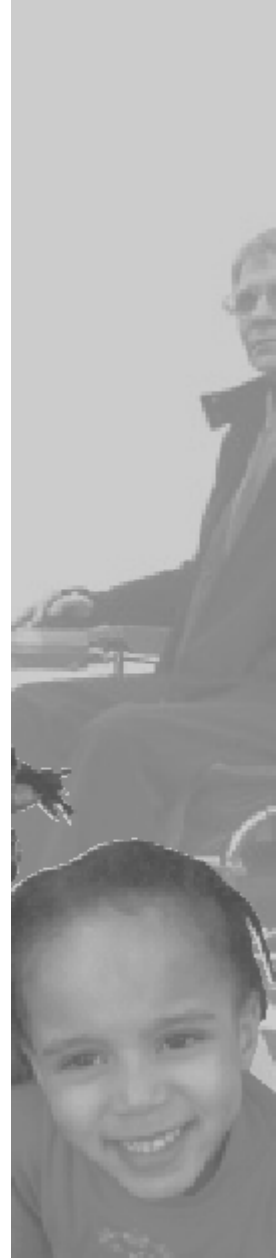


WORKING DRAFT



Leicester City Council

Best Value

Performance Plan 2004/5



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Introduction

**Foreword by the Leader of the Council
and the Chief Executive**

Purpose of the Best Value Performance Plan

Foreword by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive

Over the past twelve months Leicester City Council has again worked hard to improve value and services for local people.

The Audit Commission regularly inspects our services and publishes assessments of how the council is performing overall. In the 2002 'Comprehensive Performance Assessment' the city council was assessed as 'Fair'. At the end of 2003 the Audit Commission reported again. It found that the council had become a 'Good' local council, 'well placed to improve the way it works and the services it provides to local people'.



Leader of the Council

We have won the Beacon Council award for excellence and innovation for the fifth consecutive year – this time for Housing Renewal.

This means that Leicester City Council has been awarded 'Beacon Status' in each of the five years the scheme has been running. We are the only council in the Midlands to have achieved this accolade and one of only three in the country to win an award every year.

The exam performance of students at age 16 is improving at a rate faster than the national average. There have been notable improvements by Children's Services in Social Care and Health, including the achievement of Pilot Children's Trust status. The libraries service has achieved Quality Mark 21 for its provision of community legal service information and is recognised as an improving service nationally.



Chief Executive

We have emphasised our commitment to customer service by improving our Customer Service Centres and by setting up new access and advice facilities that will make contacting the council easier.

The council recently published a new Corporate Plan setting out our priorities over the next five years and we will report annually our performance in meeting those priorities.

The city council provides hundreds of essential services daily. From arts & museums, to waste management, this year's Performance Plan sets out clear examples of what the council is doing to provide better value and service.



We hope that you will see from this Performance Plan the progress we have made, and what our targets are for the year ahead. If you have any comments about the plan we would be very pleased to receive them.

Purpose of the Best Value Performance Plan

The Best Value Performance Plan captures 'where we've come from and where we're going' in the delivery of services to people.

The focus of the plan is on performance and improvement: highlighting where we are on target to deliver our priorities and where improvements are required to deliver the targets we aspire to.

This Best Value Performance Plan sets out:

- The strategic priorities, both local and national, that Leicester City Council works towards
- How Leicester City Council works to deliver our strategic priorities: our performance management framework
- How the council has performed in delivering its strategic priorities. This includes:
 - The outcomes of key improvement measures undertaken over the past three years
 - Our performance against targets measured over the past year
- How the council aims to improve our performance this year and over the next two years. This includes:
 - Key improvement priorities
 - Performance targets for the next year to measure what we aim to achieve.

The Performance Plan is a statutory document, prescribed by Government for all local authorities to complete so that they can be held to account by those who pay for local services.

This document has been produced in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and follows guidance issued by the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister.



1

Strategic Framework

Priorities for Leicester City Council – Corporate Plan

National Priorities for Councils

Public Service Agreements – Summary of Progress

The Council’s Performance Management Framework

**Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)
Statement**

Priorities for Leicester City Council

Corporate Plan 2003/2006

Leicester City Council now has a Corporate Plan. This is a public statement that sets out, in detail, what the council's priorities are and provides a clear direction to help us achieve our aim.

The Corporate Plan details the council's aim and main strategic objectives and presents nine key priorities that we need to meet. It forms an essential element in establishing how the council monitors and raises performance.

A copy of the full Corporate Plan is included in appendix 1

Our Aim: *to make Leicester more attractive for our diverse communities to live work and invest in*

Our strategic objectives:

- To raise educational standards and skills irreversibly so that all schools are good schools and individuals are committed to learning throughout life.
- To improve our environment to make local neighbourhoods and the city centre places for people to be proud of.

Our key priorities:

- Improve quality and equality in teaching and learning
- Make our city's developments sustainable so that we do not close down choices for our children and grandchildren
- Build on Leicester's history of including people from all backgrounds in a cohesive community free to pursue peace and prosperity
- Support children and parents, especially protecting the most vulnerable children
- Help people with disabilities and the growing number of older people to experience more independence
- Develop a safe, clean and creative city with access to culture and recreation
- Regenerate the city's housing, open spaces, public transport, and access to work and services
- Promote prosperity and new jobs, while safeguarding people's health and development interests
- Invest in continuous improvement in a well-managed organisation

National Priorities for Councils

These **'shared priorities'** have been agreed between the Government and the Local Government Association (on behalf of councils across the country).

- **Raising standards across our schools** by helping all schools match the excellence of the best, sustaining improvement in primary schools, transforming secondary schools and ensuring that the school workforce has the capacity to support this
- **Improving the quality of life**
 - **Of children, young people and families at risk** by tackling child poverty, maximising the life chances of children in care or in need and strengthening protection for children at risk of abuse
 - **Of older people** by enabling them to live as independent lives as possible and avoid unnecessary periods in hospital
- **Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities** by targeting key local services – such as health, education, housing, crime and accident prevention – to match need; and the encouragement of healthy lifestyles
- **Creating safer and stronger communities** by working with the police and other local agencies to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, strengthen community cohesion and tackle drug abuse
- **Transforming our local environment** by improving the quality, cleanliness and safety of our public space
- **Meeting local transport needs more effectively** by improving bus services and other forms of local transport and securing better access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need
- **Promoting the economic vitality of localities** by supporting business improvement, providing positive conditions for growth and employment, improving adult skills, helping the hardest to reach into work, and extending quality and choice in the housing market.

Public Service Agreements – Summary of Progress

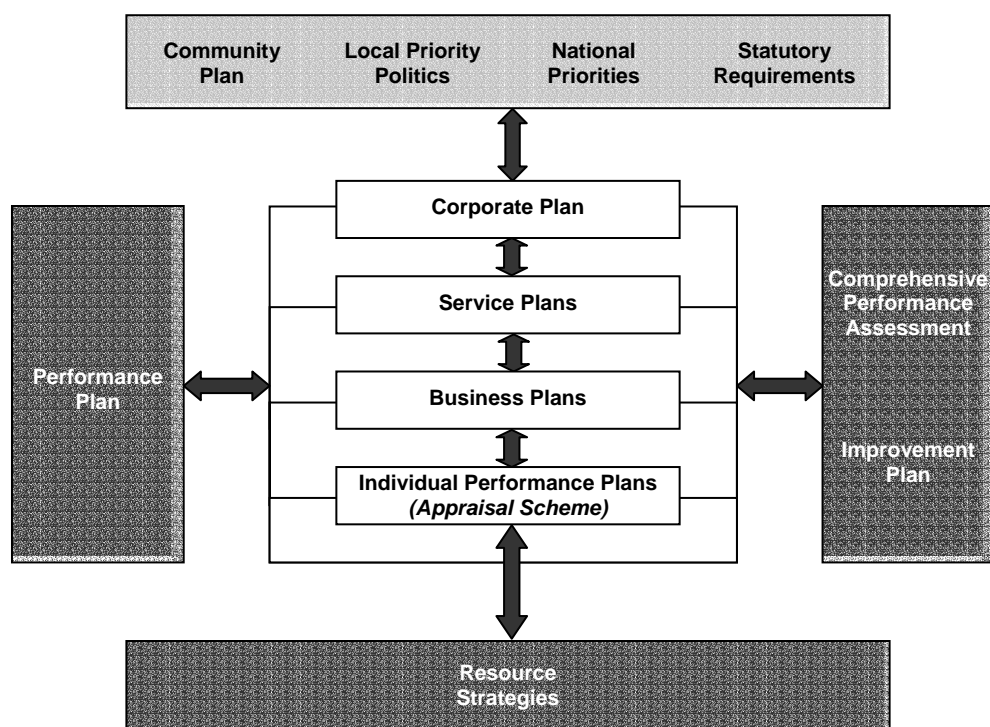
To Come – Prash????

Details of the Performance Management Framework

Delivering Priorities by Raising Performance

Since 2000 we have used the council's performance management framework to ensure that we have a corporate approach to service planning and delivery. This framework was revised in 2003 to take account of lessons learned and our first Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The Corporate Plan (appendix 1) now clearly establishes our corporate aims and priorities and forms a key element of how we will monitor and raise our performance.

Performance Management Framework for Service Improvement



From the Corporate Plan, the council's strategic aims and priorities feed into specific service plans. Each business unit of the council then generates a business plan. Each member of staff is engaged in the delivery of the plans through the appraisal process. This means that there is consistency and understanding of the key issues we face and the priority we place behind each area of our activity.

At each stage, we set targets against performance measures to improve year on year and in comparison with other councils. We monitor our performance regularly and take action if we are not meeting our targets. Cabinet monitors the progress made on targets within this plan. Scrutiny and Senior Managers monitor other targets. We report our progress annually to the people of Leicester in our Best Value Performance Plan.

We will review our Corporate Plan each year in the light of our performance and any emerging new priorities to make sure we remain focused on what is important. This review will be integrated with the council's budget making process to ensure resources are focused on the same priorities and what needs to be improved.


Our first CPA assessment in 2002 rated us as a 'fair' performing Council. By improving our services, the second assessment in 2003 rated us as a 'good' council. Our goal is to see Leicester City Council rated 'excellent'. The priority areas for improvement are set out each year in our CPA improvement plan.

We aim to raise our performance to improve what the council does for the benefit of citizens – something everyone can take pride in.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Statement

The Audit Commission regularly inspects our services and publishes a Comprehensive Performance Assessment indicating how the council is performing overall. In 2002 the city council was assessed as 'fair'. The Audit Commission reported again at the end of 2003 and found that we had become a 'Good' local council, 'well placed to improve the way it works and the services it provides to local people'.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2003



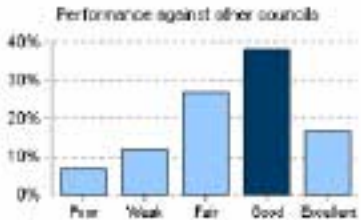
How is Leicester City Council performing?

Overall Performance

good

Leicester City Council has been measured as **good** in the way that it serves its local people. The chart opposite shows what share of councils also received this rating.

Performance against other councils



Rating	Percentage
Fair	~8%
Weak	~12%
Fair	~28%
Good	~38%
Excellent	~16%

We reached this overall rating by looking at:

1. How Leicester City Council is run; and
2. How Leicester City Council's main services perform.

1. How is Leicester City Council run and what progress has the council made in the last year?

Leicester City Council has changed from being fair to good.

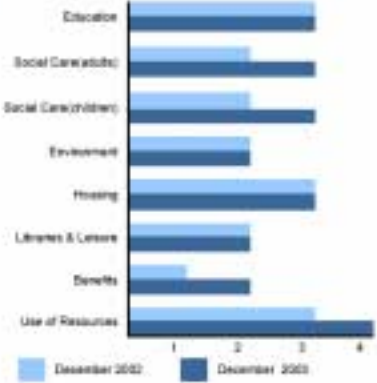
Leicester City Council has made significant improvements in social care and use of resources and some improvements in housing benefits over the last year. The council has improved strongly in children's social care services and strengthened areas of adults' services. Educational attainment has shown some improvement and the council is seeking to increase capacity to deliver improvements through various partnership initiatives. Performance in housing remains strong. Housing benefits, although better, remains weak following a systems failure. Other services have maintained at the same level. The council has made further corporate changes by clarifying its key priorities, shifting resources to these areas and strengthening performance management. It is also taking forward a number of ambitious initiatives, for instance the Children's Trust, aimed at strengthening joint working, enhancing educational standards and skills and improving the environment. Delivering these, the council will be well-placed to improve the way it works and the services it provides to local people.

In December 2002 Leicester City Council received a measurement of 3 out of 4 for the way it is run.

2. How do Leicester City Council's main services perform?

We have assessed core service performance in the service areas shown alongside. Each service is scored on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. Education and social care are given more importance in reaching the overall service score than other areas.

Overall service performance 3 out of 4



Service Area	December 2002	December 2003
Education	2	3
Social Care/adults	2	3
Social Care/children	2	3
Environment	2	3
Housing	2	3
Libraries & Leisure	2	3
Benefits	1	2
Use of Resources	3	4

2

Performance and Improvement Measures

The Council's Best Value Review Programme

**Summary of Performance 2003/2004 –
What we said we'd do, what we have done and what we will do**

**Relationship between the Budget Strategy and
Improving Performance**

The Council's Best Value Review Programme

The Council has undertaken a range of improvement measures over the past four years to improve outcomes for local people. These have included targeted service improvements that aim to better meet the needs of local people in terms of service access, provision and satisfaction.

Much of this work has been undertaken through the Council's Best Value Review Programme.

The Council's Best Value Review Programme and Progress on Implementation

Year 1 – 2000/01

- Advice Services – *action plan completed*
- Arts & Entertainment – *action plan completed*
- Customer Care – *improvement plan completed*
- Services for Older People – *action plan is being implemented*
- Procurement – *action plan completed*
- Communications & Promotion – *action plan is being implemented*

Year 2 – 2001/02

- Financial Management – *action plan is being implemented*
- Services to Homeless People – *action plan is being implemented*
- Personnel Management – *action plan is being implemented*
- Library Services – *action plan completed*
- Services for Vulnerable Children – *action plan is being implemented*

Review schedule for 2004-06

Year 5 – 2004/5

- Lifelong Learning
- Regeneration

Year 3 – 2002/03

- Highways & Transportation – *action plan is being implemented*
- ICT & e-Government – *action plan is being implemented*
- Crime & Disorder (pt1)
- Operational Finance (Payroll) – *action plan is being implemented*
- Environmental Services – *action plan is being implemented*
- Heritage Services – *action plan is being implemented*

Year 4 – 2003/04

- Crime & Disorder (pt2) – *action plan is being implemented*
- Housing Management Services –
- Legal Services – *action plan is being implemented*
- Property Services – *action plan is being implemented*

Year 6

- Regulatory Services
- Taxation and Benefits

Summary of Performance 2003/2004

What we said we'd do, what we have done and what we will do

Leicester City Council's Corporate Plan 2003/2006 sets out the key priorities for the council in detail and highlights how we will achieve and measure them.

The Corporate Plan now also forms the main basis against which the council will report its progress annually to the people of Leicester in the Best Value Performance Plan and Performance Plan Summary.¹

This means that we have reorganised the way that we report our yearly progress and improvement to more closely reflect the nine priorities that feature in the Corporate Plan.

The following pages summarise what we said we would do, record what we have done and set out what we will do in the forthcoming year to further meet these priorities.

¹ The Best Value Performance Plan Summary was produced and distributed in the April edition of Leicester City Council's civic magazine, Link, which is distributed to all households in the city. A copy of the annual Performance Plan Summary can also be found on the council's website at www.leicester.gov.uk

Priority: 'Improve quality and equality in teaching and learning'

What we said we would do	What we have done
<p>Continue to raise levels of attainment for all children and young people across all key stages</p>	<p>Improved the performance of students at age 16 at a rate faster than the nation as a whole. More and more pupils are achieving formal qualifications, including 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE.</p> <p>Improved English and mathematics results at the end of primary (year 6) at a similar rate to the nation, but the overall gap between Leicester and the national average remains.</p> <p>Received recent Ofsted reports showing that the quality of leadership and teaching in primary schools is improving at a significantly faster rate than the national average.</p>
<p>Implement a strategy for social inclusion that will give more opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people to learn, to develop and to achieve their potential</p>	<p>Introduced a common school admissions policy for 3 and 4 year olds.</p> <p>Identified a number of schools that can extend the education offered to pupils with special needs if provided with new resources</p> <p>Worked with other agencies to ensure a better response to the needs of disadvantaged children and young people.</p>
<p>Work with schools in special measures or with serious weaknesses to ensure they improve quickly and raise standards of achievement for their pupils</p>	<p>Reduced the number of schools in special measures or facing serious weaknesses from 30 to 5 in the past four years.</p>
<p>Develop the youth service to ensure there is good provision in the reach of all young people in the city, especially those living on estates and in the inner-city</p>	<p>Worked with excluded pupils to help them gain qualifications;</p> <p>Worked more closely with housing officers to address anti-social behaviour on estates;</p> <p>Continued to develop club based and detached youth work initiatives.</p>
<p>Improve attendance and behaviour through initiatives like the Sporting Crowns scheme where rewards are given to pupils for good behaviour, attendance and academic achievement, to all schools across the city</p>	<p>Continued to improve attendance rates and promote good behaviour with further government funding secured for the future.</p> <p>Worked closely with the Police on truancy sweeps in the city.</p> <p>Achieved 90.78% attendance at secondary school and 93.54% in primary school this year.</p> <p>Extended the Sporting Crowns scheme to all 115 city schools.</p>
<p>Develop out of school and family learning opportunities in more schools, libraries and neighbourhood centres</p>	<p>Launched The Early Start Initiative to help parents of children under 3.</p> <p>6,500 children took part in the Summer Reading Scheme</p> <p>Held 167 family learning activities in libraries attended by 5,563 people.</p>

What we will do this year

- Review the key challenges facing primary schools including class size, budget and school place planning
- Continue to raise attainment of pupils, especially at Key Stage 2
- Continue to provide out of school and family learning activities and develop full service provision through children's centres and extended schools.
- Add value to the work of schools through capital investment and quality support services that enable them to focus on teaching and learning.
- Continue to improve attendance and address behaviour that detracts from effective learning

Priority: 'Support children and parents, especially protecting the most vulnerable children'

What we said we would do	What we have done
Continue work to develop family support services with partner organisations and consider the benefits of a pilot Children's Trust for Leicester	<p>Leicester has been successful in attracting Pilot Children's Trust status and the local Trust will be called the Leicester Federation.</p> <p>This year we achieved improvement from a one star Social Services Department to a "two star" one, which helped the Local Council move from "Fair" to "Good" in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment. This was attained following a very positive Social Services Inspection of Children's Services.</p>
Improve the educational attainment of looked after children	<p>11 year old looked after children are showing improving results at key stage 2. Results for 14 year olds in Science are as good as those for children who are not in care.</p> <p>There has been a significant increase in the percentage of looked after young people with at least 1 GCSE A*-G Or NVQ.</p> <p>No looked after children were excluded from school in 2003.</p>

What we will do this year

- We will continue to concentrate on improving the educational attainments of looked after children and of care leavers.
- We will work with other agencies and partners to help to produce a local comprehensive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) by the end of March 2006.
- We will implement with our partners a joint Family Support Review including mainstreaming Sure Start and the development of Children's Centres throughout the City.
- We will narrow attainment gaps and tackle underachievement for particular groups of pupils, particularly, looked after children.

Priority: 'Build on Leicester's history of including people from all backgrounds in a cohesive community free to pursue peace and prosperity'

What we said we would do	What we have done
<p>We will implement our Community Cohesion Pathfinder bid and involve young people across the city in a range of media, cultural and sporting programmes to promote inter-community contact and learning</p>	<p>We are implementing projects in partnership to take forward the Community Cohesion Pathfinder. These projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training young people to deliver training on welcoming diversity and prejudice reduction; • A professional sports coach training programme for young people from diverse neighbourhoods; • A cultural awareness development programme for young people; • Setting up inter-cultural opportunities in the performing arts in schools and informal settings, and establishing e-learning networks between schools.
<p>Continue to increase cultural participation</p>	<p>12,000 people attended the Leicester City Football Club Community Day. This gave young people, people with learning disabilities and homeless people the opportunity to experience the thrill of playing sport at the new Walkers stadium.</p> <p>The revamped Castle Park Festival. Attendance increased from 11,000 in 2002 to 17,500 in 2003.</p> <p>The City again hosted the BBC Radio 1 One Big Sunday. The event was visited by up to 120,000 music lovers.</p> <p>'Discover' – the new children's gallery at New Walk Museum, has helped to bring a younger audience to the museum</p>
<p>We will continue to implement the highest standards in equalities – Level Two of the Local Government Equality Standard – covering policy making, employment and service delivery</p>	<p>We were independently validated as having achieved Level Two of the Equality Standard. The inspectors said they were impressed with the council's level of commitment to equalities work.</p>

What we will do this year

- Achieve level 3 of the equality standard for local government by October 2004
- We will develop new activities with partners to improve community cohesion across the city and council

Priority: 'Help people with disabilities and the growing number of older people to experience more independence'

What we said we would do	What we have done
<p>Continue to develop services to promote the independence of older people, adults with mental ill health, learning disabilities, physical and sensory disabilities and their carers</p>	<p>We are supporting more adults to live at home than last year and developing more community based services that meet the diverse needs of Leicester's communities.</p> <p>We increased the number of breaks that we provide to carers.</p> <p>We have delivered increased amounts of community equipment costing under £1,000 to people living at home.</p> <p>We have increased the range of benefits advice available.</p>
<p>Continue to improve services to reduce the need for older people to be admitted to hospital and residential/nursing care</p>	<p>We have re-located Social Workers to Accident & Emergency and GPs.</p> <p>We have extended the opening hours of the Social Work service in hospitals to include Saturday mornings.</p>
<p>Begin work to refurbish two elderly person's homes to provide enhanced Intermediate Care facilities with the NHS to promote rehabilitation and reduce further delayed transfers of care from hospital</p>	<p>Brookside Court elderly person's home is due to re-open in March 2004 and will provide 34 new intermediate care places, which include 10 specialist nursing placements</p>

What we will do this year

- Continue to provide lifelong learning opportunities for older people so that they are not marginalized or disadvantaged by age
- Increase participation in the use of library resources, reading and story telling for adults and children with learning and physical disabilities
- Continue to develop services in the community to promote the independence of older people, adults with mental ill-health, learning disabilities, physical & sensory disabilities and their carers
- Continue to increase services in people's own homes to reduce the need for older people to be admitted to hospital and residential/nursing care

Priority: 'Make our city's developments sustainable so that we do not close down choices for our children and grandchildren'

What we said we would do	What we have done
Recycle more waste	Our recycling & composting figure for 2002/03 was 11.6% compared to 10.70% in 2001/02.

What we will do this year

- Work towards increasing the percentage of household waste which is recycled towards 40% by 2005
- Reduce heating costs by improving energy efficiency measures in private households for vulnerable people
- Continue to improve the energy efficiency rating of the council's housing stock
- Develop the quality and range of cultural activity in sustainable ways

Priority: 'Promote prosperity and new jobs, while safeguarding people's health and development interests'

What we said we would do	What we have done
Construction of workspaces for creative industries and artists studios will commence in spring 2003 with a new centre opening mid-2004	Construction of the Leicester Creative Business Depot, on the former Leicester City Bus Depot site, will be completed by the end of April this year and will be in use from May 2004.
Building of the new Braunstone sports facility will begin in May 2003 and we intend to open the centre in autumn 2004	Construction commenced in May 2003 and the facility is on target to be completed autumn 2004.
Continue to develop and implement the Revitalising Neighbourhoods programme	Neighbourhood improvement is being taken forward in new ways by the new Coalition since the election, with proposals to establish Area Committees over the next year.

What we will do this year

- Work towards creating 18 new Social Enterprises in the City within target wards by March 2010
- Create and sustain 250 new jobs in the most deprived city neighbourhoods
- Cultural Quarter - progress development of the Performing Arts and Convention Centre

Priority: 'Develop a safe clean creative city with wider access to culture and recreation'

What we said we would do	What we have done
Continue raising public awareness on steps to take on crime prevention and where to go to seek support.	<p>Our programme of crime prevention events offered information and help about car crime, domestic violence, and support for the victims and witnesses of crime.</p> <p>In December 2003 approximately 2000 local people benefited from receiving information on vehicle crime security as a part of our seasonal campaign.</p>
Appoint a Domestic Violence Co-ordinator to work with public agencies to develop and improve services for those affected by domestic violence	<p>A Domestic Violence Co-ordinator was appointed and started work in August 2003.</p> <p>The co-ordinator is working with the Domestic Violence Forum to consolidate all the different areas of work currently undertaken by the Forum. A domestic violence website is also being developed.</p>
To seek to reduce further anti-social behaviour and the number of domestic burglaries	<p>Between April-December we improved the security of 3291 homes.</p> <p>An anti-social behaviour database has been developed to enable citywide information gathering.</p> <p>Based on third quarter figures, burglaries have been reduced by 7.8% from last year.</p>
Continue to enhance the quality of parks and open spaces by achieving more Green Flag status parks	<p>Abbey Park successfully retained its Green Flag status. Watermead Country Park was unsuccessful but will be re-submitted this year.</p>
The new Safety Camera partnership aims to reduce excessive vehicle speeds further	<p>Introduced the Safety Camera Partnership and reduced the number of road accidents and casualties.</p>

What we will do this year

- We will increase the number of parks that have Green Flag status to three. This will help to enhance the quality of parks and green spaces.
- Local clubs, residents and partner organisations are being consulted on the programme of activities for the new Braunstone Leisure Centre. Schemes to reduce barriers to participation, such as cost and transport, are being developed.
- We will work to integrate our Cultural Strategy into the city's second Community Plan, due to be launched in 2005
- We will continue to develop the Cultural Strategy Partnership

Priority: 'Regenerate the city's housing, open spaces, public transport and access to work and services'

What we said we would do	What we have done
To promote accessible transport for all	<p>Refurbished St. Margaret's bus station.</p> <p>Continued to provide more Real Time Information ('Star Trak') bus stops</p> <p>Continued to raise kerbs at bus stops and provide low floor buses.</p>
To promote the ongoing regeneration of Leicester	<p>Improved road and bridges at Frog Island</p> <p>Implemented the major restoration scheme for New Walk</p> <p>Progressed the planning and delivery of Ashton Green new village community for northwest Leicester.</p> <p>Declared two nature reserves.</p> <p>Managed Aylestone Meadows Board Walk replacement.</p> <p>Gained £3m of Liveability Fund from the Government to regenerate St Georges Area</p> <p>Built 4 Incubator Business Units at Ross Walk</p>
Continue our programme of improving playgrounds across the city	By the end of this year's capital programme in March we aim to have refurbished a total of five play areas. In addition we have secured SRB funding for the refurbishment of three play areas and Sure Start funding for another four, so by the end of March 2004 we aim to have completed a total of 12 refurbishments.
Extend our sports coaching scheme to help people in local communities gain coaching qualifications. This initiative helps to provide a sustainable infrastructure for sport. It also provides employment opportunities for local residents and develops civic pride.	We set a target to run 25 courses and actually carried out 30 courses. We said we would train 100 individuals and actually trained 150. From these 23 new individuals gained paid employment.

What we will do this year

- Increase the supply of affordable housing (and large family homes).
- Carry out programme of refurbishment to council dwellings.
- Build a new Multi-disciplinary centre with the purpose of providing accommodation and individually tailored multi-agency support packages to rough sleepers and homeless people with complex needs.
- Develop safer routes to schools schemes.
- Work with partners and the community to deliver targeted regeneration in deprived areas of the city.

Priority: 'Invest in continuous improvement in a well-managed organisation'

What we said we would do	What we have done
Ensuring that Council policies are effectively challenged and scrutinised	Specifically designated Officers now help Councillors to examine and scrutinise policies set by the Cabinet.
Consulting with the public to help prioritise spending on making Council Buildings more accessible for Disabled persons	Consultation with groups of disabled people and groups with disabled members led to specific improvements at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre and Raven Youth Club. Information obtained is also being used for the programme of access improvements to Council buildings.
Helping the public to access Council Services more easily	We have installed new computer systems in our Customer Service Centres to give people a more personalised service. Our website www.leicester.gov.uk now provides more information and services. The website has also been redesigned, making it more user-friendly.
By a more co-ordinated approach we will reduce the cost of buying things	The Council has successfully reduced the prices of several widely used items and will change its own processes for buying, which will lead to lower costs when we buy.
Through better working arrangements we will turn around more land searches within 10 days	We have increased the percentage of searches turned around in 10 days from 32% to 85%
Ensuring that Housing Benefit claims & queries are dealt with more quickly	By the 31 st December 2003 80% of visitors to Welford House were being seen within 15 minutes of arrival A newly designed application form has helped to reduce the time it takes to process claims

What we will do this year

- We will formally launch the 'Customer Service Line'. This is a one-stop telephone call centre for the public to gain information and access to services.
- We will buy a new payroll system, which will reduce the cost of paying our employees.
- We will implement an improvement plan for Local Land Charges and set challenging targets

Relationship between the Budget Strategy 2004/07 and Improving Performance

The new Corporate Plan agreed by Council in November has shaped the Council's three-year budget strategy which itself reflects the Council's key improvement priorities.

As a result there is a clear strategic relationship between corporate priorities set out in the plan and the final budget proposals. An analysis of specific issues relating to improvement priorities shows that:

- Additional resources have been re-directed to support the raising of Educational standards.
- Additional resources have been provided to meet the placement costs of Looked After Children.
- A re-direction of resources into elderly care will improve performance but re-directs resources from preventive care.
- Additional resources have been allocated to improve Crime and Disorder.
- Additional resources are provided to maintain pace with the growth in the levels of waste disposal.
- Additional resources to Parks and Leisure Centres will improve levels of public satisfaction in these services.
- Additional resources have been provided to improve the performance on Land Searches.
- Reductions in resources on regulatory services will impact on non-discretionary services and not therefore reduce our performance on statutory requirements.
- Reductions in resources in collections and benefits will not inhibit performance given these areas will benefit from the effects and efficiencies created by new technology.
- No additional resources have been provided to improve our performance on planning applications or highway maintenance.

Details of the council medium term finance and budget strategy are outlined in *Section Three: Finance and Other Matters*.

3

Finance and Other Matters

Medium Term Financial Strategy

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Medium Term Financial Strategy

Leicester City Council determines its General Fund budget with reference to a three year spending plan, known as the Revenue Budget Strategy.

This strategy sets out the council's assumptions about Council Tax levels and other available funding as well as the council's priorities for spending new money.

The main aspects of the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2004/05 to 2005/06 are:

- **The council aims to increase tax by no more than, or at a rate below, the national average in years subsequent to 2004/05.**
- **Identification of two key priorities for spending new money on. These are raising educational standards and improving the environment**

Each council department is required to prepare a three-year departmental revenue strategy that meets the requirement of the corporate revenue strategy planning services within predetermined assumptions of available resources.

As the corporate revenue strategy is rolled forward each year, so is each department's individual revenue strategy. This longer term financial planning helps departments adjust and prioritise their services over several years and, therefore, allows changes to be made more smoothly. It also ensures that financial decisions made by the council are considered over the longer term as well as the short term.

Budget for 2004/05

For 2004/05, Leicester City Council set a budget for its general services, excluding council housing, of £356.2m.

The main features of the budget were:

- A council tax increase of 8.7%
- £2.0m additional funding for Social Services
- Growth funding for environmental spending of £1.4m
- A significant package of investment in property maintenance
- Reductions in departmental budgets of £4m in order to achieve the aims of the budget strategy

Table One: General Fund Revenue Budget

Actual 2002/2003	Budget 2003/04	Estimated Outturn 2003/04	Budget 2004/05
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Regeneration and Culture			
48,987.8	50,063.7	49,992.9	49,772.0
Chief Executives			
2,405.3	2,636.2	2,500.0	2,546.5
Education and Lifelong Learning			
155,655.1	172,827.4	172,827.4	181,587.8
Housing*			
9,967.5	9771.2	9257.0	6636.1
Resources, Access and Diversity			
14,386.5	15,850.1	15,827.8	15,851.7
Social Care and Health			
64,892.0	72,683.9	72,655.2	81,649.6
Capital Charges			
8,658.0	12,530.7	11,384.6	13,866.7
Corporate Budgets			
6,199.3	6,468.5	5,878.0	4,341.6
TOTALS			
311,151.5	342,831.9	340,322.9	356,252.0

* For services other than council housing

The figures shown in *Table One: General Fund Revenue Budget* reflect the council's budgetary control framework, in which each Corporate Director is formally responsible for a controllable budget.

To facilitate comparisons between local authorities, the figures for budget and actuals should also be reported in a standard format, in which the classification of expenditure is on a common basis for all authorities, as prescribed in the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice.

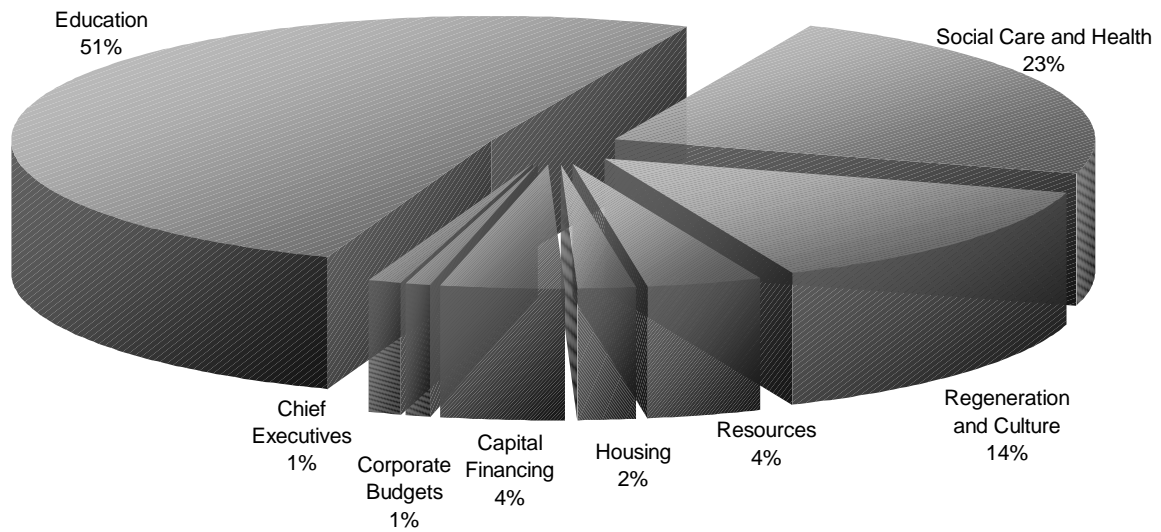
This code of practice also requires that services should be reported on the basis of 'total cost' – taking into account all charges, including overheads and 'non-controllable' costs. This is to eliminate differences in accounting treatment of some charges by different authorities.

Using this format, the figures are presented in the table below:

Table Two: Total Cost Reporting in Line with Best Value Accounting Code of Practice

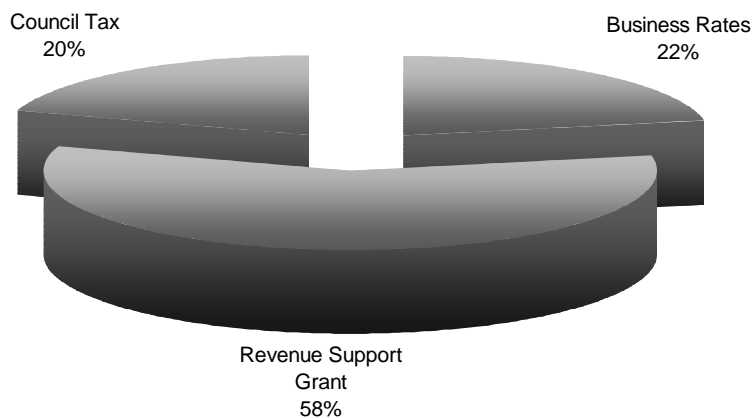
Actual 2002/2003	Budget 2003/04	Estimated Outturn 2003/04	Budget 2004/05
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Central Services to the Public			
-	1,989.0		2,188.9
Cultural Service and Neighbourhood Renewal			
50,503.0	51,609.5		59,749.4
Court Services			
900.0	713.6		160.3
Education Services			
177,516.0	186,253.9		186,830.7
Highways, Roads & Transport			
19,127.0	18,434.5		17,420.7
Housing General Fund			
17,714.0	10,032.0		8,663.1
Social Services			
69,505.0	78,310.3		85,642.6
Corporate & Democratic Core			
4,768.0	5,848.7		6,990.1
Non-Distributed Costs			
1,054.0	1002.7		2,415.2
Corporate Income and Expenditure			
(30,274.0)	(11,400.0)		(13,809.0)
TOTALS			
310,813.0	342,794.2		356,252.0

Revenue Expenditure 2004/05



Where the Money We Spend Comes From

Our income comes from Council Tax, business rates and the revenue support grant from Central Government. We also seek other sources of revenue and capital funding, for example the Single Regeneration Budget, New Deal funding, SureStart, National Lottery funding and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fun (until 2005/06)



Funding 2004/05	
	£m
Revenue Support Grant	205.0
Business rates (WNDR)	79.2
Council Tax	71.5
Collection Fund Surplus	0.5
Budget Requirement	356.2

Capital Programme 2004/05

Leicester City Council plans to spend more than £107m on capital projects in 2004/05.

In January 2002, the council set its main corporate capital programme for the next three years. The corporate programme is funded by capital money the council has that it can spend entirely at its discretion on the priorities set out in the Capital Strategy and includes schemes such as:

- The council's contribution to the new leisure centre at Braunstone
- Major regeneration of the St George's area of the city and the establishment of the Cultural Quarter, including a the Performing Arts and Conference Centre
- Significant investment in initiatives such as local environmental works and improving the riverside and othr environmental and heritage initiatives
- Investment to maintain and improve the council's buildings, including making our buildings more accessible to disabled services users, improving the condition of council housing and the maintenance of roads

In addition to the corporate programme, there is a significant programme of works funded from capital money that has been identified for particular service areas. This money is generally provided by the Government to fund specific programmes. The main service programmes in 2004/05 are Education, Housing, Regeneration and Transport.

Service	Examples of Schemes	2004/05
Education	General improvements to schools to enhance learning conditions, health and safety issues and school security	£22.2m
Housing	Improvements and maintenance of council housing including double glazing, disabled adaptations, central heating, modernising and improving private sector housing	£35.7m
Social Care and Health	Improvements to Elderly Persons' Homes, Children's Homes and other properties	£0.9m
Regeneration and Culture	Leisure facility at Braunstone, Cultural Quarter, Single Regeneration Programmes, Abbey Meadows Science Park, SureStart shemes, Local environmental works	£25.6m
Transport	Maintenance and improvement of roads, local safety schemes, safer routes to schools, traffic calming, new pedestrian crossings, street lighting	£11.4m
Other	Improvements to council buildings, including access for disabled users	£11.2m
Total Programme 2004/05		£107m

Trading Operations

The council manages some of its operations on a trading basis, whereby service departments are charged at agreed rates for the work done. Some central services are also managed in this way.

We have Direct Service Organisations (DSOs) to manage key services, such as building, cleaning and to carry out work on the city's parks and open spaces. These DSOs are managed like separate business and they have separate accounts kept for them so people can see how much they cost and whether they are running at a loss or profit to the council.

Trading Operations Forecast Turnover 2003/04

	2003/2004			2002/2003
	Forecast			Actual
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net
	£'000	£'000	(Surplus)/Deficit £'000	(Surplus)/Deficit £'000
Regeneration and Culture				
Citywide Cleaning	2,195	(2,173)	22	88
City Cleansing	6,167	(6,248)	(81)	(8)
City Highways/Civil Eng.	7,639	(7,988)	(349)	(248)
City Catering	11,954	(11,986)	(32)	(69)
Transport	12,405	(12,440)	(35)	(12)
Consultancy Services	1,572	(1,416)	156	201
City Landscapes	6,970	(6,988)	(18)	57
Markets (Note 1)				(234)
TOTAL Regeneration and Culture	48,902	(49,239)	(337)	(225)
Resources, Access and Diversity				
Financial Services (Note 2)	7,252	(7,299)	(47)	(14)
Creativity Works	3,327	(3,343)	(16)	(119)
IT Services	6,114	(6,114)	0	(1)
Design and Maintenance	3,991	(3,886)	105	0
Legal Services	3,165	(3,222)	(57)	(75)
Occupational Health			0	11
TOTAL Resources, Access and Diversity	23,849	(23,864)	(15)	(198)
Housing				
Housing Maintenance	20,441	(20,466)	(25)	153
TOTAL	93,192	(93,569)	(377)	(270)

Note 1 – Markets are now excluded from Trading Operations

Note 2 – Financial Services comprises Payroll, Cashiers, Job Shop, Debtors, Standby Register, Post Room

Statement on Contracts Involving Transfer of Staff

The Council is required to provide a brief statement on contracts involving transfer of staff, certifying that individual contracts awarded in the past year comply with the new Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

During the year 2003/04 there were no transfers of staff as a result of new contracts.

The Council's Corporate Procurement Group oversees this process and certifies it annually. Our Legal Services staff have developed standard contract clauses specifying obligations to enforce Code of Practice guidance on workforce matters.

Statement of Responsibility

The Council is responsible for preparation of the Performance Plan and for the information and assessments set out within it and assumptions and estimates on which they are based. The Council is also responsible for setting in place appropriate performance management and internal control systems from which the information and assessments have been derived.

The Council is satisfied that the information and assessments in this Plan are in all material respects accurate and complete and that the Plan is realistic and achievable.

Have your say...

We always welcome your views and suggestions about our services.

Please tell us what you think – it will make a difference.

There are various ways in which you can let us know your views:

- Writing to or visiting your local councillor during their surgery times
- Writing to the council at Customer Services Centre, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG
- Telephoning Customer Services on (0116) 252 7000
- Visiting the Customer Services Centres at New Walk Centre or Aikman Avenue, New Parks
- Completing a 'compliments and complaints' leaflet available at any council reception point
- Emailing the council via its website at www.leicester.gov.uk
- Joining the People's Panel – a representative group of local residents used for various consultation exercises



Appendices

Leicester City Council's Corporate Plan 2003/2006

Performance Indicators