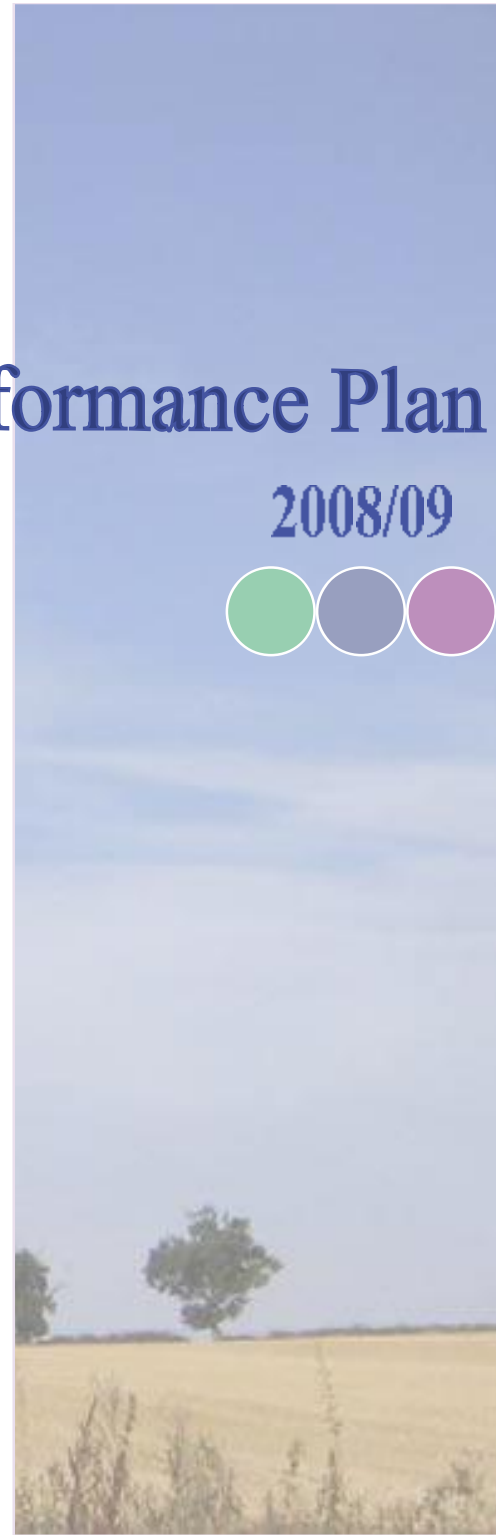




Best Value Performance Plan

2008/09



Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Contents

Our Customer Charter	1
Introduction	2
Cabinet Priorities	3
Background	5
Our Finances	9
Customer Focus	10
Green and Unique	14
A Safe Community	19
Homes and Neighbourhoods	22
Fit For Life	26
Economic Prosperity	28
Our Resource Management	29
Review, Audit and Inspection	33



Our Customer Charter

We aim to always put our customers first and for customers to be at the heart of everything that we do. We have developed our Customer Charter to let our customers and partners know the overall standards that they can expect from the Council and how we will work to provide the best services for the district.

We will:

Consult with our customers, listen to what they say and respond in the best way we can.

Be open in all financial matters and always remember we are spending public money.

Constantly search for ways in which we can improve our services.

Respond to changes which affect our customers.

Be open and honest in all our dealings and treat everyone equally and fairly.

Strive towards excellence in all our services and provide the best value available.

Invest in our staff through training and development so we can provide the best service.

Do our best to care for the environment for today and for the future.



Introduction

by the Leader of the Council
Councillor Mrs Diana Collins

This is our ninth Best Value Performance Plan. In it we set out details of our priorities and objectives, how we performed against key aims and targets in 2007/08, and the objectives we have set for the year ahead. As in previous years, the themes of the Best Value Performance Plan have again been linked to the Community Strategy for the Epping Forest District for 2004 to 2021. The Community Strategy addresses the key challenges facing the district over the forthcoming years, and was developed by a partnership of statutory and voluntary agencies, following extensive consultation with residents and stakeholders.

This Best Value Performance Plan shows how we intend to achieve our priorities and objectives for 2008/09, we hope that you find it informative and interesting.

This will be our last annual Best Value Performance Plan, as the Government does not require the plan to be published after June 2008.

Over the next year we will be working with our partners to collect and measure a new range of statutory performance indicators, that reflect national priorities. The new indicators also require various surveys to be carried out to determine public opinion and perceptions about the district, such as fear of crime in the community, levels of community cohesion and empowerment, housing regeneration and planning for a sustainable future. All existing national performance indicators were deleted from 1 April 2008. The new indicators will help to provide effective local services and create better places to live, through new relationships and better governance. Details of the new indicators and our targets for 2008/09 will be published separately on the Council's website.

We were classified as a 'good' performing council in a Comprehensive Performance Assessment process undertaken by the Audit Commission in 2004, and aim to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the district.



Cabinet Objectives 2008-09

Over the course of the last year, the Council has reviewed the way it delivers its key services. All council services are now administered by five new and inclusive directorates:

Environment and Street Scene
Planning and Economic Development
Housing
Finance and ICT
Corporate Support Services

Our work is organised into 'Portfolios. Each portfolio is allocated to a councillor who serves on the Cabinet, which is the main body where the Council makes decisions about services. The portfolios for 2008/09 are:

The Leader's Portfolio
Finance and Performance Management
Corporate Support Services and ICT
Housing
Planning and Economic Development
Environmental Protection
Community Wellbeing
Civil Engineering and Maintenance
Leisure and Young People

The Cabinet has adopted the following priority objectives for 2008/09:

Corporate Priorities

1. To ensure that the Council fully contributes to the delivery of the priorities and objectives of the second Essex Local Area Agreement, **not only through active participation in the Local Strategic Partnership, but also by robustly monitoring performance against the priority areas that the authority has 'had regard to';**
2. To explore options to improve the **accessibility of the Council's services through customer focused initiatives, including neighbourhood services and one-stop-shops;**
3. To produce a Sustainability Strategy for the Council, to ensure that the authority **minimises the environmental impact of its actions and operations;**
4. To review options for the future of North Weald Airfield, through the continuing work of the North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee;

Finance and Performance Management Portfolio

5. To maintain the Council's sound financial position and keep in place the policy of increasing the Council Tax by less than the increase in the Retail Prices Index;
6. To ensure the Council provides good value for money;

Corporate Support Services and ICT Portfolio

7. To ensure that ICT is provided in a strategic manner to support performance improvement throughout the Council;
8. To undertake a review of the Council's depot facilities within the district with a view to:
 - rationalising existing provision;
 - the disposal of site(s) surplus to requirements; and
 - the re-provision of suitable depot facilities for the Waste Management and Grounds Maintenance Services;

Housing Portfolio

9. To consider the development potential of a package of small Council-owned sites to provide additional affordable housing;
10. To consider significantly increasing the funding for off street parking schemes on Council estates;
11. To undertake an Options Appraisal for the future delivery of the Council's Careline Service to older and other vulnerable people;

Planning and Economic Development Portfolio

12. To recognise the Government approval of the East of England Plan and to work with key partners to deliver the Local Development Framework and, in particular, to consult on the core strategy;
13. To respond to sustainability issues by the development of a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the district;
14. To continue work on development briefs for key sites at The Broadway in Loughton and the St John's area of Epping, and to adopt both following consultation;

Environmental Protection Portfolio

15. To address the recommendations and criticisms contained within the Audit Commission's report on the Council's Waste Management Service, with particular emphasis on:
 - reviewing the garden waste collection service;
 - considering the introduction of a food waste collection service;
 - the wider implementation of recycling into flats and communal buildings;
 - the adoption of the Essex Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy; and
 - continued improvement in the local street scene;

Community Wellbeing Portfolio

16. To contribute to the alleviation of health inequalities in the district, through effective collaboration with other statutory and voluntary agencies;
17. To develop a resource aimed at reducing young persons' fear of crime, through working with the newly formed Youth Council;

Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio

18. To consider the outcome of the pilot 'localism' arrangements in respect of local highway maintenance, and to bring forward proposals for adoption of similar arrangements within the Epping Forest District;

Leisure and Young People Portfolio

19. To complete negotiations with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd and King Harold School, in respect of the future management of the Council's sports centres at Epping and Waltham Abbey;
20. To ensure the maximisation of opportunities presented by the London 2012 Olympic Games, and in particular the legacy of the white water canoe venue at Waltham Abbey; and
21. To undertake the feasibility of the provision of a new sports hall at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool, to improve access and increase participation in health enhancing activity in the area.



Background

About the Best Value Performance Plan

At Epping Forest District Council we are committed to constantly improving everything that we do.

The Local Government Act 1999 introduced legislation requiring all councils to provide Best Value in their services and to continually improve performance. The purpose of Best Value is to establish a culture within local government that delivers efficient, effective and economic services that meet users needs.

Best Value ensures that councils deliver continuous improvement in services with regard to the needs and expectations of service users. It focuses on achieving high standards rather than lowest cost, emphasises challenge to existing ways of doing things, and encourages the involvement of services users and staff in creative ways.

Our progress in achieving Best Value is monitored by the Audit Commission, which is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent to secure high-quality national and local services for the public. Each year we produce this Best value Performance Plan to:

- summarise last year's successes in meeting our key priorities, objectives and targets;
- show where those key priorities, objectives and targets were not achieved;
- inform residents and stakeholders of this year's key priorities, objectives and targets; and
- compare last year's performance with previous years.

The Best Value Performance Plan is for our residents, customers, partners, staff, government bodies and other interested parties. A summary of the plan was included in the leaflet sent to all households with the Council Tax bills in March 2007.

Copies of this plan can be provided in alternative formats and languages. The performance plan is available at local libraries, our information centres and on our website (www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk).

Further copies can be obtained from:
The Performance Management Unit,
Epping Forest District Council, Civic Offices,
Epping, Essex, CM16 4BZ.
Phone: 01992 564180 Fax: 01992 578018
E-mail: bestvalue@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

The Community Strategy

The Community Strategy for the Epping Forest District was published in April 2004. The strategy was drawn up by a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) of the statutory and voluntary agencies that work in the district. The themes are:

- Green and Unique
- Planning and Economic Development
- Economic Prosperity
- Homes and Neighbourhoods
- Managing Resources
- A Safe Community
- Fit for Life

The Community Strategy is part of an ongoing process to plan and influence the quality of life in the district, and addresses major issues up to 2020, including significant housing growth in the area and its potential impact on the environment, social facilities and issues such as local transport provision. The LSP is also in the course of preparing a new Sustainable Community Strategy in 2008. The aspirations within the Strategy will, in turn, be reflected in the revised Essex Strategy and the new Local Area Agreement also due to be finalised in 2008.

The strategy has eight themes with corresponding Action Groups - Green and Unique, Homes and Neighbourhoods, Economic Prosperity, Getting About, A Safe Community, Fit for Life, Lifelong Learning and Children and Young People.

The LSP and its action groups set targets with a view to achieving the aspirations and have already implemented a wide range of schemes to address the key challenges, examples including the setting up of an inter-faith forum, Neighbourhood Action Panels and Joint Action Groups to help combat anti-social behaviour and other crimes, and a vocational education facility in Waltham Abbey, an area which has pockets of deprivation and a recognised need for such provision.

Copies of the Community Strategy can be obtained from Chris Overend on telephone: 01992 564423 (or e-mail coverend@eppingforestdc.gov.uk).

The Council Plan

Our four year Council Plan reflects the Council's medium-term aims and priorities, and the aspirations of the Community Strategy. The Council Plan is available from our information centres, and on our website or direct from the Performance Management Unit.

Our Performance

In this plan we compare our performance against Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) with the performance of the average and top 25% performing district councils for 2006/07, the most recent year for which audited national performance information is available. Targets are used by our auditors as evidence of our ambition and future priorities, and as an indication to our customers of how we intend to improve. Comparison of our performance with that of other local authorities is not available for new BVPIs. Comparison with performance of other local authorities is also not possible for Local Performance Indicators (LPI's) which we set ourselves and which represent local priorities as these are not applicable to other authorities.

Our Priorities and Aims

We have developed three policy themes and a range of medium term priorities as the foundations of our services. The following themes and priorities reflect the core issues and aims that we face in respect of the provision of community services. The themes and priorities link closely with the Community Strategy published in 2004, and we have also linked this Best Value Performance Plan with the themes of the Community Strategy. The Community Strategy seeks to address important issues facing the district over the forthcoming years, and we contribute to the achievement of the aims of the Community Strategy that mirror our own aspirations, and work to support and implement those aims where we can be of influence.

Theme One, A Safe, Healthy and Attractive Place

Policy Theme One

A Safe, Healthy
and Attractive
Place

Community Strategy Themes

Green and Unique
Homes and Neighbourhoods
A Safe Community
Fit for Life
Economic Prosperity

Medium Term Priorities

- (a) To maintain the special character and advantage of the district, and address local environmental issues
- (b) To address key housing need
- (c) To create safer communities
- (d) To address leisure need
- (e) To encourage sustainable economic development



Our Priorities and Aims

Policy themes two and three reflect our commitment to high quality services provided directly to the community, we have developed additional medium term priorities which show the importance of our corporate service. These provide essential support to the work of the Council.

Theme Two, An organisation that listens and leads to resolve local issues
 Theme Three, Accessible affordable and improving services.

Policy Theme Two

An organisation that listens and leads to resolve local issues

Medium Term Priorities

- (a) political leaders give clear direction
- (b) communicate with the public about service delivery
- (c) prioritise objective and services
- (d) co-operate and plan with partners

Policy Theme Three

Accessible affordable and improving services

Medium Term Priorities

- (a) identify and target resources, realise capacity and manage performance
- (b) procure services in the most beneficial and cost effective way
- (c) develop services, staff and the working environment



Our Finances

Our Finances

We have a number of systems in place to ensure our budget is set so we can deliver the right services these include:

- four-year financial forecast
- four-year capital strategy
- budget monitoring and review

These robust processes have served the Council well in the past and will prove invaluable in the continually challenging environment that the Council is in. The quality of these processes has been recognised by the Council's external auditors who have scored the Council as performing well in the areas of financial reporting, financial management, financial standing and internal control.

Last year in the Best Value Performance Plan concern was expressed that the Government had put back the reporting date for the Comprehensive Spending Review. This review has now been concluded and has provided us with details of our grant settlement from central government for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11. Having enjoyed favourable settlements in the last two years, with increases of 9% and 6.2%, the increases of 1%, 0.5% and 0.5% for the 2008/09 to 2010/11 period were disappointing. These grant increases are substantially below inflation and mean that the Council will have

to find substantial efficiency savings throughout this period.

An area of uncertainty that has been resolved more positively is the letting of a new contract for waste and street sweeping. After the previous contractor had been placed in administration a difficult interim period had followed that proved expensive for the Council. The tendering process generated a number of bids that were good both technically and from a financial point of view. The commencement of the new contract on 5 November 2007 means that the Council can now look forward and plan with greater certainty, although there are still substantial challenges to face in reducing the total amount of waste created and increasing recycling levels.

During the last year the Council has gone through a process of restructuring its top management and removing unnecessary posts. This provided a saving of £500,000, half of which was put back into front line services to fund the new Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative.

The Council still faces considerable uncertainty about the future cost of concessionary fares. From 1 April 2008 the basis of the concessionary fares scheme changed fundamentally, as pass

holders are no longer restricted to travel within the boundaries of their local scheme. However, the Department for Transport has not fully funded these changes and it is anticipated that most district councils will have to meet substantial additional costs.

Against the background of challenges and uncertainties set out above, it was a major achievement to again set a Council Tax increase below the increase in the rate of inflation. The Council's medium term financial strategy is based on maintaining this policy and remaining as a low tax Council. To achieve the strategy it will be necessary to realize further savings against the predicted levels of overall expenditure, but this is a challenge that the Council has risen to in the past and is well placed to do again.



Customer Focus

Customer Focus

Our medium term priorities show our commitment to the key policy and service delivery issues that are important to our customers. We regularly consult our community and maintain register and forward plan of consultation exercises that we undertake each year, in order that this work informs our future priorities and contributes to the improvement of services so that they are responsive to the needs of our customers.

In recognition of the importance of understanding the experiences of service users, from 2000/01 onwards, the Government has required local authorities to survey residents' satisfaction with local services every three years. The second survey was carried out in 2003/04 and the results were reported in our Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05. The surveys were carried out again during 2006/07 and 2007/08 and the most recent results can be found on page 10 of this Best Value Performance Plan.

We need to know how we are doing. If you are not happy with the way we have treated you, you can complain directly to us. Where possible, we will put things right straight away. In other cases, we may need to investigate further. Details of our Customer Compliments and Complaints procedure can be obtained from our Complaints Officer Tel: (01992

564512), or email: jfilby@eppingforestdc.gov.uk. If you follow this procedure but are still not happy, you can take your case to the Local Government Ombudsman. Staff quality and competence is important for the provision of effective services.

We train and develop our staff to provide efficient and effective services, and we have been re-accredited the prestigious Investors in people standard. We have reviewed our procurement arrangements to ensure we obtain value for money in the goods and services that we purchase, and have joined a consortium of Essex authorities to develop joint purchasing arrangements.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity is about creating a fair and equitable society where everyone can participate. Through valuing difference, the Council aims to deliver services that recognise, respect and harness diversity for the benefit of its customers.

At the heart of this duty to promote equality are the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes, which together aim to further the Council's duty to promote equality and diversity.

The Council recognises that in some instances services can be delivered in a way that may unintentionally pose a barrier to certain groups within the district. Where these instances are identified, it is the goal of the Council to make reasonable adjustments and promote inclusion through removing such barriers and promoting equality of opportunity for all of our customers.

Want to find out more?

If you would like to know more about our priorities and performance, you can write to us or contact our Performance Management Unit on the telephone and fax numbers or email address given earlier in this leaflet. Copies of the Best Value Performance Plan will also be available at our information centres, or from our website (www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk). We will also be able to provide a copy in large print or on alternative audio disc if required.



Customer Satisfaction

During the last year we collected data to meet the requirements of a number of performance indicators which measure customer satisfaction. This included finding out people's level of satisfaction with the overall service we provide and issues such as satisfaction with waste management services. We also asked people who had complained about our services how satisfied they were with the way their complaints had been handled.

The surveys were carried out with several councils in Essex, and each authority asked the same questions. The benefits of carrying out this exercise with other authorities were that

- we achieved economies of scale, which reduced our costs;
- we enhanced our degree of partnership working; and
- it was a sound basis for benchmarking the results.

The survey consisted of a postal questionnaire sent out to randomly selected households in the district. The Best Value Performance Indicators collected were:

BV3	The percentage of people satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council.
BV4	The percentage of people making complaints that were satisfied with the handling of those complaints.
BV89	The percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standards in the district.
BV90(a,b)	The percentage of people satisfied with the council's household waste collection and waste recycling services.
BV119 (a,c,d, and e)	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Council's cultural services (sports and leisure facilities, museums, arts activities and venues, parks and open spaces).

These surveys reflect residents' perceptions of the level and quality of services at the time they were compiled.

A full set of the indicator results can be found on the following pages of this Plan. The full reports for the survey are available on our website.

Over the next few months we will be considering the results of all of the survey in detail, in order to determine appropriate improvement priorities.



Customer Satisfaction

General Survey

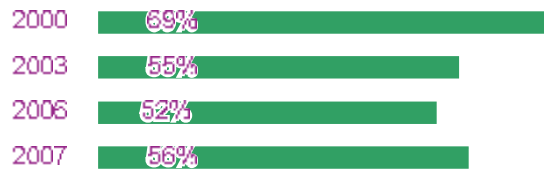
What you thought of our performance

The key findings of the General Survey for the surveys undertaken in 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2007 are as follows:

	2007	2006	2003	2000
BV3 % Satisfaction with the way the Authority runs things	56%	52%	55%	69%
BV4 Satisfaction with the handling of complaints	34%	38%	32%	45%
BV89 Satisfaction that the Authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish	71%	65%	63%	70%
BV90a Satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	70%	67%	85%	87%
BV90b Satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	74%	73%	78%	75%
BV119a Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities and events	55%	59%	46%	47%
BV119b Satisfaction with museums and galleries	21%	24%	20%	n/a
BV119c Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls	19%	18%	20%	n/a
BV119d Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	19%	18%	20%	n/a

The key findings of the General Survey, (graphical representation) for the years 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2007, are as follows:

BV3 Satisfaction with the way the authority runs things

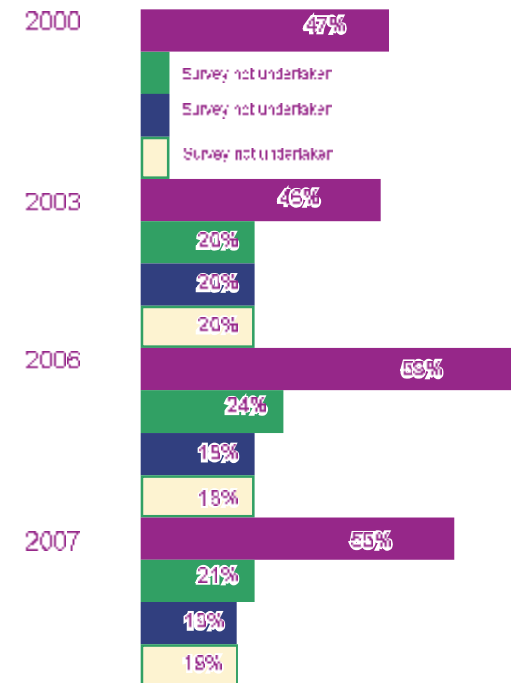


BV90a Satisfaction with waste collection services overall

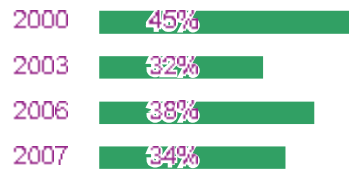


BV119 Satisfaction with:

- a) sports and leisure facilities
- b) museums and galleries
- c) theatres and concert halls
- d) parks and open spaces, over the years 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2007



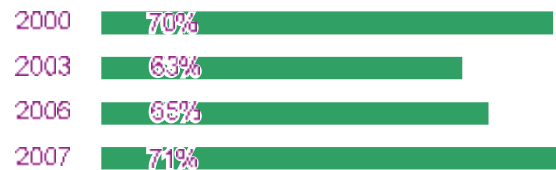
BV4 Satisfaction with the handling complaints



BV90b Satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities



BV69 Satisfaction that the authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish





Green and Unique

One of the key objectives of the Community Strategy is that the district will maintain a unique, green and sustainable environment in which communities prosper. This vision is reflected in our medium-term priorities, which seek to maintain the special character and advantage of the district and address local environmental issues. Our Environmental Protection and Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolios, and the planning functions of the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio, are included within this theme.

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection Portfolio covers a diverse range of services, many of which are very important to our residents. Some of these are obvious, such as refuse collection, street cleansing, the removal of abandoned vehicles, and recycling services, but equally important are services such as food safety, health and safety, air quality, energy and conservation, and a range of licensing functions.

Civil Engineering and Maintenance

This portfolio is responsible for local projects such as traffic calming and speed reduction schemes and parking schemes. The Grounds Maintenance Service continues to maintain many of the Council's grass verges and green open spaces in towns and villages, providing service frequencies over and above that provided for by the County Council's highway service, which ensures a better quality of environment within the district.

Planning and Economic Development

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio is responsible for guiding and controlling local development, and for town centre enhancement schemes. The economic development responsibility of the Portfolio is dealt with in the Economic Prosperity and Managing Resources section of this plan.

For more detailed information not included in this plan please see:

Environmental Protection

- Food Premises Public Register;
 - Local Agenda 21;
 - Contaminated Land Strategy; and
 - Food Safety Plan
- Contact: Jim Nolan 01892 564083
E-mail: jnolan@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Civil Engineering and Maintenance

- Essex County Council Local Transport Plan
- Epping Forest District Council High Level Flood Targets (with Environment Agency)

Environmental Protection and Civil Engineering and Maintenance Lead Officer: John Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene) Phone: 01892 554052 E-mail: jgilbert@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Planning

- Countrycare Annual Report
 - Roding Valley Nature Reserve Management Plan
- Contact: Paul Hewitt 01892 789203
E-mail: phewitt@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

- Local Plan
- Planning Lead Officer John Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development) Phone: 01892 564111
E-mail: jpreston@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Our Achievements and Aims

Environmental Protection

We aim to protect the environment of the district through the use of statutory powers, education and the adoption of good environmental practice and to maintain the highways infrastructure in the district through formal liaison arrangements with Essex County Council.

We have developed a 'Safer, Greener and Cleaner' initiative in order to provide more integrated street scene and related services, through locality based teams.

We want to improve the tree scape of the district and will be developing a new District Tree Strategy during 2008, setting out our policies and objectives to manage and retain neighbourhood trees.

Waste Management

We have agreed a new waste management contract, which will further improve recycling and diversion from land fill to meet the needs and wishes of residents. We have continued work on the remediation of the former landfill site at Bobbingworth.

Flood Prevention

We have reduced the risks of localised flooding by carrying out asset condition surveys of piped watercourses, and by providing flood alleviation schemes that maintain and enforce watercourse prevention.

Car Parking

We have reviewed our parking policies and now provide free parking on Saturdays throughout the year in our long stay and combined car parks. We have liaised with Essex County Council (the Highways Authority) to ensure that the district's highway infrastructure is adequately maintained and improved.

Planning and Development

We continued the preparation of a Local Development Framework for the district and further reduced levels of proposed new housing development.

We continued to invest in the establishment of an in-house professional Building Control team and improved planning application turnaround times.

Environmental Protection - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
KPI - BV82a(i) The percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	25.31%	28.97	26%	20.54%	24.19%
KPI - BV82a(i) The total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	12654.59	14,930.11	12500	8218.61	10069.95
KPI - BV82b(i) The percentage of household waste sent by the authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	11.78%	13.68%	11%	11.66%	17.97%
KPI - BV82b(ii) The total tonnage of household waste sent by the authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	5891.5	7050.99	5500	4900.17	7513.87
BV84a The number of kilograms of household waste collected per head of the population	409.88	422.09	416.0	411.4	380.8
BV84b The percentage change from the previous financial year in the number of kilograms of household waste collected per head of the population	-0.14%	2.98%	-1.2%	0.33%	-1.87%
BV86 The cost of waste collection per household	£54.29	£83.62	£54.31	49.54%	42.14%
BV91a The percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerb side collection of recyclables	89.99%	89.99%	98%	96.5%	100%
BV91b The percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by a kerbside collection of at least two recyclables	89.99%	89.99%	98%	94.6%	100%
BV166a The council's score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	00%	100%	85%	92.3%	6%
KPI - BV199a The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	2%	27.00%	10%	11.1%	0%
KPI - BV199b The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	0%	1.00%	10%	2%	0%
KPI - BV199c The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible.	0%	0%	10%	1%	1%
KPI - BV199d The year-on-year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with 'fly-tipping'	Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 2 or 3	Grade 2	Grade 1
BV216a The number of 'sites of potential concern' within the local authority area, with respect to land contamination	5825	5559	5825	N/A	N/A
BV218a The percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification	48.60%	88.74%	70%	N/A	98.22
BV218b The percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the local authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	79.17%	71.66%	65%	N/A	97.76%

Environmental Protection - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
BV216b The percentage of sites for which sufficient detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all sites of potential concern	0.44%	0.48%	1.7%	11%	10%
BV217 The percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time	100%	100%	90%	92%	100%
BV218a The percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification	48.6%	88.74%	60%	85.62%	88.22%
BV218b The percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the local authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	78.17%	71.66%	65%	81.01%	87.76%
LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
WM1 The number of missed refuse collections per 100,000 collections	211.09	53.48	95	N/A	N/A
WM2 The number of missed exemption collections as a % of exemptions granted	0.97%	0.51%	<1%	N/A	N/A
WM3 The number of missed glass collections per 100,000 collections	40.65	41.0	95	N/A	N/A
WM4 The number of missed dry recyclable collections per 100,000 collection	150.02	87.3	95	N/A	N/A
WM5 The number of missed garden waste collections per 100,000 collections	97.27	79.66	95	N/A	N/A
EH 1 The percentage of requests for environmental health services responded to within relevant target times	94.5%	95%	91%	N/A	N/A
EH 3 The percentage of statutory Environmental Protection Act Part B processes undertaken	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A
EH 4 The percentage of requests for Consumer Protection services responded to within target times.	93.9%	91.7%	90%	N/A	N/A
EH 5 The percentage of accidents reported through the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, within the statutory period.	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A
EH 6 The percentage of licence applications processed within the statutory period	98.3%	98.44%	95%	N/A	N/A

Planning - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
KPI - BV106 The percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	95.65%	79.81%	89.67%	74.51%	91%
KPI - BV109a,b,c The percentage of planning applications determined in line with the Government's development control targets to determine					
a) 60% of major applications in 13 weeks	67.2%	79.07%	74.75%	72.51%	87.71%
b) 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks	72.96%	78.05%	80.39%	76.48%	83.66%
c) 80% of other applications in 8 weeks	89.5%	89.27%	91.61%	88.09%	92.57%
BV200a Did the local planning authority submit the Local Development Scheme by 28th March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3-year rolling programme?	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
BV200b Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme sets out?	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
KPI - BV204 The number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications, as a percentage of the total number of appeals against refusals of planning applications	29.10%	28.7%	25%	30.9%	25%
BV205 The council's score against a 'quality of planning services' checklist	83%	83.3%	94.4%	92.4%	100%
BV219b The percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up-to-date character appraisal	16%	16%	8%	25.01%	35.07%



A Safe Community

Community Wellbeing

One of the key objectives of the Epping Forest District Community Strategy for 2004 to 2021 is to be a district where people will be reassured that criminal and disorderly behaviour is unusual and, where it does occur, that the police, other agencies and members of the community will do their utmost to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. This vision is reflected in the Council's own medium-term priorities which seek to maintain the district as a safe, healthy and attractive place. The Community Wellbeing Portfolio is included in this section of our Best Value Performance Plan.

The Council's Community Wellbeing responsibility includes a range of services to make sure our district is a safe and healthy place to live and work in. We do this through our involvement in the Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Making sure the district is safe also extends to being in a state of readiness to respond effectively to emergencies, which is achieved through our Emergency Planning Team. We work with our partners on the Local Strategic Partnership to promote health and wellbeing and reduce the impact of social exclusion.

For more detailed information not included in this plan please see:

Community Wellbeing

- District Emergency Response Plan;
- Business and Continuity Disaster Recovery Plan,
Contact: Mike Tipping 01992 564280
E-mail: mtipping@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Local Compact for the Epping Forest District
- Grant Aid Scheme
Contact: Chris Overend 01992 564247
E-mail: coverend@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Crime and Drugs Strategy
- Anti-graffiti Policy
Contact: Caroline Wiggins 01992 564122
E-mail: cwiggins@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Policing Plan
- Epping Forest Primary Care Trust Plan
- Health Improvement Plan;
- Community Strategy

Community Wellbeing Lead Officer Derek Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive) Phone: 01992 564050 E-mail: dmacnab@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Our Achievements and Aims

Protecting the Elderly

Our objective is to reduce incidence of artifice burglary in respect of the elderly and vulnerable residents in the district, and from October 2007 we have been implementing nominated neighbour cards.

A substantial number of older people reside in the Epping Forest District. As a result, the area suffers regular attention from burglars acting as bogus callers. These criminals are very plausible and persuasive and older people will often let them into their homes. We have implemented a 'Nominated Neighbour' scheme, where we issue cards to elderly residents for them to display prominently, and which ask all doorstep callers to call at a neighbours' house first to prove identify before elderly residents will open the front door.

We have also developed a strategy with Essex Police on the deployment of Police Community Support Officers, and continue to jointly fund the provision of six such support officers for the district.

Community Sector Support

We have increased the number of Service Level Agreements for community groups in receipt of long-term funding to ensure that they are working within the guidelines as set out in the contracts.

We have continued to provide grant aid to a wide range of local community and leisure based organisations.

Protecting Young People

The Council participated in the Essex Police '2 Smart 4 Drugs' scheme in schools, providing education about drugs, alcohol and staying safe. We have developed policies on gambling to ensure the protection of the public and young people.

Protecting Families and the Vulnerable

In liaison with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, we have provided three Sanctuary Schemes in the district to help families to stay in their homes if they have become victims of domestic violence or hate across the country, and our scheme is for people who normally live within the Epping Forest District.

Community Wellbeing Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
BV2a The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	N/A	N/A
KPI - BV2b The quality of an authority's Race Equality Scheme and the improvements resulting from its application	89%	89%	89%	65%	79%
BV126 The number of domestic burglaries per year per 1000 households in the local authority	14.09	15.04	12.19	8	5
BV127a Amended - The number of violent crime per year, per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	13.79	14.48	13.43	16.1	11.4
BV127b Amended - The number of robberies per year, per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	1.28	1.06	0.66	0.5	0.2
BV128 The number of vehicle crimes per year per 1,000 population in the local authority area	13.93	12.33	11.47	8.8	6.2
BV156 The percentage of local authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	83.33%	83.33%	76.9%	N/A	N/A
BV174 The number of racial incidents reported to the local authority and subsequently recorded per 100,000 population	119.94	25.38	136.49	N/A	N/A
BV175 The percentage of racial incidents reported to the local authority and that resulted in further action	100%	100%	100%	55.14	100%
BV226a The total amount spent by the local authority on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations	£138,580	£140,200	£137,580	N/A	N/A
BV226b The percentage of monies spent on advice and guidance services provision which was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality mark at 'General Help' level and above.	78.8%	76.92%	100%	N/A	N/A
BV226c The total amount spent on advice and guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters which is provided directly by the authority to the public.	Not collected	Not collected	Not set	N/A	N/A



Homes and Neighbourhoods

One of the key objectives of the Epping Forest District Community Strategy for 2004 to 2021 is that the district has safe, decent and attractive housing that meets the needs of those who want to live in the district. This vision is reflected in the Council's own medium-term priorities which seek to address key housing need.

The Housing Portfolio is included in this section of our Best Value Performance Plan. Housing has a major impact on the quality of people's lives; it influences health, educational achievement, employment opportunities and society in general. The Council is responsible for assessing housing need, overseeing and co-ordinating the provision of new housing in the District (especially additional affordable housing for rent and housing for those with special needs), dealing with homelessness, assisting with the improvement of privately owned properties, and managing and maintaining the Council's own housing stock.

For more detailed information not included in this plan please see:

- Housing Strategy
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing Charter
- Tenant Participation Agreement
- Housing Service Strategies
- Best Value Service Review Report on Housing Services
- Homelessness Strategy
- Tenant Participation Agreement
- Private Sector Housing Strategy

Housing Lead Officer
Alan Hall (Director of Housing),
Phone: 01992 564034
E-mail: ahall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Our Achievements and Aims

Providing Affordable Homes

We seek to facilitate the provision of decent, affordable homes for people to rent or own. The Council is a responsible landlord for around 6,500 tenants and around 900 leaseholders, offering reasonable rents, and managing its properties effectively and efficiently.

We continue to work with developers and housing associations to provide all types of new homes in the District, including affordable housing for rent and shared ownership. We have also initiated a 'Finders Fee' scheme to bring at least five private sector empty properties back into use per annum and make them available to our housing applicants.

We aim to introduce two low cost home ownership initiatives (Home Ownership Grants and Open Market Shared Ownership) in 2008/09, to assist first time buyers enter home ownership. We will also be carrying out a Housing Market Assessment to increase the Council's understanding of the local housing market to inform future policies and strategies.

Safe and Well Managed Housing Stock

We introduced a Choice Based Lettings Scheme (Home Option), which gives housing applicants greater choice and transparency in the letting of Council properties and we implemented a licensing regime for houses in multiple occupation to ensure that they provide safe accommodation.

We were re-accredited with the Charter Mark Award for Customer Excellence, for the whole of Housing Services, for a further three years and commenced a major £4m improvement scheme at Springfields, Waltham Abbey.

We will be commencing an upgrade programme for communal television aerials on estates, to enable receipt of digital television reception prior to the change over from analogue television broadcasting.

People with Special Needs

We continue to provide facilities for people with special needs (such as the elderly and disabled) to enable them to use in housing appropriate for their needs or to remain in their own housing for as long as practicable.

Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

We met the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management, which gives a public commitment to the Council's approach for dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Housing - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
KPI - BV63 The average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings	66	69	67	68	72
KPI - BV64 The number of non local authority owned vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during the financial year as a direct result of action by the local authority	0	33	38	35	55
KPI - BV66a The rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owed on Housing Revenue Account dwellings	98.83%	99.41%	98.84%	98.02%	98.81%
BV66b The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants	8.39%	8.36%	8%	5.56%	3.43%
BV66c The percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	22.34%	15.49%	21%	25.96%	13.61%
BV66d The percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.20%	0.22%	0.15%	0.47%	0.17%
KPI - BV183(ii) The average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	20.23 Weeks	20.29 weeks	25 Weeks	10.21 Weeks	0 Weeks
KPI - BV184a The proportion of local authority dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the financial year	6%	5%	5%	24%	10%
BV184b The percentage change in proportion of non-decent dwellings between the start and end of the financial year	10.90%	31.90%	16%	17%	32.9%
BV202 The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	1	0	0 - 10	2	0
BV212 The average time taken to re-let local authority housing	51 days	54 days	41 days	39 days	25
BV213 The number of households who considered themselves as homeless who approached the local authority's housing advice services, and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation	10	10	12	5	4

Housing - Performance Indicators

2006/07
Outturn

2007/08
Outturn

2007/08
Target

District
Council
Average
2006/07

District
Council
Top 25%
2006/07

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

H1a The amount of former tenant rent arrears collected per annum	£119,465	£85,240	£80,000	N/A	N/A
H1b The rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the authority's rent roll	1.69%	1.52%	1.6%	N/A	N/A
H2a The percentage of repairs undertaken within target time: Emergency	99%	99%	99%	N/A	N/A
H2b The percentage of repairs undertaken within target time: Urgent	89%	89%	95%	N/A	N/A
H2c The percentage of repairs undertaken within target time: Routine	90%	84%	95%	N/A	N/A
H2d The percentage of repairs undertaken within target time: Priority (Within 3 Days)	N/A	N/A	95%	N/A	N/A
H3e The level of satisfaction with repairs - General standard of service received	98%	98%	98%	N/A	N/A
H10a The average number of homeless households during the year in (i) B & B accommodation (ii) Hostel accommodation (iii) Other temporary housing	(i) 17.3 (ii) 22.9 (iii) 154.3	(i) 3.7 (ii) 15.5 (iii) 62.7	(i) 11 (ii) 25 (iii) 75	N/A	N/A
KPI - H15a The number of affordable homes completed and ready for occupation during the year	25	19	13	N/A	N/A
KPI - H15b The amount of affordable housing required as part of all Section 106 Agreements that have been signed during the year, for all large residential development sites (in excess of 15 properties or 0.5 hectare expressed as a percentage of the total number of homes to be provided on large residential development sites).	30.80%	71%	35%	N/A	N/A
EH 2 The percentage of requests for care and repair services responded to within relevant target times	98.6%	99.8%	92%	N/A	N/A



Fit For Life

Sports and Activities

One of the key objectives of the Epping Forest District Community Strategy for 2004 to 2021 is to be a district where people of all ages and abilities can lead a healthy lifestyle by having access to effective high quality leisure and cultural services. This vision is reflected in the Council's own medium-term priorities which seek to address leisure need. The Leisure Services Portfolio is included in this section of our Best Value Performance Plan.

Throughout the year we improved opportunities for local people of all ages and abilities to participate in sports, arts, heritage and community activities, through securing over £310k external funding from bodies including the Arts Council and Big Lottery Fund.

We reviewed our playing pitch facilities and formed a play pitch strategy, which will help to secure external funding and further develop and improve our local pitch sports.

North Weald Airfield hosted numerous public events, with the highlight of the year being involvement in the 21st World Scout Jamboree event, joining Scouts from 159 Countries around the World. North Weald Airfield was used to register volunteers, scouts and visitors as well as a park and ride and food distribution centre.

Community and Culture

We have invested in the re-display of our Museum in Waltham Abbey, to improve visitor access for people with disabilities and enhanced interpretation of our historic collections. £30k external funding was also secured towards two oral history projects; 'Tales of the Boarders', which focused on life as a 'live-in' pupil of Great Stony School, Ongar, and an exhibition to celebrate the 'Abolition of Slavery', which included a drama production and film, which went on to tour across the Eastern Region.

Our Arts Section secured £25k from the Arts Council, for 'home life', a special project, which involved artists working with young people, and the elderly within residential care homes in the district. The work encouraged young people to look at their local environment and enabled them to create a rap performance and DVD called 'estate life'. The older participants were involved in creating DVDs, which included memories of their lives before moving into residential care.

Children and Young People

We have set up an Epping Forest Play Partnership and from this, developed a 10 year Play Strategy for 0 – 16 year olds. This provided the basis of a bid to the Big Lottery Fund for £240k towards the provision of new play equipment for children and young people in the District. This funding will be used over

2008/09 to provide new facilities in the areas identified with greatest need.

We established an Epping Forest Youth Council (EFYC) in January 2008 involving young people aged 13 – 17 years, from throughout the District. The EFYC will give young people a 'formal voice' on the key issues and concerns that affect them locally and will provide a direct link to the Essex Youth Assembly.

Working with Essex County Council and local partners through a Children and Young people's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), we have attracted £90k to the district to provide new activity sessions for children, parenting classes for teenagers and a range of professional support for families. As part of CYPSP work, six new 'Children's Centres' will be available within the district by 2008, to provide new childcare facilities and a resource for children, families and local communities. These will be based in Chigwell, Waltham Abbey, Ongar and Loughton.

For more detailed information not included in this plan about leisure services see:

- Sports Development Strategy
- Arts Policy
- Marketing Plan
- Play Strategy

Community and Culture Lead Officer: Derek Macnab
(Deputy Chief Executive)
Phone: 01992 564561
E-mail: dmacnab@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Leisure Service - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
KPI - BV170a The number of visits to/usage's of local authority funded or part-funded museums and galleries in the area per 1,000 population	636.44	564.99	811	871	928
BV170b The number of those visits to local authority funded, or part funded museums that were in person per 1,000 population.	128.02	122.03	128.09	410	557
KPI - BV170c The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	4531	4075	3181	3246	3805
LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
L1 The number of parishes in the district in which the council directly provides leisure opportunities.	20	17	17	N/A	N/A
L2 The number of parishes in the district in which the council has enabled other organisations to provide other leisure opportunities	16	8	15	N/A	N/A
L3 The number of individuals on low income who benefited from special activity prices	289	282	2400	N/A	N/A
L4 The number of new leisure facilities enabled by the council	3	1	2	N/A	N/A
L5 The number of patients referred by a medical professional to a council health-based activity scheme	88	117	14	N/A	N/A
L6 The number of new leisure opportunities enabled by the council	34	53	5	N/A	N/A
L7 The number of organisations with whom leisure services has worked in partnership to promote healthy living and enable social inclusion	246	230	60	N/A	N/A
L8 The number of new leisure opportunities directly introduced by the council	185	139	50	N/A	N/A
L9 The number of swimming lessons given to 0-16 year olds.	12,500	13,733	10,500	N/A	N/A
L10 The number of event days held at North Weald airfield	109	124	145	N/A	N/A
L11 The number of new activities for 13 to 19 year olds enabled or directly provided by the council	28	15	17	N/A	N/A
L12 The percentage of leisure centre users who rated the service received as good or excellent	81.74%	46,238	82%	N/A	N/A



Economic Prosperity

One of the key objectives of the Epping Forest District Community Strategy for 2004 to 2021 is that the district will have a thriving and sustainable local economy, which extends opportunity for local residents and promotes prosperity throughout the district.

This vision is reflected in the Council's own medium-term priorities which seek to encourage sustainable economic development. The economic development function of the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio is included in this section of our Best Value Performance Plan.

Our Achievements and Aims

We aim to facilitate improvement in standards of local education, in order to improve employment prospects for young people.

We have been working with local disabled people and representatives of groups representing people with disabilities, to consider the impact of the Council's policies and plans on the way disabled people with disabilities, to consider the impact of the Council's policies and plans on the way disabled people live and work, and to identify appropriate improvements. We appointed an Economic Development officer in our aim to achieve both stronger links between the Council and local business communities across the district, and to ensure full local business community representation on Town Centre Partnerships and other appropriate local business forums.

There are no performance indicators related to the Council's economic development function.

For more detailed information about Economic Development not included in this plan see:

Economic Development Lead Officer:
John Preston (Director of Planning and
Economic Development)
Phone: 01992 564111
E-mail: preston@eppingforestcc.gov.uk



Resource Management

This theme is not directly linked to the Community Strategy, but reflects key areas where the Council recognises that it needs to improve current services on performance. The Leader's Portfolio, the Finance and ICT, and Corporate Support Services Portfolio are included within the theme. These important corporate services provide essential support to the work of the Council.

Leaders Portfolio

Our Leader's Portfolio refers to democratic and member services that provide essential support to the work of the Council and Members and the voting public.

Finance and Performance Management, and Corporate Support Services and ICT Portfolios

Finance and Performance Management is about financial and quality control, providing the foundations needed for financial stability and continuous improvement, and the mechanisms to see whether or not improvements have been achieved. Corporate Support Services and ICT refers to the wide range of services that provide essential support to the work of the Council. These include legal services, payroll and human resource services, ICT services, secretarial and administrative services, and the provision of depot and office accommodation.

- Consultation Strategy: Contact: Val Loftis
Phone: 01992 564471 v.loftis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Council Plan Contact: Stephen Tautz
Phone: 01992 564180 stautz@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Race Equality Strategy
- CPA Improvement Plan
Performance Management Lead Officer Derek Macnab
(Deputy Chief Executive) Phone: 01992 564054
E-mail: dmacrab@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Communication Strategy Contact: Tom Carne
01992 564030 tcarne@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Compliments and Complaints Contact: Shirley Hawkins
01992 564031 shawkins@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Constitution
- Access to Information Strategy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Code of Conduct for Councillors
Leadership and Democracy Lead Officer Ian Willett (Assistant to the
Chief Executive) Phone: 01992 564243
Email: iwillett@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Anti Fraud Strategy Contact: Joe Akerman
01992 564445 intemalaudit@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Council Budget 2007/09
- Capital Strategy
- Insurance and Risk Management
- Statement of Accounts
- Data Protection Policy
- Procurement Strategy
- Corporate ICT Strategy
- Implementing Electronic Government
Finance and Information and Communications Technology Lead
Officer Bob Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT) Phone:
01992 564279 E-mail: bpalmer@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Asset Management Plan Contact: Michael Shorten
Phone: 01992 564124 mshorten@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Legal Administration & Estates Services Lead Officer
Colleen O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services) Phone:
01992 564475 E-mail: coboyle@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Business/Service Plans: Contact the appropriate Director for copies
of the annual business plans

Our Achievements and Aims

The Council has undergone an organisational restructure in order to improve and enhance service delivery. This has involved some services becoming fully integrated, such as Environmental Protection and Street Scene, in order to deliver important services in a co-ordinated and resource effective manner.

Our overall objective is to continually improve the balance between the quality and level of service, and the cost to you. To achieve this we aim to maximise income generated from fees, charges and rents, continually improve the accuracy, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of payments and actively manage all financial resources, investments and assets to ensure maximum benefit and minimum risk to the people of the district.

We kept the Council Tax increase below the increase in the Retail Price Index of 3½% and we introduced mobile working in the Benefits Service and achieved top quartile performance in our council tax collection rate.

We shared service delivery across Essex as part of the 'Transformational Government' initiative and developed public access to services through the Government Connect (Direct.Gov).

We joined the Essex Procurement Hub and anticipate efficiency savings through our contracts with desktop equipment, refuse fleet and photocopier contracts.

The Audit Commission awarded the Council an improved score for our use of resources, which analyses how cost effective we are in delivering services, and we introduced a new staff suggestion scheme to improve services still further.

Finance - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
KPI - BV8 The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services paid by the authority within 30 days receipt or within agreed payment terms	97%	98%	99.2%	95%	98%
KPI - BV9 The percentage of Council Tax collected by the authority in the year	98.2%	98.07%	98.5%	97.9%	98.6%
KPI - BV10 The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority	99.01%	98.41%	99.2%	98.86%	99.36%
BV76b The number of fraud investigators employed by the local authority per 1,000 case load	0.49	0.46	0.40	N/A	N/A
BV76c The number of Housing and Council Tax Benefit fraud investigations carried out by the local authority per year per 1,000 case load	67.39	46.53	65	N/A	N/A
BV76d The number of Housing and Council Tax benefit prosecutions and sanctions per year, per 1,000 case load in the local authority area	6.67	4.41	6.0	N/A	N/A
KPI - BV 78a The average processing time for all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims submitted to the local authority, for which the date of decision is within the financial year being reported	28.53	37.34	28 days	30 days	24 days
KPI - BV 78b The average processing time for all written notifications to the local authority of changes to a claimant's circumstance that require a new decision on behalf of the authority	12.40	14.39	6.8 days	11.2 days	7.1 days
KPI - BV79a The percentage of cases within a random sample for which the authority's calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit is found to be correct	99.4%	99%	99%	97.76%	99.2%
BV79b(i) The amount of Housing Benefit (HB) overpayment recovered during the period being reported on, as a percentage of HB deemed recoverable overpayment during that period	42.14%	50.27%	50%	74.15%	81.71%
BV79b(ii) Housing Benefit (HB) overpayment received during the period as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period plus the amount of HB overpayment identified during the period	32.54%	29.20%	50%	34.57%	39.02%
BV79b (iii) Housing Benefit (HB) overpayment written off during the period as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the period, plus the amount of HB overpayment identified during the period	6.4%	2.4%	10%	N/A	N/A

Finance - Performance Indicators

	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Outturn	2007/08 Target	District Council Average 2006/07	District Council Top 25% 2006/07
LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
SS4a The percentage of projects in the approved audit plan completed	80%	89%	85%	N/A	N/A
SS4b The productive time of the Internal Audit Unit as a percentage of total time	67%	68%	65%	N/A	N/A
SS4c The overall user satisfaction level of the Internal Audit Unit	83%	81%	80%	N/A	N/A
SS4f The average cost per productive audit day	£314	£307	£300	N/A	N/A
F13 The percentage of telephone calls to the Benefits Division answered within 10 seconds	92.29%	90.12%	94%	N/A	N/A
ICT01 The number of customer service help desk enquiries answered within target	N/A	32	40	N/A	N/A
PR3 The number of visits to the Council's website per month	440,301	787,194	687,000	600,000	650,000

Corporate Support Services - Performance Indicators

KPI - BV11a The percentage of the top-paid 5% of local authority staff that are women	24.47%	24.11%	28.93%	26.92	33.31
KPI - BV11b The percentage of the top 5% of earners from black and ethnic communities	2.89%	2.81%	3.37%	1.96	3.70
KPI - BV11c The percentage of the top 5% of local authority staff who have a disability	8.45%	5.62%	6.5%	4.07	6.25
KPI - BV12 The number of working days/shifts lost to the local authority due to sickness absence	10.98	8.48	8.29	9.42	8.08
KPI - BV14 The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total work force	0%	0.19%	0.0%	0.78%	0%
BV15 The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health as a percentage of the total work force	0.55%	0.37%	0.35%	0.24%	0%
KPI - BV16a The percentage of local authority employees with a disability	10.14%	8.18%	4.1%	4.2%	5.25%
KPI - BV17a The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the local authority area	3.98%	3.20%	2.5%	2.4%	3.1%

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

LP1 The percentage of letters seeking ownership details in relation to Section 106 Agreements sent within seven working days of full instructions being given to the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates.	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A
LP2 The percentage of first draft Section 106 Agreements sent to applicants/agents within seven days of the information required by indicator LP1	100%	100%	90%	N/A	N/A



Review, Audit and Inspection

This section of our Best Value Performance Plan sets out how we aim to achieve the provision of the best possible services at the best value to our customers. We have also included the results of audit and inspection processes undertaken during the last year by the Audit Commission, which is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively.

Service Reviews

To achieve Best Value we must make sure that we are delivering 'value for money' services. We recognise that, over time, people's needs and expectations change, so we review how we provide our services by:

- consulting with service users and the local community
- comparing our performance against other organisations that provide similar services
- deciding whether someone else could provide that service more competitively
- challenging why services are provided in the way that they are
- seeking continuous improvement in the way we perform.

We consult with our community on the quality of services we offer, to ensure that we reflect your needs wherever possible.

We compare our performance by benchmarking against other authorities in our group of councils of similar geography and demography. The Best Value performance indicators give a comparison of where we stand nationally.

The review process challenges our services, and leads us to the continuous improvement that we strive to achieve. Best Value Service Reviews help us to improve by: meeting and setting new performance targets, identifying financial savings, comparing the cost of, and the ways in which we deliver our services, with other organisations in both the public and private sectors. The Council has carried out the following Best Value Service Reviews:

- Community Safety (jointly with Essex County Council)
- Housing Needs (including homelessness)
- Community and Cultural Services
- Human Resources
- Development Control and Local Land Charges
- Leisure Management and Grounds Maintenance
- Accountancy and Exchequer
- Projects and Partnerships
- Environmental Control
- Housing Services

The results of these reviews have been set out in previous editions of our performance plan.

For more information on this section, contact:
Performance Management Lead Officer
Stephen Tautz (Performance Improvement Manager)
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Contracts

The Government requires the Council to certify that since 13 March 2003, all contracts which involved the transfer of its staff complied where applicable with the Code of Practice on matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

Audit and Inspection

The Audit Commission reviews the Council's main financial and performance systems each year. The findings of the audit are an important component of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework, in particular the Use of Resources score is derived from the assessments in the following areas:

- Financial Reporting (the preparation of the accounts of the Council and the way these are presented to the public).
- Financial Management (how the financial management is integrated with strategy to support council priorities);
- Financial Standing (how the strength of the Council's financial position).
- Internal Control (how effectively the Council maintains proper stewardship and control of its finances).
- Value for Money (an assessment of how well the Council balances the costs and quality of its services).

For the last year the Audit Commission reported that the Council's performance demonstrated that its investment to improve the arrangements for Use of Resources had brought real improvement with the overall score increasing from 'adequate' (level 2) to 'good' (level 3), and that the Council is well placed to maintain and improve its arrangements.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment

Epping Forest District Council was assessed as 'good' in the CPA carried out in 2004. These assessments have been completed in all district councils and are now being updated, through an updated corporate assessments, in councils where there is evidence of change.

Direction of Travel

The Audit Commission reports annually on the improvement that the Council has made over the last year.

For 2006/07, the Commission reported that "Epping Forest District Council is making progress in achieving its objectives, although the improvement in performance indicators is mixed. The Council has invested resources in poorly performing services, with some success. It is addressing key local issues such as waste and planning service performance and these are showing improvements. The council engages effectively with local communities and joint working with partners is resulting in positive outcomes. For example, it is working actively with partners to promote safer communities and this is now leading to reductions in crime. The council is making progress on equality issues although there are areas for further improvement. Value for money is improving".

Full versions of each of the audit and inspection report referred to in this section can be found on the Council's website.

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