

Maximising Impact

**Test Valley Borough Council's
Corporate Plan**

2007-11



TEST VALLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Foreword by the Leader of Council and Chief Executive

Welcome to our new Corporate Plan for Test Valley Borough Council. The Plan sets out our revised strategic priorities and the key outcomes we will focus on achieving over the next four years.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2003-7 'Making a Difference', emphasised our determination to focus all of our activities on making a positive difference to the lives of people in Test Valley. Over the past four years we have achieved a great deal for the Borough, including:

- Opening of The Lights entertainment venue, work commenced on Andover's cinema, and major refurbishment of Romsey Rapids.
- Investment in affordable housing, including an innovative development of eco-homes.
- Introduction of Alternate Bin Collection (ABC) across the Borough.
- Development of our Neighbourhood Warden scheme.
- Significant developments in the electronic delivery of services.
- Enhancements to Romsey and Andover town centres, and development of a Vision for Andover.

Our new Corporate Plan sees us taking on a broadened set of SCHEME priorities, reflecting the wide-ranging role that the Borough Council plays in improving quality of life for all in Test Valley. We recognise that we have some key challenges to address over the coming years, not least the development of a significant number of new houses in Andover and southern Test Valley. This will have huge implications for the provision of services and facilities, and offers real opportunities to plan for a vibrant future for our Borough.

We are proud of what we have achieved over the past four years, which is reflected in the annual assessments of the Council undertaken by the Audit Commission. We have set firm foundations upon which to build for the future. The Council's vision to be an 'organisation of excellence' continues to drive us forward with an even stronger commitment to continuous improvement and making the best use of our resources.

The emphasis now is on 'Maximising Impact'. We need to make the most of all of our resources, transform the organisation with new ways of working, and work together as one team to focus on the Council's primary role – improving quality of life for all in Test Valley.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Profile of Test Valley

Test Valley is a mainly rural borough covering 628 square kms (243 square miles) of the western side of Hampshire. The borough has high quality natural and built environments, with a number of conservation areas, listed buildings and areas covered by designations, such as the New Forest National Park, and North Wessex Downs AOB.

At the 2001 census, the population of the borough was 109,760. This population is projected to increase by around 14% by 2026 (HCC projections). Around half of the total population lives in the two market towns - Romsey in the south and Andover in the north. The rest of the population lives in the smaller rural settlements scattered across the borough.

Test Valley is a predominantly affluent area. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation show that of 354 local authority areas Test Valley ranks 317th (where 1 is the most deprived). However the Borough does contain some pockets of relative deprivation, and average incomes are lower than those regionally and nationally. Average house prices are higher than those nationally, and comparable to regional averages. Crime rates in Test Valley are amongst the lowest in the country.

Further information can be found in the Council’s Borough Profile.

Key Issues and Challenges

The following issues and challenges have been identified as key for the Council over the next four years:

- **Major Development Areas** – significant housing developments in Andover and southern Test Valley will have huge implications for the provision of services and facilities and will open up real opportunities for the future of our towns.
- **Sustainability** – featuring high on the national agenda, sustainability is now on our radars locally. The impact of our actions on future generations is an issue for the Council and the community as a whole.
- **Maximising impact** – in a landscape of increasing expectations and emphasis on value for money it is important that the Council makes the most of available resources and maximises impact by working smarter.



The Purpose of the Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out our vision and priorities for Test Valley over the next four years and beyond. The Plan is a key corporate document and a central link in the Council's overall Strategic Planning Framework.

The Strategic Planning Framework

The Strategic Planning Framework (set out in the diagram overleaf) describes the links between the key planning documents which cascade down through the organisation, from the Community Plan to the individual objectives agreed at annual staff performance appraisals.

The **Community Plan** is the high level strategic document which sets out a shared long term vision and aims to improve quality of life for all in Test Valley. The Community Plan is based on a shared understanding of the needs of the area and is developed by a wide range of partner organisations who work together as the Local Strategic Partnership. The Council has a lead role in the partnership.

The Council's **Corporate Plan** sets out the Borough Council's medium term priorities and is our contribution to the delivery of the long term aims in the Community Plan.

The Corporate Plan contains key actions and measures which are drawn from the annual **Service Plans** in which each of the Council's services sets out its plans for the year.

The actions and targets contained in the annual service plans then feed down into the individual objectives set for each member of staff through the annual **performance appraisals**.

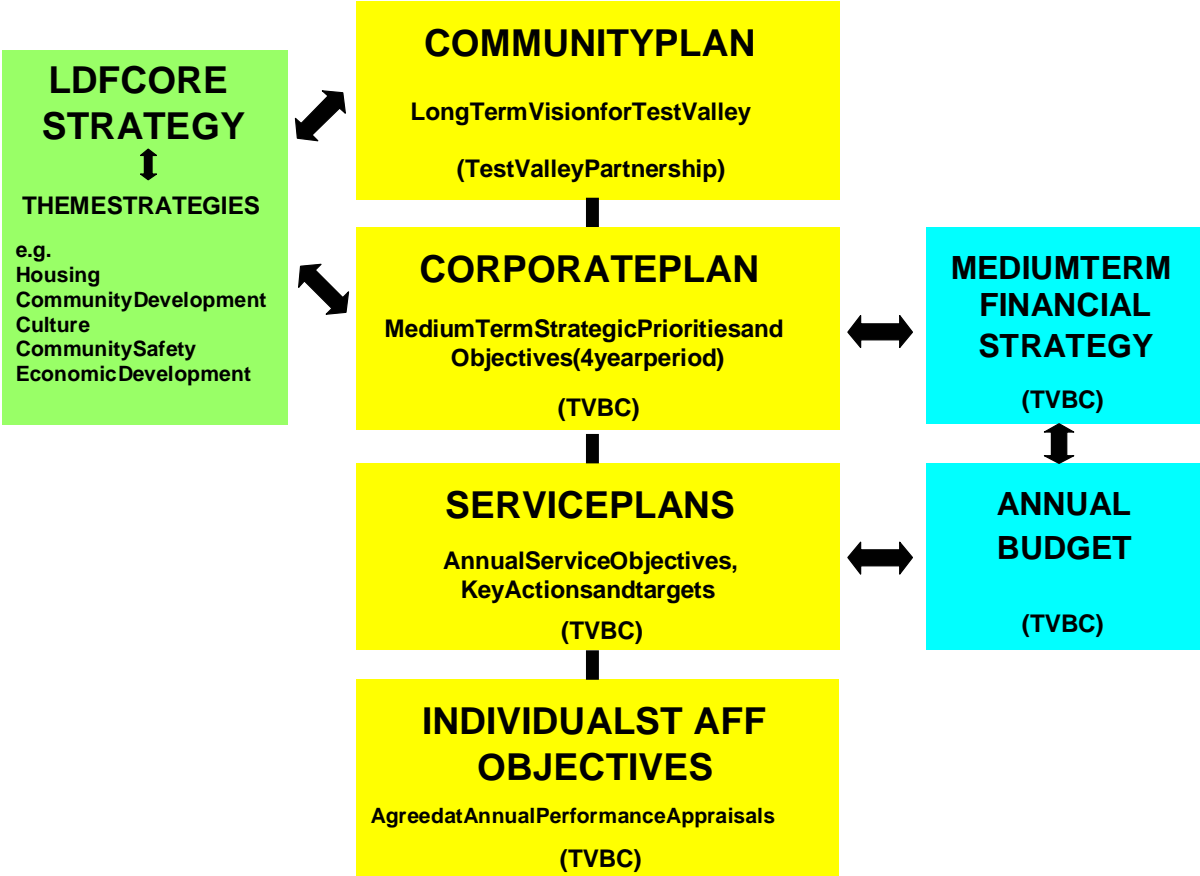
Other key Council strategies and plans also link into the framework:

The **LDF Core Strategy** is the core planning document which sets the framework for future spatial development in the Borough. It determines the land use policies which fall out of the Community Plan.

There are **other strategies and plans** which are on specific themes e.g. housing or economic development. These link into the Community Plan, the LDF Core Strategy, and the Corporate Plan.

The financial implications of all of the Council's plans are picked up through the **Medium Term Financial Strategy** and **Annual Budget**.

Test Valley Borough Council's Strategic Planning Framework



Chapter 2 Our Vision and Values

Our Vision

Our Vision defines our ambitions in terms of the kind of Council we want to be, and the difference we want to make for the communities of Test Valley.

Our Vision

To be an organisation of excellence committed to improving the quality of life of all the people of Test Valley.

In this way the Borough Council will contribute to the overall vision for Test Valley which has been developed by Test Valley Partnership and is set out in the partnership’s Community Strategy.

Our Values

In working to achieve our ambitions, we will ensure the following values are the core principles which guide our work. They apply to both the working practices of the organisation as a whole, and to how, as individuals within the Council, we all behave in respect of each other and the communities we serve.

Our Values are our ongoing commitment to high standards in everything we do.

- Our Values**
- ◆ **Accountability**
We will be accountable to all of the people of Test Valley for our actions and how we use resources, ensuring that we provide value for money.
 - ◆ **Ambition**
We will be a dynamic organisation committed to achieving, improving and innovating.
 - ◆ **Empowerment**
We will be an organisation committed to continuous learning, enabling and motivating all of our people to do their best work.
 - ◆ **Inclusiveness**
We will value diversity, promote equality of opportunity for all, and ensure that our services are accessible to everyone in Test Valley.
 - ◆ **Integrity**
We will ensure that as an organisation, our communities can trust us to act fairly and honestly, and so can our staff.

Chapter 3 Our six Strategic 'SCHEME' priorities

A new set of SCHEME priorities

In reviewing our priorities for the coming four years we have not made radical changes but have broadened a number of our priorities to reflect the wide-ranging role that the Borough Council plays in improving quality of life for all in Test Valley. This recognises the Council's part in the work of the Test Valley Partnership and the delivery of the new Community Strategy to which this Corporate Plan will make a significant contribution.

The revised priorities are based on:

- An understanding of what we have achieved so far.
- Updated information on the needs of Test Valley and issues affecting the area.
- Feedback from consultation with our Citizen's Panel, focus groups, and other engagement mechanisms.
- Changes in national, regional and local policies which may shape the priorities of the Council: E.g. The Local Government White Paper, Sustainable Communities, South East Plan, Local Development Framework, and Community Strategy.
- The outcomes from workshops involving Members and Management Team to identify key issues and proposals for the development of the new plan.

Our revised SCHEME Priorities are:

Creating Stronger & Safer Communities
Improving Cultural Opportunities
Promoting Health & Well-being
Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
Maximising Capacity and Impact
Enabling a Prosperous Economy

The following pages set out our plans for the next four years under each of our six strategic SCHEME priorities. Each section is set out under the following headings:

Our Aim:

An overall statement of our long term goals. Our aim tries to express in a single sentence the kind of place we want for the people of Test Valley.

The situation now:

Contextual information to set the scene in terms of where we are now and what are the future challenges that lie ahead.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

These are the improvements that we want to focus on over the next four years and beyond; the key differences we want to make.

Key actions planned for 2007/8:

These are key projects which are definitely committed for the coming year. They have been allocated resources through the budget process and carried through to individual service plans for 2007/8.

Medium term plans:

These are the projects which are envisaged over the medium term. They may be more aspirational in nature at this stage and may rely on future policy decisions either locally or nationally. They may also be dependent on securing appropriate funding for their delivery.

Measuring success:

The key measures or indicators that we will use to monitor progress. The baseline and targets for these measures will be published in the Council's Annual Performance Report in June.

CREATING STRONGER & SAFER COMMUNITIES

Our Aim: A place where people feel safe and involved, in strong local communities.

The situation now:

House prices in Test Valley are significantly higher than national averages. This combined with lower than average wage levels for many jobs in the Borough, means that affordability of housing remains a key issue for local people. Over the past three years we have exceeded our targets on delivery of affordable housing, including an innovative development of eco-homes. Working in partnership through the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) we have delivered affordable housing in rural areas.

Major development commencing in Andover this year will see 3700 new homes by 2016, of which 40% will be affordable. A significant number of new homes are also planned for southern Test Valley. Planning for these major development areas will be challenging, but they provide opportunities for a range of benefits for local communities including community facilities and buildings; open space, play areas; sports pitches and facilities; transport and highway improvements.

Test Valley has a diverse range of local communities. Some are long established and have a strong sense of community, others are less developed. The Council works in partnership with the voluntary sector and other agencies to engage with local communities and encourage and support community projects. Although crime rates in Test Valley are amongst the lowest nationally, there are problems with persistent low level crime and anti-social behaviour in some areas of the Borough. The Council works with the Police and other agencies through the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) to develop joint approaches to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Improved availability of a range of affordable and suitable housing to meet people's needs.
- Balanced, vibrant and inclusive communities.
- Improved access to facilities and services.
- Opportunities for everyone to participate in and contribute to community life.
- People feeling safer, with reduced levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Develop major housing development areas (MDAs) and ensure sufficient infrastructure provision and integration of new communities.
- 2.** Work with intelligence from the Housing Market Assessment, and establish a local Housing Board, to develop a new Housing Strategy for the Borough guiding future action on housing from 2008.
- 3.** Enable the development of further affordable homes to sustain the average completion rate of at least 100 affordable homes per annum.
- 4.** Develop a drop-in advice centre by returning an empty shop back into use at Atholl Court, as part of the Council's key role in the delivery of the 'Turnaround Project' (a multi-agency project looking at ways of improving quality of life within the Alamein Ward in Andover).
- 5.** Develop mechanisms to provide 3-year funding of key voluntary organisations from 2008.
- 6.** Encourage and promote the development of Parish Plans, helping communities to identify their local needs and agree action plans to tackle priorities.
- 7.** Develop 'new community days' - information days for new European communities in Andover and Romsey, to provide advice and information on housing, health and other services.
- 8.** Work with Romsey Community Improvement Partnership, a multi-agency approach to developing activities with young people to address problems of anti-social behaviour and disaffected young people in Romsey.
- 9.** Develop the Council's Neighbourhood Wardens Service, ensuring close working relationships with the new Community Policing arrangements.
- 10.** Implement a Borough wide, joint 'hot-spot' tasking approach to target places and times with higher incidences of criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.
- 11.** Develop early intervention approaches to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- 12.** Reduce our use of temporary housing accommodation by 50% by 2010 in line with Government targets.

Medium term plans:

- Use the Housing Market Assessment to ensure sustainable housing options in both rural and urban areas.
- Work in cross-boundary partnerships e.g. Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) and Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).
- Consider the implications of the Local Government White Paper and develop the Council's approach to community engagement and neighbourhood working, including community asset management, and devolved decision making.

Measuring success:

Sustained or increased numbers of affordable homes delivered (LPI)

Reduced Homelessness and use of temporary accommodation (BVPIs)

Increased levels of volunteering

Increased satisfaction with the local area as a place to live

Increased satisfaction with community facilities in the local area

Reduced levels of crime as shown by the Home Office crime indicators

Reduced levels of fear of crime

Reduced levels of anti-social behaviour

Improved speed in dealing with abandoned vehicles (BVPI)

Respect in neighbourhoods (new LAA mandatory measure)

IMPROVING CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our Aim: A place where people can participate in and enjoy a wide range of cultural and leisure activities.

The situation now:

Over the past four years we have made significant strides to deliver improved cultural opportunities in Test Valley and progress the aims of our Cultural Strategy. Major achievements include the opening of 'The Lights' entertainment venue in Andover, the completion of extensive refurbishment and new dry side development at Romsey Rapids, and development of the 'Andover Live' programme of events. The new Andover cinema is under construction and expected to open in Spring 2008.

Leisure and cultural pursuits are increasingly being recognised for their wider benefits in improving overall quality of life. Cultural activity plays an important role in improving people's overall health and well-being, developing vibrant, strong and safe communities, and contributing to a thriving local economy. An example is the role that physical activity can play in combating rising obesity levels. A recent Sport England survey shows that Test Valley residents currently have the 7th highest level of exercise in the country. We have pledged to increase that level by 3.5% by 2009.

The construction of new housing development in Andover is about to commence and priority will be given to integrate the new communities and provide new facilities where needed. We also want to ensure that cultural activities are accessible to all and encourage wider participation across the whole community by developing opportunities within local communities and the rural villages.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Increased access to a range of sport, recreational and cultural opportunities.
- Improved offer of venues and facilities for sport, recreational and cultural activities.
- Increased participation across the whole community through targeted promotion of opportunities.
- Improved quality, accessibility and use of our parks, open spaces, and play areas.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Build on the success of the first two seasons at 'The Lights' theatre with further development of the programme of performances, classes and workshops, events in the arena, and the theatre's outreach programme.
- 2.** Develop the 'Andover Live' events programme of music and arts for the town, and stage the second Andover Live Music Festival, Summer 2007.
- 3.** Develop a programme of rural community events and activities, to increase opportunities to engage in arts and other leisure activities in the villages.
- 4.** Host the Hampshire Water Festival in Andover in July 2007 to provide a fun day of activities for all, and promote ways for people to help save water.
- 5.** Carry out a 5-year review of the Council's Leisure Management Contract to ensure best use of resources in the future provision of leisure facilities.
- 6.** Produce a Sports & Recreation Strategy which will explore shared resources and new partnerships.
- 7.** As key players in 'Sport Andover', a partnership to promote sporting opportunities in Andover, hold a Sports Fair in April 2007 and develop an annual festival of sport in the town, offering increased opportunities for more people to try different sports.
- 8.** Develop the Depot youth complex to provide a wider range of activities and services for young people.
- 9.** Commence implementation of the Green Space Strategy, including securing external funding to develop Phoenix Park and attain a green flag status for War Memorial Park.

Medium term plans:

- Develop new leisure facilities in the major housing development areas (MDAs).
- Explore options to provide new modern sporting facilities to replace Andover Leisure Centre, linked to the development of the new college.
- Work with local sports clubs to enhance and develop sporting facilities at Foxcotte Park.

- Explore options for upgrading Andover Museum, linked to the development of the new Discovery Centre.
- Develop the 'Christmas Lights Switch On' festival with the intention over time to develop it into a week long festival of light.
- Maximise opportunities arising from the 2012 Olympic Games, and investigate establishing a 'Centre of Excellence' in Test Valley, for an appropriate Olympic sport.
- Explore options to develop a major new indoor facility, such as a snow dome/ski slope.
- Work towards achieving improved standards across all parks and open spaces within the Council's ownership by 2014, and ensure sufficiently high quality standards at two sites to achieve green flag status by 2011.
- Implement improvements to the Borough's playgrounds and play areas in line with the Council's Play Strategy.
- Enhance Andover's skatepark facilities at the Depot, with a view to getting national recognition and becoming a venue for national events.

Measuring success:

Increased satisfaction with cultural facilities

Increased participation levels / visitor numbers / usage

Achievement of Green flag awards for parks/open spaces.

Increased levels of volunteering hours.

LPSA2 targets for physical activities.

Benchmarking Valley Leisure performance.

PROMOTING HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Our Aim: A place where people are healthy, and feel positive about their lives and their future.

The situation now:

Test Valley as a whole is a comparatively healthy borough. However there are pockets of relative deprivation which can have an impact on people's health. In some areas life expectancy is up to 10 years lower than in other parts of the Borough.

Many factors have an influence on people's overall health and well-being. These include lifestyle choices, activity levels, housing conditions, relative income, education, employment and access to local services.

The Borough Council has a significant role to play in improving the health and well-being of the community, by promoting healthy lifestyles, providing opportunities for people to be more active, improving the quality and condition of housing, providing housing and benefits advice and assisting those in need, protecting public health, and enhancing and protecting the quality of the environment.

The Council works in close partnership with the local Health Trust, Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT); and Hampshire County Council to support health and well-being in the community. Through joint working we aim to reduce health inequalities in our most deprived neighbourhoods. The 'Turnaround project' is a multi-agency project looking at ways of improving quality of life within the Alamein Ward in Andover.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Improved standards of housing across all tenures.
- Support and advice to improve quality of life for those most in need.
- Targeted promotion of healthier lifestyles including: healthy eating; increased levels of physical activity; and reduced harm from tobacco, alcohol and substance misuse.
- Protection of public health through our regulatory functions.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Assess the need for extra-care schemes for older people as part of the development of the new Housing Strategy.
- 2.** Develop and continue to support a range of initiatives to keep older, disabled and vulnerable people healthy and safe in their homes, e.g. energy efficiency advice, Safe Warm and Well (SWELL), disabled facilities grants, Benefits outreach referral role, work of the Home Improvement Agency.
- 3.** Work in the Alamein Ward in Andover, as part of the Turnaround Project to reduce health inequalities in the most deprived neighbourhoods.
- 4.** Develop and continue to support a range of healthy lifestyle initiatives to increase levels of physical activity, e.g. Health Walks, Exercise Referral schemes.
- 5.** Lead on the Hampshire wide (LPSA 2) project to reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating in schools.
- 6.** Develop and continue to support a range of educational initiatives to encourage healthy lifestyles for children and young people e.g. Junior Citizen, solar Car challenge, Primary Science Fayre.
- 7.** Implement smoke free legislation by providing promotion and advice to businesses prior to 1st July, and undertaking visits to ensure compliance following the introduction of the ban.
- 8.** Implement a 'Scores on the Doors' national Food Standards Agency model, giving residents website access to food premises hygiene scores using a traffic light coding system.
- 9.** Introduce a revised HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation) inspection programme following the implementation of licensing of HMOs.
- 10.** Renew partnership working arrangements with the establishment of the new Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT).
- 11.** Carry out a Best Value Review of Vulnerable People to identify priority actions to improve access to services and quality of life for vulnerable people in Test Valley.
- 12.** Make preparations in advance of national changes to Local Housing Allowance.
- 13.** Review the Council's concessionary travel scheme in the light of proposed changes to concessionary travel nationally from 2008.

- 14.** Work in partnership with Hampshire County Council to improve transport options from Andover and surrounding areas to Winchester Hospital.

Medium term plans:

- Achieve Decent Homes Standard across all tenures by 2011.
- Implement changes to Local Housing Allowance.
- Develop the Council's outreach work in the community, enhancing the 'eyes and ears' role of visiting officers / front line staff.
- Promote healthy eating and physical activity in community venues.
- Engage with partners in future community development projects in our most deprived wards.

Measuring success:

Achieving Decent Homes Standard across all tenures by 2011.

Reduced health inequalities across the Borough

Increased levels of physical activity (Sport England Survey)

Reduced obesity levels (LPSA2)

Housing and Council Tax Benefits:

Reduced average number of days to process new claims

Reduced average number of days to process changes to circumstances

Increased percentage of new rent allowance claims where the first payment is made on time or within 7 days. (LPI 06/09)

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

Our Aim: A place where people enjoy and help maintain a high quality, sustainable environment.

The situation now:

Test Valley has a high quality built and natural environment which we aim to protect and enhance, ensuring that the actions we take today do not have a negative impact on the quality of life of future generations.

The Local Development Framework is a key set of documents which will set out the future for Test Valley in a planning and land use context. The core policies of the LDF will have a strategic role to play in helping to create and maintain a quality environment; and promote conservation of resources and sustainable development.

The Council has a community leadership role in encouraging the sustainable use of resources. The introduction of Alternate Bin Collection (ABC) and our green waste collection scheme has enabled us to make progress in achieving improved recycling rates and reducing the amount of waste collected.

We recognise the importance of the local environment in terms of people's perceptions of safety, and their general health and well-being. The Council has introduced an environmental clean up team to tackle hotspots, and aims to build on this approach to engage partners and encourage community participation to tackle areas with environmental problems.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Improved conservation and sustainable use of resources, including energy, water and materials.
- Continued protection of the environment from pollution.
- Increased recycling opportunities and reduced levels of waste.
- Improved opportunities for the use of public transport and alternatives to car use.
- Protected and enhanced natural landscapes and biodiversity.
- Protection of the Borough's built and historic environment, conserving local character and distinctiveness.
- Targeted improvements to create cleaner, safer neighbourhoods, promoting pride in the local environment.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Adopt a Sustainability Strategy for Test Valley, and develop a series of action plans, building on findings from a Sustainability Audit commissioned from the Environment Centre.
- 2.** Develop sustainable use of resources across the Council's services including procurement and asset management policies.
- 3.** Develop an environmental improvement campaign, with a programme of clean-up events ensuring multi-agency and community participation to tackle areas with environmental problems.
- 4.** Implement improvements arising from the review of street cleansing.
- 5.** Continue development of policies in response to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, with a proactive approach to enforcement.
- 6.** Maximise efficiency from the new ABC (Alternate Bin Collection) system and develop a Community Champion model to increase public participation in recycling.
- 7.** Review the location of bottle banks and other recycling sites for efficiency and effectiveness post ABC.
- 8.** Evaluate the viability of kerbside glass collection.
- 9.** Develop and evaluate a range of small scale recycling initiatives, e.g. Green Cone, foil recycling, real nappies, tetra pak recycling, Yellow Pages recycling, street litter recycling.
- 10.** Develop policies on energy efficiency for inclusion in the LDF, including working with the Hampshire Local Area Agreement initiative on sustainable construction.
- 11.** Encourage the use of sustainable design by architects submitting planning applications. Try to achieve Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (recommended Government Standard).
- 12.** Seek Travel Plans with major planning applications to require developers to promote and fund alternatives to the car.
- 13.** Complete and adopt a Biodiversity Action Plan as a supplementary planning document to guide future development in the Borough.

Medium term plans:

- Promote and enable further development of 'Eco-homes', environmentally sustainable homes incorporating features that help cut down on energy use and conserve natural resources.
- Work with the Environment Agency to develop policies in relation to water use for inclusion in the LDF, with particular attention to the location of major development sites and also to the detailed design of the development to agree opportunities for reduced water use.
- Work with businesses to encourage sustainable use of resources, increased recycling and reduction of commercial waste.
- Implement the Council's revised Contaminated Land Strategy.
- Review the Air Quality Strategy by 2010.
- Review private water supply risk assessment by 2010 in line with national legislative changes.

Measuring success:

Increased percentage of waste that is recycled (BVPI)

Increased percentage of waste that is composted (BVPI)

Reduced amount of waste collected per household (BVPI)

Improved Street cleanliness (BVPI)

Reduced flytipping, graffiti, flyposting (BVPI)

MAXIMISING CAPACITY AND IMPACT

Our Aim: A Council which makes the most of its people and resources to improve quality of life for all in Test Valley.

The situation now:

This priority builds on the Modernising theme in our previous Corporate Plan and the priorities set out in our CPA improvement plan. In a climate of increasing customer expectations and increasing pressures on resources, we will continue to transform the way the organisation operates in order to deliver more efficiently and effectively the Council's priorities for Test Valley.

'Maximising Capacity' means making the best use of our people and resources. We must continue to make the most of technological opportunities, and improve our business processes. We have recognised that we need to improve the way we manage our assets to make the best use of resources and maximise our income. We will work to ensure value for money from all of our activities.

'Maximising Impact' is about all of our staff and Council services working together as one team with collective goals and a shared responsibility. It captures our desire to work smarter, with increased customer focus and understanding of community needs.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Improved use of resources to maximise efficiency and effectiveness, through more effective procurement, asset management, process improvement, and project management.
- Improved management and use of the Council's information assets and extended use of technology to improve services.
- Enhanced customer experience and access to services.
- Increased community engagement and understanding of customer and community needs.
- Improved opportunities for organisational learning, and increased learning and skills development for staff and members.
- Improved understanding and awareness of diversity, and promotion of equality, across all council services.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Develop a Customer Access Strategy and Customer Experience framework.
- 2.** Develop a Customer 'Datahub', to provide a shared information resource for all Council Services by March 2008.
- 3.** Consult on and publish an Equalities Scheme for Test Valley and implement the Council's Equalities Action Plan.
- 4.** Establish a Corporate Asset Management Group and update the Council's Asset Management Strategy.
- 5.** Implement a revised repairs and maintenance programme for corporate and investment properties.
- 6.** Work to embed the Council's Corporate Risk Management processes, including testing of business continuity plans.
- 7.** Pilot a project management methodology for two corporate projects in 2007.
- 8.** Explore options in relation to shared services.
- 9.** Quantify savings from streamlined business processes. Develop an approach to impact assessment / value for money reviews.
- 10.** Implement the Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy to improve procurement practices across all services, including the use of the Hampshire Marketplace e-procurement tool.
- 11.** Revise and revitalise the employee performance appraisal system, including the development of management competencies, for roll out from March 2008.
- 12.** Roll out a re-focused Corporate Induction Programme for all new staff.
- 13.** Develop a management competency framework and revised management development programme.
- 14.** Establish a forum for middle managers to develop their management and leadership role, and enable networking, knowledge sharing and learning opportunities.
- 15.** Ensure the Council gains re-accreditation of the Investors in People (IiP) standard.
- 16.** Establish a Member development and induction programme for 2007/8.

Medium term plans:

- Roll out a project management approach for all projects across the Council.
- Introduce workforce planning to ensure suitably trained and experienced staff are available to meet future challenges.
- Develop and implement an essential skills training and development programme to enable all staff to reach required standards, e.g. IT skills, customer service skills, literacy and numeracy.

Measuring success:

Met or exceeded efficiency targets

Increased usage of the website and online applications (electronic forms)

Equality Standard for Local Government - Level 3 by April 2008

Re-accreditation of the Investors in People IiP Standard

Reduced sickness levels

Improved Use of Resources scores

Improved performance against property KPIs

ENABLING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

Our Aim: A place where people can realise their full potential in a vibrant local economy.

The situation now:

Test Valley has a successful economy, with a low unemployment rate of 1% (April 2006). It is primarily a service-based economy, with an important manufacturing sector. Farming is also a significant employer.

The Council has made real progress over the past four years in revitalising the borough's town centres. In Andover, some major achievements include the development of the Lights entertainment venue and a new cinema under construction. These have contributed to the delivery of the 'Andover Vision', a long term plan for a more prosperous, entertaining and inclusive Andover. This is an innovative joint venture by the Council with strong business involvement and a range of organisations working together as part of the Vision Board.

The Council's role in enabling the development of the local economy is recognised in its long term economic strategy for Test Valley which will be reviewed and updated in the coming year. A major priority for the coming years is the rejuvenation of our industrial estates to provide quality premises for businesses and maintain Test Valley's competitiveness. On a day-to-day basis the Council's economic development team aims to offer first class business support and advice to assist new and small businesses, of particular importance in the rural areas.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Revitalised industrial estates.
- Improved employment opportunities and support for the development of the rural economy.
- Improved opportunities for training and skills development.
- Increased opportunities for tourism.
- Improved quality of the retail offer in town centres.
- Development of innovative and higher value-added products and services (less reliance on basic production).
- Provision of first class business support to new and small businesses.

Key actions planned for 2007/08:

- 1.** Develop a Vision for the Andover Industrial Estates and work with appropriate funders to manage and rejuvenate the industrial estates, (Summer 2007).
- 2.** Review the Long Term Economic Strategy for Test Valley, (Summer 2007).
- 3.** Develop policies within the Local Development Framework (LDF) to support the provision of employment opportunities, promote regeneration, reduce economic disparities in the Borough, and support the vitality of town centres.
- 4.** Promote the Andover Vision to London commercial agents to try and attract better quality comparison goods shops (Autumn 2007).
- 5.** Lead on the Hampshire wide (LAA) project to increase Hampshire's regional share of VAT registered businesses, working with enterprise agencies to promote 'growing businesses'.
- 6.** Encourage the growth of innovative and value-added businesses through developments such as Chilworth Science Park, Roke Manor, CTC at Nursling, Telsecure at Broughton.
- 7.** Hold a Business Support Roadshow, and take part in a Hampshire 'Meet the Buyers' event, enabling small businesses from the local area to meet and sell to major public and private sector organisations, (Spring 2008).
- 8.** Produce a revised second edition of the Test Valley Business Directory, (Autumn 2007).
- 9.** Encourage a 'Local Labour in Construction' scheme requiring developers to support construction apprenticeship schemes through planning agreements on large scale housing developments.
- 10.** Work with Test Valley Community Services to promote the 'wheels to work' scheme.
- 11.** Organise and host a Test Valley Tourism Summit in June 2007.
- 12.** Promote a new 'Hampshire's Countryside' website in conjunction with Hampshire County Council, with on-line booking covering Test Valley, East Hampshire, Basingstoke and Hart. Launch May 2007.
- 13.** Promote Hampshire Hospitality Awards with associated funding for training from Tourism South East, (Spring 2007).

- 14.** Produce promotional material linking Test Valley producers (e.g. Hampshire Fayre members, community village shops etc) to attract visitors. Hold a launch event in Spring 2007.

Medium term plans:

- Continue to develop and implement the Andover Vision.
- Encourage new employment uses on the industrial estates (e.g. nursery, college facility, health & fitness centre etc).
- Seek appropriate redevelopment of the Ford Cottage site behind the Chantry Centre, possibly to include a new town centre hotel and catering outlets.
- Attract a quality department store to Andover.
- Promote and continue to develop the use of community venues for training and skills courses.
- Develop a grants scheme to support the sustainability of village shops.
- Develop the skills training brokerage service, subject to planning contributions, to provide advice and support to small businesses on training and employment needs.
- Continue work with Romsey 2020 Vision and Stockbridge Area Partnership to develop proposals under the SEEDA Hampshire Market Towns Programme.
- Enhance marketing for local producers, village shops etc, including the development of 'food trails' a series of routes linking local food producers, shops and pubs.
- Explore the potential of a European funding bid (LEADER) to enhance the promotion of countryside activities e.g. walking, cycling, horse-riding, fishing, golf etc. to generate more tourism related spending.

Measuring success:

Increased footfall to town centres

Increased satisfaction with retail / catering offer in towns

Increased percentage occupancy of units on the industrial estates

Increased visitor numbers to the borough and average expenditure (tourism impact assessment).

Chapter 4 The Corporate Plan in Context

Links to Executive Portfolios and Council Services

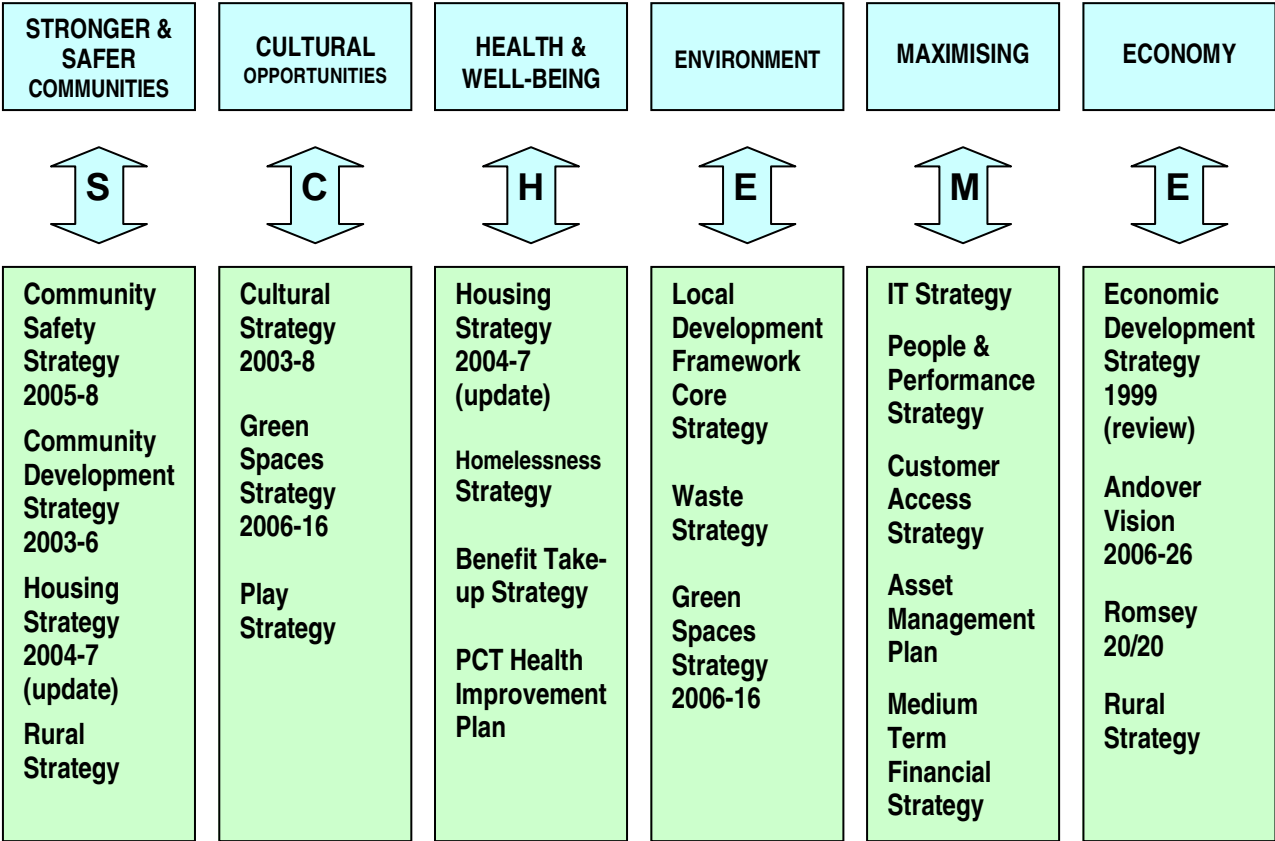
The table below sets out the links between the SCHEME priorities and the services that contribute to the delivery of these priorities. The Service shown in bold signifies that the relevant Head of Service is the SCHEME Champion for that priority. The table also identifies the Member Champion (the relevant portfolio holder) for each priority.

SCHEME Priority	Member Champion	Council Services which deliver the priority (SCHEME Champion in bold)
Creating Stronger & Safer Communities	Housing & Community Services Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing & Community Services ▪ Commercial Services ▪ Environment & Health Service ▪ Leisure ▪ Planning
Improving Cultural Opportunities	Leisure & Culture Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leisure ▪ Housing & Community Services ▪ Planning ▪ Commercial Services
Promoting Health & Well-being	Environment & Health Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environment & Health Service ▪ Housing & Community Services ▪ Leisure ▪ Revenues
Protecting and Enhancing the Environment	Planning & Transport and Environment & Health Portfolio Holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning ▪ Commercial Services ▪ Environment & Health Service ▪ Leisure ▪ Technical Services
Maximising Capacity and Impact	Corporate and Economic Portfolio Holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief Executive’s Office ▪ Administration Service ▪ Estates & Economic Development ▪ Finance ▪ Human Resources ▪ I.T. ▪ Legal ▪ Revenues ▪ Technical Services
Enabling a Prosperous Economy	Economic Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Estates & Economic Development ▪ Leisure ▪ Planning

Strategic Links

The SCHEME priorities link to and reflect the separate thematic strategies of the Council, and the priorities in the Community Plan.

The following diagram shows how the separate strategies of the Council and our partners underpin the SCHEME priorities:



The Local Development Framework (LDF)

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a key set of documents which will replace the Local Plan, and will guide spatial and land use planning in the Borough over the long term. The LDF will be prepared over the coming months, as set out in the Local Development Scheme. A key planning document is the Core Strategy which will set out a spatial vision for Test Valley along with a series of strategic objectives. A set of core policies will also be contained in the Core Strategy which will guide future development in the Borough.

The draft strategic objectives which have been developed for consultation on the Core Strategy, align well with the outcomes in this Corporate Plan. The policies developed as part of the LDF will contribute to the delivery of a number of our priority outcomes, particularly in relation to the Environment.

Working in Partnership

Test Valley Partnership Community Plan

The Borough Council plays a lead role in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Test Valley. Test Valley Partnership brings together a wide range of partners from public sector agencies, along with representatives from the voluntary and business sectors. The key purpose of the partnership is to build a shared understanding of the issues affecting the area, and formulate a long term strategy to improve quality of life.

The Community Plan is the partnership's long term strategic vision, which sets out under eight themes the community's priorities for Test Valley. The priorities in this Corporate Plan have been broadened and align more closely with those in the Community Plan. The delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan will play a significant role in contributing towards the long term delivery of the Community Plan.

Hampshire Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The Hampshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a 3 year agreement between partners in Hampshire and the Government, to improve lives and conditions in Hampshire communities. The Agreement has eight priority outcomes drawn from the Hampshire Community Strategy and the 11 District Community Strategies. The outcomes, indicators and targets are detailed in a shared three-year LAA Action Plan (April 2006 to April 2009). The LAA incorporates all LPSA2 targets.

The Council is a key partner in the delivery of a number of the outcomes of the LAA and in some instances has a lead role. Areas where the Council has a significant role are reflected within this Corporate Plan.

Cross-cutting Issues

The Council works in partnership on a number of cross-cutting issues. These are themes which 'cut across' the Council's priorities and services.

Children & Young People

The Council has a duty to work in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people. The Government's vision for children's services, *Every Child Matters* was published in 2003. It is structured around 5 key outcomes for children and young people. These are:

- ◆ Be healthy
- ◆ Stay safe
- ◆ Enjoy and achieve
- ◆ Make a positive contribution
- ◆ Achieve economic well-being

The Hampshire Children's & Young People's Partnership has set out its priorities in the Hampshire Children & Young People's Plan. The Borough Council has a significant role to play in contributing to the achievement of these outcomes directly through a number of its services, and by working in partnership through the LSP to develop a locality partnership and local plan for Children & Young People.

Older & Vulnerable People

The Council provides a number of services which support older and vulnerable people. The Council's priorities in relation to Health & Well-being and Stronger & Safer Communities contain key actions to help improve quality of life for these groups.

The Council works in partnership to help deliver the Supporting People agenda and will play a key role in contributing to the development and local delivery of the Hampshire Older People's Strategy.

Equalities & Diversity

The Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all. We recognise our obligations in relation to our statutory duties to promote equality, and acknowledge that removing barriers to services, information and employment is a key role of a modern, quality organisation.

As a service provider and an employer, the Council is committed to ensuring fair treatment and equal access to our services, to information and to employment: everyone can expect the same standards of treatment, regardless of their gender, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age religion or belief, or sexual orientation. We have set out this commitment in an Equalities Scheme for Test Valley. The Scheme ensures that the Council has a coherent and strategic approach to equality issues. It will help the Council to recognise diversity and to focus efforts on delivering services that are appropriate and meet the needs of the community.

Sustainability

The sustainability agenda has increased in profile nationally and has been recognised by the Council as a key challenge over the lifetime of this plan and beyond. Four priorities for the UK have been set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy - *Securing the Future*, published in 2005. These are:

- ◆ Sustainable consumption and production
- ◆ Climate change and energy
- ◆ Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement
- ◆ Sustainable communities

A key action for the Council in the coming year will be to develop a Sustainability Strategy for Test Valley which will set out our commitment to a sustainable Test Valley. This will provide the context for a series of action plans, building on findings from a Sustainability Audit which has been carried out by the Environment Centre.

A Sustainability Appraisal of this Corporate Plan has been carried out by officers within the Council. The Corporate Plan's six aims were tested against a series of sustainability objectives, using a framework based on regional guidance from SEERA. The results of this appraisal indicated that the Corporate Plan is a balanced document which contributes to social, environmental and economic objectives.

National Agendas

The Local Government White Paper

The Local Government White Paper: *Strong and Prosperous Communities* sets out the Government's 'new vision for local government'. It emphasises the importance of local government's role in 'place-shaping' and community leadership, and effective partnership working on cross-cutting issues. It also proposes greater neighbourhood engagement and more responsive services, giving people greater opportunities to influence local decision-making.

Chapter 5 Improving Performance

Improvement Planning

Following the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2004, an Improvement Plan was drawn up which set out key actions to improve in four priority areas: Ambition; Performance; Community Focus, and Capacity. The Improvement Plan had a 3-year timespan to April 2007.

The Council's ambition to be an organisation of excellence continues to drive improvement. The key actions needed to transform the organisation are now set out under the Maximising Capacity and Impact priority, making improvement planning part of our core business.

The Council has made real progress in the past three years in improved performance in the delivery of services. There will continue to be a focus on service delivery and a culture of continuous improvement, with a revised performance management framework being developed. The Council's targets and progress updates are included in the annual Performance Report which is published in June every year.

External Assessment

The Council is assessed annually by the Audit Commission on its direction of travel and use of resources. An overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council is set out in a report called the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. This is a public document and is published on the Audit Commission's website.

The Audit Letter contains the Council's Direction of Travel (DoT) statement which sets out the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council's progress against its key priorities.

The Use of Resources (UoR) assessment evaluates how well councils manage and use their financial resources. It is scored against five themes, including value for money. Test Valley has scored well against all areas of the Use of Resources judgment in previous assessments, and we aim to improve on our performance in future. Some of the key actions to improve performance in this area are contained within the Maximising section of this Plan.

Risk Management

The Council has made significant progress in ensuring effective risk management processes are put in place, and that they become embedded in corporate processes. The Council's Corporate Risk Register contains all significant corporate risks for the authority and identifies the key actions needed to mitigate against these risks. All of the key actions in the Corporate Risk Register are reflected within this Corporate Plan.