DRAFT 6 (28 April)

SALISBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN

2005 / 2006

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Chapter 1

Introduction by the Leader of the Council

Better services <u>and</u> 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 <u>and</u> better value.

In January 2004 we underwent a major external assessment by the Audit Commission. We were judged to be a "good" council, with a score that 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 was 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 who have all contributed to further service improvements since this assessment.

During 2004/05 we have made great strides towards meeting our ambitions; for example we have opened two new Park and Ride sites and identified funding for centralising our offices on our preferred site at Bourne Hill.

The challenge now of course, is to continue to improve. This Corporate Plan sets out our hopes and aspirations to move us forward in 2005/06. 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 seven 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

Partnership working is a vital element in our efforts to improve the wellbeing of the district. The main partnership we work with is the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance (SWSA).

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

- Churches Together
- Council for Voluntary Service
- Environment Agency
- Government Office for the South West
- Patient and Public Involvement Forum
- Salisbury College
- Salisbury District Council
- Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust

- South Wiltshire Action Against Poverty
- South Wiltshire Agenda 21
- South Wiltshire and Kennet Learning Partnership
- South Wiltshire Economic Partnership
- South Wiltshire Primary Care Trust
- The Army
- Wiltshire Association of Local Councils
- Wiltshire Constabulary
- Wiltshire County Council
- Wiltshire Fire Brigade
- 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 four priorities for 2005 - 2009:

- Affordable housing.
- Access to services (including rural transport, shared services and better information for young people).
- Crime and anti social behaviour.
- Alliance employers as exemplars of good practice.

Sustainability and equality will be common threads throughout these four priorities.

It is recognised that setting priorities is an on-going process, therefore these priorities will be adjusted and revised as part of the community strategy review process.

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, 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 four 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 citizen's 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.

Information from People's Voice surveys has been used to refine our community plans and has helped us revise our housing and tourism strategies. In November 2004 we held a workshop with representatives of statutory agencies, economic partners, community groups, the voluntary sector and local residents to discuss our budgets for 2005/6. The main issues arising from the workshop were that:

- Additional income should be generated from car parking fees.
- Entertainment centres, sports centres and economic development were identified as the services that could yield potential savings.
- Spending on area funds and CCTV should be maintained.
- Additional resources should be made available for recycling.

These views were listened to and were reflected in our budgets by:
- An additional £200,000 being invested in waste management and recycling.
- Services considered by the Council to be essential and very important being maintained.
- Offsetting unavoidable costs by efficiency savings and some reductions in discretionary services that will have little or no impact on service delivery in 2005/06.
- Increasing income from car parking charges. This is also in line with the Transport Plan's objective of seeking to encourage commuters to use the park and rides sites (including two new sites in 2005/06).

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 were identified in the 2005 Consultation Strategy and whilst some progress was made in 2004, more effort is needed to encourage a dialogue in 2005/06.

Consultation and communication are central strands running through all the Council does. An effective corporate framework for this work is provided by the consultation and communication strategies. These strategies set out:

- Policies relating to consultation and communication.
- Action plans for the future development of consultation and communication work.
- Guidance for members and officers.
- Protocols to achieve a more structured dialogue with minority communities.
- Arrangements that will link the results of consultation with broader intelligence.

The council's commitment to improve consultation and communication is strengthened by the work of the Wiltshire Compact. The Compact aims to improve joint working between the statutory, community and voluntary sectors. In collaboration with this council, Wiltshire Compact has developed a voluntary code of good practice for consultation and communication between these sectors.

Community Development and Planning

The Community Development Policy – Building Strong Communities outlines the council's commitment and approach **to making through consultation and 'hands**

on' support, so that local people have the 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.

Although the SWSA developed some of the country's first Community Plans in 200, the time has come to renew them. During 2004/05 an extensive consultation with our six community areas has resulted in new plans to cover the next 5 years.

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 grant 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 licensing matters), the Community Planning Toolkit and bi-annual parish, town, district and county liaison meetings.

In 2004, we consulted parish councils on behalf of WACC on a revised parish charter; arranged a number of discussion meetings on changes to development control and Planning Delivery Grant to supply communication equipment to parish councils.

Looking Forward

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

In summary the document recognised that continual change is now an accepted part of life for officers and elected members in local government and it is better to anticipate, lead and influence change rather than avoid it or react defensively.

The five key drivers of change recognised in June 2003 remain valid.

1. Political priorities which are centred on six topics:
   I. Creating more affordable housing.
   II. Maintaining the council owned housing stock to a high standard.
   III. Reducing waste and improving recycling rates.
   IV. Making the district safer and reducing the fear of crime.
   V. Reducing traffic congestion in the city centre and improving public transport.
   VI. Improving services for our customers.

2. Shared objectives with our South Wilts Strategic Alliance partners to meet our jointly agreed vision for the district.

3. The transformational prospects of e-government and its importance as we turn the office project into reality.

4. The challenging financial outlook with the ongoing need to find approximately £500,000 per annum just to maintain services.

5. The need for continual improvement across all our priority services, improvements to be recognised through the CPA process and in the overall level of satisfaction registered by residents.

The things we do locally are heavily influenced by the national agenda. Increasingly regional issues are also impacting on our work. With such pressures it is more important than ever that we remain tightly focused on local priorities and we apply national or regional initiatives in a constructive, judicious way to meet the needs of Salisbury people. Our capacity is such that we cannot respond to everything; we have to be quite selective in where we put our limited resources.

Legislative changes and political exhortation on such things as the new Local Development Framework, waste minimisation and new licensing powers are affecting the role, structure and workload of the council but two longer term drivers – Gershon efficiencies and "new localism" are likely to have the most impact on our five year vision.

New efficiency targets set following the Gershon review, will impose a robust challenge. We are faced with finding £1.4 million efficiency savings in the next three years.

"New Localism" is as yet a more mystical concept but the government has set out its thoughts in "Local: Vision – The Future of Local Government: Developing a Ten-Year Vision." A discussion paper published in July 2004 has been developed by two more documents published in January 2005 "Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter" and "Vibrant Local Leadership". More documents are promised to add detail to an emerging picture where local government's role in leading the local community, reflecting and responding to the needs of local people, delivering outcomes that matter locally within a democratically accountable framework is buttressed by building on a partnership approach locally and with

central government:

- A strengthened, more vibrant community leadership.
- More citizen engagement and participation with powers devolved to a very local level.
- An even stronger service delivery and performance framework to drive up satisfaction levels.

As this national vision unfolds we can anticipate new opportunities for local neighbourhoods and parishes, delegated local budgets and greater enablement of councillors to represent and champion their local communities.

If central government is a major determinant of our future it is also true to say that the role they have given to regional assemblies is having an increasing effect on the district and the way we operate as a council. Whilst the North East referendum result in November 2004 put paid to any aspiration to elected regional assemblies, the power and influence of the South West (unelected) Regional Assembly is clearly increasing in its regional planning role. The Integrated Regional Strategy "Just Connect", published in November 2004 had a clear set of aims and objectives for joining up and integrating all the region's strategies. Its importance in the daily lives of Salisbury residents may not be immediately apparent but as regional transport, housing, environment and waste plans are implemented their effect will be very noticeable. It is vitally important that Salisbury influences these key, long-term agendas from within the Assembly structures even if political debate about the role of unelected regional government continues elsewhere.

In June 2003, we foresaw the organisation developing and changing in the context of the district which is itself changing. Our predictions in 2003 remain highly relevant.

- Green field development at Solstice Park and Amesbury has literally changed the landscape in the northern part of the district.
- Three operational park and ride sites are having their effect on reducing congestion in the city centre.
- Traders are expressing fears for the future viability of the city centre as increases in car parking charges take effect.
- The second generation of local community plans have been approved and a greater number of residents across the district are engaged in implementing local measures.
- Prospective home owners are benefiting from an increased supply of affordable homes and a wider choice of tenures.
- Residents are responding to a wider range of recycling and waste minimisation facilities to push recycling rates upwards although more radical steps will be necessary to achieve ambitious government targets.

Internally the council as an organisation is changing shape as envisaged in 2003.

- With the advent of the customer services team using customer relationship management technology to deliver an improved quality of service to the thousands of people who contact us each year.
- By using business process re-engineering techniques to ensure tasks are performed in the most efficient way with the customer's needs central to the way we design services.
- Whilst the size of the workforce increased dramatically in 2004 due to taking back Five Rivers into direct management, the under lying target remains to

reduce the size of the workforce as the office project, business process re-engineering and new technology secures greater efficiencies in the way we operate. We envisage something in the order of twenty posts being deleted by the time we complete the move to one centralised office. We are managing recruitment and redeployment processes to support individuals through a difficult period of change.

- We have been commended on the strength of our internal communication system since the introduction of "Link Up".
- The senior management structure has marginally reduced having made the Best Value manager post redundant.
- New systems are supporting managers, allowing them more freedom to manage - risk management and the Agresso IT system providing two examples.
- Sustainable procurement and strengthened performance management will exert a positive pressure on the organisation next year.

Some predictions in the June 2003 document risk not coming to fruition.

- The Maltings redevelopment faltered in 2004. Despite planning permission being granted, the council as landowner could not reach agreement with the developers.
- The City Centre Vision has not progressed as envisaged.
- The forecast of the council operating from just two bases by 2005 – Churchfields and a main office has proved to be optimistic. The Bourne Hill scheme is likely to be completed in 2007/8.
- The Leisure Trust is on hold pending assimilation of Five Rivers' staff and the need to allow the emerging financial picture to become clearer.
- A countywide partnership trust to provide common services across the county is no nearer to establishment than it was in 2003, although a stronger partnership approach has developed through the Customer First Group.
- The workforce is still not representative of the district. Disabled people, those from ethnic minorities and women are still under represented.
- Sickness absence levels have fallen but remain higher than managers would wish.
- In terms of the council's political and governance arrangements, we have fallen off the national pacesetters on scrutiny and there has been a poor take up of members able or willing to take advantage of national development opportunities.

Notwithstanding these concerns, we are making good progress as we convert our 2003 vision into reality. We are not yet at the mid point in the five-year timescale. National, regional and local influences have only reinforced the need for a clear sense of the way forward. At this point – June 2005 – we can look forward to providing truly excellent services with optimism; especially if we can reinforce an organisation wide determination to work with a shared sense of purpose through these changes.

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 2005/06. Achieving those political priorities will require supporting work on four organisational themes which taken together form the *'Integrated Improvement Programme'*.

Improving Customer Services

Customer care and communication is at the heart of modern local government. People's expectations from service organisations continue to grow rapidly. 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 aims are to:

- Resolve 80% of queries at first point of contact;
- Provide easy access to a range of services at locations and times to suit customers' needs;
- Deliver an effective and efficient service;
- Train generic customer services staff to a high standard to provide reliable, courteous and timely service to customers;
- Build on current high levels of satisfaction by utilising appropriate technologies, identifying and minimising inefficient working practices and identify opportunities for improvement.

Our focus in the coming year will be on progressing centralised offices, transferring remaining services to the Customer Services Unit, developing customer services in parts of the district outside the City and offering an increasing range of services via the Internet.

In order to achieve this we will be further developing supporting technologies and continuing to invest in training and developing customer services 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 can meet the Decent Homes Standard, for some years to come. Our current programme is targeted at continuing to meet this standard. However, we are aware that tenants expectations exceed the Decent Homes Standard and, as part of a Stock Options Appraisal, we have consulted tenants on the standard of maintenance they would like to see delivered.

During the last year we have completed our options appraisal of our housing stock and have concluded that a transfer of our housing stock will provide the maximum investment in tenants' homes.

Our focus in the coming year will be on developing our detailed proposals for a transfer of Council housing stock and ensuring that all tenants are aware of the implications of a transfer before a ballot of tenants takes place.

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 affordable housing remains a challenging and complex process. Although house and land prices have stabilised over recent months, 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. To make inroads into these problems we need both land and money. During 2004/05 we have issued Supplementary Planning Guidance to secure affordable housing on major development sites (up to 40%) and entered into partnership with a venture capital company, Assetrust, to secure market funding for affordable housing.

We will, of course, continue to make use of our own resources of housing land and capital funding, as well as working with housing associations and the Strategic Alliance in order to meet our target of providing 350 affordable homes in the 3-year period ending in March 2006.

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 17% of waste through kerb-side collection and 50 recycling centres.

We have recently reviewed our "Waste Minimisation Strategy" and aim to increase the amount of waste diverted to 28% by 2005/06 and 31% by 2010 through increased public education, community involvement and recycling.

Our focus in the coming year will be to consolidate and improve the new kerbside collection services for glass, cans, paper, textiles and garden waste and improve participation rates; develop additional recycling centres / community recycling schemes, and develop new waste management initiatives jointly with the Wiltshire Waste Partnership.

We are concerned, however, that the current arrangements for minimising waste may not be enough to meet our targets. During 2005/06 we will revisit the role of the Wiltshire Waste Partnership to ensure that the strategy to attain target levels is sufficiently robust.

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 and Harnham Relief Road. The target is to reduce traffic growth in the city from a projected 21% between 1999 and 2011 to 10%. By 2004 (the latest available figures), traffic volumes in the city centre had actually fallen by over 6%.

During 2004/05 we opened the second Park and Ride site at Wilton and the third site, at Britford, is nearing completion. 2004/2005 also saw the commissioning of a Real Time Passenger Information system for bus users and the computerisation of traffic lights in Salisbury to improve traffic flow. A car park guidance system using variable message signing is about to be introduced.

Priorities for 2005/06 will be the completion of the park and ride site at Britford, the development of the fourth park and ride site at London Road and the design of the final site at Petersfinger. Roll-out of the Intelligent Transport System will also be completed.

Improving Community Safety

Being safe contributes enormously to peoples' quality of life. Although Wiltshire is now the 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. We will also tackle crime itself and anti-social behaviour, in particular in higher crime neighbourhoods, as well as introduce performance targets that measure the impact our work is having on community safety.

We will continue to work to support the partnership funded Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Officer and in particular will need to work with other agencies to consider how this post and work will be funded in future years.

During 2004/2005 a third, Crime and Disorder Audit was produced collaboratively with all community safety partners across Wiltshire and a new strategy for reducing crime and combating drug misuse was adopted in April 2005. This document outlines the key strategic priorities for the next 3-year period and will form the basis for multi-agency action plans aimed at tackling key problems.

Integrated Improvement 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 Improvement 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.

More detail on our work in the above themes can be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4

Our Achievements

Service Improvements

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

Improved Customer Services

- Transferred customer services staff into Amesbury Public Library, with increased opening hours and range of services;
- Reviewed cash handling facilities at public offices leading to introduction of electronic and telephone payments and ending of accepting cash;
- Completed first phase business process reviews (Revenues and Benefits, Complaints and Internal Directories);
- Implemented Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and associated telephony upgrades;
- Appointed and trained 18 customer services staff;
- Agreed approach to developing customer services in rural areas;
- Agreed funding for construction of new offices;
- Developed detailed plans for new offices following extensive external and internal consultation in preparation for a planning application;
- Initiated internal information management project;
- Rationalised council sponsored internet sites into a corporate programme;
- Completed integration of Land and Property Gazetteer;
- Published authentication/identification and security protocols to assist customers using the website;
- Published generic e-mail addresses;
- Implemented a corporate e-mail alert system for external users of the web;
- Appointed Corporate Web Editor;
- 72% of Salisbury District Council services capable of being e-enabled now on line;
- Achieved overall public satisfaction with Salisbury District Council in top 25% nationally.

Maintaining Council Housing

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

- 54 properties were fully electrically rewired.
- 5 properties received improvements to loft insulation.
- 348 properties had their kitchens replaced and modernised.
- 365 properties had their bathrooms replaced and modernised.
- 312 properties had their external doors replaced.
- 6 properties were fitted with replacement UPVC double-glazing.
- 105 properties had full replacement central heating installed.
- 19properties had their roofs renewed.

- Stock option appraisal has been completed and a stock transfer is being pursued.
- Achieved an "excellent" rating on the Decent Homes assessment in CPA.
- Highest ever tenant satisfaction with overall service (85%).
- Achieved Chartermark for Housing in 2004.

Delivered More Affordable Housing

- Through the planning process, completed 45 new affordable homes throughout the district.
- Approved Assettrust Housing as a preferred partner for the delivery of new affordable homes.
- Published Supplementary Planning Guidance for Affordable housing.
- Completed a Best Value Review of Balanced Housing Markets & Decent Homes.
- Set aside £3.3 m of capital funding over 3 years, to finance affordable housing schemes.
- Commenced a review of Strategic Partnering including the role of the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance.
- Developed a Do it Yourself Shared Ownership initiative to help first time buyers.
- Increased the Disabled Facility Grant Budget by 20% to improve the living conditions for the most vulnerable.
- Reduced the use of bed and breakfast from 7420 days in 2003/04 to less than 150 days in 2004/05.
- Established an Affordable Housing Board.

Improved Waste Management

- Statutory consultee on the Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan.
- Worked with the Wiltshire Waste Partnership to introduce waste minimisation, re-use and recycling initiatives.
- Introduced enhanced kerbside recycling to 26,000 households in Amesbury, Durrington, Laverstock, Salisbury and Wilton to improve the collection of paper, glass, cans, textiles, foil, green waste and cardboard for recycling.
- Improved the network of recycling centres, and increased to 50 in total.
- Adopted a comprehensive Salisbury District Council Strategy for Waste Management and Recycling.
- Improved regulation of trade waste producers.

Improved Transportation

- Developed and rolled out an Intelligent Transport System for Salisbury.
- Opened of Wilton and Downton Road Park and Ride sites.
- Introduced Real Time Passenger Information System
- Improved bus stop infrastructure.
- Reviewed and improved residents' parking schemes.

Improved Community Safety

- Established Alcohol Exclusion Zones in Amesbury and Salisbury city centre.
- Adopted 'toolkit' providing guidance to parishes and towns on implementing alcohol exclusion zones.
- Extensive consultation on alcohol licensing led to a policy being adopted which set a terminal hour on clubs and pubs.

- Produced policies and procedures for tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Grant aided a number of projects to engage young people and ensure that they were diverted from anti-social behaviour.
- Developed a Young People's Strategy with partners.
- Implemented domestic violence action plan.
- Implemented local community safety groups' action plans.
- Commissioned an audit of Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour and Drug misuse to assist in the development of the Community Safety Strategy for 2005 - 2008 and a strategy to combat the misuse of drugs in the area.
- Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation programme with the Guilder Centre and Alcohol and Drugs Advise Service (ADAS).
- Introduced police community support officers in targeted areas of the district.
- Improved multi-agency working by using prevention, intervention and enforcement measures to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Completed Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Review.
- Continued support for rural Community Safety Partnerships linked to the SWSA. Funding provided for youth projects and distraction burglary projects.
- Re-launched the Control Centre as Careconnect Salisbury that provides a range of monitoring services to vulnerable people and business organisations.
- Annual report from CCTV produced, demonstrating its role in making Salisbury one of the safest areas in the country.

Meeting the Financial Challenge

- 2005/06 Band D council tax remained in lowest 25% of district councils.
- Increased income from fees and charges for 2005/06 by £269k by commencing a five-year plan to benchmark quality services to upper quartile.
- Realised £380k of budget savings for 2005/06 with minimal impact on services.
- Generated over £5m of capital receipts in the year.
- Revised the Medium Term Financial Strategy to reflect financial risks and movement of resources from non- priority to priority areas.
- Carried out a comprehensive review of corporate governance.
- Remained free from external debt.
- Facilitated public consultation on the budget setting for 2005/06.
- Ensured Scrutiny involvement in budget setting process.
- Adopted protocols for invest to save and improve initiatives.
- 2003/04 Accounts adopted two months ahead of the statutory deadline.
- Approved in Principle the financing arrangements for centralised offices.
- Rationalised the cash office operation.
- Rolled out the new Corporate Financial Management System.
- Secured approval to appoint an External Funding Officer.
- Introduced combined quarterly financial and performance monitoring reporting.
- Revised the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plans.
- Introduced a new corporate income collection system (PARIS).

Improved Performance

- Produced high level performance monitoring report for Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- Implemented an 'Invest to Improve Performance' initiative.
- Increased performance – Authority wide, 48% of our indicators for which the upper quartile is set, achieved it, 66% of our indicators demonstrated improvement on last year, with a further 11% maintaining last year's performance,

59% of our indicators for which local targets were set achieved them and of those an outstanding 87% outperformed their local target. SDC has achieved excellent standards of performance where it really matters this year with 69% of our key BVPIs reaching upper quartile status compared with 44% last year and 19% in 2002/3. Meanwhile 80% of our key performance indicators demonstrated improvement on the results on the last year, with a further 10% maintaining their performance last year. 70% of our key indicators met with their local targets, of which 86% outperformed it. 56% of our key indicators achieved outstanding results, managing to improve on last year, exceed our own targets and reach upper quartile status.

- Reviewed targets for performance indicators to reflect priorities and core values;
- Concluded review of Best Value programme in light of CPA report and review of scrutiny;
- Introduced performance and procurement capacity within Democratic Services to strengthen the Council's work in these areas;
- Transformed the lowest performing service (Development Control) from bottom quartile performance nationally to top quartile nationally.

Partnership Working and Community Engagement

The Council remains convinced that it can best offer community leadership through partnership working with other bodies, together with engaging local communities to elicit their priorities in order to influence the actions of the partnership.

During 2004/05, the existing Community Plans were renewed, and the work of the SWSA both evolved in anticipation of the emerging plans, but also continued the work arising from existing Plans. During 2004/05, the following advances were made:

- The alliance agreed the basis of an overarching Community Strategy for 2005 – 2008, to be published in the summer of 2005.
- Supported current groups and partnerships to develop work programmes that meet SWSA and Community Plan priorities.
- Strengthened links with councillors to develop their role in community planning through training workshops and the Area Committees.
- Restructured SWSA to strengthen the partnership
- Engaged with the Regional Assembly to achieve a more influential role for the district in the areas of tourism, housing and the emerging spatial strategy.

The renewal of the Community plans involved an extensive consultation exercise, involving:

- A Community Questionnaire (49, 000 households received the questionnaire and 37% replied).
- Workshop Group Meetings.
- Village Design Statements.
- Residents' Associations.
- People's Voice Panel.
- Parish Councils.
- Survey work.
- Community Groups.

The result of these consultations shaped the new Community Plans. The draft plans were circulated for consultation to councillors, SWSA, People's Voice Panel and South Wilts Action Against Poverty in April 2004. The objective was to ensure that the plans were achievable, to ensure support for the priorities and set meaningful targets to measure progress (which will be included in our 2005/06 Corporate Plan).

The Community Plans have been finalised and will be adopted by the SWSA in the Summer of 2005.

The renewed plans show some shifting priorities within individual areas eg reducing crime has moved down the agenda for Mere and Tisbury, although vandalism and anti-social behaviour has become the top priority for the City. Overall, main priorities still reflect the views contained in the original plans. On a district wide basis the top priorities are:

- 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.

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 2004/05 include:

- **Staff Training** – The Council continue to use the Investors in People process to analyse training needs to improve the performance of individuals and the Council. A comprehensive annual training plan is in place. During 2004/05, training programmes were delivered across the organisation to improve performance and capacity. These included awareness of our new customer services arrangements under the banner Customer First; equalities training and training for managers in reducing sickness absence.
- **Recruitment and Retention of Staff** – To reduce costs and maintain stability, thus maintaining our capacity, a number of steps were taken in 2004/05. We strengthened our recruitment process through the employment of specialist staff and training for managers. We addressed concerns over issues holding back the organisation as identified in our staff survey and new arrangements for the use of agency staff reduced costs by around £40k pa.
- **Project Management** – As an extension to previous training on managing individual projects, we identified and planned the resources required to deliver our Integrated Improvement Programme to compare and balance resources required and resources available.
- **Business Process Reengineering (BPR)** – BPR is a management tool which maps processes and identifies inefficiencies and overlaps to improve overall performance, quality and cost. We used BPR in 2004/05 to analyse Revenues and Benefits, Development Services and our Complaints Procedure. An extensive programme of reviews of services will continue into 2005/06.
- We have transferred BPR skills from costly consultants to an in-house team of volunteers.

Achieving External Accreditation

In January 2004 the council underwent a week-long inspection led by the Audit Commission, called the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The areas identified for improvement by the CPA process are included in our Integrated Improvement Programme set out at Appendix 2.

Achievements in external accreditation in 2004/05 include:

- Chartermark status for housing services and renewal of Chartermark for the refuse collection service.
- Salisbury Tourist Information Centre receiving TIC of the Year Award.
- Crystal Mark for housing application forms and documents.
- Recognition of our training activities for Salisbury Commercial Services staff from Free2Learn.

Each of our Portfolio Plans (Appendix 4) includes objectives for further accreditation in 2005/06. Examples include:

- ISO 9002 for Building Control
- Chartermark status for Salisbury Tourist Information Centre, and Environmental Health.
- Secure Car Park awards for Park and Ride sites at Britford and Wilton.

Improvements Through Best Value

Best Value was introduced in 1999. The Council has undertaken a number of reviews and the improvement programmes identified are virtually complete. These are:

- Housing Repairs.
- Pest Control.
- Car Parking.
- Development Control.
- Elections and Electoral Registration.
- Environmental Stewardship.
- Conservation.
- Housing Benefits.
- Leisure and Sports Facilities.
- Customer Care and Communication.
- Corporate Support Services.
- Services for Older and Vulnerable People.

Best Value Results 2002-2005

Year	Title of Review	Services Included	Best Value Inspection Rating
2003/04	Street Services	Parks and open spaces, tree management, street cleaning, household waste collection,	No inspection carried out

Year	Title of Review	Services Included	Best Value Inspection Rating
		recycling, public conveniences, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles, street furniture, public art, road safety, community safety, CCTV	
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	Completed in 2004/05

A summary of each of the above Best Value Reviews is set out in Appendix 3 together with progress on implementation.

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

Best Value Review Programme

Following our CPA inspection, we decided not to undertake any Best Value Reviews in 2004/05 in order to allow the capacity of the Council to recover. For 2006/07 we have agreed a less formal approach to best value reviews, using our extensive work on Gershon efficiency savings and business process reengineering to demonstrate value for money. We will, however carry out a formal review of rural services.

Improvements through Scrutiny

Scrutiny Review Work Programme 2004/05

Scrutiny Panel	Topic	Outcomes
Community and Housing	• Review of housing stock options financial assumptions. • Review of housing associations as part of stock option appraisal. • Best Value Review of Balanced Housing Markets and Decent Homes. • Young People's Strategy development	• Council decision to explore further tenant support for a stock transfer. • Council decision to establish new association to receive housing stock in the event of tenant support for such a move. • Completion of 2003/04 review. • Completion of a youth strategy. To be adopted by Cabinet by June 2005.
Environment and Transport	• Review of traffic calming measures.	• Better understanding by members of issues underpinning traffic calming.

Scrutiny Panel	Topic	Outcomes
	• Review of rural transport.	• Better understanding by members of issues underpinning rural transport.
	• Review of city centre parking for motorcycles.	• Better understanding by members of issues underpinning parking for motorcycles.
	• Review of school transport.	• Better understanding by members of issues underpinning school transport.
	• Review of sustainability supplementary planning guidance.	• Adoption by Cabinet of new SPG on sustainability.
	• Out of hours parking enforcement.	• Scrutiny of Cabinet decision to introduce out of hours enforcement of parking restrictions.
Planning and Economic Development	• Review future of Churchfields Industrial Estate.	• Support for proposals to modernise and upgrade Churchfields Industrial Estate.
	• Hotel / conference site in Salisbury.	• Better understanding of land use issues relating to hotel developments.
	• Training on Local Development Framework.	• Better understanding of new planning process to replace the Local Plan.
	• Review changes to development control processes.	• Support for changes introduced to streamline development control process to meet targets set by BVPI 109.
Resources	• Impact of the Office Centralisation Project on the Council's Finances • Impact of the Office Centralisation Project on the Council's core priorities and services • Impact of the Office Centralisation Project on staff and members.	• Better understanding by the Council of the likely costs and financial arrangements needed to bring the project to fruition. • The intent over the next 12 – 18 months is to identify and plan for changes in working practices required by office centralisation.

During 2004 the Council completed a major review of its scrutiny role and approved a number of recommendations for improvement. The changes included specific measures aimed at – identifying and addressing issues of public concern; increasing public involvement in scrutiny and raising public awareness. Three of the most important changes in this regard are set out below:

- The level and nature of stakeholder involvement is now established by Members at the outset of each review as part of the scoping exercise to ensure that all those affected are given the opportunity to participate.
- Greater efforts are now made to publicise the scrutiny reviews being undertaken, in order to encourage public participation. This will include press releases issued by the lead councillors for each review, web pages with regular updates on the progress of reviews and periodic newsletters.
- Greater use will be made of existing consultation tools to engage stakeholders in scrutiny reviews – such as People's Voice, expert witnesses, focus groups and online polling.

The 2005/06 Scrutiny Programme is a major departure from previous years. For the first time, the council has narrowed its focus onto a smaller and more manageable number of in-depth, fully resourced reviews with key lines of enquiry. The programme reflects a more outward looking approach with reviews selected that reflect public priorities and concerns as evidenced in the results of consultation and in the community strategy for South Wiltshire. In addition to the ongoing reviews carried over from 2004/05, the following eviews will be undertaken in 2005/06 in accordance with the new scrutiny arrangements adopted by the Council:

Keeping the Peace? *A Review of CCTV in South Wiltshire:*
An examination of the impact of CCTV in South Wiltshire and a review of the future development of the service
Lead Member: Councillor Peter Edge
Key lines of enquiry:
- *To establish the purpose, focus, operation and effectiveness of CCTV in South Wiltshire.*
- *To identify public attitudes towards CCTV.*
- *To identify the requirements of other agencies (such as the Police, businesses, etc) in relation to CCTV.*
- *To identify demand for additional coverage and the associated resources.*
- *To consider what technological and other resource investments will be required over the short, medium and longer term.*
Completion Due: November 2005

A Rural Heartbeat: *Sustainable Rural Communities in South Wiltshire.*
An examination of the role of planning policy in protecting and enhancing community facilities in rural communities.
Lead Member: Councillor Bill Moss
Key Lines of Enquiry:
- *To identify which particular facilities are central to the life of a rural community and are particularly valued by local people*
- *To review the effectiveness of the present policies in the Local Plan in protecting and enhancing such facilities.*
- *To examine how planning policy elsewhere has been used to protect and promote such facilities in rural settlements.*

- *To identify what additional policies are necessary to protect existing community facilities in the rural areas and how the District Council can help to provide additional facilities.*
- *To identify anyway developer contributions can be utilised to promote the provision and retention of facilities.*

Completion Due: *February 2006*

Prepared for Office: *A review of training and development for councillors.*

An examination of the skills needed by effective modern members, a review of current training provision and the development of a modular training programme that suits the needs of councillors

Lead Member: *To be confirmed*

Key Lines of Enquiry:
- Establish the skills required by effective modern councillors
- Review the current Member Training Strategy
- To examine examples of good practice from other areas
- Identify the key requirements of an effective Members training programme
- Develop a revised training and development programme that meets the needs of councillors

Completion Due: *March 2006*

Key Jobs = Key People: *A review of recruitment and retention at Salisbury District Council*

To examine recruitment and retention within the council; to identify and address the reasons why people leave the council and to establish what measures may assist recruitment and retention.

Lead member: *To be agreed*

Key Lines of Enquiry:
- **Review current Recruitment & Retention Policies**
- **Establish views of staff and reasons why people leave the Council**
- **Establish how existing policies can be enhanced and improved, learning from best practice elsewhere**
- **Identify areas of strength and weaknesses in the current policies**
- Recommend any changes

Completion Due: *December 2005*

Rubbish Targets: *An examination of refuse collection and recycling in the context of the forthcoming renewal of the refuse collection contract.*

Lead Member: *Councillor Paul Clegg*

Key Lines of Enquiry
- *To examine the current position in respect of the refuse and recycling contracts in South Wiltshire.*
- *To assess how effectively the current collection contract assists the Council to achieve its recycling targets.*
- *To identify the public attitudes towards refuse collection and recycling.*

- *To identify how the Council should adapt its recycling programme in the long-term to better achieve targets and evaluate any changes this may mean for the refuse collection contract.*
- *To recommend modifications to the new contract to better achieve the Council's aims.*

Completion Date: *February 2006*

The School Run
An examination of School Transport in Salisbury and South Wiltshire with an assessment of its overall effectiveness and impact.
Lead Member: *Councillor Ian McLennan*
Key Lines of Enquiry:
- *To identify existing provision of school transport in South Wiltshire.*
- *To assess the impact of the 'school run.'*
- *To identify pupils, parents and teacher attitudes towards school transport.*
- *To identify the effectiveness of school travel plans.*
- *To identify demand for additional public services and associated costs.*
- *To identify any strategic recommendations for improvement.*

Completion Date: *December 2005*

Behind Closed Doors: ***An investigation into nature and level of Domestic Violence within South Wiltshire***
Lead Member: *To be confirmed*
Key Lines of Enquiry:
- *To establish the extent and nature of domestic violence in South Wiltshire.*
- *To examine existing policies and practices for dealing with domestic violence.*
- *To examine national best practice in this area.*
- *To identify measures that may help to reduce the incidence of domestic violence.*

Completion Date: *December 2005*

Supporting People: ***An examination of proposals to change the way sheltered housing accommodation is provided in South Wiltshire.***
To examine the likely impact on residents of sheltered accommodation of changes proposed under the Supporting People Shadow Strategy for Wiltshire.
Lead member: Councillor Jose Green
Key Lines of Enquiry:
- To establish the nature of the proposed changes to the sheltered housing service
- To identify the views of users and providers on the changes
- To establish the likely impact of the changes
- To make any recommendations for changes to the Supporting People Strategy.

Completion Date: *September 2005*

Improvements Through Audit

Internal and external auditors carry out an annual programme of inspection which identifies weaknesses in our performance and help us improve. Areas identified in 2004/05 include:

- Establishment of Corporate Governance regime.
- Establishment of Statement of Internal Control.
- Report on Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery.
- Report on Risk Management.
- Report on Capital Investment.

Establishment of Corporate Governance Regime

During 2004/05 we completed a review of the requirements to establish a Corporate Governance system to comply with new financial regulations. A working party lead by the Deputy Leader drew up an action plan, and helped prepare an initial document including a Statement of Internal Control. The Council has agreed to set up an Audit Committee, which will include the appointment of an Independent Person to oversee Corporate Governance.

Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery

This report identified weaknesses in our current system in that it was based on information collated in 2000, and is now out of date. An action plan has been drawn up to be overseen by the Risk Management Group, and an analysis of recovery requirements for each service ahs been carried out in order to identify priorities for restoration of services in the event of major damage caused by fire or flood.

Risk Management

A report identified much good work by the Council on Risk Management but identified improvement needed to ensure that the concept is absorbed by the organisation as part of its normal working culture. The report was analysed by the Risk Management Group and an action plan draw up to reflect priorities for 2005/06.

Capital Investment

A study by external auditors into the procedures for control of the council's capital investments demonstrated more strengths than weaknesses. Nonetheless improvements which were suggested eg regular monitoring of progress and lessons learned from major projects, have been referred to the Financial Challenge Board to implement.

Key Areas For Further Improvement

Although the Council has made progress in improving its performance, there are areas where achievements have lagged behind our ambition, and further consideration of the way ahead is needed.

Improving Customer Services

The complexity of centralising our offices on the Bourne Hill site has delayed implementation of the efficiencies and cost savings anticipated. A firm decision on design is needed to avoid further delay, although the involvement of English Heritage means that this is not wholly in our control.

Improving Waste Management

Although we have increased investment in kerbside recycling and community recycling centres, and thus improved the percentage of waste diverted from landfill, we are not convinced that the current strategy will deliver the target of 31% of waste diverted. We have therefore suggested to our partners that we need to review the remit of the Wiltshire Waste Partnership and devise a county-wide strategy to secure our targets within the resources available.

Improving Transportation

Although much of the work identified in the Local Transport Plan for Salisbury has been achieved, the road building element has lagged significantly behind. We need to continue to encourage Wiltshire County Council to implement the Brunel/Harnham Link and to identify an alternative solution for the Wylye Valley.

Building the Capacity of the Organisation

Although the investment in training for officers and members has improved skills and knowledge, and thus capacity, application is not consistent. Further encouragement is needed to persuade officers and members who are not making use of the training available to do so.

Diversity and Equality

Although the Council has carried out valuable groundwork in introducing diversity policy and supporting training, improvements now need to be made in providing services consistently with our policy and engaging hard to reach groups.

Meeting the Financial Challenge

The Council has reviewed its Medium Term Financial Strategy to match financial resources to our ambitions, but this remains a challenging area where further innovation and difficult decisions will be needed.

Improving the Performance of the Council

Significant progress has been made on improving our performance, but there are areas which give cause for concern, notably land searches and sickness absence.

Chapter 5

Our Future Plans

Integrated Improvement Programme

This chapter represents our *'Integrated Improvement Programme'* for 2005/06.

Improving Customer Services

During the next 12 months we will:

- Introduce Customer Access Strategy;
- Review business processes to support customer service for four additional service areas;
- Implement new telephone contact centre;
- Introduce three new services each in Amesbury and Mere (to be agreed with local residents);
- Develop SMART plans for provision of services in community areas;
- Conclude review of post-handling;
- Implement revised Complaints and Customer Feedback Scheme;
- Base implement CRM with at least 100 processes mapped onto system;
- Develop an "Access to Services" action plan with SWSA partners.

Office Centralisation

During the next 12 months we will:

- Seek agreement from all interested parties on the detailed design for the new offices;
- Seek the determination of the application for planning permission;
- Seek agreement to the construction of the new offices;
- Agree arrangements for the disposal of surplus assets;
- Agree contractual arrangements for construction of the new offices;
- Agree arrangements for the decanting of staff during construction.
- Refurbish City Hall meeting rooms in support of the Office Centralisation project.

E-Government Implementation

During the next 12 months we will:

- Complete back office integration project;
- Complete implementation of CMS;
- Implement E-forms project;
- Complete implementation of Wilts partnership joint A-Z project;
- Complete on-line client authentication project;
- Complete any other work as required by ODPM Priority Outcomes Listing;
- Raise awareness of e-Government within authority and resultant project prioritisation/resourcing via e-Governance Group.

Maintaining our Housing Stock

During the next 12 months we will:

- Submit to the Government Office of the South West our proposed Stock Management Option.
- Invest a further £3m in our housing stock, targeting meeting Decent Homes Standard and tenant priorities.
- Prepare and implement a detailed project plan for stock transfer
- Submit "fit for purpose" business plan to the Government Office of the South West.

Delivering More Affordable Housing

During the next 12 months we will:

- Secure a suitable site for a crisis assessment centre for homeless people.
- Undertake a housing needs survey and market assessment to inform a whole market approach to the strategic housing function.
- Work with Assettrust to deliver a third affordable housing scheme.
- Appoint a new Registered Social Landlord partnership.
- Evaluate the benefits of introducing choice based lettings.
- Develop an affordable housing action plan with South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance partners.
- Provide 350 affordable homes over the 3-year period ending in March 2006.

Improving Waste Management

We will over the next year:

- Consolidate and improve the new kerbside collection schemes for glass, cans, paper, textiles and garden waste and improve participation rates
- Develop additional recycling centres / community recycling schemes
- Increase the percentage of waste recycled.
- 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.

Improving Transportation

We will over the next two years:

- Continue to implement the Salisbury Transportation Plan.
- 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.
- Open a further park and ride site at London Road and complete design work for a Petersfinger site

Improving Community Safety

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

- Publish a new Crime and Drug Misuse Reduction Strategy for 2005 – 2008.
- Develop a community safety action plan with the SWSA partners and implement actions from the strategy.
- Design a new system for reporting and accurately recording anti-social behaviour.
- Target Alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Look to merge the SW Community Safety Partnership with the SWSA. Measuring performance is crucial and we have set a target of reducing crime by 12.5% by the end of 07/08. This will be complimented with a range of local indicators geared more towards local priorities such as domestic violence and anti-social behaviour which will be approved and adopted by the LSP and included in the Community Strategy.
- 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.
- Continue to develop local community safety action groups.
- Continue street work, diversionary activities, citizenship and safer schools initiatives with young people.
- Continue to enhance the profile of the Community Safety Partnership through the local media and ensure regular reporting to elected members and their communities.
- Publish a Young Peoples Strategy.
- Continue to provide training for officers, councillors & community representatives on tackling antisocial behaviour and implementing their crime and disorder responsibilities under Section 17 of the Act.
- Continue to provide support for projects aimed at tackling domestic violence including lifeline alarms; perpetrator programmes and training for young people in schools.

Meeting the Financial Challenge

- Commission a value for money review of the centralised offices project.
- Develop the Corporate financial management system to incorporate online procurement and purchasing
- Undertake a BPR review of purchasing arrangements
- Introduce the CIPFA Financial Management model
- Carry out a feasibility study on incentives for financial performance
- Further develop the corporate income collection system

- Update the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plans
- Adopt treasury management arrangements in line with the CIPFA code of practice.
- Adopt the actions arising from the Audit Commission review of capital programme arrangements.
- Carry out public consultation on the budget.
- Produce and monitor the Annual Efficiency Statement.
- Develop an external funding strategy.
- Carry out the annual review of corporate governance.
- Develop and produce the Statement on Internal Control.
- Introduce outcome based targets into the voluntary sector agreements.
- Establish an Audit Committee to oversee governance arrangements.
- Develop operational risk management processes.
- Establish business continuity plans.
- Produce a revised procurement strategy.

Improving the Performance of the Council

During the next 12 months we will:

- Review the existing performance management framework;
- Develop the Performance Management system (to include themed projects, PIDs, Strategy action plans, audit reports etc;
- Review Top 20 Indicators;
- Review performance indicator targets for 2005/06;
- Hold annual performance clinics to review existing indicators and develop new;
- Interlink the role of scrutiny and project management with performance management;
- Seek external evaluation of our approach through the IDeA;
- Develop internal peer support with Service Unit Heads assisting other units to turn around performance;
- Revise the Procurement Strategy to reflect the Gershon Review;
- Increase performance so that 75% of our top 20 performance indicators meet national top 25%;
- Review rewards and recognition policies including pilot of performance related pay;
- Develop mechanisms for measuring efficiency gains in light of INLOGOV pilot;
- Explore opportunities to work with Regional Centres of Procurement Excellence;
- Establish an improvement programme for performance against national upper quartile;
- Develop framework for reporting performance information to the public and other key stakeholders;
- Devise medium for demonstrating/communicating best practice examples;
- Develop our approach to e-procurement through the Agresso system.

Corporate Communications

During the next 12 months we will:

- Implement a 'Value for Money' campaign;
- Develop media interactive resource pages on the website;
- Carry out a survey of media requirements;

- Work with the e-Government Officer and the IT Services Unit on the design and development of a new Intranet;
- Monitor media coverage and report regularly;
- Endeavour to increase advertising revenue for the Citizen to enable four editions to be produced.

Partnership Working and Community Engagement

During the next 12 months we will:

- Publish a Young People's Strategy.
- Rationalise partnerships and link to clear objectives.
- Develop approach further to engaging hard to reach groups.
- Produce a Community Strategy for the district.
- Coordinate work on SWSA priorities.

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 2005/06:

- **Resource Management** – In 2004/05 we analysed our capacity to match human resources to our ambitions. We need to refine this process to ensure that we can continually check progress against target and alter priorities quickly when circumstances change.
- **Business Process Re-engineering (BPR)** - We will use BPR to analyse our front line services to achieve successful integration into our new Customer Contact Centre (which will of itself improve efficiency) but also to identify and eliminate overlaps and inefficiencies in our administrative processes.
- **Mobile Working** – We will introduce new working methods which will enable staff to work from whichever location is more effective; home, car, off site. This will reduce travelling time, increase productivity, reduce costs and produce significant savings by cutting the amount of office space required.
- **Temporary Staff** – During 2004/05 we set up an "internal agency" of temporary staff to cur out costs and increase the quality of our temporary support. We will build on this idea to secure a further reduction in costs and increase in productivity.
- **Exemplar Employee** – We will analyse the employment procedures of "best practice" local authority employers to ascertain what improvements we might be able to make to our own policies and procedures.
- **Sickness Absence** – We will review our training and policies to seek further reduction in sickness absence.

During 2005/06, Cabinet will re-evaluate our political priorities, community themes and core values to ensure they remain relevant to the needs of the district.

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:

JANUARY – CABINET
- Monitor performance and budget

FEBRUARY - CABINET/COUNCIL
- Approve Portfolio Plans
- Set council tax and budget

MARCH – CABINET POLICY DEVELOPMENT DAY
- Identify political priorities for future year
- Develop Draft Corporate Plan

MAY - SCRUTINY
- Review Draft Corporate Plan

JUNE - CABINET
- Approve Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Approve approach to public consultation on budget
- Publish Corporate Plan

JULY - CABINET
- Approve Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan
- Monitor performance and budget

OCTOBER - CABINET POLICY DEVELOPMENT DAY
- Identify service strategy
- Provide guidance on Portfolio Plans
- Provide guidance on funding of voluntary sector
- Examine financial forecast

OCTOBER - CABINET
- Monitor performance and budget

OCTOBER
- Public consultation on budget

NOVEMBER
- Management Team undertake staff briefings
- Financial Services commence budget preparation
- Cabinet consider draft portfolio plans
- Cabinet reviews results of budget consultation

DECEMBER – EXTENDED MANAGEMENT TEAM
- Review capacity to deliver Portfolio Plans

DECEMBER – SCRUTINY
- Review Draft Portfolio Plans

Project Management

One of the primary tools we use to ensure successful control of human and financial resources is project management. Managers have received training in project management techniques. These techniques have been applied to each of the Council's political and organisational themes to ensure proper consideration of the following:

- 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?

We recognise that these are not the only areas where project management is needed. During 2004/05 we have improved our analysis of human resources by undertaking a project management exercise to include the whole Integrated Improvement Programme in a single project document. The object of the exercise was to compare human resources with our ambitions.

Whilst the exercise demonstrated that these were broadly in balance, there were areas of concern eg IT, and little spare capacity to absorb change. The exercise will be further developed as a tool for managing resources during 2005/06.

Risk Management

Identifying and controlling risk is an integral part of our systems for controlling resources. The Council aims to establish risk management in all significant areas of operation, and has so far risk registers for:

- Portfolio Plans.
- Each theme of the Integrated Improvement Plan.
- Individual Projects.

During 2004/05, we carried out further work on other areas which need to be subject to risk management in order to embed the concept throughout the organisation. These are:

- **Operational Risk Registers** – for each unit supported by training.
- **Business Continuity/Emergency Recovery** – measures need to be refreshed so that the Council can identify the risks associated with disruption of services by fire, flood etc, and how to resume normal business quickly if disruption occurs.

In order to implement these improvements the Council has created a Risk Management Group to oversee progress and devise a work programme to ensure actions are implemented.

Performance Management and Procurement

We have strengthened our approach to performance management and procurement through creating a new team within the Democratic Services Unit and setting up an Improving Performance Board, led by the Deputy Leader.

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.

A model reflecting our approach is shown below:

IMPROVEMENT – BETTER QUALITY SERVICES TO LOCAL PEOPLE

Working Differently
- Business Process Reengineering
- BV Reviews
- Inspections/audits
- Using technology
- Learning/best practice
- Quality Standards

Systems
- Performance Management System
  - PIs
  - Corporate Plan/Portfolio Plans
  - Service Unit Tasks
  - Integrated Improvement Themes
  - Inspection/Strategy Actions
- Community Plans
- Project Management

People
- Managers
  - Appraisals
  - Rewarding good performance (SMARTIES)
  - Tackling poor performance (capability procedure)
  - Piloting performance related pay
- Members
  - Monitoring performance

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Appendix 5 provides detailed Performance Information:

Our approach to procurement is based on maximising the resources available to the council through cost effectively acquiring goods, works and services. Following the implementation of a number of practical procurement initiatives, the Improving Performance Board is developing a more strategic focus for its work. This has included:

- Raising awareness of the implications of the Gershon Review with councillors and staff;
- Responding to the implications of the National Procurement Strategy locally;
- Working with neighbouring local authorities on the Improvement Partnership;
- Identifying major procurement areas where savings can be maximised;
- Revising the Procurement Strategy.

Our strategy for meeting the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's efficiency targets together with actions to be taken during 2005/06 and expected efficiency gains are set out in 5F.

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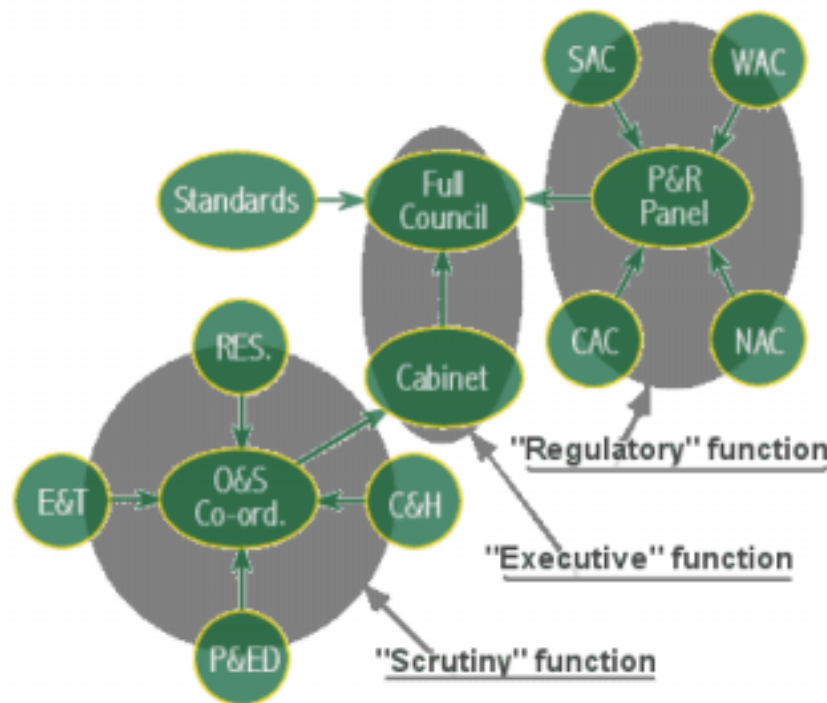
Key: E&T – Environment & Transport, RES – Resources, C&H – Community & Housing, P&ED – Planning & Economic Development, O&S Co-ord – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, P&R Panel – Planning & Regulatory Panel, Area Committees: SAC – Southern, NAC – Northern, WAC – Western, CAC – City.

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. It if 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 Policy Development 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.

Councillor Training, Development and Support

The role of the modern councillor is complicated and demanding. Councillors need training and development to fulfil their role; they also need practical support to manage their workload.

Facilities available to members include;
• Regular training events.

- Access to external training courses and conferences.
- Provision of home PCs, mobile phones and stationery.
- Facilities for informal meetings via the members and cabinet rooms.

A strategy for training and development has identified areas of skill or knowledge particularly important to members, and annual training programmes will be built around these.

There are two areas which need further action in 2005/06.

- **IT Support** – members are dependent on a telephone based support network not provided by the Council to support their IT needs. It has become apparent that this is not adequate and we will explore the possibility of improving support to councillors by the provision of a dedicated in house technician and the provision of broadband access to member's houses.
- **Training and Development** – The take up of the opportunity for member training is inconsistent, with many members readily using the training offered, but some not. We need to explore this issue and determine whether different types of training or different subject matter might encourage a better take up.

Investing in Staff

This Council recognises that people are its greatest asset. It strives to invest as much time, effort and finances as it can do effectively and within the constraints of the resources available, to helping people to:

- Understand their role, how it fits within the corporate whole, what is expected of them and how we will help them.
- Gain, retain and develop and the right skills, knowledge and experience for the job in a changing environment.
- Be clear about the qualities that are needed to help them perform according to the needs of their specific roles and the wider corporate context.
- Gain and retain the motivation and enthusiasm needed to bring an extra sparkle to the job they have to do.
- Recognise that all they do must be directed to understanding, responding to, predicting and acting in accordance with the real needs of the customer.

This is achieved by:

- Continuously improving induction arrangements.
- Implementing annual appraisals and continuously revising the system of appraisals to ensure that it remains in sympathy with the Council's needs.
- Using appraisals to build and implement training and development plans and identify succession planning issues.
- Providing clear channels of communication to help people understand Council priorities.
- Developing robust recruitment and retention strategies.
- Providing a behavioural competency framework for use with appraisals and working towards using this framework to recruit new staff.
- Understanding how employees view their work experience via focus groups, workshops, team meetings, cross unit meetings and staff surveys.

- Taking this information and using it to inform future strategies and action plans.
- Promoting the culture of customer care and service via role modelling, training and development, structures and systems.
- Providing new and reviewing current people related policies to ensure they are relevant and modern.

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 2005/06. 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   *
- Conservation   ***

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

- 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   *

Financing our ambitions is a constant challenge. Broadly speaking, our Medium Term Financial Strategy sets us the targets of:

- Keeping annual Council Tax increases to no more than 5%.
- Recognising that unavoidable cost pressures require funding well above a 5% tax increase.
- Growth is needed to fund improvements in Waste Management.

Difficult decisions are needed to square this circle. Our approach is to:

- Freeze funding for services classified as Desirable or Important ie no increase for inflation. This is an equivalent saving of £152,000 pa.
- Fees and charges are to be benchmarked at the upper quartile for national comparators, producing an additional £50,000 of revenue per annum rising to £250,000 over five years.
- The ODPM has issued a three year target for efficiency savings 2005/06 to 2007/08. This equates to £432,000 per annum of which half (£216,000) must be "cashable". The Council in its first annual efficiency statement for 2005/6 has identified a larger proportion of cashable efficiencies £397,000)
- Affordable housing – direct investment will cease in 2006, instead we will rely on increased supply through newly introduced Supplementary Planning Guidance and our partnership with Assetrust.
- Housing Stock – we acknowledge our inability to improve our Council housing to the standard desired by our tenants, and are therefore consulting them on the possibility of a stock transfer to secure the level of improvement identified.

Resources freed by these actions are needed to meet our unavoidable cost increases, and transfer funding to our ambitions, notably Waste Management.

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 processes are fair, open and non-discriminatory.

Over the last six months a small group has been reviewing the Council's Equality Policy and Practice. It concluded that a substantial review of services was completed at the time of the implementation of the Policy and that the actions arising have largely been completed. Indeed substantial progress has been made on employment policies and practice with regular reviewing of diversity targets.

However, the review also concluded that national revisions and changes have not been reflected within the policy and that systematic and regular impact assessments

of policies and services have not become embedded into the Council's day-to-day delivery of services. With the exception of employment policies, service objectives and target have not been set.

In order to overcome this over the next twelve months the council will:

- Review its comprehensive Equality Policy and Race Equality Scheme.
- Consult relevant organisations, groups and interested individuals on its revised policies.
- Establish a corporate framework to undertake equality impact assessments that are subject to external scrutiny and audit.
- Incorporate into the 2006/07 portfolio plans a section on equality which will outline a review of the services against the equality standard, set out a three-year rolling programme of equality impact assessments of services and set equality targets, where appropriate.
- From 2006/07 onwards report on the equality standard reached by portfolio and corporately as part of the quarterly performance report.
- From 2006/07 onwards ensure that equality assessments are incorporated as part of all new policies, strategies, plans and best value reviews.
- Increase awareness through the roll-out of online equalities training models for all staff and provide specialist staff training programmes for those officers who regularly come into direct contact with customers/clients.

Corporately 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".
- Best Value Performance Indicator 2(b) covers "the duty to promote race equality".

On both these indicators it will be our intention to be in the upper quartile nationally with in the next three years.

Investing in Information and Assets

Accurate, relevant and up-to-date information is the foundation of our business. Unless our core information is reliable and readily accessible, the quality of our decision-making and service provision will inevitably be compromised. Councillors, officers, partner organisations and the public all have a stake in how we produce, store, retrieve, publish and ultimately dispose of information.

Thus, information management is a crucial component of our business. Over the past three years we have made major investments in information technology as part of our e-Government initiative. Over the next three years, the focus will increasingly be on ensuring the information within those systems is accurate, accessible and appropriate.

During the next 12 months, we will:
- Develop an information management strategy. This will document how we manage the lifecycle and security of all our corporate information, including defining the necessary roles, responsibilities and processes necessary for managing our information.

- Roll out our Electronic Documents and Records Management System across the whole organisation, giving us better control over the production of information whilst reducing unnecessary duplication.
- Develop the range of information we make publicly available on our website, while continuing to ensure that the information is kept accurate and up-to-date. We will increasingly be extracting information direct from back-office systems to avoid duplicating and re-purposing information.
- Publish information held within our corporate Geographic Information System on our website. This will enable the public to search for information that applies to specific properties or geographic areas: for example, showing whether a particular property is subject to planning constraints within the Local Plan.
- Put an increasing reliance on our website being the default location for public information. For example, service information available to our customer service staff will be the same as that available on the website, so that members of the public will always receive the same information, whether they contact us by telephone, face to face or via the web.
- Provide a single "change of address" facility for the public, such that after notification of a change, we can alert all council service units. This will provide a better service for the public, whilst at the same time cutting down on internal duplication of address data.
- Start the redevelopment our corporate intranet as a support tool for officers, giving them a single access point to all the corporate and public information and processes they need to perform their jobs.
- Investigate the requirements for an extranet system to provide similar support for councillors and staff in partner organisations.

A review of our assets has been undertaken to devise a disposal strategy for properties which will become surplus to requirement once centralised office accommodation is established.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Of all the documents, strategies and plans we produce, this Corporate Plan is of fundamental importance. It marries our long-term vision and ambition to specify actions designed to improve the quality of life for our residents, people employed in the district and visitors attracted to the historical heritage and wonderful environment.

It is aimed primarily at councillors, staff and partners but we are gratified if a wider audience shows an interest in understanding the council's work in the coming year. Its main aim is to demonstrate an integrated, corporate approach but the document also allows councillors and managers to monitor progress, drive improvement and make the best use of our limited resources.

Most importantly, I hope the document reinforces the strong sense of pride we feel in providing a wide range of services to communities in South Wiltshire that rightly expect high quality. Our ambition remains to provide excellent services, engage the community and work in partnership with people who share our aims. This plan will move us further towards those aspirations.

Richard Sheard
Chief Executive