

# REPORT

Authors: Management Team

**Councillor Kevin Wren, Leader of the Council**

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## **FINAL DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To seek Cabinet agreement to recommend the Final Draft Corporate Plan to Full Council on 28 June 2004.

### **2. Finalising the Plan**

- 2.1 The Cabinet considered the draft Corporate Plan at the meeting held on 5 May 2004.
- 2.2 Since that meeting the Corporate Plan has been finalised, ready for printing. The main document, without the technical appendices which were previously considered, is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Following adoption by Full Council, copies of the Corporate Plan will be circulated to all councilors and senior officers and a summary leaflet version provided for all staff. It will also be placed on our website – [www.salisbury.gov.uk](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk).

### **3. Recommendation**

Cabinet are invited to recommend the final draft Corporate Plan to Full Council.

### **4. Implications**

Financial: Contained within the Plan.  
Legal: None.  
Personnel: Contained within the Plan.  
Community Safety: This forms one of the political priorities of the Council.  
Environmental: Contained within the Plan.  
Core Values: The Plan supports all the core values.  
Wards Affected: All.



**SALISBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PLAN**

**2004 / 2005**

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction by the Leader of the Council**

#### **Better services and better value**

Since forming the political administration in 2001 we have worked hard to achieve top quality services at the best price possible. We do not think it too ambitious to demand better services and better value.

In January 2004 we underwent a major external assessment by the Audit Commission. We were judged to be a “good” council, which puts our overall performance in the top thirty percent of councils in the country. Our council tax levels are in the lowest quartile in the country. It is therefore immensely encouraging to receive an external validation of the high quality of our services and I need to pay tribute to the tremendous efforts of the council's employees, elected members and the many stakeholders and partners we work with. All have contributed enormously.

The challenge now of course, is to continue to improve. This Corporate Plan sets out our hopes and aspirations to move us forward in 2004/05. It challenges our capacity to deliver better services but I have no doubt we will respond very positively to the challenge we have set ourselves. Implementation of this plan will move us ever closer to our ambition of becoming “a nationally recognised high performing council with a strong emphasis on partnership working and engaging the community”.

Councillor Kevin Wren  
Leader of the Council

## Chapter 2

# Our Ambition

## Vision and Core Values

In association with our South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance (SWSA) partners we have developed the following vision for the district:

**“A safe and caring place, in which it is easy to get about and where value for money services contribute to a high quality of life and environment with equality of opportunity for all”.**

In support of this vision for the community, Salisbury District Council’s ambition is **“to be a nationally recognised high performing council with a strong emphasis on partnership working and engaging the community”.**

This ambition and the council’s core values (listed below) have remained constant throughout the last six years and four political administrations. They have provided a stable backdrop and guidance against which officers and councillors have been able to drive the organisation forward. Whilst political priorities have altered and the council has continued to modernise and change, it has done so with a very clear sense of direction, underpinned by its ambition and core values.

## Core Values

- Providing excellent service.
- Being fair and equitable.
- Supporting the disadvantaged.
- Being environmentally conscientious.
- Communicating with the public.
- Promoting a thriving local economy.
- Wanting to be an open, learning council and a willing partner.
- Being a progressive employer.

## Partnership Working

In the introduction, the Leader of the Council has emphasised the importance of working in partnership to improve the wellbeing of the district. The over-arching partnership with which the council works is SWSA.

The organisations and partnerships represented on the SWSA’s Board are:

- Churches Together.
- Council for Voluntary Service.
- Environment Agency.
- Learning and Skills Council (Wiltshire and Swindon).
- Salisbury College.
- Salisbury Community Health Council.
- Salisbury District Council.
- Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust.

- South Wiltshire Action Against Poverty.
- South Wiltshire Economic Partnership.
- South Wiltshire Primary Care Trust.
- Wiltshire Constabulary.
- Wiltshire County Council.
- Wiltshire Racial Equality Council.
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

The Board works at a strategic level to deliver improvements to services in the long-term. The Board has agreed the following ten priorities:

- Reduce crime and promote community safety, targeting areas of high crime and social deprivation.
- Reduce incidence of coronary heart disease and cancer, concentrating in areas where health inequality is most marked.
- Reduce levels of waste disposal.
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
- Promote sustainable land management and farming.
- Promote independent living for vulnerable people.
- Improve access to public services for isolated communities.
- Improve the quality of skills within the employment market.
- Seek recognition of the district as a European centre for business, technology and tourism.
- Increase civic participation of young people.

A number of these priorities directly support the political priorities of the council, which are outlined in Chapter 3.

## **Community Engagement**

Community engagement is central to the council's ambition. The council believes that community engagement leads to better informed decision making, increased accountability and stimulates self help. Our approach is based on consultation, community development and community planning and area committee activity.

### **Consultation**

The council adopted its Consultation Strategy in March 2003. The strategy outlines the purpose, aims and methods of consultation. It emphasises that councillors will, in most cases, make final decisions. The decisions will not always reflect the majority view, particularly when several sections of the community have different interests. But it is the job of the councillor to consider the outcome of consultation and weigh it up against other factors such as resources and statutory requirements.

Over the last three years the council has consulted extensively using methods such as the People's Voice (a citizen's panel of approximately 1300 residents who are consulted through postal surveys), the Tomorrow's Voice (a citizens panel for 14 to 18 year olds), targeted surveys, focus groups, workshops, public meetings, exhibitions and through public notices.

The following examples provide a flavour of how it has been used to inform the council's decision-making over the last 12 months:

- The results of a postal survey undertaken with the Electoral Registration Canvass have been used to develop themes and tasks for our new Community Plans.
- In November 2003 a workshop facilitated by MORI (Market and Opinion Research International) helped the council examine its services, budgets and council tax requirements.
- The statutory Best Value surveys have provided detailed information on satisfaction with the council, its key services and quality of life issues in the district. The results will be used to review our priorities, measure ourselves against other councils and develop our services.
- Focus groups, face to face interviews, postal and web based surveys were used to assess views on existing contact arrangements with customers and to develop our Customer Contact Centre.
- 94% of participants rated their sports development activity as excellent/very good.
- 97% positive response rate that the sports development programme that the individual has attended has made a difference to them.
- Surveys carried out by the Durrington Swimming and Fitness Centre showed a large increase in regular use and high levels of customer satisfaction.
- People's Voice surveys have supported the development of our new Community Plans, Customer Contact Centre, and Housing Strategy.
- A survey of businesses on the Churchfields Industrial Estate, focusing particularly on property needs and issues arising from their location, has resulted in the provision of an options appraisal for the estate being included within the council's Economic Development Strategy.

The council recognises that further work is required in providing a more structured dialogue with minority communities and linking the results of consultation with broader intelligence. These matters have been identified in the Consultation Strategy and are built into our work programme for the coming year.

Consultation between independent and community groups and the district council and other public bodies is supported by the Wiltshire Compact. The Compact aims to improve the quality of life for people in Wiltshire by improving joint working arrangements and developing mutual understanding between statutory, community and voluntary sectors.

A code of practice to support the Compact on communication and consultation will be developed to provide guidance. Through the Compact partners are committed to:

- Allowing sufficient time for effective consultation and communication.
- Using methods to suit the target audience.
- Making good use of the voluntary and community sector's links to different groups.
- Co-ordinating consultation to prevent duplication.
- Making information as accessible as possible, including using simple language.
- Being clear about what can and cannot be changed.
- Providing relevant and well-publicised feedback.
- Evaluating any communication and consultation, and learning lessons.

## **Community Development and Planning**

The Community Development Policy – Building Strong Communities outlines the council's commitment and approach ***to encouraging participation in decision***



***making though consultation and ‘hands on’ support, so that local people have opportunity to influence decisions that affect their quality of life.***

The council’s community development work includes:

- Working with and funding the voluntary sector.
- Working with a range of partners to promote social inclusion.
- Providing community facilities, including the Bemerton Heath Neighbourhood Centre.
- Working with groups to access funding to improve the quality of life in the district.
- Supporting the development of local and area community plans.

A significant amount of community development work is undertaken through the community planning process, which takes place on both a village/parish level and an area level.

Community planning has two main aims:

- To identify community priorities for SWSA partners, so that services can be improved or refocused.
- To stimulate self help and the development of local initiatives to meet community priorities.

The SWSA developed some of the country’s first community plans in 2000 following extensive consultation. Chapter 4 outlines progress towards meeting the community planning targets and Chapter 5 outlines the approach to producing the second generation of community plans.

### **Area Committee Activity**

In recognition of peoples’ “sense of belonging” to their local area, the council set up four area committees with delegated decision making powers. The role of the area committees is to make all local decisions on behalf of Salisbury District Council.

District, parish, town and county councillors participate and members of the public are encouraged to contribute at ‘Public Question Time’. The area committees also have funds to support local projects and community planning initiatives.

Positive working relationships with the 77 parish councils are promoted through the Parish Charter (which gives a far more influential role in the determination of planning and licencing matters), the Community Planning Toolkit and bi-annual parish, town, district and county liaison meetings.

### **Looking Forward**

Our five year vision for the development of Salisbury District Council was set out in the document “Moving Us On – Controlling Our Future”, approved by council in June 2003 and included at Appendix 1 of this Corporate Plan.

In summary the document:

- Recognised that continuing change is an expected fact.
- Described five key drivers of change.
- Emphasised our political priorities.

- Outlined our shared objectives with the SWSA.
- Described the transformation opportunities new technology offers.
- Highlighted the challenging financial outlook – the need to do more with less.
- Emphasised the increasing importance of performance management.

The national context in which we operate remains largely as we described it last year with a continued emphasis on partnership working, tight control on spending and continued high priority for government on health, education, crime and transport. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) has impacted heavily on local government and constraints on investment in public housing affecting our ability to provide sufficient affordable homes to meet need as well as restricting our ability to invest in the quality of our own housing stock.

Emerging national issues which are likely to affect our long-term vision for the organisation include the Gershon review on procurement, which implies less local choice and more collaborative procurement and service provision arrangements with other councils. In addition second generation Public Service Agreements and Local Area Agreements which may offer districts more opportunity to resource agreed priorities from government funding and the Balance of Funding Review which might pose a threat or an opportunity as government grapples with how to finance local government spending in the future.

Amidst all the change we are working through, there are some constants set out in our ambition to be nationally recognised for the quality of our services, working in partnership with others and engaging the community and in the core values that shape our behaviour set out on page ??? of this document.

We foresee the organisation developing in the context of a district which is itself changing. The predictions we foresaw in last year's document remain very relevant:

- Development which will alter the character of the northern part of the district is now underway.
- The first turf will have been turned on the second Park and Ride site (Wilton) before this Plan is formally adopted.
- Discussions with partners and stakeholders continue on the future of the city centre and how the Cathedral, the Market Square / Guildhall and Central Car Park might contribute to the vibrancy of the city and will help to shape up a long-term vision for the city centre.
- South Wiltshire Economic Partnership's vision for the economic prosperity of the district is beginning to impact at the regional level.
- Second generation community plans will be published in July hopefully acting as a catalyst for local community development across the parishes and towns that make up the district.
- Waste management policies are leading to greater recycling opportunities for people.

Internally steps taken in the last year have, as predicted, moved us on towards the vision we set out. The Improvement Plan arising from the October 2002 Peer Review put us in good stead for the CPA inspection in January 2004. The Improvement Plan arising from the CPA inspection will provide the cornerstone for our future development in the next three years (see Appendix 2). This Corporate Plan, incorporating our rolling five year vision will be subject to annual review.

Simply stated, our vision for the organisation envisages:

- Customer needs being met by a strong Customer Services Team with the skills and knowledge to meet 80% of customers' needs first time.
- Local customer points in Mere, Tisbury, Amesbury, Wilton and Downton based in existing county or district council-owned buildings.
- A centralised office at Bourne Hill, housing the majority of council staff.
- A reduced directly employed workforce due to more efficient business processes being employed; the formation of a Leisure Trust to manage the facilities and the transfer of some services common across the county into a new organisation designed to deliver better quality services more efficiently and effectively.
- Higher public satisfaction rates for our priority services and overall satisfaction with the council increasing compared to the national trend.
- Top quartile performance in all of our top twenty Performance Indicators by 2005 with no services performing in the bottom quartile.
- A "good" CPA category in 2004 with an "excellent" rating by 2007.
- A streamlined senior management structure delivering better quality services.
- Community planning becoming even more ingrained in the organisation with the council contributing to a partnership manager post to permanently support the SWSA.
- Sharper systems in place to support managers – the Aggresso financial system introduced in April 2004 being just one example.
- The national e-government target of 100% services on line by the end of 2005 being met.
- Stronger procurement processes leading to better value for money.
- A culture within the council which values:
  - Delivering services to the highest standard possible.
  - An outwardly focused organisation.
  - Continuing development of people within the council.
  - Consistency, fairness, decisiveness, diversity and openness.
  - Flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness in the way we look to do things differently.
  - A "can do" atmosphere.

## **Chapter 3**

# **Our Priorities and Focus**

## **Political Priorities of the Council**

The council has identified six political priorities. This chapter outlines those priorities and highlights key issues for 2004/05. Achieving those political priorities will require supporting work on four organisational themes which taken together form the 'Integrated Change Programme'.

### **Improving Customer Services**

Customer care and communication is at the heart of modern local government. Peoples' expectations from service organisations are growing. They want to shop, bank and access services at times to suit their busy lives. With this expectation comes the need for choice about how, where and when services are delivered. Technological advances can help us with this but the opportunity for face-to-face contact with helpful, well informed staff still remains a priority for many of our citizens.

Our aim is to be able to answer over 80% of all enquiries to the council at the first point of contact.

Our focus in the coming year will be on progressing centralised offices to the design stage (including submitting a planning application) and reviewing how we provide services so that they can be more efficient, effective and convenient to customers. In order to achieve this we will be developing supporting technologies and investing in a training and development programme for our customer contact staff.

### **Maintaining our Housing Stock**

Decent housing is a fundamental human need. The quality of housing makes a huge difference to the health, wealth and life chances of all citizens. The council directly provides 5,700 council homes or about 12% of all homes in the district. The council works closely with tenant representatives on key issues and during the last five years over £30m has been invested in modernising our pre war stock providing all our homes with double glazing and central heating and improving the insulation of our Pre Reinforced Concrete (PRC) stock.

Due to our substantial investment in the last few years we are in a position where our stock currently meets the Decent Homes Standard, some six years ahead of the government target.

Our current programme is aimed at continuing to meet the governments 'Decent Homes Standard'. However, we are advised that tenants expectations might exceed the Decent Homes Standard and, as part of a Stock Options Appraisal, we are consulting tenants on defining the 'Salisbury Standard'.

Our focus in the coming year will be on completing a comprehensive Stock Option Appraisal so that councillors can determine a long-term programme to improve the stock and maintain the Decent Homes Standard.

## **Delivering More Affordable Housing**

The housing market in South Wiltshire operates within a complex built and natural environment. Housing ranges from high-density city accommodation to large military settlements and substantial historic country houses in some of England's most beautiful rural settings.

Providing more housing remains a challenging and complex process. Although house and land prices are beginning to moderate, the market in South Wiltshire is likely to remain strong. With local wages below the national average there remains a disproportionate ratio between house prices and income levels. The consequence of this is that many people find it difficult to secure and pay for a home. Adequate provision of affordable housing through partnerships with housing associations is considered essential in sustaining local communities and maintaining a local work force.

It is therefore necessary for us to make the best of all our resources including our own housing, available landholdings, capital resources and partnerships to deliver more affordable housing.

Our focus in the coming year will be to:

- Continue to deliver on the outcomes from the Scrutiny Review, including providing 350 new affordable houses by March 2006.
- Identify and where possible secure additional resources for the procurement of affordable housing.
- Publish the Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Develop our approach to making better use of empty properties.
- Improve conditions of the worst private sector housing.
- Review our Strategic Partnering in order to ensure that our partners can deliver the maximum amount of affordable housing.

## **Improving Waste Management**

The council is responsible for the collection of household waste which is disposed of to a landfill site (Wiltshire County Council Waste Disposal contractor site). The council recognises that this method of disposal is not sustainable both in terms of its impact on the environment and the finite capacity of landfill sites.

We are therefore committed to diverting waste from landfill disposal by a policy of reduction, re-use and recycling. The council currently diverts around 16% of waste through kerb-side collection and 41 recycling centres.

We have recently reviewed our 'Waste Minimisation Strategy' and aim to increase the amount of waste diverted to 20% by 2004/05 and 31% by 2010, through increased public education, community involvement and recycling.

Our focus in the coming year will be to implement the Best Value Review recommendations; introduce new kerbside collection schemes for glass, cans, paper, textiles and garden waste in some areas; enhance the remaining kerbside collection of paper and cardboard; improve the network of recycling centres and how they are serviced and participate in the county-wide 'Home Composting Initiative'.

## **Improving Transportation**

Salisbury is a thriving mediaeval city sitting on a major route to the South Coast. Local and through traffic is growing and threatens to damage the economy and environment. The council is committed to ensuring that Salisbury remains a pleasant place to live, visit, do business in or pass through.

It has, therefore, forged a partnership with Wiltshire County Council and Government Office for the South West (GOSW) to produce a strategy for controlling congestion and air pollution, providing alternatives to the motorcar and improving road safety in and around Salisbury.

This partnership approach has succeeded in attracting around £34m of government funding for a programme that includes the provision of five Park and Ride sites, improved facilities for public transport, better opportunities for cycling and walking, an Intelligent Transport System and proposals for the construction of the Brunel Link/Harnham Relief Road and improvements to the A36. The target is to reduce predicted traffic growth in the city from a projected 21% between 1999 and 2011 to 10%. By 2001 (the latest available figures), traffic volumes in the city centre had actually fallen by 3%.

Our focus in the coming year will be the construction of the Wilton and Britford Park and Ride sites and the completion of the Intelligent Transport System.

## **Improving Community Safety**

Being safe contributes enormously to peoples' quality of life. Although Wiltshire is the second safest place to live in England, our communities have expressed a fear of crime and concerns about rising levels of anti-social behaviour and nuisance crimes.

Our focus in the coming year will be to continue our work with the Community Safety Partnership to reduce the fear of crime, to increase public confidence and reassurance. Whilst encouraging appropriate tolerance. We will also tackle crime itself and anti-social behaviour, as well as introduce performance targets that measure the impact our work is having on community safety. A Young Peoples' Strategy will be developed and this will include diversionary activities for young people, including a SPLASH football project planned for the summer holidays targeted at young people in Bemerton Heath, the Friary, Harnham and Bishopdown.

The findings of a scrutiny review on improving the council's contribution to tackling anti-social behaviour will support this work. A partnership funded Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Officer will begin work in South Wiltshire in April 2004 and a key focus for the council will be to support and work with this officer to tackle the problems that have been identified.

During 2004/2005 the council will be required to work with the other key partner agencies to develop a third Crime and Disorder Audit and produce a third Community Safety Strategy to be in place for April 2005.

## **Integrated Change Programme**

In order for the council to meet its vision, ambition and political priorities, it will need to manage change successfully. We believe that this can be most effectively

achieved through an Integrated Change Programme. This will be based on the six political priorities, supported by work on the following four organisational themes:

- Meeting the financial challenge.
- Improving the performance of the council.
- Partnership working and community engagement.
- Building the capacity of the organisation.

## Chapter 4

# Our Achievements

## Service Improvements

Over the last year or so a huge range of improvements have been made to our services. This chapter highlights those key achievements in the Integrated Change Programme as well as the improvements made through 'Best Value' and the work of the Scrutiny Panels.

### Improved Customer Services

- Customer Services Programme Plan and budget agreed for the next two years.
- Human Resource Plan for customer services integration including unit structure, job descriptions, grades and appointment procedures out for staff consultation.
- Customer Charter published setting out the standards of customer service that people can expect.
- Joint planning with Wiltshire County Council to pilot a customer information point in Salisbury library.
- Improved communication to the public through the local media.
- New approach and format to the South Wiltshire Citizen, designed to improve its readership within the community.
- Community consulted on the council's longer-term budget plans.
- Customer surveys for general satisfaction of council services and specific satisfaction surveys for housing, planning, and benefits.
- Joint planning with Wiltshire County Council to provide an integrated public office in Amesbury.
- Architects appointed to produce a development strategy for new centralised council offices based at the existing Bourne Hill site.
- Suitability of City Hall (as a venue for Full Council meetings) and Churchfields Depot (for temporary or permanent use for appropriate services) reviewed.
- Partnership project with West Dorset District Council completed, funded by the government Invest-to-Save Programme to e-enable planning and licensing services.
- £2m Local Government Online programme completed as part of the Wiltshire and Swindon e-Government Partnership. Projects included a joint A-Z of public services, development of the Wiltshire and Swindon Intelligence Network and joint procurement of a corporate Content Management system.
- Government approved *Implementing Electronic Government Statement* resulting in an allocation of £550,000 to implement e-government over the next two years.
- Re-launch of the council's website focused around customer needs and transactions.
- Launch of secure online and telephone system for service payments.
- Upgrading and improvement to the southwilts.com community website.
- 50% of Salisbury District Council services capable of being e-enabled now online.

### Maintained Council Housing

The following improvements were undertaken to the housing stock in the last year:



- 129 properties have been fully electrically rewired.
- 2863 properties received improvements to loft insulation.
- 53 properties had their cavity walls filled.
- 333 properties had their kitchens replaced and modernised.
- 376 properties had their bathrooms replaced and modernised.
- 296 properties had their external doors replaced.
- 40 properties were fitted with replacement UPVC double glazing.
- 79 properties had full replacement central heating installed.
- 106 properties had their roofs renewed.
- Commencement of a stock option appraisal.
- Achieved “average” rating from GOSW for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.
- Highest ever tenant satisfaction with overall service (85%).

### **Delivered More Affordable Housing**

- Through the planning process, provided 118 new affordable homes throughout the district.
- Ceased using Bed and Breakfast and moved all households into their own accommodation.
- Supported the appointment of a county-wide rural housing officer.
- Secured funding through the Wiltshire Teenage Pregnancy Unit to support Young Mothers.
- Opened a Young Mothers Project.
- Opened three shared houses for single people.
- Launched the Backup Service to help people secure housing in the private sector.
- Increased our portfolio of leased properties from 120 to 150 properties.
- Published a Homelessness Strategy.
- Published a Private Sector Housing Strategy.

### **Improved Waste Management**

- Statutory consultee on the Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan.
- Working with the Wiltshire Waste Partnership to introduce waste minimisation, re-use and recycling initiatives.
- Introduced kerbside bags to 4,000 households for improving the collection of paper and cardboard for recycling.
- Commenced a new contract for improving the removal of abandoned vehicles and compliance with End of Life Vehicles (ELV) requirements.
- Adopted a comprehensive Salisbury District Council Strategy for Waste Minimisation Re-use and Recycling.
- Progressive introduction of cleaner fuelled vehicles undertaking council business.
- Improved regulation of trade waste producers.

### **Improved Transportation**

- Took on responsibility for on street parking control and increased parking capacity, whilst reducing congestion through control of illegal parking.
- Development and roll-out of Intelligent Transport System for Salisbury.
- Planning approval gained for Wilton and Downton Road Park and Ride sites and land acquired.

- Improvements to bus stop infrastructure.
- Enhancement of city centre streets.
- Ongoing roll-out of residents' parking schemes.

### **Improved Community Safety**

- Establishing Alcohol Exclusion Zones in Amesbury and Salisbury city centre.
- Adoption of 'toolkit' providing guidance to parishes and towns on implementing alcohol exclusion zones.
- Production of policies and procedures for tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Distribution of £140k of Home Office funds on community safety projects across South Wiltshire tackling domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse, youth issues, problems on Bemerton Heath and the Friary, anti-social behaviour and diversity.
- Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation programme with the Guilden Centre and Alcohol and Drugs Advice Service (ADAS).
- Appointment of community safety partnership task group co-ordinator.
- Appointment of community safety partnership anti-social behaviour reduction officer.
- Introduction of police community support officers in targeted areas of the district.
- Joint production of Anti-Social Behaviour Toolkit for Wiltshire and training held for practitioners in South Wiltshire.
- Improved multi-agency working by using prevention, intervention and enforcement measures to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Pilot for south-west in Community Safety Partnership Self-Assessment procedure.
- Completion of Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Review.
- Enhanced press profile through use of community safety partnership press officer.
- Continued support for rural Community Safety Partnerships linked to the SWSA funding provided for youth projects and distraction burglary projects.

### **Meeting the Financial Challenge**

- Band D council tax in lowest 25% of district councils.
- Increased income from fees and charges by £190k using benchmarking and market knowledge.
- Realised £160k of savings with minimal impact on frontline services.
- Generated over £5m in capital receipts in the year.
- Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy to reflect financing of priorities.
- Commenced detailed action plan for corporate governance.
- Remained debt free going into new prudential system to take advantage of transitional arrangements.
- Facilitated public consultation exercise on the budget setting for 2004/05.
- Scrutiny involvement in budget setting process.
- Identified invest to save and invest to improve resources.
- Early closure of accounts ahead of legislative requirement.

### **Improved Performance**

- Completed Best Value Review of Street Services.
- 48% of published performance indicators in upper quartile compared to 39% last year.

- 75% of published performance indicators improving or stay the same last year.
- Seven of the council's priority indicators in upper quartile compared to three last year.
- 11 of the council's priority indicators either met their target or were within upper quartile.
- 13 of the council's priority indicators improving on last year.

## **Partnership Working and Community Engagement**

85% of the targets included in the districts first Community Plans 2000-2003 have now been achieved. A summary by key theme is listed below.

### **Traffic and Transport**

- Real-time passenger information at bus stops on the Key Bus Network coming online.
- Concessionary fares extended to men aged 60 and over.
- 30 and 40 mph speed limits installed in villages.
- Walking Buses established at Christ the King Primary School (Amesbury), Downton, Morgan's Vale, Winterslow and Woodfalls Primary Schools.
- Beehive Park and Ride keeps 400 cars a day out of the city centre.
- Fisherton Street and New Canal, Salisbury enhanced.
- Permanent tourist coach parking facility established in city.
- Bus priority scheme set up in Castle Road.
- 170 long stay parking spaces been converted to short stay following the opening of the Beehive Park and Ride.
- Cycle route to Salisbury District Hospital constructed.
- Walking map to encourage residents to walk for health purposes has been published.

Targets not achieved:

- It has not been possible to improve bus services due to driver shortages in the area. However, Wilts & Dorset is now under new ownership and working with the Joint Transportation Team to improve services.
- The planning application for a pedestrian crossing over Minster Street in Wilton was withdrawn.
- The Salisbury Share-a-Lift-to-Work scheme is no longer in operation.

### **Health and Welfare**

- 10% more older people now supported in their own homes, rather than having to move to a care home.
- Funding continued for the Salisbury District Carers Network.
- 78% of patients now receive hospital treatment within six months, an improvement of 6%.
- 98% of breast cancer referrals are seen within two weeks.
- Death rate from stroke and coronary heart disease for people under 75 years has been reduced by 4.5%.
- Death rate from cancer for people under 75 years has been reduced by 5.2%.
- 81.4% of women are screened for cervical cancer.
- Teenage pregnancy rates have dropped by 5.2%.
- Cardiac Rehabilitation and Falls Prevention programmes.

- Elderly people's exercise programme at Salisbury and Tisbury.
- Salisbury Walking Map.
- Fit Club in Salisbury and Tisbury for people with disabilities.
- Active Swimming programme targeting non-swimmers from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The South Wiltshire Credit Union was launched in 2002.
- Doorstep Walks are in place for Salisbury, Tisbury and Amesbury.
- £750,000 of lottery funding achieved for a 'Healthy Living Centre' in the Mere and Tisbury areas.

Targets not achieved:

- Immunisation rates for two year olds are currently 93.5% (target was 95%).

### **Crime**

- A 'life line' service has been set up for victims of domestic violence.
- 'Bobby on a bike' and newsletter about crime in Wilton.
- Warning signs erected at vehicle crime hotspots in Mere and Tisbury areas.
- £20,000 received from the Home Office for CCTV in Wilton matched by £1,000 each from 20 businesses.
- Five community support officers appointed.
- In Amesbury 20 cameras installed in homes of elderly and vulnerable people who have been repeat victims of burglary.
- Drinking banned in four designed areas in Amesbury to address crime and disorder caused by people gather to drink in open spaces.

Targets not achieved:

- The number of drug-related crime incidents increased by 7% between 2001 and 2002, in line with national trends.
- It has not been possible to increase the number of police officers on the beat.

### **Rural Life and Vibrant City**

- Enhancements carried out in Amesbury town centre.
- Local Plan policy now requires all major housing developments to provide a minimum 25% of affordable housing.
- A new business park (Solstice Park) is due to be built outside Amesbury over the next ten years.
- Developer contributions of approximately £400,000 per year are collected to fund new or improved outdoor recreation in association with new residential development.
- An A-Z guide of council services was jointly published between the district and county councils.
- Additional mini-recycling centres have been provided in Quidhampton, Netherhampton, Kilmington, East Knoyle, Chilmark and Wyle. Sites in Maiden Bradley and Zeals are to follow.
- Policies for the conversion and re-use of redundant buildings for local employment use are not in the Local Plan.
- Downton Leisure Centre receive an annual grant of £22,000 from Salisbury District Council.

- Rural businesses are supported through the Rural Regeneration Partnership, Wiltshire Foodlinks and Rural Business Club.
- A Salisbury city centre access guide 'Access Salisbury – Your guide to getting around Salisbury' was published.
- New community facilities have opened in Barford St. Martin.
- A new library has been opened in Downton.
- A Tourist Information Centre has been established in the Mere library, enabling an extension of opening hours and creating a 'one-stop-shop'.
- The tourism internet site ([www.visitsalisbury.com](http://www.visitsalisbury.com)) is recording an average 10,000 sessions and 45,000 page views per month.

Targets not achieved:

- In February 2002, 25% of people of working age in employment had an NVQ level 4 qualification or higher (target was 30%).
- Funding for 'The Workout' mobile employment, training and advisory service was discontinued due to lack of tangible outcomes.

### **Young People**

- A panel of young people called 'Tomorrow's Voice' was established in February 2000 to provide information about young people's needs and priorities across Wiltshire.
- Junior Good Citizen has been established.
- The Local Plan contains a policy which ensures that all new housing developments include youth facilities.
- All schools comply with government limits on infant class sizes i.e. there are no classes over 30 unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- A foyer scheme providing accommodation, training and employment for young people was opened.
- 62% increase in the number of under sixteen's taking part in sports development activities.
- A Youth Summer Leisure Credits Scheme, where young people work in the community to earn credits for outings and activities, is in operation in the Mere and Tisbury areas.
- Young people in the Tisbury area can borrow a moped for six months to help them get to work or college under the Moped Access Project

Targets not achieved:

- Funding for the Graduates into Business scheme led by Salisbury Learning Partnership was unavailable after 2000/01.
- The target for 80% of children to reach national standards for reading, writing and arithmetic has not been reached.

The second generation of community plans will be completed in July 2004. The preparation of the plans has included a variety of consultation methods including:

- |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Community questionnaire         | • People's Voice Panel              |
| • Working group meetings          | • Parish councils                   |
| • Village design statements       | • Community / parish and town plans |
| • District and county councillors | • Specific surveys e.g. housing     |
| • Local community safety          | • Community groups                  |

- partnerships
- Resident associations

The purpose of the community questionnaire was to provide residents with the opportunity to identify priorities for their area.

Approximately 49,000 households received the questionnaire and a respectable 37.44% were returned.

The number of questionnaires returned by area is as follows:

Amesbury	4,164	City	6,413	Downton	3,534
Mere	1,025	Tisbury	1,390	Wilton	1,818

### **Summary of Results by Community Planning Area**

- Looking after the roads is the top priority for five of the six areas with City being the exception.
- Houses local people can afford features within the top six priorities for each area with again the exception of City.
- Cleanliness of roads, streets and open spaces falls within the top six priorities for four of the areas with the exclusion of Mere and Tisbury.
- Looking after the environment is a top priority for Mere, Tisbury, Wilton and Downton but does not rank within the top six for Amesbury or the City areas.
- Reducing crime was the top priority in 1999 for Mere and has slipped down the table to fourth position in 2003 and this might be attributed to the successful Community Safety Partnership in the area.
- Looking after roads was and remains the top priority for Tisbury and is the top ranked issue across all community areas, we do see an improvement in reducing crime for the area with this priority moving from second to fifth place.
- Wilton rates protecting local facilities higher than any other area and we can assume has seen an improvement in vandalism and anti-social behaviour which was voted top priority in 1999 and now ranks ninth.
- We can suppose that activities and facilities for teenagers has improved in Amesbury with the priority moving from third position in 1999 to sixth in 2003 however, they give greater priority to this issue than any other area.
- In Downton we can see that vandalism and anti-social behaviour remains second highest priority for the area and roads have moved from third to top; Downton also ranks looking after the environment higher than any other area.
- We can presume that traffic congestion has improved in the City area with this priority moving from top to third position with the top spot being replaced by vandalism and anti-social behaviour the second highest priority across the district.

Analysing the results on a district wide basis provides the following priorities:

- Looking after the roads.
- Reducing crime.
- Vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- Houses local people can afford.
- Cleanliness of roads, streets and open spaces.
- Looking after the environment.

The results of the community questionnaire and other consultation methods have been used to inform the Community Plans.

The plans will be based around the ten themes identified by the Wiltshire Strategic Board and by differing in look, style and content will, it is hoped, gain ownership by the communities themselves.

Councillors at all levels, SWSA, the People's Voice Panel and the South Wiltshire Action Against Poverty were consulted on the draft plans published in April 2004. This provided a 'reality check' to plans regarding their achievability, supported ownership at all levels and worked towards making the plans SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely).

Final plans shall be circulated in June 2004 and targets will be available for inclusion in the Corporate Plan 2005/06.

### **Building the Capacity of the Organisation**

Increasing our skills, reducing our costs and improving our policies and procedures all contribute to a more robust organisation, which is better placed to deliver our ambitions.

Achievements in 2003/04 include:

- **Staff Training** – The council improved its system for staff appraisals and retained its Investors In People Award. Equalities training was provided for all staff.
- **Councillor Training** – Induction training for new councillors was introduced, together with an annual system of appraising councillor training needs.
- **Recruitment and Retention of Staff** – Training offered to managers on recruitment and selection of staff. Employee induction training has been significantly improved. A staff opinion survey has been undertaken. Savings of around £70k per annum have been identified through a revised approach to the use of agency staff.
- **Reducing Sickness Absence** – A new procedure for managing sickness absence has been implemented, new reporting and monitoring arrangements have been introduced to reduce sickness absence. Average days lost per employee reduced from 11.6 days in 2002/03 to 8.53 days in 2003/04.
- **Personnel Policies** – 16 new or improved policies were introduced. Examples include Sickness Absence Management, Stress in the Workplace and Grievance Procedure.
- **Project Management** – Managers have been trained in project management skills to ensure that resource implications are properly understood and made available and to inform the consideration of the council's overall capacity.
- **Corporate Capacity** – Integrated Change Management and Performance Monitoring systems have been introduced to measure, prioritise and monitor progress on projects and tasks undertaken by the council. The objective is to ensure that the council's priorities make satisfactory progress whilst ensuring that the organisation does not become overstretched.

### **Achieving External Accreditation**

In January 2004 the council underwent a week-long inspection led by the Audit Commission, called the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). A team of

independent inspectors working for the Audit Commission visited the council to assess our work and speak to staff, customers and councillors. At the end of their assessment the inspectors had to assess us as either being excellent, good, fair, weak or poor - and the council came out as good, just three points away from being excellent. Our result means we are in the top 27% of councils nationally.

The inspection has highlighted areas for improvement which we are committed to meeting. Our aim is to be recognised as an 'excellent' council in the eyes of the Audit Commission and more importantly the communities of Salisbury and South Wiltshire by 2007.

Appendix 2 outlines our Improvement Plan.



## Improvements through Best Value

Our approach to Best Value has developed significantly since the council first approved in 1999 a weighted programme of 77 Best Value reviews covering all services over a five year period. The weightings were based on how critical the services were and how far they were from the ideals of Best Value. The programme was later revised and individual reviews have been amalgamated into larger, more strategic, cross-cutting reviews.

Best Value reviews are conducted and considered by:

- A project management team to set the objectives, monitor progress and sign off the final report, consisting of member(s), policy director, community/customer representative(s), union representative(s), "critical friend", relevant officers.
- A working group of relevant officers and the "critical friend" to undertake key tasks.
- The Scrutiny Panel.
- The Cabinet.

### Best Value Results 1999-2004

Year	Title of Review	Services Included	Best Value Inspection Rating
1999/00	Housing Repairs	-	2* / Unlikely to improve.
1999/00	Pest Control	-	No inspection carried out
2000/01	Car Parking	-	2* / Promising prospects for improvement
2000/01	Development Control	Planning	1* / Promising prospects for improvement
2000/01	Elections and Electoral Registration	-	No inspection carried out
2000/02	Environmental Stewardship	Environmental issues within the council	No inspection carried out
2000/01	Conservation	Planning conservation	No inspection carried out
2000/01	Housing Benefits	-	No inspection carried out
2001/02	Community Safety	This was a joint review between all the Wiltshire districts the county council and the police	2* / Promising prospects for improvement
2001/02	Leisure and Sports Facilities	Guildhall, City Hall, Tisbury, Durrington and Salisbury sports centres, parks and grass cutting including nature conservation, cemeteries and crematorium	2* / Promising prospects for improvement
2001/02	Customer Care and Communication	Receptions, hours and methods of	No inspection carried out

		operation, marketing and communication services, communications and consultation strategies, publications, signage	
2002/03	Corporate Support Services	Financial, IT, personnel and payroll, legal and property, best value, democratic services	No inspection carried out
2002/03	Services for Older and Vulnerable People	Housing adaptations, housing control centre, sheltered housing and wardens, Shopmobility	No inspection carried out
2003/04	Street Services	Parks and open spaces, tree management, street cleaning, household waste collection, recycling, public conveniences, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles, street furniture, public art, road safety, community safety, CCTV	To be completed in 2004/05
2003/04	Balanced Housing Markets and Decent Homes	Affordable housing, stock condition, decent homes standard, using planning to influence housing, housing advice, homelessness, and how housing affects quality of life	To be completed in 2004/05

For 2004/05 the council had planned to undertake Best Value Reviews of:

- Services to Households – covering council tax and benefits, environmental health personal services and building control personal services.
- Services to Businesses – covering business rates and grants, economic development, environmental health business services, building control, tourism services.
- Community Services – covering forward planning, nature conservation, community development, social inclusion, transportation.

However, following our CPA review in 2003/04 it has been decided not to undertake these reviews but to revise the Best Value Review programme.

This revised programme will be based on our CPA assessment and will concentrate reviews for future years on those areas identified as being “areas for improvement”. This approach has been discussed and agreed with our external auditor.

An outline of the Audit and Inspection of Salisbury District Council is included as Appendix 3a).

A summary of each Best Value Review is set out in Appendix 3b)–3n) together with progress on implementation. Where the reviews have been inspected a summary of the Inspector’s Report is also included.

## Improvements through Scrutiny

One of the key roles of our four Scrutiny Panels is reviewing key policies and making recommendations on improvement.

The process for conducting scrutiny reviews is based on each panel:

- Developing an annual work programme for validation by the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee.
- Producing a 'Project Initiation Document'.
- Setting up a working group of councillors.
- Undertaking visits to best practice authorities, interviewing expert witnesses, holding discussion forums and research.
- Producing a final report with recommendations for the panel.
- Recommending findings to Cabinet/Full Council.

### Scrutiny Review Work Programme 2003/04

Scrutiny Panel	Topic
Community and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving the council's contribution to tackling anti-social behaviour.</li><li>• Housing Stock Option Appraisal.</li><li>• Best Value Review of Balanced Housing Markets and Decent Homes.</li><li>• Best Value Review of Services to Older and Vulnerable people.</li></ul>
Environment and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Best Value Review of Street Services.</li><li>• Review of Salisbury Transport Plan.</li><li>• Monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy for Waste Minimisation, Re-use and Recycling.</li><li>• Review of Sustainability/Environmental issues of the council.</li><li>• Review of Green Energy.</li></ul>
Planning and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutiny Review of the efficacy (in meeting the scheme objectives) of the council's 'R2' policy.</li><li>• Scrutiny Review of the council's buildings sustainability policy and practice; methods of ensuring that sustainability/green building design and construction is encouraged/enforced.</li><li>• Scrutiny Review of the council's planning enforcement policy and practice.</li><li>• Scrutiny Review of the 'fit' between the new planning framework and the needs of the business community.</li></ul>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IT provision to members.</li><li>• Medium/Long-Term Financial Strategy.</li><li>• Top-slicing and fees and charges.</li><li>• Indemnities for members.</li></ul>

The council is in the process of conducting a major review of its scrutiny role. The review is focusing on the following questions:

- Is the scrutiny function working effectively, is it focusing on the right issues?
- Are members, staff and stakeholders fully engaged?
- Does the current structure help or hinder effective scrutiny?
- Are adequate resources available?
- Has the organisation fully embraced the new role?
- Is the relationship between Scrutiny and Cabinet working effectively?
- Can we incorporate any lessons from emerging best practice?

The review has drawn its evidence from:

- Peer Review, CPA and District Audit reviews.
- Emerging best practice.
- Consultation with the Scrutiny Chairs.
- Members' workshops facilitated by the consultant Julia Wright.
- A review of the first two years

The review is expected to conclude in May 2004.

## **Key Areas for Further Improvement**

The council has achieved improvements in each of its priorities. However, it is not complacent and further work needs to be done if continued progress is to be achieved:

### **Improving Customer Services**

- Development of ICT Strategy for meeting e-government targets.
- Communication with the public.
- Customer access – investment in information management and disabled access.
- Better feedback to the community at large and to our key partners.

### **Delivering More Affordable Housing**

- Increasing the numbers of affordable housing.

### **Improving Waste Management**

- Sustainable waste management, focused on minimising and reducing waste as well as recycling.

### **Improving Transportation**

- Traffic congestion – opening planned Park and Ride sites.
- Access to rural transport.

### **Building the Capacity of the Organisation**

- Continuing to develop scrutiny role with members and more involved in performance management.
- Enhancing project management skills across more staff.
- Embedding risk management, building on work to date.

### **Meeting the Financial Challenge**

- Continuing to develop a more robust longer-term financial strategy.
- Maintaining reduced rent arrears (BVPI 66.2).

### **Improving the Performance of the Council**

- Embedding performance management, including personal and team target improvements.
- Speed of processing minor planning applications (BVPI 109b).
- Speed of processing other planning applications (BVPI 109c).
- Consistent turnaround performance of land searches (BVPI 179).
- Monitor and investigate causes for a reduction in Park and Ride passenger journeys (LPI 502).

## **Chapter 5**

### **Our Future Plans**

#### **Integrated Change Programme**

This chapter represents our '*Integrated Change Programme*' for 2004/05.

#### **Improving Customer Services**

We will over the next year:

- Transfer customer service staff in Amesbury from Redworth House to the Amesbury Public Library.
- Implement a review of cash handling facilities at public offices.
- Complete the first phase reviews of customer service processes.
- Implement a Customer Relationship Management system and associated telephony upgrades.
- Appoint customer services staff to new posts.
- Develop training programme for customer services staff and those supporting front line staff.
- Set out proposals for a district-wide strategy for public service access points.
- Agree in principle funding arrangements for the construction of new offices.
- Seek agreement from all interested parties on detailed plans for the new offices and submit plans for planning permission.
- Set out for consultation with our staff revised Green Travel Plan proposals that result from office centralisation proposals.
- Commence review of document handling, control, storage, retrieval and disposal.
- Review internal information management needs to support customer services staff, e-government initiatives, statutory requirements (DPA 98/FoIA) and improve internal efficiency.
- Develop an Internet Marketing Plan.
- Rationalise and integrate council sponsored internet sites into corporate programme.
- Complete integration of Land and Property Gazetteer.
- Implement a corporate electronic forms system to e-enable service applications.
- Establish and publish authentication/identification and security protocols.
- Publish generic e-mail addresses.
- Implement a corporate e-mail alert system for internal and regular external users of web based services.
- Introduce an ongoing customer feedback scheme.
- Review our approach to social inclusion/diversity.

#### **Maintaining our Housing Stock**

We will over the next year:

- Allocate resources to complete an annual improvement programme.
- Prioritise works on continuing to meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- Continue with the programme to meet tenants priorities of new kitchens, bathrooms and external doors.

- Complete the Stock Option Appraisal, including consultation with tenants.
- Implement the Tenants Compact.
- Produce an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.
- Submit a 'fit for purpose' HRABusiness Plan to GOSW.

## **Delivering More Affordable Housing**

We will over the next year:

- Continue implementing the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review.
- Target a new interest free loan facility to help bring back into use empty properties.
- Complete the Best Value Review of Balanced Housing Markets and Decent Homes.
- Evaluate the benefit of a partnership with Assetrust to deliver affordable homes.
- Evaluate the benefits of introducing choice based lettings.
- Review the Registered Social Landlord Strategic Partnership.
- Raise the profile of the council's role in enabling affordable housing with the public and the Regional Housing Board.

## **Improving Waste Management**

We will over the next year:

- Introduce new kerbside collection schemes for glass, cans, paper, textiles and garden waste in some areas.
- Improve the servicing of recycling centres and develop additional community recycling sites.
- Increase the percentage of waste recycled to at least 20%.
- Implement the Best Value Review of Street Services.
- Identify further plans and priorities for improving the Waste Management Service.
- Continue to implement the council's Strategy for Waste Minimisation, Re-use and Recycling.
- Develop waste management initiatives jointly with the Wiltshire Waste Partnership.
- Improve the collection of bulky household waste and introduce a charge for the service.
- Implement a new dedicated trade waste bag/label scheme to improve management of the service.

## **Improving Transportation**

We will over the next two years:

- Continue to implement the Salisbury Transportation Plan.
- Open two new Park and Ride sites for commuters entering Salisbury from the west and south.
- Review the financial strategy supporting the Salisbury Transportation Plan to ensure that charges do not damage the economic viability of the city and are sufficient to fund the full implementation of the Plan.
- Have completed the implementation of the Intelligent Transport System for Salisbury, delivering real time passenger information for bus passengers, online



passenger and commuter information, a car park guidance system and more efficient operation of traffic controls.

## **Improving Community Safety**

We will over the next 12 months in partnership with the South Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership:

- Continue to tackle anti-social behaviour and in particular implement the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review.
- Continue to endeavour to reduce the fear of crime and to increase public confidence and reassurance in how safe the district is.
- Work with staff involved in the implementation of the new licensing legislation to take into account any community safety implications of new policies.
- Consider the impact of and monitoring of the CCTV system.
- Roll out section 17 training both within the council to officers and to parish councils and elected members.
- Further tackle drug and alcohol misuse.
- Further tackle domestic violence.
- Continue work on Bemerton Heath and the Friary.
- Continue street work, diversionary activities, citizenship and safer schools initiatives with young people.
- Participate in the third Crime and Disorder Audit and contribute to the production of the third Community Safety Strategy for South Wiltshire.
- Continue to enhance the profile of the Community Safety Partnership through the local media and ensure regular reporting to elected members and their communities.
- Develop Young Peoples Strategy.

## **Meeting the Financial Challenge**

- Undertake Corporate Efficiency Review.
- Implement Invest to Save/Invest to Improve Protocol.
- Agree in principle funding arrangements for the construction of new offices.
- Complete and implement a review of cash handling facilities at public offices.
- Develop and implement phase two of the Financial Management System.
- Recruit an external funding advisor.
- Adopt a policy to strengthen key controls and audit/monitor operation of financial systems.
- Implement **CIPFA/SOLACE** governance arrangements.
- Produce integrated performance and financial monitoring reports on a quarterly basis.
- Adopt treasury management arrangements in line with CIPFA code.
- Introduce prudential indicators.
- Embed risk management processes.
- Introduce outcome based targets into voluntary sector agreements.
- Produce updated Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan.
- Evaluate outcome of public consultation on the budget.
- Introduce new income collection system.
- Embed procurement strategy and practices.
- Introduce system to monitor efficiency savings.
- Extend arrangements for monitoring reallocation of budgets to support political priorities to other types of resources.

- Enhance the role and impact of scrutiny in the budget process.

## **Improving the Performance of the Council**

We will over the next year:

- Produce a quarterly monitoring report for Cabinet, Scrutiny Panels and Management Team.
- Approve an “Invest to Improve Performance” initiative with a capital allocation and policy criteria for assessing proposals under the scheme.
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a programme to independently review service areas where potential performance improvements are considered possible.
- Increase performance so that 50% of our top 20 performance indicators meet national top 25% by April 2005.
- Review targets for existing published indicators to fully reflect political/organisational priorities and core values.
- Develop further local indicators to fully reflect political/organisational priorities and core values.
- Review the corporate Best Value Review programme in the light of the published CPA report and review of Scrutiny function.

## **Partnership Working and Community Engagement**

We will over the next year:

- Publish the second phase community area plans.
- Develop a three year plan to deliver and monitor SWSA's high level targets and community area plans.
- Evaluate community planning in each of the six community areas.
- Maintain and develop SWSA website.
- Support current groups and partnerships to develop work programmes that meet SWSA priorities and community area plans.
- Continue publicity campaign to ensure communities are kept informed on community area plan progress.
- Maintain and strengthen links with councillors to develop their role in community planning.
- Map partnerships working in South Wiltshire and establish working relations to bring community area plans to fruition.
- Develop and implement co-ordinated approach to consulting and involving hard to reach groups for SWSA partners.
- Restructure SWSA to strengthen the partnership and minimise or remove the weaknesses identified in the partnership self assessment review.

## **Building the Capacity of the Organisation**

We intend to make further improvements to our skills, policies and procedures so that we continue to improve our capacity to deliver. The following objectives are set for 2004/05:

- **Employee Communication** – We will seek to improve communication with our employees by analysing the results of the Staff Survey undertaken in 2003/04 and involving them in drawing up an action plan to tackle the problems identified.

- **Complaints** – We will further improve our complaints procedure by systematically analysing the underlying trends generating complaints and revising our services accordingly.
- **Business Process Re-engineering** – External consultants will carry out a rigorous examination of the processes the council uses to provide its services, with the objective of minimising duplication, inefficiency or waste.
- **Scrutiny Panels** – We will review the Scrutiny function and implement new procedures and practices to further improve this vital function.
- **Temporary Staff** – We will seek to make further savings by using a pool of council employees to fill temporary vacancies, as an alternative to the employment of agency staff.
- **Customer Contact Centre** – We will implement phase one of the Contact Centre which, in addition to providing a better service to the public, will also generate considerable efficiency savings.
- **Sickness Absence** – We will seek to build on the progress made in 2003/04 by reducing the average number of days per employee lost to sickness to our long-term target of eight days. We will also seek a better understanding of stress in the workplace and reduce this as a factor in sickness absence.
- **Personnel Policies** – New or revised policies will be implemented on:
  - Work Life Balance.
  - Annual Leave.
  - Market Forces Supplements.
  - Honorarium Payments.
  - Capability.
  - Relocation.
  - New Employee Support.
  - Working Time Arrangements.
  - Electronic Communication.
  - Provision of References.
  - Harassment and Appeal Procedures.

In the course of the next year we will be reviewing our key priorities taking into account:

- Our success in bringing the council's housing stock up to a good standard.
- Results of the public consultation we have undertaken in 2004 which is highlighting the need for us to focus more on the needs of young people as well as those priorities we have already identified.
- The increasing importance of balancing the local economy and the local housing market to ensure as far as possible a buoyant, healthy economy where people can afford to live.

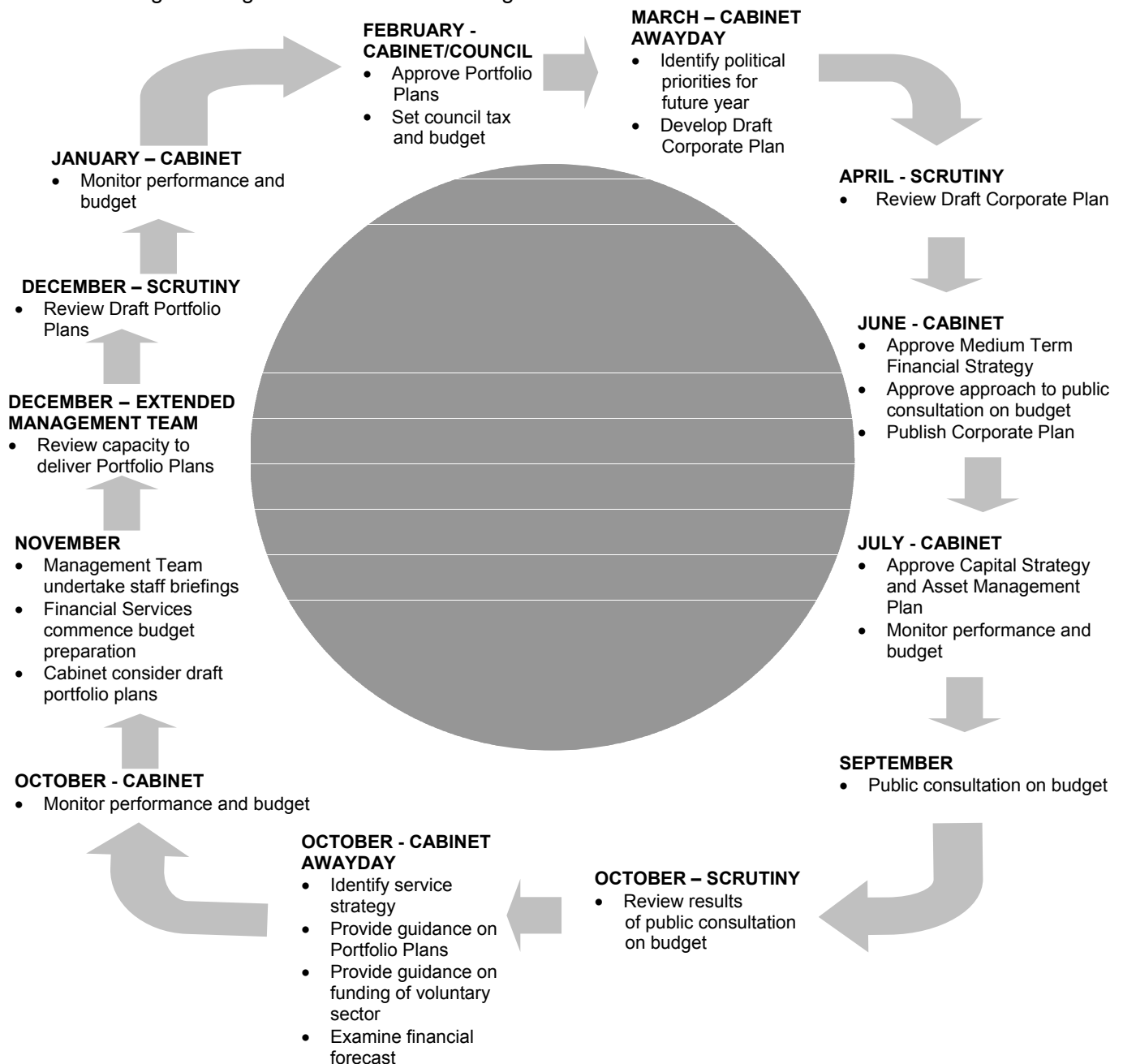
## Chapter 6

### Making It Happen

The implementation of this plan requires both sound management processes and resources to be in place. This chapter focuses on those processes, whilst Chapter 7 addresses resources.

### Corporate Planning Cycle

Salisbury District Council's approach to achieving '*our ambition*' and delivering '*our future plans*' is based on an annual integrated service planning and budget setting process. This cycle of prioritisation, consultation, performance management and budget setting is summarised in the diagram below:



## Project Management

'Our Future Plans' summarises the 'ten themes' in the Integrated Change Programme. We recognise that these 'ten themes' will only be achieved through corporate working both internally and, for some themes, with partner organisations. Each of the 'ten themes' is supported by a cross cutting multi-disciplinary board. These boards have produced a 'project plan' which summarises the key objectives and anticipated outcomes.

Some of the 'ten themes' are interdependent and unless they are viewed holistically, we may not achieve our ambition. A 'trouble shooting' group has therefore been set up to consider interdependent impacts. This group's work will enable potential difficulties to be flagged up and possible solutions to be offered for Cabinet consideration.

In addition to the Integrated Change Programme, there are four Portfolio Plans covering Community and Housing, Planning and Economic Development, Resources and Transport and Environment. Each plan identifies key service specific activity for the year ahead. Copies of the Portfolio Plans are included at Appendix 4a)-4d).

Each individual project supporting the 'ten themes' is managed under a corporate project management framework. The framework requires each project to have a plan setting out the following information:

- Introduction – Background.
- Project Justification – Why we are doing the project and how does it meet our corporate priorities and objectives?
- Project Specification – A list of tasks to be undertaken with their milestones.
- Project Limitations – What is not included?
- Drivers – Reasons for doing the project both internally and externally.
- Project Analysis – Impact or dependency upon other projects, which may rely upon its completion?
- Resources – How much money and time is required to complete the project and are these available?
- Project Timescale – When will the project be completed?
- Project Team – Who is required to deliver the project and agreement to their availability?
- Monitoring – Who will monitor the project and at what frequency?
- Risks – What risks and issues exist for the project?

Each project will have a *project sponsor* who is responsible for ensuring the project is meeting its objectives and monitors progress against budget and time and a *project manager* responsible for the delivery of the project.

At the completion of each project a 'post project review' is undertaken to capture learning and improvements that can be made.

## Risk Management

Implementing the 'Integrated Change Programme' and indeed carrying out any work requires 'Risk Management'. This requires the identification of significant risks, the consequences assessed and the most effective method of controlling and monitoring the risk established.

Our aim is to integrate '*risk management*' into the culture of the council. We will identify:

- Strategic and major operational risks in each annual Portfolio Plan.
- Risks in each of the '*Themes of the Integrated Change Programme*'.
- Risks in each individual project areas.
- Operational risks within each service unit.

The Council has developed a standard format and guidance for use in the identification of risks, their classification and evaluation. Any risks will be classified according to the following categories:

- Political.
- Reputation.
- Economic/financial.
- Environmental and sustainability.
- Impact on people.
- Organisational capacity.

The risk will be assessed as to its likelihood and impact. Both impact and likelihood can be assessed as high, medium or low.

For risks that exceed the council's risk threshold a risk management response will be developed. Depending on the risk a number of responses are employed:

- **Tolerate**, the council may decide to accept and monitor the risk at the present time. This may be necessary for some risks that arise from external events.
- **Transfer**, the council may decide to pass the risk on to another party. For example contractual terms may be agreed to ensure that the risk is not borne by the council or insurance may be appropriate for protection against financial loss.
- **Terminate**, the risk may be such that the council could decide to end the activity or to modify it in such a way as to end the risk.
- **Treat**, the council may take actions or employ strategies to reduce the risk to the council.

Project Risk Registers and the current status of risks will be reviewed as part of agreed monitoring procedures. Corporate risks identified within Portfolio Plans will be reviewed and amended as part of the overall quarterly monitoring reports.

## Performance Management

Managing performance is about practical ways of improving how we do things. Its only purpose is to deliver improved services to local people.

Our approach draws on best practice identified by the Audit Commission. It recognises that creating the right culture is as important as having targets and systems for monitoring progress. Our approach is based on:

- Senior managers and councillors championing high performance.
- Learning from other organisations and within the council about how to make improvements.

- Setting clear priorities for the council as a whole and within each Cabinet Portfolio Plan.
- Helping people to understand that what we do has to change for improvement to happen.
- Involving staff and allowing people to take responsibility for driving improvement.
- Measuring what matters – we have identified our 'Top 20' Performance Indicators that support our political priorities and developed a computerised system that enables monitoring.

Appendix 5 contains:

- a) Introduction
- b) Summary of all Statutory and Local Performance Indicators.
- c) Explanation of Performance Indicator Variances.
- d) Summary of Salisbury District Council's Top 20 Performance Indicator Action Plans.
- e) Summary of Procurement Strategy – TUPE Certification

## Procurement

The council recognises the importance of good procurement techniques in securing value for money and effective services. To this end it has established a Procurement Steering Group membership of which includes a policy director and a member of Cabinet.

The group has identified a series of challenges in securing good procurement. These are:

- The need to secure sustainable purchasing.
- Fragmented purchasing arrangements with common goods and services bought by individual business units.
- Frequently purchased items not properly market tested.
- Examples of modern procurement, e.g. partnering contracts, exist but are not widely disseminated.

The group has taken action to rectify these weaknesses. It has:

- Secured single contracts for common items such as electricity, paper, stationery and mobile phones, whilst at the same time ensuring sustainability. For example, all our electricity is from "green" sources and paper and stationery supplies are of recycled (or recyclable) material.
- Agreed to use the services of the group as a reference point for major procurement to help disseminate best practice and encourage greater consistency.

During 2003/04 the following have been achieved:

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| • New print room photocopier            | saving £12,000 pa |
| • New contract for agency staff         | saving £36,800 pa |
| • Least cost routing of telephone lines | saving £20,000 pa |

During 2005/06 the group intends to evaluate and improve procurement in the following areas:

- Standard advertising contract                      Target saving    £5,000 pa
- Washroom facilities                                   Target saving    £7,000 pa
- Reduced use of computer priorities              Target saving   £10,000 pa
- Reduced use of water coolers                    Target saving   £10,000 pa

Other areas for improvement in 2005/06 are:

- Implementation of the National Procurement Framework
- Enabling e-procurement
- Implementing framework agreements for frequently purchased goods.



## Chapter 7

# Resource Investment

## Providing the Building Blocks

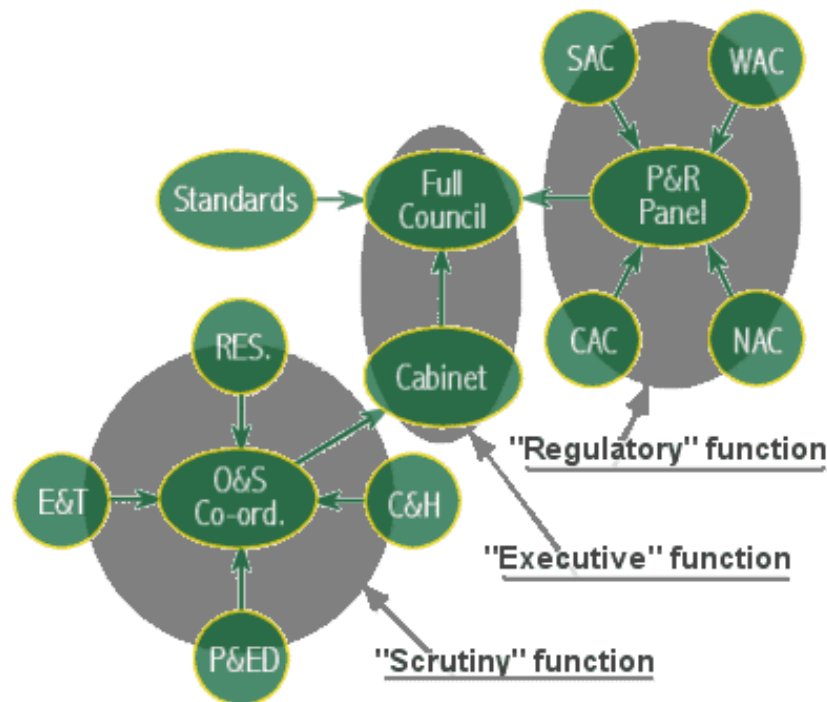
This plan has set out what we want to achieve and how we intend getting there. The final ingredient needed to achieve our ambition is resources; both people and money.

Chapter 7 outlines our approach to investing in staff and councillors and to ensuring that our budget follows our priorities. The chapter concludes with a section on equal opportunities, since it is vital that everyone's potential is maximised.

## Investing in Councillors

Councillors undertake a huge variety of roles both within their communities and within the council. Support through training, development and resources is therefore vital. The new political structure, introduced in 2001 provided the opportunity for councillors to specialise in different aspects of their role, thus creating greater capacity. The structure is shown below.

### Political Management Structure



**Key:** E&T – Environment & Transport, RES – Resources, C&H – Community & Housing, P&ED – Planning & Economic Development, O&S Co-ord – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, P&R Panel – Planning & Regulatory Panel, Area Committees: SAC – Southern, NAC – Northern, WAC – Western, CAC – City.

## **The Cabinet**

The Cabinet is appointed at Annual Council and reflects the overall political control of the council. It is composed of the council Leader and Deputy, currently four portfolio holders and their deputies. The portfolios cover service areas over which the district council has some responsibility: i) Environment and Transport ii) Planning and Economic Development iii) Community and Housing and iv) Resources.

Decisions are still made collectively but the portfolio holders have responsibility for their specific areas of policy and are the key spokespersons. The Cabinet makes decisions that are in accordance with the council's budgetary and policy framework. If it wishes to make a decision that lies outside this framework, it must refer it to the council for a decision.

Cabinet has worked effectively with portfolio holders and their deputies developing their role successfully. Strategic policy issues have been successfully tackled, meetings of the Cabinet have been focused on strategic decision making and members have strongly influenced the direction of the council and its priorities. The corporate planning process successfully tied together political priorities and budget decisions. The use of informal "Away Days" with Senior Management Team have been a particularly useful investment to aid formal decision making.

## **Overview and Scrutiny**

Currently Salisbury District Council operates four Overview and Scrutiny Panels that mirror the four portfolios. Their work programme is co-ordinated and monitored by the (politically balanced) Overview and Scrutiny Panel before finally being agreed by the Full Council.

The transition from the traditional committee system involved a big change in how councillors involved in scrutiny performed their roles, with a shift in emphasis away from *decision making* to that of *inquiry*.

The main functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels are as set out below, with different practices deployed for different functions:

- i) *Holding the Cabinet to account* – scrutinising decisions the Cabinet has made and is going to make; the reasons behind them and the legality of them. This may also involve inviting portfolio holders to meetings to give evidence.
- ii) *Policy review and development* – undertaking policy reviews either proactively or at the behest of the Cabinet.
- iii) *Best Value reviews* – engaging in continuous performance improvement.
- iv) *External scrutiny* – taking on an outward-looking approach to external and cross-cutting processes.

A high degree of local choice has allowed the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to adopt a variety of forms. For example, one panel chose to appoint smaller sub-panels to do the bulk of work of gathering evidence and producing a report.

Towards the end of the 2002/03 members began a review into the scrutiny process and began to make initial recommendations for its continuing improvement and development. Despite the weaknesses identified both locally and nationally there is now a growing acceptance of the approach and a greater understanding of the potential of scrutiny.

Two scrutiny reviews – Affordable Housing and Waste Management – are both recognised as excellent examples of the way in which the broader membership of the council can invest its time and energy to really influence policy development. Scrutiny has also been successful in supporting the Best Value Review process. Call in has been invoked on three occasions with mixed impacts on Cabinet decisions.

### **Councillor Training, Development and Support**

To support councillors in their increasingly complex roles requires sound training, development and support. Our broad approach continues to include:

- The provision of an induction programme.
- Regular training events throughout the year.
- Access to appropriate external training courses and conferences.
- The provision of home laptops/PCs, mobile phones, stationary and support as necessary.
- Councillor facilities such as a Member Room.

A members training and development policy, strategy and plan has been developed and actions and initiatives will be undertaken in accordance with these provisions.

A member skills and knowledge matrix has been identified and includes the following areas of skills/knowledge development:

- |                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| - Advocacy                  | - Managing information |
| - Assertiveness             | - Managing workload    |
| - Change management         | - Media                |
| - Communications            | - Meetings             |
| - Community engagement      | - Organisational       |
| - Councillor role           | - Policy               |
| - Creativity                | - Priorities           |
| - Finance                   | - Problem solving      |
| - Interpersonal             | - Public speaking      |
| - IT                        | - Stress               |
| - Learning and development  | - Writing              |
| - Management and leadership |                        |

Relationships between councillors and between councillors and staff are highly constructive. Cross party working is the norm. Chairs of Scrutiny are held by opposition councillors. Area Committees which are not politically proportionate continue to be a resounding success.

Similarly, relationships between councillors and staff continue to be very positive. At an informal level councillors have access to relevant staff to deal with constituency issues. Councillors are regularly involved with officers on corporate working groups and senior managers are in regular contact on

politically contentious issues with opposition members benefiting from officer briefings as well as leading members of the Cabinet. The council's constitution does set out a councillor/officer protocol but informal relationships have been more important in determining the way the council operates.

In the last year councillors have been developing their role as community leaders, through community planning. We now have some impressive examples of the way councillors can apply community planning and development processes to provide leadership in their wards and area committees are now getting more regularly involved in the production and monitoring of the second phase of community plans.

## **Investing in Staff**

- The main ways in which we plan to invest in employees during the coming year are outlined in Chapter 5 (Future Plans).
- Our aim is to achieve a workforce which is motivated, clear about priorities, have the right tools for the job, possess the right skills, knowledge and experience and are customer focused and enjoy providing a high quality service to the public.
- Our range of 'people policies' are designed to achieve these aims.
- In particular, we continue to seek to achieve an organisational culture which enables the council's values to be lived by its employees and its priorities met.

## **Financial Resources following our Priorities**

The council believes that if it is to achieve its' priorities then resources must be targeted. In other words our budgets should support our priorities.

With limited financial resources it is necessary to concentrate investment in public services that have the greatest impact within the community. In order to guide the council in making investment decisions it has categorised services.

The categorisation which is reviewed annually, is used within the 'corporate planning process' to allocate resources to meet unavoidable increases in service costs, target actions for service performance improvement and guide managers.

The Cabinet has identified that services can be placed into the following four categories:

- Essential.
- Very important.
- Important.
- Desirable.

The criteria used to determine which services fall into which categories is as follows:

- The degree to which the service is either statutory or discretionary.
- The degree to which the service contributes to the political priorities of the council.
- The extent of the community benefiting from the services.
- The impact if the service was withdrawn.

The following categorisation of services for financial purposes has been agreed for 2004/05. The asterisks alongside each description is used as a rough guide to the statutory or discretionary nature of the service - \*\*\*\* denotes a service which is largely statutory - \* denotes a service which is largely discretionary.

### Essential

- Finance. \*\*\*
- Transportation and car parks. \*
- Forward planning. \*\*\*\*
- Waste collection. \*\*\*\*
- Recycling. \*\*
- Housing enablement. \*\*\*
- Democracy. \*\*\*
- Housing management. \*\*\*
- Housing benefits. \*\*\*\*
- Environmental health. \*\*\*\*
- Council tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). \*\*\*\*
- Development control and enforcement. \*\*\*
- Marketing, public relations and communication. \*
- Community safety. \*\*\*
- Environment. \*

### Very Important

- Customer services \*
- Personnel and training. \*\*
- Building control. \*\*\*
- Abandoned vehicles. \*\*\*
- Community development and planning (including partnership working). \*
- Tourism. \*
- Shopmobility. \*
- Land charges. \*\*\*\*
- Sheltered housing. \*
- Corporate management. \*
- Office support. \*
- e-Government \*

### Important

- CCTV. \*
- District sports centres (Five Rivers). \*
- Rural sports centres. \*
- Legal Services. \*\*
- Democratic services. \*\*
- Property management. \*\*
- Tourist information centres. \*
- Licenses. \*\*\*\*
- Cemeteries and crematorium. \*\*
- Parks, play areas and allotments. \*

- Economic development. \*
- Best Value. \*\*\*

### **Desirable**

- Conservation. \*\*\*
- Markets and fairs. \*
- Historic buildings. \*
- Public conveniences. \*
- Land drainage. \*
- Community grants. \*
- Sports development. \*
- Area committees' discretionary funds. \*
- Special events. \*
- Unison support. \*
- Dog control. \*\*
- Arts and entertainment (City Hall, Guildhall and major arts grants). \*
- Unison \*

This approach to budgeting has led to a significant shift in the financial resources that support our priorities. The following summarises investment and shifts in resources:

#### **Improved Customer Services**

- Investing £634k in hardware/software/business process re-engineering and training over three years.

#### **Improving our Housing Stock**

- The council will determine its future funding of this priority at the conclusion of the Stock Option Appraisal Process.

#### **Delivering More Affordable Housing**

- The council expects to invest over £3m of its own resources over the next three years.

#### **Improving Waste Management**

- In partnership with Wilts County Council the council will invest over a million pounds in recycling over the next three years.

#### **Improving Transportation**

- Salisbury District Council in partnership with Wiltshire County Council will be investing £5.7m of government funding in 2004/04 for this priority.

The council's overall financial position is contained within Appendix 5:

- a) Summary of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2004/05.
- b) Income Budget for 2004/05.
- c) Spending Budget for 2004/05.
- d) Portfolio Budgets 2004/05.
- e) Explanation of Budget Variances.
- f) Summary of Capital Programme.

## **Commitment to Equal Opportunities**

The council commitment to equality is reflected in two of its core values:

“Being Fair and Equitable” and “Supporting the Disadvantaged”.

The council adopted an Equal Opportunities Policy and supporting action plan, which incorporated a Race Equality Scheme in 2002. The aim of the policy is to ensure that service provision, employment practices and democratic and consultation functions are fair and open.

The action plan outlines development in three key areas:

- Service provision.
- Local democracy and consultation.
- Employment.

A working group has been established to implement and monitor progress against the action plan.

Two Best Value Performance Indicators measure progress on equality:

- Best Value performance Indicator 2(a) covers “the level of the equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms”. The council considers that it has achieved level two during 2003/04 and aims for level three in 2004/5.
- Best Value Performance Indicator 2(b) covers “the duty to promote race equality”. The indicator is expressed as a percentage against a list of actions. The council considers it has attained a score of 53% in 2003/04.

During 2003/04 the council has:

- Undertaken equalities training for its staff.
- Published a commitment statement on diversity in partnership with Salisbury Community Action and South Wilts NHS.
- Identified services which have an impact on ethnic minority or hard to reach groups.

## **Investing in Information and Assets**

The council is responsible for receiving and managing vast quantities of information much of which is personal and/or sensitive. We have to ensure that the rights of individuals are maintained through the appropriate use of the Data Protection Act. Furthermore we want to be an open and honest council, which allows accessibility to all of our public documents via the Publication Scheme and the Information Catalogue.

We have invested in:

- A corporate information manager to manage the strategic and tactical issues flowing from the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts, including information security, records management and the Business Continuity Plan.
- Online access to council minutes and agendas.
- Access to plans and documents relating to planning applications.

The council is about to embark on a review of how it manages, stores, records, retrieves and disposes of all of its corporate information, with a view to making most information available electronically.

The council is also responsible for land and buildings both for operational purposes and for investment purposes. We are investing resources into ensuring the assets are still relevant, fit for purpose and well maintained. This is managed through the council's Asset Management Plan, which is reviewed annually to ensure a strategic fit with the council's political priorities and financial strategies.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Conclusion**

This Corporate Plan, brings together in one strategic document, our vision, ambition, values, achievements and future plans. We want it to be a working document.

It is aimed at councillors, staff and partners. It will assist new councillors, staff and partners in understanding the council's work in the coming year. It will also enable councillors and managers to monitor progress, drive improvement and make best use of resources.

Finally, we hope that it helps to create a sense of pride in the wide range of work that is undertaken on behalf of the communities of Salisbury and South Wiltshire.

Richard Sheard  
Chief Executive