business Manager, sixteen of whom report to one of the three Strategic Directors and two directly to the Chief Executive. The following diagram shows you who these people are and what they are responsible for managing. In Part Four of this plan you can see more details about the work of each Business Unit and what it aims to do to achieve the council's vision for Oxford.

22/12/2004

# Figure 6 – Oxford City Council's Senior Officer Structure

| PERFORMANCE & IMPROVEMENT TEAM Mick Lowe | CHIEF EXECUTIVE Caroline Bull | CORPORATE SECRETARIAT Michael Newman |
| --- | --- | --- |

| STRATEGIC DIRECTOR Finance & Corporate Services Mark Luntley | STRATEGIC DIRECTOR Physical Environment Sharon Cosgrove | STRATEGIC DIRECTOR Housing, Health & Community |
| --- | --- | --- |

**STRATEGY & REVIEW**
Janet Banfield

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
Anne-Marie Scott

**FINANCIAL & ASSET MANAGEMENT**
Sarah Fogden & Penny Gardner

**AUDIT & RISK**
Richard Josephs

**REVENUES & BENEFITS**
Paul Warters

**LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**
Brian Johnson (to 01/05)

**BUSINESS SYSTEMS**
Chris Brooke

**FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**
Jane Lubbock

**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**
John Hill

**PLANNING**
Michael Crofton-Briggs

**TRANSPORT AND PARKING**
Graham Smith

**LEISURE & PARKS**
Tony Stephens

**CITY WORKS**
Glen Wooldrige

**HOUSING SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS**
Karen Ravenhill & Graham Stratford

**CUSTOMER SERVICES**
Ian Barrett

**OXFORD BUILDING SOLUTIONS**
Graham Bourton

**NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL**
Val Johnson

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**
John Copley

| AREA CO-ORDINATORS Fergus Lapage Angela Cristofoli Rebecca Carley |
| --- |

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# 3.0 Your Priorities – Our Priorities. Vision into Action.

## 3.1 Oxford's Community Strategy

The Council works in partnership with other organisations delivering services in the area such as the County Council, Thames Valley Police, Oxford Primary Care Trust, both universities and OX1, (the city centre management company). We do this because working together we can make a greater difference to the lives of the people of Oxford. To help all the organisations in the Oxford Strategic Partnership work together we have agreed on a Community Strategy for Oxford. Our common goals are based on a wide range of research conducted by the partnership with residents and local communities. These goals are grouped into five themes:

- **A vibrant and inclusive economy**
- **Safer communities**
- **A better living environment**
- **Opportunities for life**
- **Active and healthy communities**

Oxford City Council's plans for Oxford have influenced the content of the Community Strategy, as have the plans of other members of the partnership. The Community Strategy is also reflected back to influence our plans. Some of aspects of the Community Strategy are influenced by what Oxford City Council does more than others, for example housing issues are a key area of responsibility for Oxford City Council. Other aspects are most strongly influenced by the work of other organisations in the partnership, for example encouraging healthy lifestyles is something that the Oxford City Primary Care Trust influences most strongly. But, whatever influence our work has we want to make sure that we are working towards the same aims. The Community Strategy therefore plays an important role in how Oxford City Council plans and prioritises its work.

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**Like to know more about the Oxford Strategic Partnership?**
You can find out more about the strategic partnership from its website, www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk

**Like to see a copy of the Community Strategy?**
Telephone us on 01865 249811 and ask for our Strategy and Review Team

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## 3.2 The Council's Vision Statement

In 2002 the council agreed the following Vision Statement:
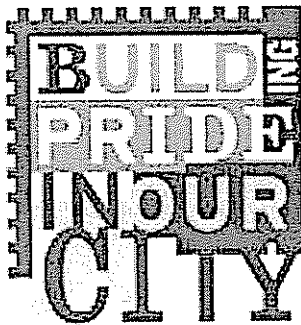
# Building Pride in Our City

**We believe that democratic local government can and should make a positive difference to people's lives. We want to work with all our communities to build a city that all our people can be proud of.**

The council has agreed to review the vision statement during 2005/2006 in order to make sure we are sensitive to the changing needs and priorities of the people of Oxford.

> Further information about our current Vision Statement can be obtained:
> - From our website at www.oxford.gov.uk
> - By telephoning us on 01865 249811 and asking for our Media and Communications Team

We intend to achieve the vision by working with others to deliver shared goals and improve the council's performance as we recognise we will only be successful if we:
- Have well trained staff who feel valued and are motivated;
- Have sound financial management;
- Aspire to improve whilst accepting that we must prioritise
- Are open and responsive to our customers needs.

We have developed seven priorities based on our consultation with the people of Oxford in 2004 who told us these were:

- Housing
- Safety;
- Environment;
- Prosperity;
- Consultation;
- Leisure; and
- Transport.

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## 3.3   What type of organisation do we want to be?

In order to deliver these priorities, Oxford City Council is determined to become an organisation where the people of Oxford and our staff are treated fairly.  We aspire to make our services accessible to all and to offer staff equal opportunity to succeed and develop. Therefore, the council has asked central government for money from the Capacity Building Fund to help us become the type of organisation we want to be.  Our ambitions for the culture of the organisation are as follows:

*Our ambition is to transform the culture of Oxford City Council by developing the skills, behaviours and capacity of our councillors and staff and to become an organisation where:*

- *The customer is the focus of service delivery.*
- *Staff are empowered to act within a clear governance framework.*
- *We enable flexibility and creativity in our thinking and our actions.*
- *We are business-like in the way we set our policy and financial framework and the way we procure our goods and services.*
- *We work closely in partnership with others to ensure the needs of our citizen's are met.*
- *We look forward and outward and learn from others.*

## 3.4   Deciding on priorities

We recognise we cannot change everything at once and that we have to decide what is most important and what we will do first by agreeing on priorities.  Our first priorities must always be making sure we provide those services for which we have a legal obligation, for example providing Housing and dealing with Council Tax Benefit claims.  But we also aim to make sure our other priorities reflect those of the people of Oxford.  To help us do this we carry out research through surveys and consultation.  We survey users of particular services and every three years carry out a general satisfaction survey. For specific projects, we also do more in depth research, for example through our panel of residents, Talkback.

Our 2003 customer survey helped us to identify what the people of Oxford would most like to change and this helped us develop our improvement plan, which is part of this Oxford Plan.  In September 2004 we undertook asked citizens what they thought our budget priorities should be.  This Oxford Plan also reflects the results of that consultation.

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**Want to find out more about consultation?**
Examples of some of the consultation work that has influenced the priorities in this plan include Budget Consultation in September 2004, Best Value Performance Indicator Surveys 2003/2004, and the Talkback Panel, Recruitment Survey in February 2004.  You can access more information on consultation:

- On our website at www.oxford.gov.uk
- By telephoning 01865 249811 and asking for our Consultation Officer
- By emailing consultation@oxford.gov.uk or
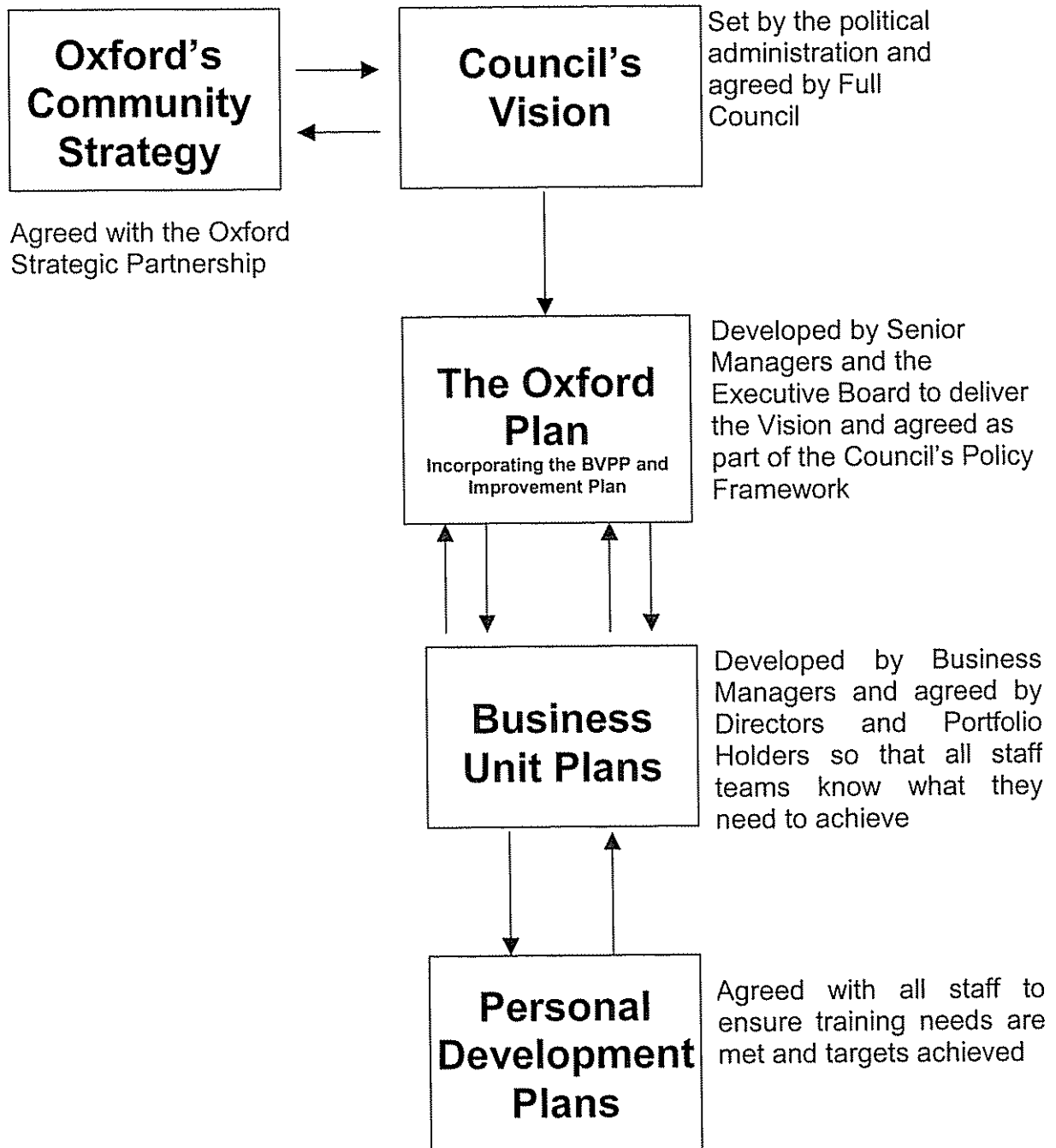
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## 3.5 Linking Priorities to Plans

One of the ways to make sure we can deliver services efficiently and stay focused on what we must do better is to set and agree our priorities not just in consultation with the public but also with other public service organisations in the area. Our agreed priorities are set out in several key documents. The key documents that we use to plan the delivery of our services are:

- **Oxford's Community Strategy** – this is the objectives and priorities that we have agreed for the area in partnership with other organisations in the city.

- **The Oxford Plan** – this is the document you are reading and it sets out the objectives and priorities for Oxford City Council based on our statutory duties, public priorities, local and central government priorities and audit and inspection advice. Sometimes we need to provide more details about how we are going to approach service delivery either corporately or in a specific service area. These additional details are contained in the supporting policies and strategies of the council, details of which can be found on our website or from our Strategy and Review Business Unit.

- **Area Plans** – plans based on local areas are being developed and once approved they will also integrate into the planning process of the council.

- **Business Plans** – each of our service areas or Business Units produces an annually reviewed three-year business unit plan. This gives more detailed information on what the Business Unit is setting out to do in the coming years, how much it will cost and whether goals for the previous year are achieved. The objectives of these Business Plans are based on the statutory duties of the council and the council's priorities as set out in the Oxford Plan.

- **Personal Development Plans** – as a council we can only achieve what we set out to do through our staff. We evaluate how well we are all performing to see how we might do even better the next year. We do this to make sure we give staff the training they need to succeed and we agree a personal development plan for every single one of them each year. The PDP is based on the skills each individual needs to do their job and work towards achieving the council's objectives.

All these documents help us translate our Vision Statement into practical plans of action for Oxford. In order for us to deliver improvements to our services and to the way we work all these plans must flow together. This is a two-way process; we monitor our performance at every level and feed this information back into the business planning process as we seek to continually improve. We recognise and support best practice and we also learn from our mistakes by evaluating our progress. In this way we intend to improve the quality and efficiency of the services we deliver.

The following diagram illustrates how the council's key planning documents relate to our Vision Statement and to each other to form the business planning and performance management framework. This helps us to coordinate our plans for service improvement according to our agreed priorities.

# Components of the Business Planning Framework

| Oxford's Community Strategy → ← Council's Vision | Set by the political administration and agreed by Full Council |

Agreed with the Oxford Strategic Partnership

| The Oxford Plan Incorporating the BVPP and Improvement Plan | Developed by Senior Managers and the Executive Board to deliver the Vision and agreed as part of the Council's Policy Framework |

| Business Unit Plans | Developed by Business Managers and agreed by Directors and Portfolio Holders so that all staff teams know what they need to achieve |

| Personal Development Plans | Agreed with all staff to ensure training needs are met and targets achieved |

## 3.6   Plans into action.

We have our priorities as agreed through public consultation on the Vision and the Community Strategy to guide what we do. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment carried out in February 2004 by the Audit Commission has also guided us. Unlike all previous inspections of the council this assessment looks not just at the services we provide but also how we go about our business. The report told us that whilst we are making significant improvements in some areas, standards of service are patchy and we

need to make substantial improvements to how we work and prioritise further. As a result of this the council developed a set of priorities for improvement. This was agreed by council and published in our Best Value Performance Plan in July 2004. Since then the plan has been refined and refocused. We now have two key aims of 'Improving Services' and 'Transforming the Way We Work', linked to the Vision with an underlying group of key objectives and supporting set of actions.

- **Improving Services** is a key aim of the council as our very reason for being here is to provide services to the people of Oxford. We want the services we provide to be efficiently run, good quality services that meet the needs of our citizens.

- **Transforming the Way we Work** is a key aim because we know that people expect the services they receive to be delivered efficiently, without waste. To ensure that we can do this we need to look at how we go about our business and make sure our staff, our processes and our systems co-ordinate, have focus and are the best they can be.
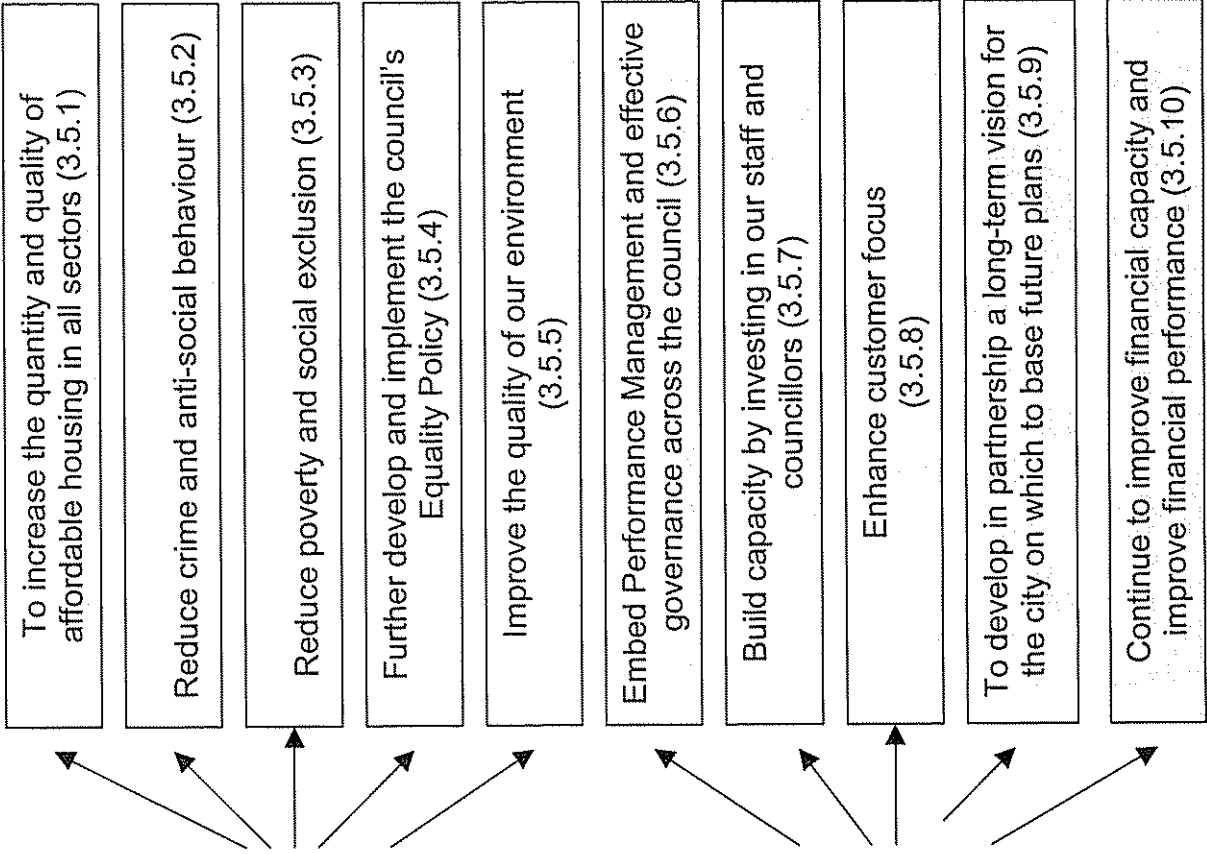
The diagram on the following page illustrates how the aims and objectives within our Improvement Plan link to the Council's Vision.

In 2004/2005 we produced our first Improvement Plan in which we focussed on some key transformational activities and those actions we believed we could and should achieve as rapidly as possible. For the coming three years there are further improvement activities that we intend to undertake and these are outlined at Appendix i.
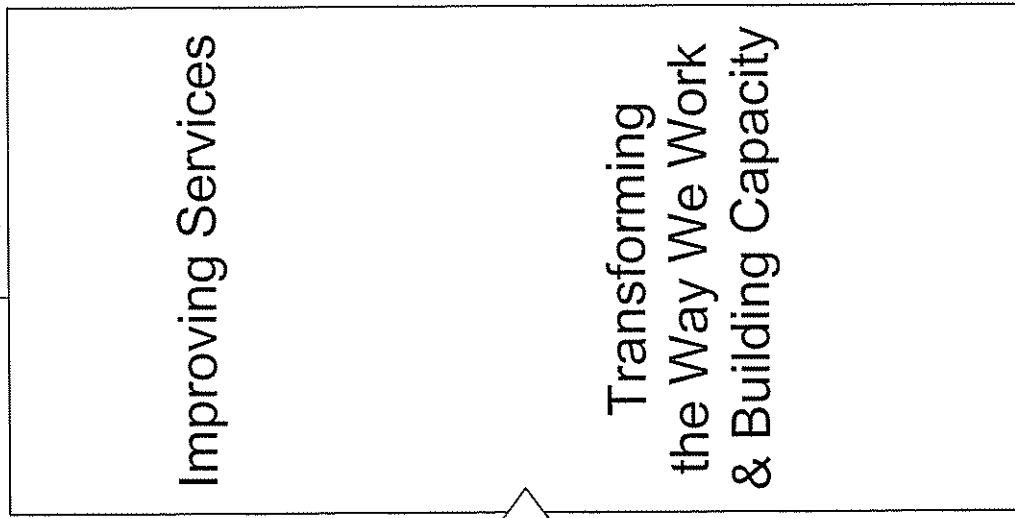
By March 2005 we will have made considerable sustainable improvements in our performance. These and some of the key improvement actions on which we will focus in the coming three years are explained in more detail in sections 3.6. Section 3.7 describes how we will monitor and report our performance against these targets.

Our budget book includes details of all business of all units of the council, many of which are recognised by the public and external inspection as providing a good quality of service. Higher quality service may not be a priority for improvement activity but we aim to maintain the quality of these services and make further improvements where we can.
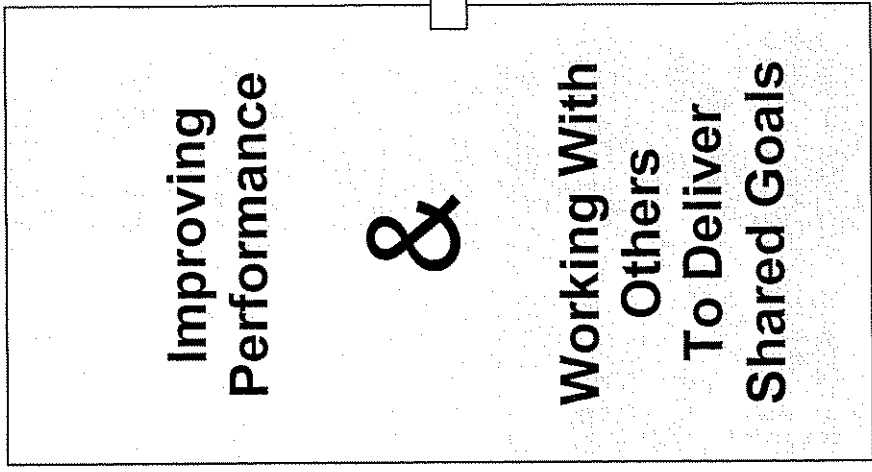
22/12/2004

# OUR IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

- To increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing in all sectors (3.5.1)
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (3.5.2)
- Reduce poverty and social exclusion (3.5.3)
- Further develop and implement the council's Equality Policy (3.5.4)
- Improve the quality of our environment (3.5.5)
- Embed Performance Management and effective governance across the council (3.5.6)
- Build capacity by investing in our staff and councillors (3.5.7)
- Enhance customer focus (3.5.8)
- To develop in partnership a long-term vision for the city on which to base future plans (3.5.9)
- Continue to improve financial capacity and improve financial performance (3.5.10)

LINKAGE WITH IMPROVEMENT AIMS

Improving Services

Transforming the Way We Work & Building Capacity

# OUR VISION

Improving Performance

&

Working With Others To Deliver Shared Goals

22/12/2004

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H Rowlands

### 3.6.1  Improving Services - To increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing in all sectors.

> **This priority for improvement links to:**
> - The council's strategic priority to provide more affordable housing.
> - The Community Strategy objective to improve the supply and condition of affordable housing in Oxford, part of its theme for a better living environment.

Oxford City Council's role as landlord is one of our major functions.  We spend £40 million on social housing and homelessness every year.  House prices and rents in Oxford are amongst the highest in the country outside London.  Indeed, housing costs in Oxford often exceed those in the capital.

High housing costs can threaten the sustainability of communities and result in the break-up of extended families.  They also impact on the cost of delivering public services as they contribute to the difficulties public services have in recruiting and retaining staff.  In addition to the pressures on general housing the city has a greater challenge in dealing with homelessness; the scale of our challenge is in fact similar to that faced by the centres of large conurbations when, despite our city status, we are in character more akin to a large market town.  During recent budget consultation one of the findings was that there was consensus amongst all age groups of people, that affordable housing was a major issue for the city.

> **We have:**
> *(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
> - Provided 150 new social housing units during 2004/2005
> - Consulted with Oxford Tenants Panel on repairs and redecorations policy.  The panel accepted that the current policy was fair, simple and affordable given the council's budgetary constraint
> - Achieved our target for 2005 to increase the proportion of local authority homes that meet decent homes standard from 49% to over 61.7%
> - Achieved our target to increase the level of rent collected in housing from 94% to over 96.9%.  At September 2004 this amounted to a reduction in arrears of over £400,000
> - A tenant satisfaction survey is underway.  Final data is not yet available but initial findings suggest that we have not succeeded in increasing overall satisfaction with our landlord services.  Further work in 2005/2006 will determine what the causes of dissatisfaction are so that we improve satisfaction.

**We will:**

- [Promote an urban extension as a sustainable option to meet housing need via regional and local policies.] **Labour**
[Support the urgent investigation and implementation of what will be the most sustainable solutions to meet Oxford's housing need] **Lib. Dem.**
[Ensure investigation of Brownfield sites with regard to development. Sites currently reserved for employment use in the local plan will be released for mixed use and existing planned housing sites developed at higher mixed-use densities.] **Green.**
- Carry out a Registered Social Landlord and housing procurement review with a view to increasing capacity and partnership working in order to facilitate the provision of at least 150 social housing units each year for the next 2 years.
- Complete a comprehensive review of the options for the future of our housing stock by July 2005 to determine the best way to ensure the ongoing provision of good quality homes.
- Achieve a standard that would meet 'one star' Housing Inspection rating by March 2006 and 'two star' by 2008
- Increase the proportion of local authority homes that meet decent homes standard to over 68% by March 2006, 75% by March 2007 and 81% by March 2008
- Increase rent collected in housing to 97% by March 2006 and 98% by March 2007 to increase income due to the council and reduce arrears.
- Extend the discretionary homes in multiple-occupation licensing regime as an adjunct to forthcoming mandatory licensing to increase registration to 1,000 properties by March 2006 and thereby increase the number of homes improved.
- Work to secure planning requirements in the adopted Local Plan of 50% affordable housing on new developments to help increase provision of affordable housing in the city.

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.

- Housing Services
- Planning
- Oxford Building Solutions
- Environmental Health

### 3.6.2 Improving Services - To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

**This priority for improvement links to:**
- The council's Strategic Priority to make Oxford a safer city
- The Community Strategy theme for safer communities

Although crime figures show that Oxfordshire is one of the safest areas of the country, we know that in Oxford we have pockets where crime and particularly anti-social behaviour is of concern and causes distress. We will work in partnership with local communities, Oxford Safer Communities Partnership and the Home Office to provide a city where all our people are confident that they can safely enjoy all it has to offer.

**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Achieved Together Action Area status so that we can work with the Home Office and maximize our power to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- Developed and implemented a Child Protection Policy in consultation with relevant internal and external representatives so that people can be confident that their children are protected and kept safe from harm when engaged with any activity with the council.

**We will:**

- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) through Together Action Area status. By April 2005 commence a rolling programme with the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership and the Home Office ASB Unit to work with 50 of the most challenging cases.
- Work with Oxford Safer Communities Partnership to ensure a combined strength of at least of 20 Street Wardens and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) is working in the district by March 2006.
- We will help empower local communities by increasing the funding available for local projects through our Area Committees.
- We will carry out our duties under the Licensing Act 2003 and related enforcement. We will use our licensing powers liaising with our Planning staff for future premises to regulate them and their hours of operation

The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- Neighbourhood Renewal
- Planning
- Environmental Health

### 3.6.3 Improving Services - To reduce poverty and social exclusion

**This priority for improvement links to:**
- The council's strategic priority to create local prosperity and sustain full employment
- The Community Strategy theme for a vibrant and inclusive economy

Oxford City Council has a key role to play in supporting some of the most vulnerable people within our communities. For example our Housing and Homelessness Service, Benefits Service and Neighbourhood Renewal Service work with individuals or groups experiencing a difficult time in their life. However, we want to do more. We want to make sure that everybody entitled to Housing and Council Tax Benefit gets it and that people from all sections of our multi-cultural and diverse city can access our services.

We also have a responsibility to encourage business and investment in a world-class local economy and strive to re-generate less well-used areas of the city centre. By doing this we can help provide job opportunities in the city, enhance our status as a centre for tourism and increase our trade as a major shopping centre. A strong and sustainable local economy means good long-term job prospects for the people of Oxford, increasing standards of living and health.

**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Achieved our target for 2005 to improve processing of new benefits claims to achieve an average less than 40 days
- Achieved our target for 2005 to improve processing of changes in circumstance for benefit claimants to an average of less than 15 days
- Actively publicised Housing and Council Tax Benefits by carrying out five Roadshows, producing new, easier to understand leaflets, publicising through news items on the radio and working with voluntary groups on poster campaigns

**We will:**

- Implement a co-ordinated council approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion, particularly in areas of child and family poverty, linked to the Local Strategic Partnership by March 2006
- Improve processing of new benefits claims to achieve an average of no more than 32 days by March 2006 and 30 days by March 2007
- Investigate a financially viable free bus fare scheme for older people
- [Investigate the introduction of taxi tokens for those pensioners unable to readily access public transport] **Lib. Dem.**
- Investigate options for free swimming for pensioners and young people
- [Establish a not for profit trust to improve the city's leisure facilities] **Lib. Dem.**

The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book

| | |
|---|---|
| Strategy and Review | Revenues and Benefits |
| Transport and Parking | Leisure and Parks |

### 3.6.4 Improving Services –Develop and implement the council's equality policy

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**This priority for improvement links to:**
- The Community Strategy theme for a vibrant and inclusive economy

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Oxford is widely accepted as a diverse multi-cultural community. We live, work and play together and the incidence of race related crime is low. This can sometimes lead us to be complacent and assume that everybody is getting equality of opportunity regardless of his or her background. Unfortunately this is not always the case. The council intends to ensure that it provides services that all sectors of the community are consulted on and can readily access and it will also demonstrate its commitment to equality of opportunity through its own employment policies.

The Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Employers' Organisation for local government, with assistance from the Audit Commission, have jointly developed an equality standard for local government. This provides the opportunity and performance management framework for the council to deliver positive changes in a comprehensive and consistent manner. Progress on equalities issues is measured through five levels:

- Level 1 – Demonstrated commitment to a comprehensive equality policy
- Level 2 – Assessment and consultation
- Level 3 – The setting of equality objectives and targets
- Level 4 – Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5 – Achieving and reviewing outcomes.

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**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Achieved our target of reaching Level 1 of the Equalities Standard by March 2005

**We will:**
- Achieve Level 2 of the Equalities Standard by December 2006
- Achieve Level 3 of the Equalities Standard by March 2007
- Achieve Level 4 of the Equalities Standard by March 2008
- Work to ensure that by March 2008 the employee profile of the council better reflects that of the local community.

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The Human Resources Business Unit carries out the majority of the work on these commitments

**Want to find our more about the Equalities Standard?**
Information on the Equalities Standard for Local Government can be found at:

http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk/diversity/equality/index.html

If you would like to know more about what we are doing to meet the standard please telephone us on 01865 249811 and ask for our Strategy and Review Team

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### 3.6.5 Improving Services – Improve the quality of our environment

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**This priority for improvement links to:**

- The council's strategic priority to improve the environment where we live and work
- The Community Strategy theme of a better living environment

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Oxford is one of Europe's most beautiful cities. We are proud of our parks and open spaces. The quality of our public spaces was recognised by our recent Comprehensive Performance Inspection and by the numerous awards many of them have received. For example, Wolvercote has twice been voted cemetery of the year, we have won Britain in Bloom three times and are a regular winner of the regional category. Our allotments have long been recognised for their success and we have even had two of our public toilets voted Toilet of the Year 2003! Our performance for recycling is in the top 25% in the country and a recent Audit Commission report acknowledged our good work in tackling litter, fly tipping and air quality. However, the people of Oxford have told us how important these issues are to them and we intend to maintain and build upon our successes and enhance the Oxford environment.

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**We have:**
- Reconfigured services to provide single teams for all aspects of street cleansing in each area of the city so that we can provide a coordinated, local approach.

**We will:**

- Seek to influence the County Council as part of the Local Transport Plan Review to develop more cost effective and less environmentally damaging ways of promoting increased numbers of journeys into and within the city by public transport, cycling and walking in order to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion and parking pressures and promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Develop initiatives to tackle fuel poverty, promote alternative energy sources and maximise fuel efficiency in all types of property.
- Make the running of the Council's parks and green spaces more responsive to local communities by rolling out a fully area-based working through Area committees
- Extend recycling of cardboard and green waste
- [Introduce kerbside recycling of plastics] **Green**

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- City Works
- Transport and Parking
- Leisure and Parks

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### 3.6.6 Transforming the way we work – Embedding performance management and effective governance

To succeed, we need our staff to be well trained and motivated, our processes to be inclusive and responsive and our systems to be efficient. All the following priorities for transforming the way we work and building capacity are about ensuring we have efficient business practices and staff with up-to-date skills in order to deliver service improvements and provide efficiency savings wherever possible. The people of Oxford have told us quite clearly through consultation that this is something they expect us to do and their view is supported by the findings of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection.

For these reasons we have identified the following key areas for improving how we work,

- Performance management
- Corporate governance
- Staff capacity
- Financial capacity
- Activities to increase our customer focus
- Long-term goals for the city

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**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Adopted a risk management strategy so that we understand the risks to the council's business and can which will be implemented during 2005/2006 and reviewed annually
- Extended use of our performance management software, CorVu offering training for all councillors and all staff at third tier and above by March 2005 to facilitate the drive for performance improvement through evidence-based management
- Worked with councillors, the Executive Board, Scrutiny and Area Committees and Housing Revenue Account Management Board to make performance information more readily available to them. This work will continue in the coming year.
- Made performance data available to the public via our website.
- Improved business planning processes and business plan format in line with best practice.

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**We will:**

- Continue development of our performance monitoring software, CorVu to permit individual staff and their managers access to their personal development plans on our intranet by March 2006
- Establish capacity and skill levels in business units for performance management governance and provide training or on-site support where needed by March 2007.
- Reduce the number of council policy and strategy documents to a manageable level by March 2008, making sure that all policies have a 'review by date'.

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- Performance and Improvement Team
- Strategy and Review

### 3.6.7 Transforming the way we work –Build capacity by investing in staff and councillors

When staff recruited we spend time and money training them to do their job. We want to make sure that having invested in them they remain fulfilled and motivated to continue in their work with the council, helping us deliver good quality services. We are theefore working to update our Human Resources policies and demonstrate commitment to our staff through Investors in People to help us retain our staff.

The nature of our work changes over time as the needs and expectations of the people of Oxford change and we need to develop our staff so that they can keep their skills up to date and gain new skills. For instance, a decade ago only the managers of the council worked with a Personal Computer or PC, now the majority of staff use a PC every day as the main tool of their job. Whilst our investment in new technology provides benefits for service delivery it does require further investment in training.

When councillors are elected they bring with them expertise from their own careers, they are often very familiar with large areas of the council's work. owever, we need to make sure they are given the opportunity to find out about all the areas of work of the 1400 staff of the council, that they have the opportunity to learn about the legislation that governs and restricts many of the diverse aspects of the council's work and that they have the opportunity to strengthen their political and leadership skills so that they can best represent the views of the people of Oxford and drive the improvements and changes people expect to see.

**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Developed a new Human Resource Strategy to be implemented from April 2005 (subject to Council approval January 2005)
- Introduced new ways to share learning across the council such as our Trainer's Network and free lunchtime seminars.
- Together with Trades Unions, secured funding to open a Learning Centre giving access to PCs for staff who would not normally have this facility in their day-to-day work so that we can help them develop their computer skills. Our Learning Centre will be open in the first part of 2005/2006
- Together with Trades Unions, secured funding for a Home Computing Initiative to help staff purchase their own PC and develop their computer skills further. The first computers were delivered to staff in January 2005.
- Reduced days lost at work due to illness to less than 11 per employee per year
- Developed new grievance and disciplinary procedures which will be implemented from 2005/2006
- Improved internal communications with the staff newsletter - Oxford Accents and information from across the organisation through Team Brief.

**We will:**
- We will extend our shared learning programme to include mechanisms to share best practice and provide peer support from external public and private sectors during 2005/2006
- Develop and embed Investors in People principles in all business units. Aim to be at IiP standard by December 2006
- Deliver a programme to develop the leadership and performance management capabilities of senior officers and councillors by March 2006
- Reduce days lost at work through sickness to an annual average of less than eight per person by March 2006

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- Human Resources

## 3.6.8   Transforming the way we work –Enhance customer focus

Councillors and council employees are here to deliver services to the people of Oxford. We have a responsibility to prioritise what we do and the way we do it according to the needs and expectations of the people of Oxford. One of the ways in which people express their opinions and priorities is by voting. However, being customer focussed means much more than taking a sounding of people's priorities every few years through the ballot box. We have to build an awareness of customer needs into all aspects of our work, and continually ask ourselves how our actions affect our service to customers:

- PLANNING CHANGE – What did customers tell us they want to change?

- BEFORE CHANGE - Have we consulted customers on how we intend to make changes?

- DURING CHANGE - Does what we are doing meet the identified customer needs and what do they have a right to expect from us?

- AFTER CHANGE - Have customer needs been met by the changes made and have we given feedback?

This process is cyclical and helps establish a means for achieving continuous improvements to our services.

Customers have told us how much they value the service they receive from our Customer Service Officers and we intend to maintain a high quality face-to-face service. However, there is also clear customer demand for improvements to the way we handle customer phone calls and we are working hard on a key project to help us deliver improvements to our phone service. We are also making big changes to our website to make it easier to use and increase the services available by the internet. This is all part of our implementation of the electronic government agenda.

**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Consulted the people of Oxford during the period September 2004 to January 2005 on the council's vision and budget priorities for 2005/2006

**We will:**
- Provide our new Customer Relationship Management software across the whole council and deliver training to staff using it by March 2006. This will allow us to quickly access all the information we need to answer queries when our customers phone us, removing the need to pass customers from one department to another.
- Embed and further develop our telephone contact services based on just two council telephone numbers, making it easier for the public to know the correct number to call in order to speak to somebody with the skills and knowledge to help them.
- Increase customer satisfaction for telephone contact with the benefits service to 73% by March 2007
- [We believe that a unitary authority would best serve the people of Oxford and we will consult them on this to decide whether we should work with partners to lobby national government to achieve this.] **Labour.**
- [Introduce a mobile face-to-face customer enquiry service] **Lib. Dem.**

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- Customer Services
- Strategy and Review

### 3.6.9 Transforming the way we work – To develop in partnership a long-term vision for the city on which to base future plans

If we are to work in an efficient and coordinated way we need to have a long-term view of what we want to achieve for the city. We also need to ensure that we work in partnership with other organisations in the city towards the same long-term goals.

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**We have:**
*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*
- Set-up delivery groups for each theme group within the Community Strategy to help achieve the agreed outcomes
- Ensured that this, the draft Oxford Plan reflects our Community Strategy priorities and our council's Vision to inform business unit plans for the coming year.

**We will:**

- Revise the Community Strategy by July 2005 to incorporate a longer-term vision for the city with outcome-based targets
- Further strengthen the links between the Oxford Plan, the Community Strategy and Council Vision and ensure that the 2006-2009 Oxford Plan is drafted by September 2005. This will then inform business plans, with the final plan agreed in February 2006. The plan will then be reviewed annually.

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The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
- Strategy and Review
- Performance and Improvement Team

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### 3.6.10 Transforming the way we work –Improve financial capacity and financial performance

However well focussed and coordinated our plans are they can only be achieved if we have a sound financial base. The council has made great strides in stabilising its finances over the last four years but we still have more to do if we are to achieve all that we want to do. As one of the few councils still retaining control of its housing stock we face a big challenge in finding the £31 million needed to meet the minimum housing standards required of us by 2010.

**We have:**

*(On target outcomes expected by March 2005)*

- Reviewed our capital programme to ensure that money is available to meet the agreed priorities to 2007. We will continue to review the programme every six months to ensure resources are available for a minimum three-year advance period.
- Delivered basic financial training to 3rd tier managers in order to continuously improve financial management techniques and ensure more effective financial control at business unit level.
- Achieved our target to improve the number of invoices that are paid within 30 days from 87.9% to above 90%.
- Increased our council tax collection rate from 95.4% to 96.5%. This is just below our target of 97% but raises our performance to the national third quartile position. Additional resources may be needed to maintain this momentum.
- Decreased rent arrears in homelessness by 24%, that is a reduction of more than £300,000 in money owed.
- Set-up arrangements for payment of over 50%, £1.5 million, of overpaid benefit, however people on low incomes can only make repayment in small amounts so recovery is slow. Although we did not achieve our target of increasing repayment of 50% of money owed, we have raised our performance to the national third quartile.
- Achieved our target to develop a best practice Procurement Strategy and action plan that meets the National framework milestones. This was done with the support of the IDeA and the plan has been commended by them.
- Achieved our target to set-up the Strategic Procurement Partnership to provide joint working arrangements with other Oxfordshire public bodies to gain value for money and develop projects as appropriate.
- Achieved our target to develop a robust Best Value Review system incorporating Business Process Re-engineering and monitoring plans. We will publish review programme of 3 service per annum in Corporate Plan and BVPP for 2005/2006 onwards

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**We will:**

- Carry out three Best Value Reviews each year between 2005 and 2008
- Improve invoices paid within 30 days to 92% by March 2006 and 94% by March 2007
- Increase council tax collection rate to 98% by March 2007
- Improve recovery of over-payments to 60% by March 2007
- Revise our financial regulations and provide a structure of supporting documents by March 2006.
- Deliver basic financial training to all Business Managers and interested councillors by March 2006.
- Spend only according to our budgets in order to maintain the General Fund balance.
- Following the outcome of our Housing Stock Options Appraisal we will set a funding strategy to deliver the Decent Homes Standards required by Government by 2010. If we are able to fund higher than this very basic standard we will do so.
- [Assist the increase in Council Tax collection by investigating the introduction of incentives for prompt payment] **Lib. Dem.**
- Pledge only to increases Council Tax when needed to pay for services, not when it would increase reserves already considered adequate by the District Auditor

> The majority of the work on these commitments is carried out by the Business Units listed below. More information on the work of these units and the resources allocated to this work can found in the relevant sections of the Budget Book.
> - Finance and Asset Management
> - Revenues and Benefits

## 3.7  Monitoring

This, Oxford's corporate plan, is a forward-looking document on which we base our plans for the next three years. In order for us to successfully plan and budget for the next three years we need to have the Oxford Plan in place some time before this. It cannot therefore include reporting of achievement until its second publication, after the end of the preceding year. This will coincide with our legal duty to publish a Best Value Performance Plan by 30 July each year. The second publication of the Oxford Plan will incorporate these requirements.

Although annual achievements cannot be reported until the end of the financial year, various forms of monitoring, checking and reporting are going on all the time. Indeed, in the areas of the council where performance management is firmly embedded performance data is used on a daily basis to allocate resources and meet fluctuations in workload. This is the key to staying on track and meeting our targets. Some examples of the more formal monitoring and reporting we do are given below.

- Performance is reported to the Executive Board and Finance Scrutiny Committee of the Council every three months. Many aspects of performance are monitored monthly by managers, our Performance and Improvement Team and our Portfolio Holder for Performance and Review.

- Staff and councillors can access live performance data at any time via our performance management software on the intranet. This provides much greater scope for monitoring and scrutiny of their areas of responsibility. This investment allows us to manage our performance far more effectively at a corporate level and service level. We will be developing this to include the Personal Development Plans of each member of staff so that they and their manager can access this on-line.

- In July 2005 we will publish this plan again with data at Appendix ii showing how we performed during 2004/2005. This data will then be checked by the Audit Commission to make sure that we have measured our performance fairly.

- In order to help drive forward our priorities for improvement and provide external challenge and expertise to how we approach our work, we have established an Improvement Board. This includes officer and political members of the council and external advisors from Government Office for the South East, the Audit Commission, the Said Business School and Unipart. The Improvement Board do not take decisions on behalf of the council, but they do advise it through the portfolio holder for performance and review to the Executive Board.

**Would you like more information about the Council's performance?**

Performance information is available from various sources:

- Monthly data on our performance against local and national indicators will be available on our website from January 2005
- Every three months reports on our performance against local and national indicators go to our Executive Board. These reports are available with the agenda on our website at http://srvbocc/council/meeting-diary.cfm/detail/2 – reported quarterly
- Monthly progress reports on our priorities for improvement will be made to the Improvement Board and available on our website from January 2005
- Our Best Value Performance Plan shows are performance for 2003/2004 and is available at http://srvbocc/council/bvpp.cfm

If you would prefer a paper copy of a report please contact us:
- Phone us on 01865 249811 and ask for the Performance Improvement Team
- Email us at improvement@oxford.gov.uk

## 3.8 Corporate Risk Assessment

High-level corporate risks are currently being identified and discussed by the Strategic Management Board. It is anticipated that they will go to council for approval in time to be incorporated into the Oxford Plan before the plan goes to full council for final approval with the budgets in February 2005.

# Appendix 1

# KEY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES – 2005-2008

The following tables show key improvement activities for the next three years, they are structured around the same headings and objectives as our approved Improvement Plan. As actions on the Improvement Plan are achieved we will need to consider which actions from the following tables the Improvement Board may wish to focus on as the Improvement Plan evolves.

## AIM:            TO IMPROVE SERVICES

### OBJECTIVE ONE:        Increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing in all sectors

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and Timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1 | Promote an urban extension as a sustainable option to meet housing need via Regional/Local Policies - *Michael Crofton-Briggs* | Proposal uncosted |
| 1.1.2 | Use council powers to bring private sector empty homes back into use - *John Copley* | If a proactive programme is pursued this will cost about £25k pa.  No funding yet agreed |
| 1.1.3 | Ensure the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme can fund housing improvements to bring the entire stock up to decent homes standard by 2010 - *Neil Gibson /Michael Lawrence* | This is currently being examined in great depth within existing resources |
| 1.1.5 | Extend the discretionary Homes in multiple occupation licensing regime as an adjunct to forthcoming mandatory licensing to increase registration to 1,000 properties and thereby increase the number of homes improved - *John Copley* | 2005/6 £200,000 |
| 1.1.6 | Carry out a Registered Social Landlord and housing procurement review with a view to increasing capacity and partnership working in order to facilitate the provision of 150 social housing units for the next 2 years.  (Target will be reviewed subsequent to outcome of review) - *Val Johnson* | 2005/2006 £150,000 (includes implementation) With projected savings for future years |
| 1.1.7 | Achieve a two star' Housing Inspection rating by 2007/2008 – *Graham Stratford/Graham Bourton/Karen Ravenhill* | 2004/2005 £160,000 (additional) 2005/2006 £256,000 2006/2007 £100,000 2007/2008 £100,000 2008/2009 £50,000 |

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and Timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1.8 | • Complete a comprehensive review of the options for the future of our housing stock by July 2005 to determine the best way to ensure the ongoing provision of good quality homes - *Karen Ravenhill* | Within existing resources |
| 1.1.11 | • Decrease the proportion of local authority homes that were non-decent homes from 38.3% to 32% by March 2006, 25% by March 2007 and 20% by March 2008 (BV184) - *Graham Bourton* | Year 1: £8m funding in place<br>Year 2: tba<br>Year 3: tba |

## OBJECTIVE TWO: Reduce Crime and anti-social behaviour

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.2.1 | • Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) through Together Action Area status; by April 2005 commence a rolling programme with the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership and the Home Office ASB Unit to work with 50 of the most challenging cases. - *Val Johnson* | Within existing resources |
| 1.2.2 | • We will carry out our duties under the Licensing Act 2003 and related enforcement. We will use our licensing powers liaising with our Planning staff for future premises to regulate them and their hours of operation - *John Copley/Michael Crofton Briggs* | 2005/2006 £245,000 preparation & implementation<br>£74,000 p.a thereafter to run |
| 1.2.3 | • Secure and extend existing Street Warden Scheme to Littlemore, Barton and Woodfarm by March 2006 thereafter establishing a mobile unit to cover areas experiencing occasional problems and provide support to city centre Police Community Support Officers - *Val Johnson* | 2005/2006 £200,000<br>2006/2007 £500,000<br>2007/2008 £700,000 |

38/12/2004

H Rowlands

38

## OBJECTIVE THREE: Reduce Poverty and Social Exclusion

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.3.2 | • Research the practical and financial implications of a free bus travel scheme for older people and report to the council - *Graham Smith* | Research within existing resources<br>Running costs £800,000 to £4,000,000 p.a. Costs difficult to assess as behaviour of users can alter radically when travel becomes free. |
| 1.3.3 | • Implement a co-ordinated Council approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion, linked to the Local Strategic Partnership by March 2006. – *Janet Banfield/Val Johnson* | 2005/2006 £250,000<br>2006/2007 £250,000<br>2007/2008 £200,000 |
| 1.3.6 | • Support the ongoing programme of new and upgraded health facility in the city by becoming a full member of the LIFT (Local Improvement Finance Trust) imitative by September 2004. Assess wider benefits to city council services by March 2005. - *Neil Gibson/Michael Lawrence* | Within existing resources |
| 1.3.7 | • Review provision of leisure services through the emerging Leisure Strategy and seek ways to provide a more cost effective, higher quality service to the people of Oxford - *Tony Stephens* | Within existing resources |
| 1.3.8 | • Progress our Project Planning Application for the Town Hall Project with the Heritage Lottery Fund. Complete by March 2007 and decide on outcome whether to proceed to Stage 1 application. - *Jane Lubbock* | 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 Project planning - within existing resources<br>2007/2008 Progressing project est. £10,000,000 (£5,000,000 HLF with matched OCC funds) |
| 1.3.9 | • Investigate options for free swimming for pensioners and young people - *Tony Stephens* | Investigation within existing resources.<br>Running costs estimated at £108,000 each year |
| 1.3.10 | • Complete the investment in the Ferry Leisure Centre and Barton Pool projects so the projects are finished by April and December 2005 respectively - *Tony Stephens* | Ferry Leisure Centre - within existing resources.<br>Barton Pool £23,500 p.a. |
| 1.3.11 | • Implement the results of the Community Centre Review to improve quality of facilities by March 2008 – *Val Johnson* | To be cost-neutral |

## OBJECTIVE FOUR: Further develop and implement the council's Equalities Policy

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.4.1 | • Implement the 2004-5 Corporate Equalities Action Plan to achieve Level 1 of the Equalities Standard (BV002a) by March 2005 and Level 2 by December 2006 - *Caroline Bull* | Within existing resources |
| 1.4.2 | • Work to ensure that by March 2008 the employee profile of the council better reflects that of the local community – *Anne-Marie Scott*<br>(Also see 1.3.3 which includes implementation of the Council's Equality Strategy) | Proposal -uncosted |

## OBJECTIVE FIVE: improve the quality of our environment

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 1.5.1 | • Expand resources for street cleaning and washing to improve cleanliness and increase customer satisfaction - *Glen Wooldrige* | Proposal - uncosted |
| 1.5.4 | • Broaden kerbside recycling to include plastic and green waste. Scheme to cover 25% of the city by March 2006, 75% of the city by March 2007 and 100% of the city by March 2008 - *Glen Wooldrige* | 2005/2006 £125,000<br>2006/2007 £375,000<br>2007/2008 (and annually thereafter) £500,000<br>Cap. Ex ~£1,000,000 for vehicles, containers etc. |
| 1.5.5 | • Improve anti-litter campaign and education on protecting the local environment with new strategy implemented by March 2006 - *Glen Wooldrige* | Proposal uncosted |
| 1.5.7 | • Increase participation rates in the existing recycling scheme by use of publicity campaigns, in order to assist achievement of PSA recycling targets - *Glen Wooldrige* | Within existing resources |
| 1.5.8 | • Seek to influence the County Council as part of the Local Transport Plan Review to develop more cost effective and less environmentally damaging ways of promoting increased numbers of journeys into and within the city by public transport, cycling and walking by September 2005 - *Michael Crofton Briggs* | Within existing resources |
| 1.5.9 | • Develop a strategy for using fines/legal powers to enforce littering, graffiti, fly-posting and other "environmental crimes" by September 2005 - *Glen Wooldrige/Val Johnson* | £20,000 revenue set-up costs.<br>Fines to be set at levels to self fund all future admin and legal costs |
| 1.5.10 | • Consult on the desirability of a public smoking ban in Oxford by March 2006, seeking resources to assess practicality and cost implementation in 2006/2007 should consultation conclude this called for - *Jan Banfield* | Initial consultation within existing resources |
| 1.5.11 | • Review the provision of play areas and develop a specific improvement plan by July 2005 - *Tony Stephens* | Proposal uncosted |

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# AIM: TO TRANSFORM THE WAY WE WORK AND BUILD CAPACITY

## OBJECTIVE SIX: Embed Performance Management and Effective Governance across the Organisation

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 2.6.1 | • Continue to work closely with councillors – Executive Board, Scrutiny and Area Committees– to improve their skills and make performance information more readily available. - *Mick Lowe* | Additional resourcing of the Performance & Improvement Team over two years will be £172k pa |
| 2.6.2 | • Continue to develop our performance management framework to integrate the council's corporate plan with business plans and Personal Development Plans by March 2006 so as to drive performance improvements. – *Mick Lowe* | Within existing resources |
| 2.6.6 | • Continue work with business managers to improve target setting and benchmarking, with training completed by March 2006 - *Mick Lowe* | See P&I Team above |
| 2.6.7 | • Improve engagement of executive and scrutiny chair members with corporate performance - *Caroline Bull* | Within existing resources |

## OBJECTIVE SEVEN: Build capacity by investing in our staff and councillors

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 2.7.2 | • Develop and embed IiP principles in all business units and aim to be at an Investors in People standard by December 2006 - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Year 1: £40,000<br>Year 2: £40,000 |
| 2.7.3 | • Monitor improvements in staff morale via MORI staff survey – April 2005 & April 2007 - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Year 1: £15,000<br>Year 3: £15,000 |
| 2.7.4 | • Reduce days lost at work, BVPI 012 to less than 8, by March 2006 - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Within existing resources |
| 2.7.6 | • Review recruitment and retention policies in order to reduce staff turnover in priority areas. Revised policy to be in place by October 2005 and to include agreed measurement and monitoring of staff turnover in order to establish meaningful targets - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Within existing resources |
| 2.7.10 | • Develop and implement a new learning and development plan, integrating the findings of the Capacity Building Fund diagnostic stage, by April 2005 - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Within existing resources |
| 2.7.11 | • Deliver a prioritised programme of councillor training and development based on the systematic assessment of needs from the Capacity Building Fund diagnostic - *Anne-Marie Scott* | Within Capacity Building Fund Bid |

## OBJECTIVE EIGHT: Enhance customer focus

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 2.8.3 | • Establish annual consultation planning process. Seek to secure council-wide budget for service based focus group consultation. Implement focus group work in key service areas to reflect Council priorities/need- *Janet Banfield* | • Planning process — within existing resources. Council-wide budget for service focus groups - £12,000 |
| 2.8.7 | • Work with resident and tenant focus groups to increase understanding of how improvements in satisfaction with cleanliness standards can be achieved - *Glen Wooldrige* | • £4,000 (from corporate consultation budget referenced above in 2.8.3) |
| 2.8.8 | • Develop with business units a corporate-wide customer complaint follow-up form to help us gather feedback to improve complaints handling efficiency and improve customer satisfaction. To encourage use of the form and to develop with the Consultation Officer guidelines on appropriate use. By March 2006 - *Mike Newman* | • Within existing resources |
| 2.8.10 | • Ensure Area Action Plans include how hard to reach groups will be involved in the further development of those plans - *Area Co-ordinator* | • Within existing resources |
| 2.8.17 | • Create and send 'citizenship packs' to all new residents to the city (including students) to encourage more active involvement in community affairs by March 2006 - *Janet Banfield* | • £15,000 (basic pack) to £50,000 (full, professionally presented pack) p.a. |
| 2.8.18 | • Improve customer service by continued implementation of the corporate Customer Contact Strategy agreed in Sept '03 for all front-facing service provision. Redesign service delivery to meet customer need according to proposals and costings agreed by SMB by March 2005 - *Ian Barrett* | • Outline figures awaited |
| 2.8.19 | • Develop a Young Persons Strategy to be adopted by July 2005, to cover all services provided by the council with connections to young people and to be co-ordinated with the County. - *Val Johnson* | • 2005/2006 - £10,000 To progress initial implementation |

## OBJECTIVE NINE: Deliver and Implement with partners a shared long-term vision for the city

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 2.9.3 | • Revise the Community Strategy by July 2005 to incorporate a longer-term vision for the city with outcome-based targets - *Janet Banfield* | Within existing resources |
| 2.9.4 | • Continue roll-out of West End project including consideration of Westgate proposals as they come forward – *Sharon Cosgrove* | 2005/2006 - £123,500 Proposal uncosted |

## OBJECTIVE TEN: Continue to Improve Financial Capacity and Financial Performance

| Ref | Action, Outcomes and timescales | Additional Resource Implications |
|---|---|---|
| 2.10.5 | • Develop a more ambitious and integrated external funding approach by April 2005. Subject to funding approval, implement during 2005/2006 to increase income to match our priorities by an agreed percentage pa. - *Janet Banfield* | £45,000 p.a. |
| 2.10.6 | • Maintain and roll forward a robust and sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy each year - *Mark Luntley* | Within existing resources |

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# Appendix 2

BVPI tables will be available after the data is collected at the end of the financial year. We will publish this information annually by July 30th.

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