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Foreword from Group Leaders and the Chief Executive

Welcome to Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan for 2010-2013

Last year's Corporate Plan set out the Council's ambition - developed with our partners, including business, community organisations, the health and education sectors and the County Council - to make Oxford a world-class city for everyone. It also set out our plans for transforming the way that the Council performs. We intend to be a world-class council, delivering high quality services and excellent value for money for all our citizens.

The hallmark of the Council's approach to its own transformation has been focus and consistency. We have stuck to the priorities set out in our recent Corporate Plans and - by improving the management systems underpinning the delivery of these plans - we have significantly improved the Council's performance across a range of services.

The Audit Commission, in its *Organisational Assessment 2009*, says that "Overall political and managerial leadership is strong" and that the Council "is improving significantly and well on its way to meeting its four year transformation plan".

This focus and consistency is reflected in this Corporate Plan. We have retained our existing corporate priorities. This plan sets out the Council's strong performance against these priorities and rolls forward our plans for the next three years. In summary, the Council has made systematic progress in improving its own performance..

The Council's financial planning – awarded a score of three out of a possible four by the Audit Commission - has been strong and this has enabled us to avoid being knocked off course by the credit crunch and other external issues. By the end of 2008-09, we will have achieved a General Fund reduction of £7.1m – equivalent to 25% of the net budget - over two years. Further savings of £4.3m are targeted for 2009-10 and £2.2m for 2010-11. We will continue to strengthen the Council's financial management capacity – in the corporate centre, and across the Council as a whole. National politicians of all parties are saying that cuts to public spending are inevitable. We must continue to improve the Council's own financial health if we are to maintain the high quality services on which many of our citizens depend.

We have a rolling programme of fundamental service reviews in place to improve value for money, quality, and customer satisfaction. We have tackled leisure, one of our longstanding high cost services, which is now delivered in partnership. We are currently finalising a review of our recycling and waste service and we will be reviewing the revenue and benefits service in 2010-11.

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The Audit Commission has commended the City Council for its “ambitious vision to improve quality of life, especially for its more deprived communities. The Council – working with its partners – has made good progress in delivering its broader aspirations for the city and some of our achievements in this regard are set out this Corporate Plan. However, we aim to do much more in the coming twelve months and beyond.

Oxford appears to be a thriving and affluent city. However, there are major inequalities in life chances and in life expectancy within our city and ten neighbourhoods of Oxford are amongst the 20% most deprived in England. In some areas, half of all adults have no qualifications and this tends to be linked to lower incomes, poor health and child poverty. Citizens living in the most deprived areas can expect to live ten years less than those in the wealthiest areas.

Many of the issues that contribute to inequality in our city – the strength of the local economy, health, education and training among others - are beyond the control of the City Council. Our challenge, therefore, is to encourage our partners in these sectors to change their priorities and spending plans in order to tackle these deep-seated problems in a co-ordinated way.

Providing more and better affordable housing is at the top of the Council's priority list. Over the last 12 months we have significantly exceeded our target by providing 265 more affordable homes. As a result of our strong track record the Council has been given additional income of £4m to help build more affordable homes.

More existing homes in the city now meet higher standards. As at December 2009, the Council had improved 93.73% per cent of its own housing stock up to the national Decent Homes Standard. We have also been working hard to improve standards in the private rented sector. As a result of concerted lobbying by the Council, the Government has agreed that local authorities can introduce compulsory licensing schemes for houses in multiple occupation from April 2010. The City Council will be making full use of these new powers. We will crack down on unscrupulous landlords and stop the spread of high concentrations of shared homes, where it causes problems for other residents or changes the character of a neighbourhood.

The City Council will be driving hard in the coming year and beyond for a cleaner, greener Oxford - in the city centre and in all our estates and neighbourhoods. We have been reviewing the way that we deliver our recycling and refuse service. These changes, which will make the service more cost effective and more responsive to our customers' needs, will come into effect from October this year.. We are taking a zero-tolerance approach to littering in the city centre and we will be extending this approach into our estates and neighbourhoods over the coming months. The Council's very effective work to reduce carbon emissions – our reduction target of 25% over three years and 50% by 2020 is progressing well – is a key element in our ambition for a cleaner, greener Oxford. We are one of only nine cities in the country to have been awarded the status of Low Carbon City.

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We will be working with our partners to provide a better deal for our young people, particularly those living in disadvantaged areas. The Council will be offering apprenticeship places and participating in the Government's Future Jobs initiative. However, the problems that many of our young people face go much deeper than this. The dismal attainment rate in many of Oxford's schools must be improved, as must the opportunities for further education and training...

We will also step up the pace of our work with our partners to engage more young people in projects to improve their well-being and integrate them more fully into the life of their communities and the city. Leisure and sport are important in this regard. Our leisure centres are now performing well, with many more people signing up to taking advantage of the opportunities that they offer. The City Council already provides free swimming for under-17s and will continue to do so.

Oxford has an innovative and high quality local music scene and we want to increase the access that our young people have to culture and the arts in general. Pegasus Theatre, Oxford's own youth theatre will be re-opening in 2010 after a £4m rebuild. Oxford City Council's successful annual dance festival continues to receive enthusiastic support from Oxford's young people and the Arts Council. We will be working with our partners in the culture sector to ensure that culture becomes a key driver of regeneration in the city.

Increasingly, the Council's achievements are achieving external validation from beyond the public sector. Over the last twelve months, the Council has won a number of awards including the BCS and Computing UK IT Industry Award under the category Project Manager of the Year, the Energy Saving Trust Fleet Hero Award for "Smarter Driving", the Carbon Trust Innovation Award and two Oxford Preservation Trust Awards. The Council was also a finalist for the APM's Programme of the Year Award for its Transformation Programme.

The views of the Audit Commission and other external organizations about the performance of the Council and its partners are important. The views of the people in Oxford are even more important. In this regard, it is worth referring to an important piece of consultation that has been carried out recently. The Place Survey was developed by central Government to provide information on people's perceptions of their local area and local services. The Place Survey will be carried out every two years and is a statutory requirement.

IpsosMori, in their analysis of the Place Survey results, identified Oxford as having a combination of background characteristics that make it very hard to score highly on perception measures. These characteristics include high population churn, high levels of ethnic diversity, large numbers of young people, and a high number of households with over occupancy and other housing problems. IpsosMori identified Oxford as the district council where public satisfaction is hardest to achieve.

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In the light of these challenges, the levels of public satisfaction identified by the Place Survey are very encouraging. 83% of people are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. 75% of people feel that they have been treated with respect and consideration by their local public services in the last year. 82% of people agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. The Status Survey of housing tenants found that 82% of tenants felt that the Council was a good landlord.

We hope that you enjoy this year's Corporate Plan and we welcome your comments on it.

More housing, better housing for all

There is a housing crisis in Oxford and the provision of affordable, high quality housing is a key priority for Oxford City Council and its partners.

The population is growing, as is the number of households requiring housing (up from 45,000 in 1991 to 55,000 in 2006). Oxford is the least affordable city in the UK in terms of housing. Average house prices are much higher in Oxford (£320,000 in September 2009) than nationally (£220,000 September 2009) and owner-occupied housing is increasingly out of the reach of people on lower incomes. Average house prices are now thirteen times higher than annual incomes. This poor affordability puts severe strain on the social housing sector, with over 5,000 households in need on the housing register, and homelessness - though much improved - is over twice the national average.

Over the last twelve months we have increased both the quantity and quality of affordable housing. 1025 new affordable homes have been built in the city from 2004 to the end of 2009. In 2008/09 we significantly exceeded our target by providing 265 affordable homes. As a result of our strong track record, the Council has successfully competed for funding from new Council houses and has been awarded a grant of £4m. We are building on the findings of our innovative affordable housing select committee to improve the pace of change with partners. As a result of the Council's strong local leadership and influencing skills, the Government's Housing and Communities Agency is targeting additional money for Oxford.

We are also improving the quality of existing homes. As at December 2009, the Council had improved 93.73 of its own homes up to the national Decent Homes Standard and tenant satisfaction - at 82% - is very high. Oxford has one of the highest numbers of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) in the country - about 5,000. The private rented sector is a valuable housing supply for many people who are vital to our economy, including students and new arrivals to the city. It can, however, be open to abuse from unscrupulous landlords. As a result of concerted lobbying by the Council, the Government has agreed to amend existing legislation so local authorities can introduce compulsory licensing schemes from April 2010. The City Council will be making full use of these new powers and existing powers such as those relating to landlord accreditation. We will ensure that houses in multiple

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occupation are managed safely and responsibly and that the character of neighbourhoods is protected.

We have also made progress in tackling and reducing homelessness. Significantly fewer people are in temporary housing, with the number of these households reduced from 1,100 in 2004 to 282 in November 2009. We continue to focus on preventing homelessness and helping people who are sleeping rough into settled accommodation. The Council met a government target for reducing homelessness two years early and is regarded as an exemplar council for its work on homelessness.

By March 2011 we will:

- Ensure that 150 new affordable properties are built in Oxford.
- Ensure that all Council-owned homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- Have 500 properties covered by the accreditation scheme for private landlords so as to drive up the standards in rented housing.
- Further improve homelessness prevention, reducing the number of households in temporary and emergency accommodation to no more than 175..
- Build 58 new Council homes.

By March 2013 we will:

- Ensure that an additional 400 new affordable properties are built in Oxford between 2011 and 2013.
- Ensure that all Council owned homes continue to meet the Decent Homes standard.
- Implement the New Growth Points programme and ensure 2000 homes are built in Oxford from April 2008, of which at least 50% should be affordable on sites of over 10 units.
- Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation for the homeless to no more than 75.
- Have 1000 properties covered by the accreditation scheme for for private landlords so as to drive up the standards in rented housing.

Tackling inequalities and supporting communities

In marked contrast to other parts of the county, Oxford is ethnically and culturally diverse, with the third highest minority ethnic population in the South East. This diversity is one of our city's strengths and social inclusion and community cohesion are important issues for the city and the Council. In the light of this, the results from the Place Survey are very encouraging. 82.1% of respondents felt that Oxford is a place where people from different

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backgrounds get on well. More than 70% of people feel that people treat each other with respect and consideration.

However, these results should not mask the fact that there are major inequalities in life chances and in life expectancy within our city and ten neighbourhoods of Oxford are amongst the 20% most deprived in England. In some areas, half of all adults have no qualifications and this tends to be linked to lower incomes, poor health and child poverty. Citizens living in the most deprived areas can expect to live ten years less than those in the wealthiest areas.

Outside these areas, there are some population groups – notably people with disabilities, the elderly and some black and minority ethnic groups – who do worse than others in terms of education, employment and health. Relative to the rest of Oxfordshire, Oxford has high levels of deprivation. The Indices of Deprivation 2007 rank Oxford 154th out of 354, placing it amongst in the top half most deprived Local Authorities in England. Of the 85 Super Output Areas in Oxford, ten are among the 20% most deprived in England. There are geographic and demographic pockets of high unemployment in the City. Oxford has over 10,000 working age residents claiming benefits – the highest percentage in the county.

We aim to reduce the extent of inequality and to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of our society, particularly young people. 24% of Oxford's under-16 year-olds are living in low-income households. We want to support social and economic regeneration, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods, and ensure that the economic vitality of the city delivers benefits to our young people and to all sections of the community.

Many of the issues that contribute to inequality in our city are beyond the remit and control of the City Council. Our challenge therefore it to encourage our partners in local government, education, and health to significantly change their priorities and spending plans in order to tackle these deep-seated problems in a co-ordinated way..

The City Council has developed a Regeneration Framework to help guide and shape this work. .The Framework focuses on the need to strengthen the economy as a whole and provide training and jobs; to regenerate particular geographical areas both physically and socially; and to target and improve mainstream services so that they meet the needs of particularly disadvantaged groups and communities. Consistently poor levels of attainment in Oxford's schools need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Delivery against the Regeneration Framework is supported by our work with partners to implement the 'Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation' programme. This is a 2-year programme, modestly funded by the Oxfordshire Public Service Board, that is aimed at supporting vulnerable families, improving employability and reducing health inequalities in the county. We are working in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to reduce the number of obese children in Oxford's primary schools.

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By March 2011 we will:

- Start to implement the Oxford Regeneration Framework through developing Local Area Action Plans in Blackbird Leys and Barton.
- Start to implement the 'Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation' programme.
- Continue to provide free swimming for under 17s and over 60s.
- Continue to provide the Bus Concessionary Fare Scheme for the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Commission voluntary sector organizations to provide financial and other advice to individuals and families through provision of grants totaling £500,000.
- Increase the number of our community centres with the national 'VISIBLE' standard to four (This standard recognises the quality of the associations' work in their communities.)

By March 2013 we will:

- Be implementing and evaluating the success of the Local Area Action Plans in Blackbird Leys and Barton.
- Have evaluated the Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation project and mainstreamed those projects which have proved to be effective in addressing inequalities and deprivation.
- Demonstrate leadership in employment and service delivery by achieving 'excellent' accreditation for the national equalities standard.
- Raise the levels of adult participation in sport by 5% against the baseline reported by the Active People Survey undertaken by Sport England.
- Increase the number of our community centres with the national 'VISIBLE' standard to six and work with Community Associations in smaller Community Centres to achieve the appropriate national standard..
- Review the use of our community centres in relation to identified community needs to increase usage and user satisfaction by 10%.

Improve the local environment, economy and quality of life

A strong local economy, supported by innovative and effective education and training, and accessible by all is at the heart of vibrant and sustainable communities. Oxford's local economy – heavily weighted toward public sector activity - continues to be a concern for employers, employees, and local residents, particularly in the light of the current national economic situation.

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Oxford is a global brand for education, health, bioscience, information technology, publishing, the motor industry and tourism. Around 3,400 businesses provide 108,000 jobs and seven of the ten largest employers in the Oxfordshire sub-region are within Oxford. However, there has been little change in the total number of jobs in Oxford over the last 30 years. As manufacturing has declined, these jobs have been replaced by employment in the health, education and service sectors. 89% of employees now work in services, including 46% in public administration, education and health.

The City Council has been working in partnership with the County Council and others to deliver a coordinated response to the negative local impacts of the economic downturn. We are tackling the problems in practical ways, for example helping residents to get back into work or training and alleviating the pressures on businesses by paying bills more promptly and increasing opportunities for businesses to meet buyers in the public sector. We are offering apprenticeship places and participating in the Government's Future Jobs initiative. We have set targets for a proportion of the money spent by the council to be spent with local businesses.

Over 9 million tourists visit the city each year and tourism plays a key part in the local economy. We are aiming to improve the value rather than the quantity of tourism. In order to facilitate this, we are setting up a Destination Management Organisation to improve the management and marketing of Oxford's tourism offer. This will include improving the physical environment and increasing the number of hotels and working in partnership with tourism businesses and other stakeholders.

We will continue to improve the quality of the city's leisure offer. Our partnership with Fusion Lifestyle, a not for profit trust, is working well and there has been an increase of around 5% in leisure centre membership over the last twelve months. We are working with Fusion, and in consultation with our residents, to roll out an ambitious development programme. A total of £2.2m is being invested into improvements at Ferry Sport Centre, Barton Pool and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. We are also looking to develop a new competition standard pool in Blackbird Leys. It is anticipated that the new facility will be an 8-lane, 25 metre pool, which will be adjoined to the existing leisure centre. The facility will help increase interest in swimming within the community, as well as providing a venue where county-standard swimming competitions can be held.

The Place Survey showed that 80.82% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the city's parks and open spaces. This result places us in the top national quartile. Encouraging though this is, we are working to make our parks, and green spaces even safer and cleaner. We also have initiated a £2.5m programme to improve the quality of our 87 play areas over the next three years. We are developing area and neighbourhood plans that reflect local consultation, local Councillors' proposals and community-led planning initiatives.

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Unsurprisingly, the Place Survey shows that public satisfaction with the city's cultural offer is in the top national quartile. Over the coming year we will be working with our partners in the cultural sector to ensure that culture also becomes a key driver of regeneration in the city. Our aim is to increase access to vibrant cultural opportunities, at affordable prices, in a range of venues and locations..

The Old Fire Station - with a new Crisis Skylight Centre at its heart - promises to be a unique and dynamic creative enterprise. Pegasus Theatre, Oxford's own youth theatre in East Oxford will be re-opening in 2010 after a £4m rebuild. Our successful annual dance festival continues to receive enthusiastic support from the citizens of Oxford and the Arts Council. A new venture is the recently established youth-led dance committee *Moving Voices* for 16-25 year olds. The Museum of Oxford continues to present challenging exhibitions about our city and its history. In particular, we want to increase the access that our young people have to culture and the arts.

By March 2011 we will:

- Complete the modernisation of 54 playgrounds.
- Retain Green Flag Status for four of the main parks.
- Achieve QUEST accreditation (the UK quality scheme for sport and leisure) in five leisure centres.
- Increase the proportion of our spending with local businesses to 30%.
- Implement improvements to the city centre based on a satisfaction survey of visitors of city centre users.
- Provide more affordable and accessible cultural activities and increase participation in these activities by commissioning arts and cultural organisations to work with disadvantaged and less involved sections of our community through grants of over £300,000.
- Identify a site for new cemetery space to meet needs over the next 10 years.

By March 2013 we will:

- Complete the modernization of all 87 playgrounds.
- Increase use of our leisure centres by 5%, measured against the 2009 baseline.
- Increase satisfaction with leisure services by 5% measured against the 2009 Place Survey baseline.
- Increase by 5% the proportion of local residents who are satisfied with their neighbourhood measured against the 2009 Place Survey result..
- Improve visitor satisfaction with the city centre by 10%.
- Increase spend with small local business to 40%.
- Have established the Old Fire Station as a unique and dynamic creative enterprise, with a new Crisis Skylight Centre at its heart, providing education, training and employment for homeless and vulnerable people.

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- Adopt an Area Action Plan for the Northern Gateway including the allocation of 1 million sq ft of employment floor space to provide 4,500 jobs.
- Begin development works on cemetery space to meet requirements over the next ten years.

Tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management

Oxford's citizens place a very high priority on the quality of the local environment and the City Council's objective is a cleaner, greener Oxford - in the city centre and in our neighbourhoods.

We are continuing to set challenging targets to improve the condition of our streets and neighbourhoods, which we want to be amongst the best in the country for cleanliness and tidiness. We are tackling inappropriate refuse disposal, fly-tipping, littering, dog-fouling, and graffiti through a mix of education and enforcement. We campaigned successfully to get the County Council to introduce a 20mph zone for the whole city, which should improve the environment and quality of life for pedestrians, cyclists and residents. We will continue to promote home zone initiatives and the campaign for clean air.

Talkback Panels, and other consultations, remind us that recycling is an important priority for our residents. Between 2005 and 2006 we recycled just 20% of our domestic waste in Oxford and we land-filled over 37,000 tonnes of waste. For 2007/08 the figure for recycling was 36% and the tonnage land-filled was down to 30,500 tonnes. We are working to further reduce waste and to maximise reuse, recycling and composting, with a long-term goal of reducing land-filled waste to zero.

The Council has changed the way it delivers its recycling and refuse services. A change in the collection rounds is saving over £200,000 every year. We have introduced the first phase of our weekly food waste recycling programme which has been very popular and we will expand this to the whole city by March 2011. Over the last several months, we have market tested our recycling and waste service in order to make the service more efficient and to improve customer satisfaction. We're planning an improved city-wide recycling scheme to start in October that will include most plastics, as well as food and garden waste. Our aim is to achieve the best recycling rate for an urban authority.

As a large organisation the Council seeks to play a major role in reducing the impact we have on the environment, tackling climate change and developing a coherent adaptation strategy. Over the past year, we have put measures in place to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from our buildings and operations by over 800 tonnes per year (8% reduction on 2005/06 levels). The Council aims to reduce emissions by a challenging 25% by the end of March 2011 and then 3% year-on-year thereafter and we are on track to achieve this. This could deliver potential savings to the Council of around £1.24 million over five years.

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The Council's in-house initiative is complemented by a wide-ranging and practical approach to encouraging renewable energy generation in the local community.

In 2009, Oxford became the first Council in England and Wales to sign agreements with Partnerships for Renewables (PfR) to develop community scale wind turbines on Council land. Funded by PfR, the project will make significant contributions to national renewable energy targets. It will help to reduce our reliance on imported fossil fuels and also provide additional revenue to the Council that can be recycled back to other important community projects. The Low Carbon West Oxford (LCWO) community group have won over half a million pounds to develop solar energy in West Oxford and other measures.

Oxford's Strategic Partnership is planning a carbon reduction initiative aimed at businesses and transport. In September, the Civic Society and the Council will sponsor a 'Streets for People' initiative to promote cycling and walking and the importance of the 20mph speed limit in residential areas. Since 2006/07, the Council has provided £230k in fuel poverty grants to improve energy efficiency and the well-being of residents. The Council has developed a planning requirement for 20% on-site renewable energy production for large developments. Our award-winning "Oxford is my World" initiative is also supporting and encouraging sustainable and low carbon approaches for householders, community groups and local businesses.

Through strategic partnerships with other agencies and organizations we are working to combat the adverse effects of climate change, including the increased incidence of flooding. We will also be implementing a broader strategy for dealing with the management of natural resources

The Council is increasingly receiving national and external recognition for its work in this area. We have won the Energy Saving Trust Fleet Hero Awards for 'Smarter Driving' and the Carbon Trust Innovation Award 2009: Innovative use of Technology (Public Sector). We are one of only nine cities in the country to have been awarded the status of Low Carbon City.

By March 2011 we will:

- Increase the percentage of materials recycled or composted to 50%.
- Ensure that 96% of our streets are free from litter.
- Continue the programme to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 2,500 tonnes (25% reduction compared to 2005/06 levels).
- Improve the SAP Rating (energy efficiency standard) of council managed housing stock to a score of 72..

By March 2013 we will:

- Increase the percentage of our materials that are recycled or composted to more than 50%.
- Ensure that 97% of our streets are free from litter.

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- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions from Oxford City Council's buildings and operations by at least 31% compared to 2005/06 levels.
- Continue to improve air quality through a jointly managed Low Emission Strategy with the County Council.
- Achieve and maintain level 3 accreditation for our Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

Crime and the fear of crime have an adverse effect on the well-being of all our communities, and we are continuing to make good progress, with our partners, on making Oxford a safer place. When asked about safety both during the daytime and at night, most people who responded to the Place Survey (90%) felt safe outside during the day time, but this fell to 55% outside after dark. These figures are consistent with the South East average. During the dark, women were more likely to feel unsafe than men. People in the Cowley and south east of the city area feel less safe walking at night than people living in other areas.

Oxford has been a national leader in its approach to community policing. Consultation with the community is at the heart of our approach to tackling crime and the fear of crime and we will continue to address these concerns through the Neighbourhood Action Groups and through our partnership with the Thames Valley Police. The Place Survey results suggest that that the work that we and our partners are doing in the community is bearing fruit.

Thirty-one percent of respondents agreed that the police and other public services are seeking and listening to people's view about anti-social behaviour issues in their local area. This is higher than the South East average of 24%. Thirty-eight percent agreed that the police and other public services were successful in dealing with anti-social behaviour issues in their local area. This is significant higher than the South East average of 26%. Of the Place Survey respondents who had used the services of Thames Valley Police, 62% were satisfied with the service and only 15% were dissatisfied.

Oxford has a vibrant and diverse night-time economy, and we want people to enjoy the attractions that are available. However, consultation shows that people still feel less safe visiting the city centre in the evening. We will continue to work on these issues through our Nightsafe scheme in partnership with Thames Valley Police and other agencies. The Council - through the Nightsafe partnership - is also trying to develop treatment for drug misuse and getting people back into the community.

The Place Survey asked people's opinions about a range of anti-social behaviour issues. Rubbish or litter lying around was perceived to be the biggest problem in our city. 54.34 % of our respondents felt that we were doing a good job dealing with litter. This is not good enough and we are taking steps to improve our performance on tackling inappropriate refuse disposal, fly-tipping, littering, dog-fouling, and graffiti.

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Education and enforcement are the two key planks in our strategy to reduce environmental crime. We are doing everything that we can to provide information to our citizens and the visitors to our city about the rules relating to street cleanliness. However, we will not hesitate to enforce when these rules are broken. We have already issued 213 Fixed Penalty Notices to people who have been caught littering in the city centre and we will be extending our campaign for a cleaner, greener Oxford into our neighbourhoods over the coming months.

The second most frequently cited problem was teenagers hanging around the streets (34%). Our work with Thames Valley Police and our successful street warden programme is helping to address this issue. We are also continuing to seek to divert young people from crime and anti-social behaviour by supporting projects that improve their well-being, particularly those who are at risk of offending. The City Council provides free swimming, for example, for under 17s. We are the only council in Oxfordshire that provides this service. As set out in other sections of this plan, we are also working with our partners in a range of fields to provide a better deal for our young people, particularly those living in disadvantaged areas.

By March 2011 we will:

- Step up enforcement action against environmental offences by 25% to 125 cases and continue our education and public relations programme to reduce environmental problems.
- Provide free holiday activities for over one thousand young people between 5–19 in the most deprived areas in Oxford.
- Reduce the incidents of criminal damage by 5%, and assault with injury by 5.4% against the 2008/09 baseline.

By March 2013 we will:

- Increase the level of enforcement for environmental offences by a further 100% and continue the programme of education and public relations.
- Provide free holiday activities for 2000 young people annually in the most deprived areas in Oxford.
- Increase residents' satisfaction with the methods of dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Implement a plan to strengthen social and community cohesion.

Transform Oxford City Council by improving value for money and service performance

We aim to be recognised by our customers, stakeholders, staff and external regulators as a world-class Council. We want to improve the quality and accessibility of our services, improve customer satisfaction, and offer good value for money.

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In order to achieve these objectives we are transforming the way in which the Council performs, with the aim of delivering better services to customers first time and every time, and achieving better value for money. To secure this, we have developed an ambitious programme with five themes:

- customers first: securing better access to the Council's services, for example through the implementation of improved telephone services and a customer relationship management system
- offices for the future: enabling more effective use of our offices
- modernise corporate services: providing services for the Council and customers which make full use of new ways of working that improve value for money and reduce waste
- organisational development: ensuring we have the right structures and skilled and motivated staff
- carbon management and natural resources: continuing to reduce our carbon footprint and manage our natural resources better.

By the end of 2008-09, a General Fund reduction of £7.1m – equivalent to 25% of the net budget had been achieved over two years. Further savings of £4.3m are targeted for 2009-10 and £2.2m for 2010-11. We have tackled leisure, one of our longstanding high cost services, which is now delivered in partnership. We expect the operating costs of our leisure centres to reduce by £1.2m by 2013. We have a rolling programme of fundamental service reviews and we are currently looking at ways of increasing efficiency and improving customer satisfaction with our recycling and refuse collection services. In 2010-11 we will be focusing on benefits and revenue collection.

Progress on delivering improvement in customer services has moved quickly, with our new customer relationship management system (CRM) now in operation in our housing and street-scene services and due to be rolled out in the revenues and benefits service at the end of January. Our website is becoming more transactional by the day. We are also rationalising our telephony arrangements with a view to moving to one number for all Council services.

Building on the major management restructure that we completed last year we are rolling out a management development programme for all managers. This should lead to improved organisational efficiency and increased staff morale. We have significantly improved the working relationships between management and trade unions. This is reflected in the reduced number of employee relations issues in the last year. The single status agreement was negotiated and proposed jointly by management and unions. The Council is currently working toward Investors in People accreditation. We are also making progress in reducing sickness absence in the Council.

We have made the first steps toward reducing our property and carbon footprint by moving out of our offices in Northway, and we will be making significant moves toward more modern and flexible working styles in the

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coming year and beyond. We are on track to reduce carbon emissions of 800 tonnes by March 2009.

We have made progress but there is much more to be done, particularly in the light of the financial challenges that the public sector will confront in the coming years. A key transformational priority for the coming year is to enhance the Council's financial management capacity – in the corporate centre, and across the Council as a whole.

By March 2011 we will:

- Implement savings of £2.2 m..
- Deliver a comprehensive asset management plan that rationalises our property holdings, releases capital for investment and ensures that our buildings are properly maintained.
- Deliver a further £160k in procurement savings.
- Increase staff attendance to 96%.
- Ensure that 90% of our customers can reach us first time on the Council's main service lines.
- Increase the number of online transactions (including financial) by 5% from the 2008 base.
- Implement a corporate approach to managing our customers and dealing with complaints in the majority of customer-facing areas.

By March 2013 we will:

- Secure formal recognition from the Audit Commission that the City Council has improved strongly by achieving Level 3 for our use of resources.
- Increase staff satisfaction to 75%.
- Achieve Investors in People accreditation.
- Increase public satisfaction by 5% from the baseline 2006 result.
- Develop a corporate procurement strategy that reduces costs of goods and services bought in by 1% a year.
- Increase the number of online transactions by 10% from the 2008 base
- Reduce our office footprint by 25%.

Working in partnership

Many of the challenges that face Oxford – or any other major city – cannot be solved by the Council alone. The Council, therefore, works with other organisations at many levels to deliver and enable services for the residents of Oxford. Partnership working will become increasingly important as budgets become tighter in the coming years if we are to continue to deliver effective and accessible service to the customers who depend on us.

Two of the Council's partnerships are particularly important. These are the Oxford Strategic Partnership and the Oxfordshire Partnership. These partnerships bring together key organisations from the public, business,

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community and voluntary sectors to develop and implement long-term visions for Oxford City and Oxfordshire respectively.

We benefit from a vibrant and highly participative Local Strategic Partnership. A highlight was the publication of the Affordable Housing Select Committee report. This approach to problem solving has been cited as an exemplar by IDeA and has already led to fresh approaches in delivering much needed additional housing for Oxford. The Oxfordshire Partnership has worked with partners and the Government to develop a Local Area Agreement. The Local Area Agreement sets out how national and local priorities are being delivered.

Oxford City Council is also engaged with a number of county-wide ‘Thematic’ Partnerships where organisations come together to jointly plan and deliver services. We have recently reviewed how we work with these partnerships in order to strengthen the voice and influence of the City Council and to ensure that the services delivered through the partnerships meet the needs of the Oxford City and reinforce the targets in our own corporate plan, as shown in the table below:

Thematic Partnership	Key activities over the next 3 years which support the City Council’s Corporate Plan
Spatial Planning and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the Central Oxfordshire area as a ‘Diamond for growth area’ and strengthen the economy of the City. • Through the Oxfordshire Housing Partnership to deliver a high level of affordable housing and reduce homelessness. • Through the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership to enable improved access to training opportunities and enable businesses to become established and supported.
Environmental and Waste Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards Oxford City becoming carbon neutral and a centre of excellence for climate change and adaptation. • Reduce waste and encourage recycling • Strong policies on flood reduction • Improved street cleanliness and the public realm
The Children’s Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve health and social exclusion • Reduce child poverty • Provide opportunities for the most disadvantaged.
Health and Well Being Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the ‘Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation’ programme, aimed at supporting vulnerable families, improving employability and reducing health inequalities • Reduce the gap in the rates of premature deaths.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage people to choose healthier life styles.
Safer Communities Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make Oxford a more cohesive city• Reduce crime• Reduce antisocial behavior• Reduce fear of crime• Reduce domestic violence
Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen the role of the voluntary and community sectors• Increase the number of volunteers in the City

The Council continues to work with Oxford Inspires, the city's partnership-funded cultural development agency, and other cultural partners to ensure that the scope and quality of Oxford's rich cultural scene continues to improve and is accessible to all. The quality of the city's Christmas celebrations last year was widely applauded and we intend to work with Oxford Inspires and our partners in the business community to make Oxford a Christmas destination of choice

The City Council's role in the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MKOB) partnership remains very strong, as do our partnership working arrangements with the Homes and Communities Agency, SEEDA and Oxfordshire Economic Partnership.

Partnership work on procurement continues to develop strongly and deliver savings across a wide range of areas, e.g. stationery and IT consumables, recruitment, temporary agency staff, and building Materials. During 2008/09, the City Council has taken the lead in setting up a joint procurement hub for other Oxfordshire districts. As a result of a successful funding bid through Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) and additional funding from the other districts, the hub has been in place since 1st April. During the first three months of 2009, over £100k of quick win savings have been identified.

The procurement team actively engages with Business Link, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce. The team regularly supports the work of these groups by giving talks to members and offering training. The team hosted a Meet the Buyer event on 2nd April which saw over 300 local businesses attending and meeting with 20 public sector organisations and charities, including Oxfam. We also worked with local professional services such as banks, solicitors and accountants who provided free advice to businesses at the event.

The Audit Commission has noted the Council's effective work on partnership and the benefits that this has brought the city, whether in local communities or

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in bringing affordable housing, jobs, and improved retail and cultural opportunities to the city centre.