

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

02ND SEPTEMBER 2009

COUNCIL PLAN 20010-2013 PART 1

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingworth, Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To re-confirm the Council's Vision and Council Objectives, increase the number of values from four to five, amend the number of priorities from four to six and consider the outline budget bids/key deliverables for delivering the required improvement on these priorities to meet our residents' expectations..
- 1.2 An Executive Summary is set out in Appendix 1 Section 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-
- i. Reconfirm the Vision and Council Objectives (**Appendix 1, 8.5**).
 - ii. Agree to a fifth corporate value: value for money.
 - iii. Consider the analysis of the Council's national, regional and local context (**Appendix 1 Sections 1 to 7**).
 - iv. Based on this context agree a new set of priorities (**Appendix 1 8.6**).
 - v. Consider the outline key deliverables each priority and potential budget bids (**Appendix 1 Addendum 2**).
 - vi. Direct each portfolio holder to work with the relevant Director and Head of Service on "working up" budget bids and savings, as required from this report.

3. BACKGROUND

Council Plan 2010-2013

- 3.1 Cabinet and Full Council approved the Council's first Council Plan as part of the 2007/08 budget round. The Council Plan is effectively the business plan for the Council and a key document for Members. The 2010/2013 plan will not be published until March 2010; however, the Council needs to agree it priorities now, so that officers can make detailed plans to deliver these as part of the 2010/2011 budget round (September 2009 to February 2010).

- 3.2 Understanding our context and setting priorities is critical to achieving excellence in the new CAA framework. The Council received a score of 3 out of 4 in its second CPA (March 2009) for prioritisation. The Council was described as “performing well” in this area and to “have a sound strategic framework for planning its priorities”. This is a result of having clear processes for finding out what residents think about services and linking these to the business planning process. The Council has a considerable range of activities for finding out residents’ views. The biggest change since last time has been the introduction of the statutory Place Survey and the end of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and their replacement with the new National Indicators (NIs). These are much more focused on outcomes rather than processes and have thrown up some interesting results for the Council, which are discussed in Appendix 1.

Strategic Planning Process

- 3.7 The cycle for developing the Council Plan starts in early July with the Cabinet/CMT away day, which considers the outturn performance from the previous year. The process then feeds into the formal reporting cycle of the Council in September:-

Action	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Agree priorities and consider outline budget position at Full Council (Council Plan Pt 1).							
Complete service plans and budget options							
Detailed Budget Options Considered by - CMT Groups Cabinet							
Agree budget at Full Council							
Set Council Tax and agree Council Plan at Full Council							
Publish Council Plan and send out CT bills.							

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 See Appendix 1 Section 7.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

6. Corporate Objectives

- 6.1 The existing corporate objectives to remain basically unchanged, but with amended wording.

7. Risk Management

7.1 The Council Plan will be supported by the Council's strategic risk register.

8. Other Sub Headings

8.1 All the following issues have been reflected in the definitions of the Council Objectives:-

Procurement Issues: None
Personnel Implications
Governance/Performance Management Considerations
Community Safety Considerations
Policy Considerations
Environmental Considerations
Equalities Implications

9. Consultation

9.1 Please include the following table and indicate 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate. Delete the words in italics.

Portfolio Holder	Cabinet/CMT Away Day.
Chief Executive	At CMT.
Corporate Director (Services)	At CMT.
Assistant Chief Executive	At CMT.
Head of Service <i>(i.e. your own HoS)</i>	At CMT.
Head of Financial Services <i>(must approve Financial Implications before report submitted to Leader's Group)</i>	At CMT.
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services <i>(for approval of any significant Legal Implications)</i>	At CMT.
Head of Organisational Development & HR	At CMT.

<i>(for approval of any significant HR Implications)</i>	
Corporate Procurement Team <i>(for approval of any procurement implications)</i>	No.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Policy, Performance and Financial Position Statement (August 2009).

Background Papers

Council Plan 2009/2012

Budget Book 2008/2009

Contact officer

Name Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive
E Mail: hbennett@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881430

Bromsgrove District Council
Policy, Performance and Financial Position Statement
19 August 2009

Contents

1.	Executive Summary	
2.	Bromsgrove District Overview	
3.	National Policy	
4.	Regional/Local Policy	
5.	Community Engagement	
6.	Performance Position	
7.	Resources	
8.	Strategic Direction	
.	Addendum A – Council Objective Definitions	
	Addendum B – Key Deliverables and Resourcing (incl. budget bids)	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The national picture has changed dramatically since last year's report due to the "credit crunch".
- 1.2 Local government can expect very poor grant settlements through the next parliament.
- 1.3 The exact size and scope of public expenditure reductions is as yet unknown, but the Council should be prudent and not commit itself to expenditure which cannot be easily stopped, should the need arise.
- 1.4 The Council is comparatively well placed to respond to this challenging agenda, as a result of the shared services agreement with Redditch Borough Council.
- 1.5 The Council is now "Fair" rated, which reflects the significant improvement in its performance. In terms of performance measures, the one problem area remains sickness absence.
- 1.6 The Council is also IIP accredited and has recently achieved Level 3 on the Local Government Equalities Standard.
- 1.7 Although the Council's performance for process measures, like benefits payments, missed bins etc. is much improved, delivering visible outcomes for the public, plus longer term outcomes and customer experience are areas that still require a lot of progress in order to deliver our customers' expectations and our vision of community leadership and service excellence.
- 1.8 This challenge, along with the shared services agenda, should not be underestimated.
- 1.9 The Place Survey supports this analysis, with residents' satisfaction with the Council dropping to only 34% (this is consistent with national trends, but is comparatively low).
- 1.10 The Place Survey identifies the need to communicate more, market our services more and involve residents' in decision-making more. This is an area where the Council needs to invest, as current capacity is limited.
- 1.11 The town centre regeneration remains the headline project which the Council needs to address. This has been made more difficult by the "credit crunch". Residents particularly want an improved retail offer, which reflects the relative affluence of the District.
- 1.12 Overall, the District is relatively affluent and many of the problems it faces reflect this: affordable housing, an ageing population, alcohol related

hospital admissions, childhood obesity, CO2 emissions and pockets of relative deprivation (at a sub-ward level).

- 1.13 The standout statistic is that the Council was responsible for 2.5m KGs of CO2 in 2008/2009. Our response to this is underdeveloped (although the Council is not unusual in this respect). The recent Climate Change Act (2008) has committed the UK to an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. This is an enormous challenge.
- 1.14 The Council is responding to all of these issues either directly or through the Local Strategic Partnership. Particular areas of concern include: the capital funding (borrowing) required to fund the regeneration of the town centre, disabled facilities grant (as our older population expands) and funding for more energy efficient equipment; the outcome of the Regional Spatial Strategy and what this means for the future housing mix of the District and the growth and consequence of an ageing population on service provision.
- 1.15 As a result of these changes, Cabinet recommends the following priorities to Full Council:-
 - Economic Development.
 - Town Centre.
 - Value for Money.
 - One Community.
 - Housing.
 - Climate Change.
- 1.16 These priorities will drive budget decisions in forthcoming years, including the immediate budget round for 2010/2011.
- 1.17 Addendum B to Appendix 1 attached, sets out the proposed key deliverables, resourcing issues and possible measures of success for each priority.
- 1.18 It is proposed to introduce a new value for the Council: Value for Money.
- 1.19 Members are asked to consider whether the “Building Pride” strap line is still appropriate now that we have achieved a “Fair” rating.
- 1.20 The Vision is still considered appropriate.

2. Bromsgrove District Overview

Geography

- 2.1 Bromsgrove District is in north Worcestershire, covering a large area of approximately 83.9 square miles. Whilst only 14 miles from the centre of Birmingham, the Lickey Hills country park provides an important dividing line between the urban West Midlands Conurbation and the rural landscape of north Worcestershire. Ninety percent of the District is greenbelt which creates difficulties for housing policy. Four radial routes pass through the District, each served by railway lines and major roads, including the M5 running north and south, the M42 running east and west, with further links to the M40 and M6.
- 2.2 Data suggests that 16,643 people travel into the District for work, with 26,112 (29%) of the population travelling out, a net commute out of 9,469.¹ Our main communities are detailed in the map (below). The District has no wards in the top 20% most deprived in England.²

Table 1 – Map of Bromsgrove District

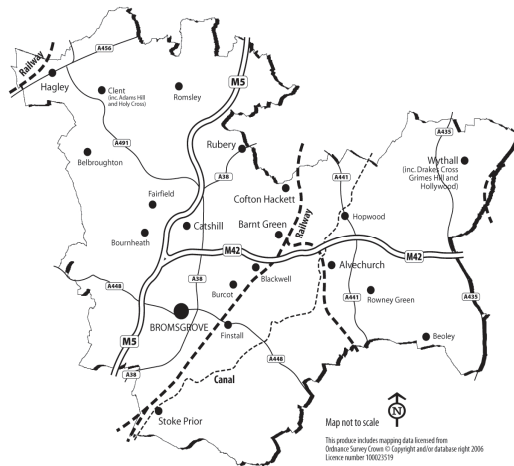
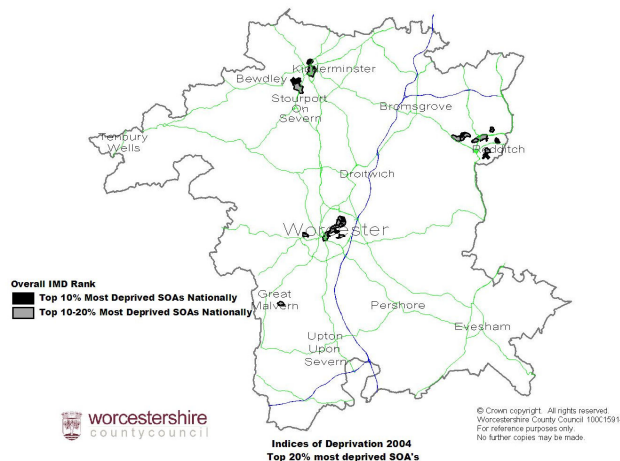


Table 2 – Map of County Deprivation



¹ ONS 2001 Census
² DCLG Indices of Mu

Population

- 2.3 The population of the District is 92,300³. The over 80s population is set to increase by 87.5% and the 70-79 population by 41.3%. This is one of the defining characteristics of the District. The Bromsgrove Profile, undertaken for the LSP states-⁴

“This increasing aging population may have a significant impact on policy and planning for the District, with specific regard to community safety, health and the strength of communities.”

Table 3 - Population projections by age, 2007 - 2026

Age Group	Thousands								% Change
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2016	2021	2026	
0-9	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.9	9.9	9.5	8.6	8.4	-15.2%
10-19	11.9	11.9	11.6	11.1	10.8	9.8	9.8	9.3	-21.8%
20-29	8.3	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.6	8.0	7.4	-10.8%
30-39	11.8	11.2	10.7	10.2	9.9	8.3	8.1	8.6	-27.1%
40-49	14.6	14.9	14.9	14.9	14.8	13.0	10.5	9.0	-38.4%
50-59	12.8	12.5	12.4	12.4	12.7	13.5	14.0	12.3	-3.9%
60-69	10.8	11.1	11.4	11.5	11.7	11.6	11.4	12.3	13.9%
70-79	7.5	7.7	7.8	8.0	8.0	9.3	10.6	10.6	41.3%
80+	4.8	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.3	6.0	7.2	9.0	87.5%
Total	92.3	92.1	91.7	91.4	91.1	89.6	88.2	87.1	-5.6%

Source: ONS projections - Research and Intelligence Unit Worcestershire County Council

- 2.4 There are 37,492 households in the District⁵. The current housing allocation is for approximately 100 houses per year. The recent housing market survey, commissioned by BDHT and the Council, suggests an estimated need of 7,350 properties across all tenures. To date the debate has tended to focus on affordable housing; however, the survey has also identified the need for housing for older people. The current review of the Regional Spatial Strategy is likely to require homes for 3,000-7,000 households to be built in the District in the next 25 years and it is also probable that the District will have to take some of Redditch Borough Council's housing allocation.
- 2.5 The black and minority ethnic population (BME) is 6.4%, which is low for the region and nationally. This percentage comprises 1% Irish, 2.6% Asian, 1.2% Mixed, 1.0% Black and 0.6% Chinese.⁶ There are no definitive data sources for the migrant worker population living in

³ ONS 2007 Mid-Year Population Estimates

⁴ ONS 2006 Subnational population projections

⁵ Worcestershire County Council RSS Household Forecasts Report 2008

⁶ ONS 2006 Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group

Bromsgrove, but indicative figures suggest this is in the region of 0.2%.⁷ The BME population appears to have doubled in recent years.

Economy

- 2.6 The economic picture of the District is comparatively positive despite the current economic downturn. The mean household income is £38,690, which is the highest in the county (the County average is £35,656).⁸ Whilst the average household income is high, it is less than £25,000 per annum in Charford, Sidemoor, Catshill and St Johns. There are three major areas of economic regeneration within the District: the Longbridge site, Bromsgrove town centre and Bromsgrove railway station. Unemployment, whilst comparatively low, has risen from 1.8% a year ago to 3.7% (March 2009), with the benefits claimant rate being over 10%. The area action plan for the Longbridge is in place, but stalled due to the changing economic conditions. Bromsgrove town centre needs a major overhaul to encourage local shopping and to be able to compete with neighbouring shopping centres. Bromsgrove station's funding is almost secured. The new station will have a significant impact on Bromsgrove town, due to the planned Cross City Line electrification being extended to Bromsgrove and as a result bringing the town more into Birmingham City's economic orbit. VAT registrations have risen slightly (pre "credit crunch" data) and are consistent with the national trend away from manufacturing, towards more service based industries

Sustainable Development

- 2.7 Last year, Full Council agreed to fund the joint appointment, with Redditch Borough Council, of a Climate Change officer. Since then, the Council has, for the first time, calculated the total carbon emissions it emits from its activities, which totals a staggering 2,500,000 KGs per annum. Each property in the District emits on average over 10 tonnes. It is critical that the Council starts to reduce these figures.

Education, Deprivation and Health

- 2.8 The percentage of the District's population qualified to NVQ Level 4 is significantly higher than average. GCSE results gained at local authority schools and colleges in Worcestershire in 2008 were amongst the highest in the country (64.4% achieved five or more GCSEs at A*-C).⁹ The District ranks 299th out of 354 councils on the national index of multiple deprivation 2007 (where 1 is the most deprived), making the District one of the least deprived nationally.¹⁰ It is also the only district in Worcestershire to have become less deprived since 2004.¹¹ Only 640

⁷ Worcester County Economic Assessment 2007-2008

⁸ PayCheck 2008

⁹ Worcestershire LEA Key Stage 4 results 2007/08

¹⁰ & 16 DCLG Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007

¹¹ ibid

households are in receipt of benefits in the District, one of the lowest figures in Worcestershire.¹² As a result, identifying the vulnerable within our communities is more difficult than a district with geographic areas of deprivation.

- 2.9 Generally, the District's population is healthier than the regional average. Young people (18-24) have a high risk status being the most likely to smoke, binge drink and not take exercise. Potentially, we could be storing up problems in our young people. A Primary Care Trust (PCT) annual report noted that our children's health is good, but there is a need for more child and adolescent mental health services. The PCT retain a concern (shared by the Council's own Community Safety Team) that domestic violence remains "common place". The rate of teenage pregnancies in Bromsgrove in 2006 was 23.6 conceptions per 1,000 females, which is almost half that of the England average of 41.1.¹³

Crime and Fear of Crime

- 2.10 At the end of the 2007/08 year, crime had reduced by 32% in the District, surpassing the target of a 17.5% reduction from the 2003/04 baseline results.¹⁴ This was exceptional when compared to the national reduction of just 4%, and the county-wide figure of 24%. Reductions were seen in all British Crime Survey comparator crime types, with the largest decrease being seen in domestic burglary at 53% and the smallest in criminal damage which only reduced by 12% compared to the baseline year 2003/04.
- 2.11 Fear of crime, however, remains a problem in the District despite the reduction in actual crime in 2007/08. Residents are most fearful of house burglary, vandalism or damage to property and having their car broken in to, despite significant reductions in all of these crime types during 2007/08; however, residents most commonly identify issues like teenagers hanging around, rubbish and graffiti as their top concerns.¹⁵

¹² Worcester County Economic Assessment 2007-2008

¹³ DH 2008 Bromsgrove Health Profile

¹⁴ British Crime Survey 2008

¹⁵ West Mercia Crime and Safety Survey 2008

3. National Policy

- 3.1 Last year we reported that local government was undergoing the most significant statutory change since the Local Government Act (1999). A year on, this is still the case, but we are now in the implementation stage.

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007)

- 3.2 The District Council became a failing council for many reasons, but one of them was undoubtedly a lack of awareness of the changes that were happening to local government at a national level. The Council must not repeat that mistake and must pay due regard to the changes in this Act. A Member briefing has been arranged on 24 September 2009, which will cover Comprehensive Area Assessment, which is the main legislative change.
- 3.3 The Act has introduced four key changes to the regulatory framework of local government. These are:-

- The replacement of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) with Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) from 01 April 2009. This shifts the regulatory emphasis from the Council's performance to the performance of all public bodies in an area, in this case Worcestershire. This makes working in partnership more critical than ever, in particular, both the District and County Local Strategic Partnerships. Members can clearly see the benefits of partnership working at a local level, in particular, the crime and disorder reduction partnership and PACT meetings.
- New, more focused, Local Area Agreements (LAAs). The County LSP is currently working towards delivering the 2008/2011 LAA and the Council and its local partners have a role to play in delivering the targets. Section 4 of this report considers these targets, progress and the Council's role in delivering them.
- The replacement of Best Value Performance Indicators with new National Indicators and a Place Survey. The new national indicators are much more outcome focused and perception focused, hence the Place Survey. The Council has incorporated many of the new NIs into its Council Plan 2009/2012 and is currently undertaking a fundamental review of the District's Sustainable Community Strategy, making use of the information provided by the new NIs and Place Survey. Further information on the Place Survey results can be found in Section 5 of this report. The Council has a good track of record of using survey data and using the results as part of the budget decision making process, so we are well placed to respond to the Place Survey, but it is worth reminding ourselves that the Place Survey is statutory, which gives the results an extra significance.

- Efficiency. Every Council is now subject to a net cashable efficiency target of 3% per annum. The Act is encouraging the delivery of this target through regional improvement and efficiency partnerships and through inviting councils to become two tier pathfinders or unitary authorities (and therefore remove some of the structural inefficiency in local government). The Council's main response to this is the shared services programme with Redditch Borough Council.

3.4 Although the Council will no longer be subject to a separate CPA, we will still be subject to an annual Organisational Assessment, made up of an assessment of our use of resources and managing performance. We are currently awaiting the results of these assessments.

3.5 There were a range of other issues set out in the Act, but these have been tackled later in the report, in order to provide some reasonable grouping of all the changes that are occurring. The extent of the changes should be a cause for concern for the Council. There are a tremendous number of initiatives coming out of Central Government. The Council simply cannot respond to all of them and needs to be able to consider these in the light of its own priorities and local issues and create synergies between national priorities and initiatives and our local priorities and initiatives.

Community Empowerment and Neighbourhoods

3.6 The new Local Government and Involvement in Health Act also includes a general "duty to involve" residents (compared to the previous duty to consult residents). This was significantly expanded upon in the White Paper: Communities in Control, which is now progressing its way through the House of Commons as the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill. Key elements include:-

- A duty to promote democracy. Councils will be expected to do more to in terms of encouraging young people, giving practical support to councillors and information to residents. The Council is reasonably well placed to respond to this duty, with its annual children and young people's event "U Decide", linked to the County's youth forum, PACT meetings and Local Neighbourhood Partnerships. The Council expects to invest in this area through the next budget round, in particular, money to children and young people to vote on and the further expansion of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- The power of petitions is being strengthened with each local authority being required to have a "petition scheme"; and

- The power of scrutiny is being updated so that each local authority has a dedicated “scrutiny officer”, whose role is to promote and support the scrutiny function in each local authority.

Crime Strategy

- 3.7 Last year we reported that the Government would be producing a green paper on policing. This has now been published and the Policing and Crime Bill is on the Government’s legislative programme. There is no direct impact on the Council from this Bill; however, the Bill will encourage neighbourhood policing. The Council is well placed to respond to this agenda with a very effective Community Safety Partnership (overall crime rate down by 32% in the District 2005-2008) and a high level of commitment from Members and senior officers to Partners and Communities Together meetings.

Economic Development

- 3.8 The “Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration” set out proposals to given local authorities (upper tier) new powers to drive and incentivise local prosperity. This has now found its way into the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill, which includes a requirement for upper tier councils to undertake an economic assessment of their area. Last year we reported that the County Council is actively involved in these changes and this strategic economic development is not a function of district councils; however, whilst the County Council is now beginning to bring its considerable resource and expertise to bear on the town centre, Longbridge and the railway station, the economic development of the town centre (and the northern districts in general) may need a further boost. The Council has clearly benefited from the joint County/District appointment of a project manager for the town centre. A similar appointment with a focus on economic growth, in particular, bringing in larger businesses to the town centre and District as a whole may be appropriate. This is likely to be addressed through the forthcoming single management team for both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council, as the SERCO report proposed a Head of Regeneration. If this post is created through the shared services model, a priority will be the development of a North Worcestershire Economic Development Strategy, to help the area combat the impact of the recession which, while we may soon be technically out of recession, is likely to be with us for sometime and to position the three northern towns, in relation to Birmingham and Worcester. Funding is likely to be required in the short term to work up a draft strategy and a bid may be put forward through the forthcoming budget cycle.

Housing

- 3.9 The LSP Board and the Council have clearly identified that an appropriate housing mix is fundamental to achieving a balanced community. The

priority of the Council has always been Housing, rather than just affordable housing, but the debate has tended to focus on affordable housing i.e. housing for younger people. The recent interim review of the Council's Housing Strategy has clearly identified the need for housing that is appropriate for our older residents as well. The Core Strategy, which is effectively the District's floor plan, cannot respond to these issues until the examination in public of the proposed Regional Spatial Strategy 2 is completed (expected first draft October 2009). The Council is challenging its RSS2 allocation, because while the Government is demanding a significant increase in housing numbers within the County, very few of these are set to be in the District, with the growth areas being Redditch and Worcester City. The situation is now further confused by Central Government pressure for even higher housing targets (the Government's draft legislative programme states that its vision is for 3,000,000 new homes by 2020, which will include up to 10 new Eco-towns). The release of surplus public sector land for housing is expected to provide an additional 20,000 homes, which is relevant to our future plans for the town centre.

Community Cohesion and Equalities

- 3.10 The equalities agenda has provided the Council with a number of important forums for listening and understanding the issues of some of our less vocal and, in some cases, more vulnerable communities. Age and disability (often together) are the two most significant aspects of the equalities agenda to Bromsgrove District. The Government has been pushing the equalities agenda in local government for some time, largely through the Local Government Equalities Standard and has recently launched its Equalities Bill, which will introduce a single equality duty on public bodies, increase transparency and improve enforcement of this agenda. It is perhaps unfortunate that terms like "enforcement" are being used around this agenda; generally as this agenda has a compliance feel to it, when understanding all our customers' is consistent with good business practice and our Customer First value.
- 3.11 The Council is comparatively well placed to respond to the equalities agenda. The Council has recently achieved Level 3 of the Local Government Equality Standard and there is now a general acceptance within the Council of the value of the Disabled Users Group and Equalities and Diversity Forum. The Council can also begin to point to projects like the new town centre toilets, Diwali celebrations and the community transport scheme, as examples of us listening and responding to our community's aspirations
- 3.12 We have previously noted that the older population is set to increase dramatically over the next 25 years and we also noted last year that the Audit Commission's "Don't Stop Me Now" report which highlighted that councils are not sufficiently age proofing their work or future plans. The Commission recommend a closer consideration of demographic profiles,

more innovation and forward thinking as key areas for improvement. The Council is now undertaking a scrutiny task group on older people (which was one of the Audit Commission's recommendations). The Council needs to improve its understanding in this area, not just focusing on some of the current issues e.g. car parking, but a more fundamental consideration of the needs of an ageing population.

Children

- 3.13 Last year we noted the creation of the new Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which was expected to provide a further boost to the "Every Child Matters" agenda. We also noted that the new department will also be responsible for the Government's Respect set of policies, previously with the Home Office, which suggested a move away from focusing on the young from a criminal perspective to a more supportive one; as Anne Longfield, Chief Executive of 4Children commented "the Government puts a lot of money into young children, but all we have offered teenagers so far is ASBOs". The Leader and Executive Director Partnerships and Projects share a particular concern that we are demonising our young people and not supporting them with enough facilities and support (both Local Neighbourhood Partnerships have been active in this area as well). Children and young people are a key aspect of the one community priority. The need for facilities should be set alongside the fact that there must be more for children to do today and in previous generations, but feedback from residents through the Customer Panel and the more recent Place Survey, suggest that we are less keen now for children to play in unsupervised settings. Good parenting remains the key issue, rather than lack of things to do.
- 3.14 The "baby P" tragedy has heightened even further concerns over child safety and safeguarding. There are 531 looked after children in Worcestershire (45 of whom have a home address in our District). These figures given an indication of the continued need to focus on this agenda.
- 3.15 The Government's legislative programme includes a new Education and Skills Bill, which is intended to strengthen the capacity of Children's Trusts to deliver the "Every Child Matters" outcomes and a proposed new National Apprenticeship Service. The Council may wish to consider how it can play its part in improving skills and reducing youth employment through apprenticeship and graduate schemes.

Transport

- 3.16 The Council continues to manage the concessions for over 60s on bus travel and Cabinet agreed recommendations from the scrutiny review of public transport are being delivered primarily by the County Council and the District Council, where appropriate. The community transport scheme is about to go live and the bus station in the town centre has been given a face lift. At a national level, the main change of the last 12 months has

been the fiscal expansion of capital schemes to bolster the economy during the recession. As a result, Worcestershire County Council has been successful in securing £5,000,000 worth of funding through Regional Funding Advice to Central Government. The County Council is now in detailed negotiations with Network Rail to finalise the cost of the scheme and total funding package.

Third Sector

- 3.17 Last year we reported that as part of the new NIs, the Government has introduced two new performance indicators for the voluntary sector. NI6 seeks to measure the level of participation by residents in regular volunteering and NI7 seeks to measure whether there is a suitable “environment for a thriving third sector”. NI7 is a composite measure made up of an entire national third sector survey, the results of which can be viewed at a County level. As part of putting together this report, the survey has been downloaded and referred to the Executive Director Partnerships and Projects for inclusion on a future COMPACT meeting agenda.
- 3.18 The Council has undertaken a number of initiatives with the voluntary sector over the last year, in particular, active support for National Volunteer week and the establishment of a community transport scheme with the WRVS.

Single Status

- 3.19 Single Status is in this section, as the Council was obliged to deliver it as part of the national Single Status/Equal Pay/National Pay and Reward Strategy. We have now successfully delivered Single Status and are currently working on the appeals stage, post implementation. Members will be aware of the impact on staff morale of Single Status, but it is to staffs’ credit that the Council has continued to perform and improve.

Climate Change

- 3.20 Last year the Council agreed to make Climate Change a priority and invest in a joint Climate Change Officer post with Redditch Borough Council. The main development since last year’s report is the Climate Change Act (2008), which commits the UK to reduce CO2 emissions by 80% by 2050 (from 1990 levels). All of us, organisations and individuals, will need to play our part in delivering this very stretching target. The Council is emitting over 2,500,000 KGs of CO2 per annum as a result of its activities. The joint Climate Change Officer has recommended that we initially commit ourselves to a 6% reduction over three years, which is lower than the 9% reduction, required over the same time frame, for domestic emissions, which is a Local Area Agreement target.

Customer Service

- 3.21 The Audit Commission continues to view customer service as an issue of access i.e. ensuring all sections of our communities can access our services. This is a legitimate aspect of customer service, but ignores more basic considerations of customer care. If the Council is to truly deliver its value of Customer First and deliver excellent customer service, this will involve improved access channels, but also a significant improvement in the level of customer service and care provided by the Council. The Council now has all of the infrastructure in place i.e. the customer service centre, spatial project etc., but needs to develop a customer focused culture across all of our services (a recommendation from the most recent CPA report). This will involve all teams improving how they listen to customers, how they market services to customers, reducing avoidable contacts (a form of waste), how they communicate to customers and how they feedback to customers. Cabinet agreed a new Customer Access Strategy in June 2009, which includes a range of activities, including: Customer First Part 3 workshops, two lean systems pilots, the development of team Customer First action plans, a new more user friendly Internet platform, plain English training for staff and subject to successful budget bids, marketing software, an Older People's Services Directory and a similar publication for children and young people.

4. Regional/Local Policy

Worcestershire Local Area Agreement

- 4.1 The key strategic document which makes the link between national, regional and local policy is the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Through the Local Government and Involvement in Health Act (2007), the Government has placed even more emphasis on LAAs, particularly, as the inspection regime for local government will now be on an area basis through CAA. As a result the County LSP has had to negotiate a new LAA, which contains thirteen priorities for the County for the next three years (2008/2009 to 2010/2011). A LAA is a form of contract between Central Government and the County LSP with a focus on outcome targets. The County LAA flows out of the evidence based County Sustainable Community Strategy. The District Council responded to the consultation on this Strategy. The following paragraphs provide a brief commentary on each of the LAA blocks in relation to Bromsgrove District.

Block A: Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI2	% of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood.	63.0%	61.40%	High figure good
NI 17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	11.4%	12.3%	Low figure good
NI18	Adult re-offending rates.	-7.77%	No data	No figure available.
NI21	Dealing with concerns about ASB	32.5%	27.8%	High figure is good.
NI195a	Improved street cleanliness.	8	2%	Low figure is good.
NI39	Alcohol related admissions per 1000 population.	1,652	1,229	Red flag from Audit Commission, but substantially below target.
LI 4	Assault with injury.	7.12	4.739	Well below county average.

- 4.2 The District has a strong Crime and Disorder Partnership which is contributing strongly to this outcome. The overall crime rate in the District has fallen by 32% between 2005 and 2008 (target 17.5%). Despite actual improvements in reducing crime, we are not achieving the perception measure targets, as set out in the LAA; consequently, this must be an area of focus going forward.

Block B: A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI186	Per capita CO2 emissions in LA area.	-9%	6.3	6.1 tonnes produced in 2005/06, 6.3 tonnes in 2006/07. Therefore performance is not improving.
NI188	Adapting to climate change.	Level 2 for District	0	
NI193	Municipal waste land filled.	48%	57.72%	
LI 1a	All vulnerable areas identified, integrated flood risk mgmt plans developed.	100%	No data	No data available
LI 1b	Improved Flood Warning System in place at Parish level		No data	No data available

- 4.3 These figures represent a considerable challenge to the Council. We have appointed a Climate Change Officer, but have a long way to go before we can start to make a serious dent in these figures. The 9% reduction in household emission over three years is very ambitious (but necessary), while the recent Climate Change Act (2008) has committed the UK to an 80% reduction by 2050.

Block C: Economic Success that is Shared By All

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI117	16-18 year olds NEET.	4.4%	2.6% (May 08 data)	6.68% in Charford is the highest. Lowest is 2.13% in Stoke Prior.
NI152	Working age people on benefit.	8.4%	11.1%	Gap between unemployment rate (3.7%) and this figure represents "worklessness).
NI163	Working age population qualified to Level 2.	79%	75.8%	District figure is above the County average.
NI166	Average earnings of employees.	94.3%	No data	Bromsgrove's average earnings figure is £406. Wyre Forest is the lowest at £399 and Malvern's the highest at £477
NI171	Business registration rate.	115.5% of WM Reg. Av.		No data will be available until Winter 2009.

- 4.4 These figures are interesting, as they paint a different picture from the high household income figures and comparatively low unemployment. The difference between the unemployment rate and NI152 represents “worklessness”, which appears to be in the region of 7%; whilst the average earnings figure indicates there is a marked difference between those who live and work in the District and those who commute out to work. The LSP Board is beginning to put more emphasis on economic development and the Council is likely to do the same with a possible North Worcestershire Economic Strategy.

Block D: Improving Health and Well Being

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI8	Adult participation in sport.	25.7%	25.6%	23.9% figure also supplied by County, which is different.
NI56	Obesity among primary school children.	15.5%	15.3% (2007/08)	Linthurst, Alvechurch, Hollywood, Cofton Hackett, parts of St Johns, Slideslow, Waseley and Whitford all have over 20% of children overweight.
NI112	Under 18 conception rate.	26.1	No data	None of the 23 Bromsgrove wards feature in the top 12 wards identified by the County Council.
NI121	Mortality rate from circulatory disease in under 75s.	62.03	62.5	2005-2007 figure. % declining.
NI123	Smoking prevalence per 100,000 population.	682	721.5	2007/2008 figure. Smoking prevalence is increasing and is above the County average of 705.
NI133	Timeliness of social care packages (4 weeks).	92%	85%	County figure.
NI142	% of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	98.02%	97.52%	County figure.
NI146	Adults with learning disabilities in employment		No data	
NI150	Adults receiving secondary mental health services in employment.	566	No data	

- 4.5 The key contribution that the Council can make to this block is improving people’s lifestyles through supporting community sports organisations and through direct leisure provision e.g. the Dolphin Centre. The District’s population is relatively affluent and therefore relatively healthy. Through

previous budget rounds, the Council has invested in this area e.g. additional sports development officers and the refurbishment of the Dolphin Centre. As a result, the District has high levels of participation in sports and has almost achieved the 2010/11 LAA target. Similarly, the District has already met its target for alcohol related admissions to hospital; however, this indicator has been “red flagged” by the Audit Commission, as there has been an 89% increase in admissions between 2002/2003 and 2007/2008.

Block E: Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI 54	Services for disabled children		No data	
NI110	Young people's participation in positive activities.	83.3%	72.2%	Worcestershire baseline. No District figure.
LI 2	Children who have experienced bullying.	33%	35%	County figure.

- 4.6 The Council can only make a limited contribution to these indicators, as they are primarily delivered by the County's Childrens Services Department. That said, “The Trunk” will have a focus on health and positive activities for young people. Our Sports Development Team and the Dolphin Centre can contribute to reducing obesity in our children (Band D). The Council is also committed to increasing its engagement with young people through events like “U Decide”.

Block F: Stronger Communities

Ref.	Indicator	10/11 Target	District 08/09 Outturn	Comments
NI116	Proportion of children in poverty.	12.0%	13.9%	County figure, but two super output areas in District in top 30%. One in Sidemoor, one in Charford.
NI154	Net additional homes provided	1,830	542	Both figures are County figures. Bromsgrove's figure was 135. This District figure is the lowest for all 6 districts..
NI155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	450	145	The 450 is a County figure and the 145 a District figure.
NI169	Non principal roads where maintenance should be considered.	8.4%	11.02%	2007/2008 figure.
NI175	Access to services and facilities by public transport.	94%	83.2%	Proxy indicator required as indicator definition complicated..
NI187	Tackling fuel poverty.	SAP	8.42%	This is the % with low

		below 35- 7.68%		efficiency, where a low % is better.
LI 3	Successful new claims generated for pension credit, attendance allowance and disability living allowance	2,700	No data	

- 4.7 This block tends to be a catchall for targets that do not fit in the other blocks. The maintenance of roads is a key concern for residents, but is relatively low level in the scheme of things. Transport was a key issue for many residents, particularly older residents and public transport usage. Undoubtedly the key indicator in this block is the affordable housing target. The Council is exceeding its target of 80 units a year; however, this is not sufficient to meet the identified housing need.

District Community Strategy and Partner Feedback

- 4.8 The Council has a statutory responsibility to produce its own Sustainable Community Strategy, which provides a long term vision and strategy for the District, bringing together the public sector organisations operating in the District, the voluntary sector and private sector. The District's Community Strategy is currently undergoing its three year fundamental review.
- 4.9 Last year, the Council invited LSP partners to part of its Cabinet/CMT away day. This year, a separate away day was held for the LSP Board. The Board considered contextual information on the District and (subject to Full Council approval) has set itself the following draft priorities:-

Our Vision: “We will make Bromsgrove District a better place to work, live and visit by driving forward change.”

Objectives (Total of 6)	Communities that are safe and feel safe	A better environment for today and tomorrow	Economic success that is shared by all	Improving health and wellbeing	Meeting the needs of children and young people	Stronger communities
Priorities (Total of 13)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and Communication Intergenerational Activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing CO₂ emissions Adaptation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Town Centre Economic Development Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Lifestyle Choices 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Being Healthy Marketing existing services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger Communities Balanced Communities Older People
Key Deliverables (under each Priority) (Total of 34)	<p><u>Marketing and Communication</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Changing perception of crime Tolerance Promoting area as a nice/safe place to live <p><u>Intergenerational activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> History Sharing skills and experiences 	<p><u>Reducing CO₂ emissions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Business Transport <p><u>Adaptation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding Planning Policy 	<p><u>Town Centre</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion Improve retail offer Improve public buildings Improve High Street appearance <p><u>Economic Development Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop railway station New businesses Strengthening regional links 	<p><u>Mental Health</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Services Improving perception and confidence building <p><u>Lifestyle Choices</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol Maintaining low levels of smoking Diet and physical activity 	<p><u>Being Healthy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in positive activities Healthy lifestyles <p><u>Marketing existing services</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Positive attitudes Engagement 	<p><u>Stronger Communities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Trunk Catshill (?) Local Neighbourhood Partnerships <p><u>Balanced Communities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate housing mix Appropriate employment mix <p><u>Older People</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Age Well Housing Access to services

- 4.10 The key changes, compared to last year, are: an increased focus on managing perception (in order to respond to the Place Survey), a tighter focus on climate change (CO2 emissions and adaptations), the need for a North Worcestershire Economic Development Strategy and a wider focus on housing to work towards a “balanced community” through appropriate housing provision. The LSP Board, also recognised that it needs to put some resource behind the Older Person’s Theme Group.

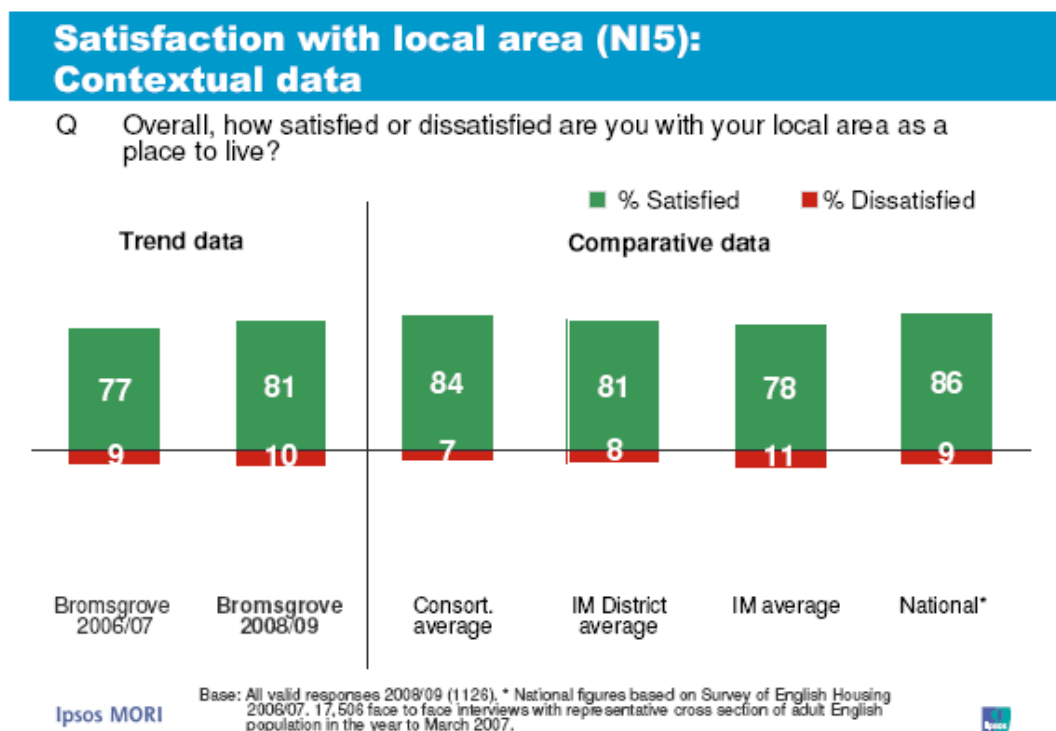
5. Community Engagement

- 5.1 In previous years we have reported the findings of the quality of life survey and customer satisfaction survey. The Government has now introduced a statutory bi-annual Place Survey, which effectively replaces the surveys we were undertaking.

Local Area

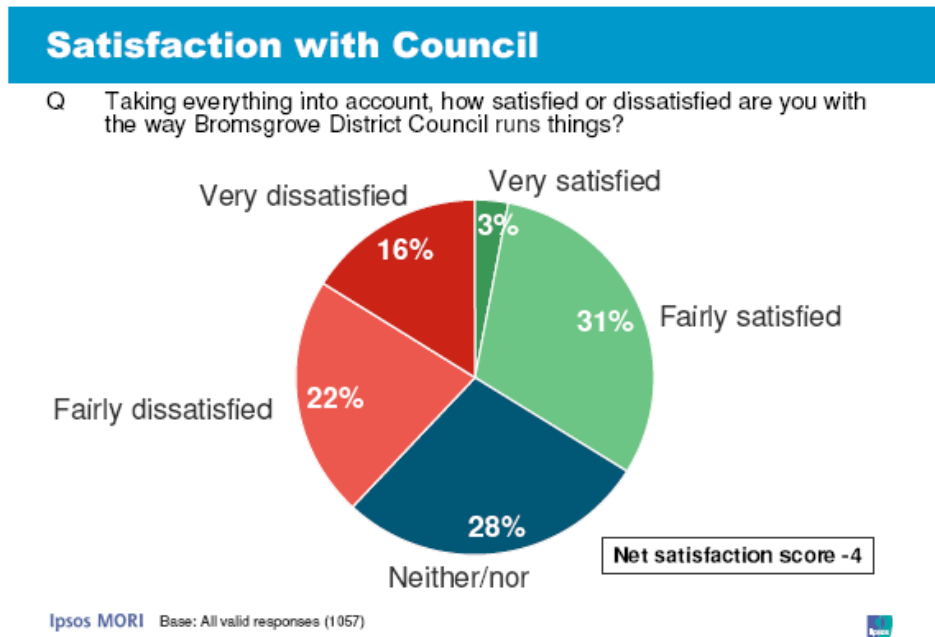
- 5.2 Overall, four fifths (81%) of our residents are satisfied with the District as a place to live:-

Table 4 – Satisfaction with Local Area



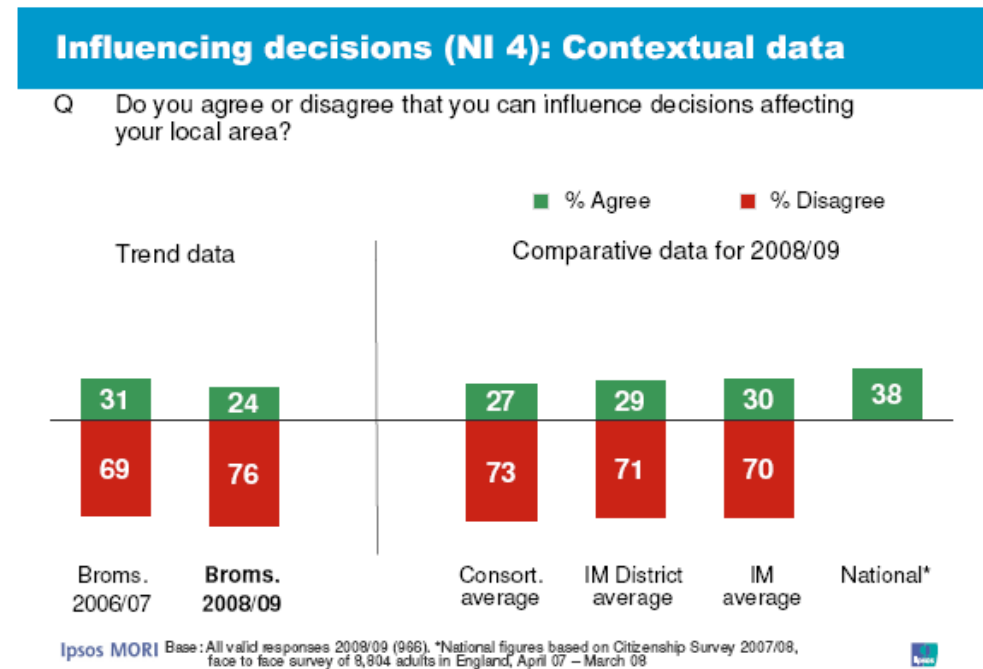
- 5.3 Dissatisfaction is highest amongst 18-34 year olds and lowest amongst 35-44 year olds. Only 11% of over 65s are either fairly or very dissatisfied with the District. Bromsgrove is spot on the district average. Similarly, 91% of residents are satisfied with their home as a place to live (the district average is 90%). 91% of residents feel safe in the day and 82% of residents get on with people from different backgrounds.
- 5.4 These are generally very positive statistics; however, only 34% of residents are satisfied with the Council, down from 51% and compared to the County average of 46%:-

Table 5 – Satisfaction with Council



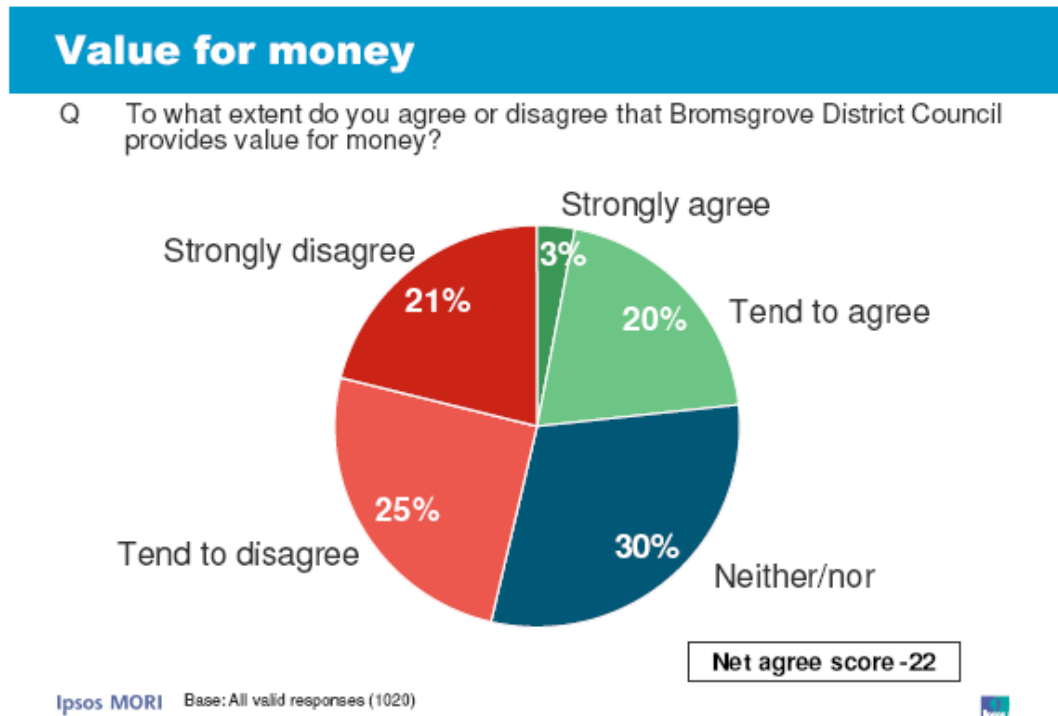
5.5 Similarly, only 24% of residents feel able to influence decisions of the Council (the district average is 29%).

Table 6 – Influencing Decisions



- 5.6 Only 23% believe the Council delivers value for money, compared to a district average of 36%:-

Table 7 – Perception of Value for Money



- 5.7 These figures should not come as a great surprise. The CPA inspection identified that it would take some time for the Council’s reputation to catch up with the improvements it has actually made. The Ipsos Mori report states:-

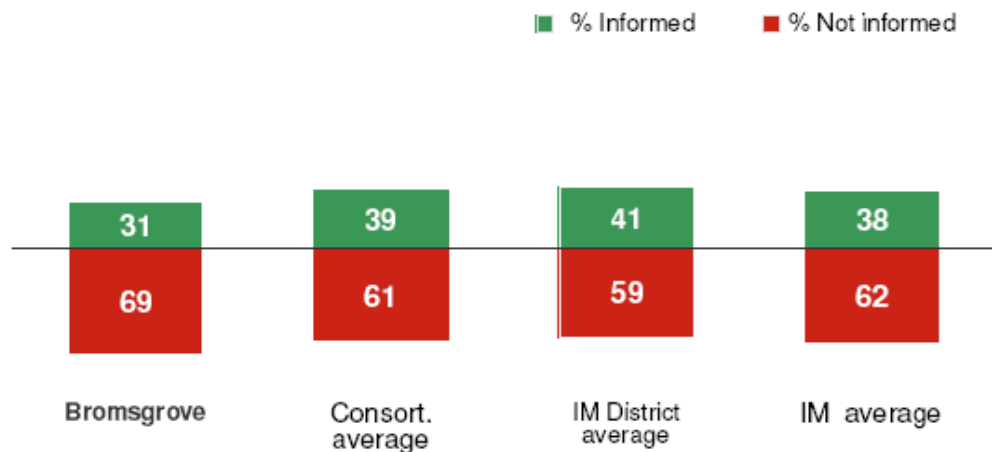
“a clear way in which Bromsgrove District Council might greatly improve satisfaction levels is by keeping people more informed of the services that the Council provides – something which people feel it currently does poorly in comparison to wider Worcestershire. It is possible that residents who are unaware of these services may be underrating the extent to which the Council provides value for money”.

- 5.8 Last year’s budget jury certainly backed this assertion. There was a clear change in the jury’s perception of the Council as they attended the sessions and understood more about the Council and the pressures politicians have in meeting competing demands. Last year’s jury voted for money to be put behind more marketing activities.
- 5.9 The Place Survey contains the following two graphs which support Ipsos Mori’s assertion:-

Table 8 – Being Kept Informed

Being kept informed: Comparative data

Q Overall, how well informed do you feel about local public services?

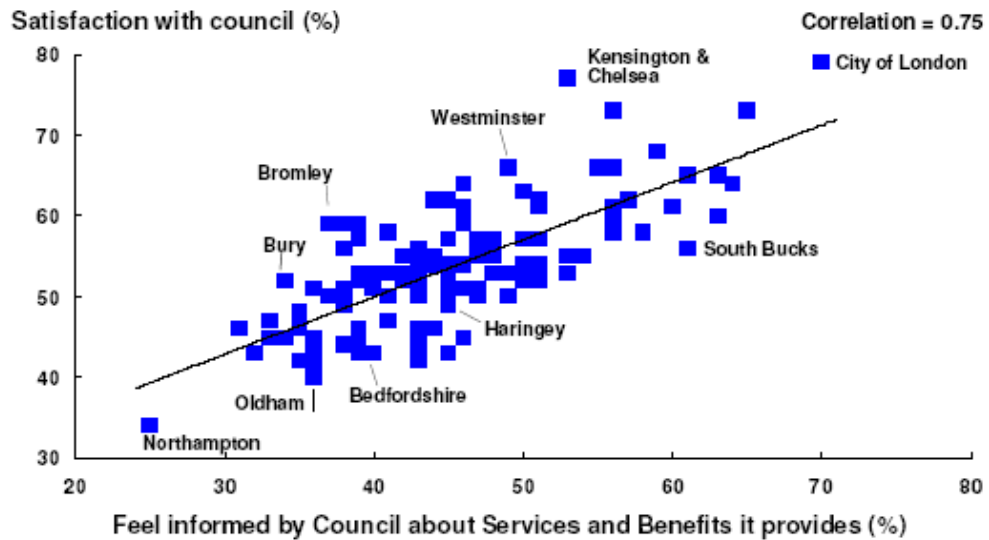


Ipsos MORI Base: All valid responses (1045)



Table 9 – Correlation Between Being Informed and Satisfaction

Satisfaction and Feeling Informed



Base: BVPI 2006 (130 Single, Upper Tier and District Ipsos MORI client authorities)

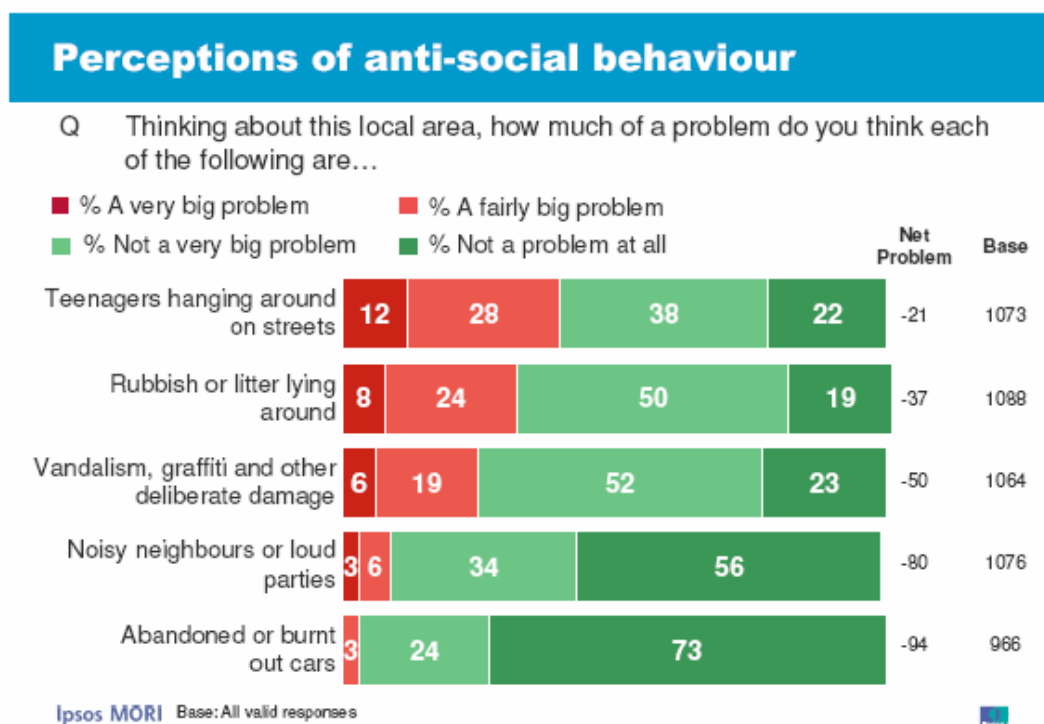
Source: Ipsos MORI

- 5.10 This correlation and regression analysis demonstrates a very strong link between being kept informed and satisfaction, with a positive correlation of 0.75 (the maximum being +1 or -1).
- 5.11 There is a school of thought that spending money on marketing the Council's services and is a waste and should instead be spent on delivering more services; however, marketing our services is consistent with increasing customer access to services, increased income and a more informed and engaged electorate.

Community Safety

- 5.12 The Council has a very strong working relationship with the Police, through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The Partnership has achieved a significant reduction in crime over the last three years (-32%), which is perhaps reflected in residents key concern regarding anti-social behaviour, being teenagers hanging around, which in itself it not an offence.

Table 10 – Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour



- 5.13 Further analysis in the Place Survey shows nearly all the types of anti-social behaviour being perceived as less of a problem by residents, with the exception of people being drunk or rowdy in public, which has increased by 2% points.

Improving the District

- 5.14 The improvement in reducing crime is reflected in the graph overleaf, which compares our residents' changing priorities over time. Crime as a priority has fallen from 40% to 24%, which is a very large fall. The top three issues would come as no surprise to Members or officers. There is little the District Council can do to change the first one and while the maintenance of non-principal roads is a LAA target, reflecting customer feedback, this is an area that is likely to be cut first, once the serious public spending cuts start to feed into local government in the 2011/12 budget round.
- 5.15 Activities for teenagers has come out from previous customer panel surveys. There is surely more for teenagers to do now than any previous generation? The high percentage probably reflects the anti-social behaviour aspect that older people do not like teenagers hanging around, regardless of whether they are breaking the law. Teenagers hang around for safety and to be unsupervised, so we will need to think carefully about how to respond to this issue. We also need to remember that we have invested in both capital schemes, diversionary activities and sports development officers in recent years and our "offer" to teenagers is already good, so consideration needs to be given to marketing more strongly the "offer" that we make. Both shopping and transport are being addressed through the town centre regeneration.

Table 11 – Residents’ Top Priorities for Improvement

Priorities for improvement and changes over time

Q Thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?

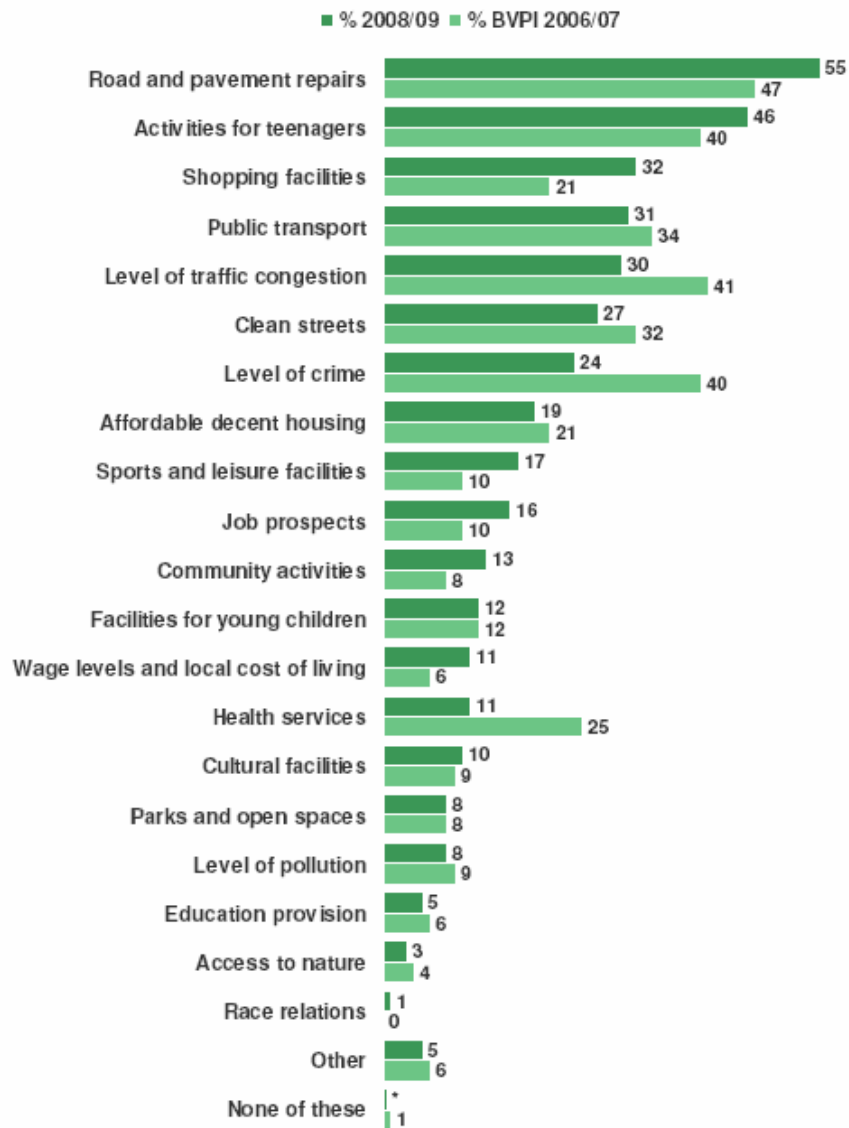
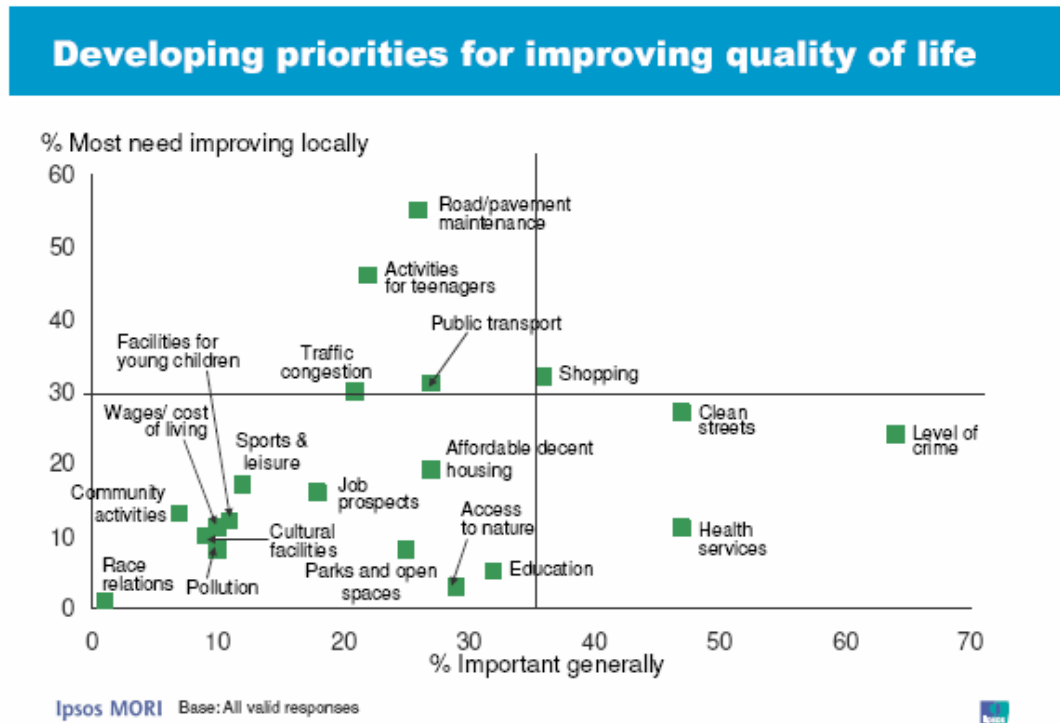


Table 12 – Importance and Most In Need of Improvement



5.16 It is interesting to note that shopping is the only area that is deemed by the public to be of high importance and in high need for improvement.

Budget Jury

5.17 Unfortunately, this year’s budget jury had to be suspended due to the Shared Services agenda. The Cabinet/CMT away day expressed a continued commitment to the jury and its potential expansion in future years, once the process is refined. Feedback from last year’s jurors indicates, as per the Place Survey feedback, that there is a strong link between satisfaction with the Council and how informed people are.

Staff Feedback

5.18 Staff were extensively consulted last year about the Council’s priorities. It was not felt appropriate to re-run the same exercise so quickly again and consult again this year, plus the proximity of the Shared Services agenda also made such an exercise seem inappropriate.

5.19 Last year, staff identified three priorities:-

- A thriving market town;
- Sense of community and well being; and
- Street scene and environment.

5.20 Staff went on to look at the key deliverables for each proposed priority and suggested the following:-

1. A thriving market town;

- Parking.
- Transport.
- Visitors experience/attractions.
- Tourism.
- Unique shopping experience.
- Entertainment

2. Sense of community and well being; and

- Entertainment and leisure
- Healthier communities
- Housing

- Events
- Safer communities

3. Street scene and environment.

- Gateway approaches.
- Recycling.
- Waste Management.
- Clean streets.
- Sustainability.
- Climate change.

Equalities and Diversity Conference

5.21 The Council now holds an annual Equality and Diversity Conference. This year's conference is not due to be held until the 26 September, but last year's feedback has been included, as it is reasonable to assume that the areas identified by those attending the conference will be similar. The feedback from last year is as follows:-

Housing

- Affordable housing for all sections of the population, including those with special needs;

- A concern about younger people moving away due to the lack of affordable housing; and
- The need for more properties which are shared ownership.

Town Centre

- A general view that the “physical appearance of the town centre is very poor”, but that Bromsgrove is basically a nice town;
- The Conference, like residents in general, clearly want a better retail offer and improved town centre layout, particularly, access between ASDA/shopmobility and the rest of the town;
- Access to the town centre was a key issues, in particular, improved public transport, a better bus interchange and a high dependency unit (toilets);
- Proper kerbing that is suitable for shopmobility scooters has also been highlighted as an issue to correct in any future changes to the highways.

Transport

- Storage facilities for personal mobile vehicles whilst users use public transport.
- Community transport provision.
- Removing charges for blue badge holders.
- Extension of the shopmobility hours.

Customer Service

- The Hub was considered a “great service”.
- Increased marketing and awareness of this service were considered key.
- The existence of the customer feedback system was not widely understood.

Sense of Community

- More group events.

Clean Streets and Recycling

- Street cleaners following on from refuse collection was identified as an improvement (the same issue has come out of the customer panel);
- Regular attention to litter hotspots.
- The desire for co-mingled recycling collections.

6. Performance Position

- 6.1 2008/2009 was the Council's most successful year for some time. The Council achieved an overall CPA rating of "Fair", based on its 2007/2008 outturn. Analysis of 2008/2009's performance is more difficult, as 2008/2009 is a transition year from the old BVPIs to the new NIs, so no historic data is available and we are awaiting comparative data.
- 6.2 72% of performance indicators achieved their target. There were 10 red or amber indicators. A performance summary and a table setting out the red or amber indicators is set out overleaf.
- 6.3 Looking at the red or amber indicators, the target for recycling/composting was only just missed and overall performance is comparatively high. Sports centre usage was down due to the refurbishment of the Dolphin Centre (now complete). The bonfire night reflected the decision to charge and poor weather the previous year. The crime indicators have been addressed and whilst the PACT target was missed, the Council is unusual in fielding senior officers to these meetings. Planning's performance dipped due to long term sickness and turnover caused by Single Status. The latter has been addressed, the former remains a problem. This leads us on to sickness absence, which remains the one intractable indicator. A corporate working group has been established with the aim of reducing the Council's sickness levels.

Summary of performance

Performance against targets

The following table provides information on how performance indicators are performing against targets set by the Council, where the data is available.

Performance against target	2007/08	2008/09
Performing at or above target	77%	72%
Performing below target but within 10% of target	16%	20%
Performing below target by more than 10%.	7%	8%

Note that due to the significant changes in the PI reporting set, as described above, there are a number of PI's which were new in 2008/09 and thus did not have a target. Therefore overall comparisons of performance with previous years should be treated with caution.








Performance Trends

The following table and graph provides information on how performance indicators are performing against previous year's performance, where comparable data is available.

Performance Trends	2007/08	2008/09
Performance Improving	72%	54%
Performance steady	11%	8%
Performance declining	17%	38%

Note that due to the significant changes in the PI reporting set, as described above, there are a number of PI's which were new in 2008/09 for which there were no previous years figures. Therefore overall comparisons of performance with previous years should be treated with caution.

Table 13 – 2008/2009 Outturn Red/Amber Indicators

Ref	Description	2007/08 Actual	2008/09		Trend
			Target	Actual	
NI 192	Percentage of household waste re-used, recycled and composted	n/a	45.00	43.25	n/a
	Number of usages of Sports centres	592,133	672,420	627,404	
	Number of people attending the annual bonfire	n/a	11,339	2,757	n/a
	The number of domestic burglaries	355	359	438	
	The number of robberies	67	56	61	
	% of PACT meetings attended by SMT members	n/a	85	80	n/a
	The average number of working days lost due to sickness	9.35	8.75	10.66	
NI 157	The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks.	95.35	75.00	68.80	
NI 157	The percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks.	92.42	80.00	76.50	
NI 157	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks.	93.11	90.00	89.50	

Audit Commission – CPA Report (March 2009)

6.4 The Council was re-rated as Fair in March 2009; the report identified the following areas for improvement:-.

1 The Council should strengthen its customer focus so that its actions meet the needs of its community:

- A culture of customer focus should be fully established at all levels within the council.
- Strategies, contracts, project specifications and business plans and accompanying action plans need to have clearly identified outcomes that the public would recognise, to deliver the outcomes intended.

2 To ensure the Council maintains its improvement journey and to make the best use of resources and ensure a focus on priorities, the Council should:

- Develop further its workforce planning by undertaking a skills audit to identify and address any gaps;
- Undertake routine evaluation of all projects, initiatives and partnerships to ensure that the Council's resources make the most impact and deliver the best value for money; and
- Strengthen the scrutiny function to ensure robust and constructive challenge of performance, plans and decisions, including their direct and indirect consequences, so that priorities are delivered fully and not unintentionally undermined.

3 Improve external communication by:

- Regularly checking that the community understands the Council's messages and information. This will help the public know what services are offered by the Council and allow the Council to highlight what it has achieved.
- Providing clear and regular information updates on progress, especially for longer term projects such as the town centre.

6.5 The Government Monitoring Board was satisfied that the Council is responding to each of these recommendations appropriately; hence, why it is recommending an end to voluntary engagement.

7. Resources

Finance

- 7.1 Economic commentators are predicting large cuts in public spending after next year's general election. To give an indication of the scale of the problem, the Government's annual borrowing requirement prior to the recession was £38billion, which many political commentators considered high. The most recent monthly figure was £13billion, which suggests an annual figure considerably in excess of £100billion. Public sector debt was historically low in the 1990s, so whilst the current figures are high, they are not unprecedented: public sector debt after both world wars was very high; however, this meant years of fiscal austerity.
- 7.2 In considering the pressures on public finances, future reviews of the Medium Term Financial plan 2010/11-2012/13 will review the impact of the financial pressures to ensure the priorities of the Council can be delivered within the limited resources whilst demonstrating Value for Money to our residents.

People

- 7.3 Staff remain our most valuable resource and it is critical that we continue to support them through what will be a difficult number of years, as we implement the shared services model with Redditch. Cabinet/CMT identified two main strands to this continuing commitment.
- Continuing to invest in training to ensure we have modern, commercially aware managers. Over the last few years, we have invested in training, to bring our managers and staff up to speed on what many organisations would consider the basics e.g. PDRs. We now need to invest in skills that will give our managers a competitive advantage in the public sector, for example, lean systems, programme management, marketing, customer experience, income generation etc.
 - We also need to continue to pay attention to recognition of performance, loyalty and making Bromsgrove a good place to work.
- 7.3 In addition to our existing staff, Cabinet/CMT identified a need to increase support for youth employment e.g. graduate programmes, apprenticeships etc. and to access external funding streams where we can.

8. Strategic Direction

Vision

8.1 The Council's Vision is:-

“Working together to build a district people are proud to live and work in through community leadership and excellent services”

8.2 This Vision is still considered appropriate.

Values

8.3 Given the up and coming shared services agenda and current economic climate, Cabinet wish to add a fifth value, Value for Money.

Strap Line

8.4 The Council's current strap line is “Building Pride” which reflected the Council's position three years ago i.e. that it was difficult to have pride in an organisation that was one of the worst performing councils in England. The achievement of the CPA “Fair” rating and our drive towards shared services and excellence suggests we should now change this strap line. It would be a gradual change i.e. as equipment is replaced, so that no additional costs are incurred. Various proposals were discussed on the Cabinet/CMT away day. Cabinet are asked to consider this area further.

Objectives

8.5 The current objectives are Regeneration, Improvement, Sense of Community and Well Being and Environment. The definitions of each objective are in Addendum A. The objectives titles have been changed very slightly with Sense of Community and Well Being becoming One Community and Well Being.

Priorities

8.6 The following 6 priorities have been identified for the year ahead:-

Table 14 – Proposed Corporate Priorities

Council Objective	Current Priority	Revised Priority	Comment	Report Ref.
Regeneration	Town Centre	Town Centre	No change.	5.16
	Housing	Economic Development Moved to different objective.	Both Cabinet and the LSP Board have identified the need to have a stronger focus on economic development in the north of the County. The town centre will continue to be key aspect of this agenda.	3.8, 4.4
Improvement		Value for Money	Reflects the proposed new Value and increased focus on Shared Services. Value for Money also includes customer satisfaction.	5.6, 7.1
One Community and Well Being	Sense of Community	One Community	A slight change of wording, with children and young people and crime and fear of crime remaining key to delivering this priority. A new aspect is the inclusion of older people (see overleaf). Community influence has been removed, but is considered to underpin the Council's activities, through the Customer First and Equalities values. The Place Survey demonstrates a clear link between involving people and satisfaction with the Council.	2.3, 3.13 and 4.2

		Housing	No change, but underneath the headline priority a wider focus around a balanced mix of housing to enable a balanced community. This will include affordable housing, but also housing for older people. Moved from Council Objective Regeneration	3.9
Environment	Clean Streets and Climate Change	Climate Change	The Council has made significant improvements to street cleansing, but climate change remains the biggest challenge the Council faces.	3.20, 4.3

Key Deliverables

- 8.7 The budget bids and performance measures for each proposed priority will need to be “worked up” through the business planning process, budget process and production of the Council Plan 2009/2012 (March 2009 Cabinet). The outline key deliverables/budget bids for each priority are:-

Our Values: Leadership, Partnerships, Customer First, Equalities and Value for Money

Our Vision: “Working together to build a District where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services.”

Objectives <i>(Total of 4)</i>	Regeneration (CO1)	Improvement (CO2)	One Community and Well Being (CO3)	Environment (CO4)
Priorities (CPs) <i>(Total of 10)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Development 2. Town Centre 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Value for Money 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. One Community 5. Housing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Climate Change
Key Deliverables (under each Priority) <i>(Total of 34)</i>	<p><u>Economic Development</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Development Strategy 2. Employment <p><u>Town Centre</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High Street 2. Market Hall 3. Train Station 	<p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shared Services 2. Efficiencies (incl. Lean Systems) 3. Marketing/Income generation 	<p><u>One Community</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and young people (including intergenerational activities, community events and diversionary activities). 2. Older People – access to services (including directory, ageing well and community transport). 3. Crime and fear of crime. <p><u>Housing</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Balanced Housing Mix 2. Disabled Facilities Grants 	<p><u>Climate Change</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CO2 emissions. 2. Adaptations.

Our Values: Leadership, Partnerships, Customer First, Equalities and Value for Money

Addendum A

Council Objective Definitions

Council Objective 1 - Regeneration

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Improving the physical fabric of the District, in particular, the town centre and Longbridge site.
- Improving the living environment of the vulnerable, in particular, eliminating fuel poverty, reducing the gap in serious accidental injury, and the indoor living environment in so far as it affects respiratory health (cold, damp, indoor pollution).
- Ensuring quality and choice in the local housing market across all tenures with the availability of sufficient decent, affordable and sustainable housing to meet the needs of all of the District's residents including those with special housing needs.
- Ensuring a strong, prosperous and competitive local economy which creates wealth in order to support the level of investment required to close the gap of inequality; contributes to the region's economy and enable people to improve their quality of life.
- Securing public and private investment in the above factors in order to lever in sufficient investment to tackle these issues.
- Reducing inequalities wherever these exist within our District.
- Improving household incomes through increasing economic activity by promoting enterprise and entrepreneurship and the take up of employment opportunities through improved access to jobs, employment growth (both public and private) and improving people's skills (both young people's and adults). Where people are genuinely unable to work ensuring that people take up the full benefits to which they are entitled.

Council Objective 2 - Improvement

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Providing an excellent customer experience including choice where possible.
- Maintaining a clear focus on our customers' priorities.

- Making the best use of new technologies to improve services whilst reducing costs.
- Driving out efficiency savings (3% cashable per annum) and making the best use of our assets in order to further invest in our priorities.
- Using systems theory and other management tools to help deliver these efficiency savings and working with the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.
- Making appropriate use of management systems e.g. risk management, performance management and project management.
- Ensuring we recruit the right staff and retain and develop their skills.
- Achieving public confidence in our prudent financial management, service delivery and corporate governance through positive external audit and inspection feedback.
- Maintaining a level of council tax from which the public feel we make good use of the money we spend and reflects the quality of services they receive.
- Ensuring we seek out, listen, respect and represent the views of our diverse customers and communities.
- Communicating consistently to our customers and communities.
- Actively involve our customers and communities in the design and delivery of our policies, strategies, plans and services.
- Joining up and integrating services both within the Council and with our partners making the best use of new technologies.
- Tailoring the mix of customer service, community leadership and democratic engagement to fit the particular circumstances of each community.
- Ensuring people are able to access services whatever their circumstances.

Council Objective 3 - Sense of Community and Well Being

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Ensuring the District's residents have a good cultural "offer" which encourages a sense of community.
- Ensuring the District's residents have a good sports and physical activity "offer" which encourages a sense of community and healthy lifestyles.

- Providing effective community leadership.
- Promoting active citizen engagement in the democratic process.
- Ensuring the value and contribution of the diverse communities in our District is recognised and celebrated.
- Improving the social capital of our communities and developing sustainable and cohesive communities.
- Enabling people to enjoy a high quality independent life in their own homes and communities for as long as possible and when this is no longer possible ensuring more intensive care is available.
- Ensuring the Council fully embraces the “Every Child Matters” Agenda: that our children and young people are: healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, achieve economic well being and can access services.
- Reducing crime and the fear of crime within our communities.
- Ensuring access to lifelong learning opportunities for learning and creativity to help everyone achieve their potential for quality of life and prosperity.
- Improving people’s lifestyle choices, including diet, smoking and physical activity.

Council Objective 4 - Environment

This Council Objective can be defined as:-

- Ensuring the District offers a quality living environment for everyone, with access to good facilities including clean and attractive open spaces.
- Sustaining this quality living environment for future generations.
- Waste collection, recycling and disposal that supports a reduction in landfill.
- Ensuring high levels of environmental cleanliness.
- Maintaining and fostering the District’s biodiversity.
- Reducing carbon emissions, both as a Council and a District.
- Adapting to climate change, in particular, flood mitigation measures, flood risk identification and mitigation and improved drainage.

- Developing a modern transport infrastructure and services which encourage modal shift from car to public transport, walking or cycling.
- Maintaining our rural communities.
- Balancing our green belt whilst responding to the economic development needs of the District.

Addendum B

Key Deliverables – Resources and Outcomes

Key Deliverable: Economic Development Strategy	
Resource	Outcomes
Need to develop District Economic Development Strategy.	Attract new and more diverse businesses.
Market Bromsgrove District (BUDGET).	Improve wages for those who live and work in the District.
Understand baseline.	
Align to City/Region (investigate).	
Funding co-ordinator (BUDGET).	
Improve skill levels.	

Key Deliverable: Employment	
Resource	Outcomes
Put LSP Economic Theme Group on firm footing. Focus on people accessing services.	Unemployment rate.
The Trunk.	Worklessness rate.
	Disability unemployment levels.

Key Deliverable: Town Centre High Street	
Resource	Outcomes
Need to find money to resurface High Street and High Street furniture.	Improved physical appearance.
	Increased footfall.
	% who believe town centre improving.
	% satisfied with town centre.
	Improved accessibility (footfall at bus

	station, community transport and shopmobility usage, car park usage).
--	---

Key Deliverable: Town Centre Market Hall	
Resource	Outcomes
Town centre partnership and also a property developer.	Improved physical appearance.
New business located on site or other usage determined.	Increased footfall.
	% who believe town centre improving.
	% satisfied with town centre.

Key Deliverable: Train Station	
Resource	Outcomes
Funding package secured.	Increased footfall at station.
Planning approval.	% who believe town centre improving.
District Council support for project team.	% satisfied with town centre.
	% using public transport in District.
	Transport improvements i.e. new train station, hopper service, expanded community transport provision.

Key Deliverable: Marketing Council and District	
Resource	Outcomes
Marketing budget, particularly, for town centre.	Improved rating.
Using alternative formats for communication/e-mails/buses.	Improved perception on Place Survey.
Budget for improved distribution of Together Bromsgrove (BUDGET)	Improved sense of belonging.
	Increased service take up.

Key Deliverable: Improvement Events (rapid learning)#	
Resource Knowledge of approach. Cllr Del Booth has expertise in this area.	Outcomes Improvements delivered as a result of rapid learning events.

Key Deliverable: National Indicators	
Resource Existing Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team. Annual review through Annual Report, LSP Away Day and Cabinet/CMT Away Day.	Outcomes Appropriate rate of improvement for excellent council status. Needs of District tackled.

Key Deliverable: Shared Services	
Resource Funding (up front) for transformation. Capacity (including interim support through change. Included in SERCO report). ICT. Training.	Outcomes Survival as an organisation. Improved services. Significant savings.

Key Deliverable: Efficiencies including Lean Systems	
Resource Training/skills. Funding (up front).	Outcomes Improvement in performance. Improvement access.

Permanent improvement manager (BUDGET or funded through Shared Services).	Savings realised. Improved services. Change culture.
---	--

Key Deliverable: Income Generation	
Resource	Outcomes
Funding co-ordinator (see Econ. Development Strategy KD). Marketing budget required (BUDGET). Sponsorship. Training for lean systems.	More external funding. More with less. Lower council tax. Better services.

Key Deliverable: Inter-generational activities	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Would require a new Officer and delivery budget as this work would be out side any current work loads and the capacity of the current structure.</p> <p>In effect we are looking at creating a community co-ordinators role to link up the work of the Sports dev, Sports centres, HIMP and Com Safety Teams, spot gaps and opportunities (inc funding) and create sessions to full fill this need.</p> <p>This person would also need to be able to up skill local groups and volunteers in order to assist them to continue with delivery once the initial work had been completed to ensure sustainable projects.</p>	<p>Participation in Sport (NI8, NI110).</p> <p>Place survey satisfaction ratings</p> <p>Lower Fear of and perception of Crime results from West Mercia Survey.</p> <p>Other national indicators (NI1, 6, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24 & 25).</p>

Key Deliverable: Activities/facilities for young people (cost of access)	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Funding for magazine and website aimed specifically at young people. This may not be required as the county, Sport England and other agencies have this in place. What is required is capacity to map and plot current provision load it into the current systems and enhance opportunities to promote current work.</p> <p>Young people provision in parks and open spaces such a MUGA's, skate and risky play as per PPG17. This could then be supported by existing work programmes and the proposed intergenerational officer's post.</p>	<p>% who remember receiving a copy.</p> <p>% who found it useful.</p> <p>Increased numbers at activities.</p> <p>Increased satisfaction ratings.</p> <p>Increased opportunity to access information from a single source/point of contact.</p> <p>Ni110 & 199</p>

Key Deliverable: Safeguarding	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Full operating and reporting procedures produced, reviewed, implemented and monitored.</p> <p>Resource required would need to be established but would inc production of policies, consultation with WORCS safeguarding board & training of staff.</p>	<p>Children and young people are kept safe within our District, particularly, when using Council facilities.</p>

Key Deliverable: Reduce Fear of Crime	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Promotional activity (existing budget)</p> <p>Continued commitment to PACT?</p> <p>Increased crime prevention information and access to information relating to the performance of the CSP.</p>	<p>Reducing fear of crime (Place Survey).</p> <p>Increasing acceptance (Place Survey).</p> <p>Area a nice place to live Place Survey).</p>

Key Deliverable: Enforcement	
Resource Last years budget bid was rejected. Do Members want officers to submit another bid?	Outcomes Reduced fear of crime. Improved public perception.

Key Deliverable: Diversionary Activities	
Resource No additional resources are required as they are funded via the CSP funding process; however should LAA funding be reduced again we may need to look at this matter with other partners to make up any lose that may be enforced.	Outcomes Reduce crime and fear of crime.

Key Deliverable: Older People – Access to Services	
Resource Budget for production and distribution of older person’s directory (BUDGET).	Outcomes % who remember receiving a copy. % who found it useful. Older people get the support they need to continue to live independently (Place Survey).

Key Deliverable: Ageing Well	
Resource Budget for more activities (BUDGET). Promotion of (BUDGET).	Outcomes Older people get the support they need to continue to live independently (Place Survey). Increase participation levels through

	increased offer.
--	------------------

Key Deliverable: Community Transport/Shopmobility	
--	--

Resource	Outcomes
<p>Increased provision (subject to initial service being a success) (BUDGET).</p> <p>Budget already available for second bus, but would need increased revenue funding.</p>	<p>Usage numbers.</p> <p>User satisfaction.</p>

Key Deliverable: Budget Jury (including Internet)	
--	--

Resource	Outcomes
<p>More officer time.</p> <p>Advertising costs.</p> <p>Small budget for road shows.</p> <p>Refine process in 2010 and consider much larger exercise in 2011.</p>	<p>Increase % who feel they can influence decisions.</p> <p>Survey satisfaction of residents at beginning and end of process.</p> <p>Hits on Internet.</p> <p>Numbers attending jury.</p> <p>Better understanding of Council role.</p> <p>VFM Place Survey.</p>

Key Deliverable: Community Forums (including LNPs)	
---	--

Resource	Outcomes
<p>Improved corporate management of engagement programme.</p> <p>Advertise how much we do? "Listening Times" 3k required (BUDGET).</p> <p>Continue with U Decide.</p> <p>Continued funding for LNPs.</p>	<p>Increase % of people who think they can influence (Place Survey). Increased awareness of PACT.</p> <p>As above.</p> <p>Increased numbers, including harder to reach.</p> <p>Public satisfaction with town centre.</p>

<p>Set aside some land in town centre (one where we have time to do), for public to determine what they want to with it (future capital budget bid).</p> <p>Building in town centre for young people (future capital budget bid).</p> <p>Staff time to deliver.</p>	<p>Numbers involved. Direct feedback.</p> <p>As above. Youth satisfaction. Young people have somewhere to “hang out”.</p> <p>Representative workforce.</p> <p>Generally, increased buy in to difficult decisions.</p>
---	---

Key Deliverable: Community Events	
<p>Resource</p> <p>Increased budget for community events (BUDGET – 15k suggested).</p> <p>Easter Egg Hunt (town centre).</p> <p>Grand Prix (location?).</p> <p>Xmas event for children (linked with festival and lights).</p> <p>Band contest.</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Sense of belong (Place Survey)</p> <p>People getting along well (Place Survey)</p> <p>Improved scores for specific events e.g. bandstand, street theatre etc.</p> <p>Increased numbers.</p> <p>Above applies for all of District.</p>

Key Deliverable: Balanced Housing Mix	
<p>Resource</p> <p>Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Core Strategy (RSS). Available sites.</p> <p>Downsizing strategy and funding?</p> <p>Care homes.</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Improved housing offer i.e. more of and mix.</p> <p>As a result, more balanced communities.</p> <p>Housing for young to stay in District.</p> <p>Older people remaining independent for longer.</p>

Key Deliverable: DFGs	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Lean systems review.</p> <p>Capital budget to meet increasing need.</p> <p>Loss of grant funding to Worcestershire pooled budget for Care and Repair Service.</p>	<p>Reduced waiting times.</p> <p>Satisfaction with adaptations.</p>

Key Deliverable: CO2 Emissions	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Baseline measurement.</p> <p>Improved public transport.</p> <p>Air quality zone.</p> <p>Energy/usage monitoring.</p> <p>Working patterns.</p> <p>Vehicles (Need an action plan, with associated costs to deliver the reductions) (BUDGET).</p>	<p>Reduced CO2 emissions measured by NI 185.</p> <p>Possible target of 9% over three years.</p>

Key Deliverable: Adapting to Climate Change	
Resource	Outcomes
<p>Influence partners e.g. County Council, Severn Trent.</p> <p>Provide information.</p> <p>Drainage engineer??? (BUDGET)</p> <p>Do we need to increase our capability to respond to flooding problems??? (BUDGET)</p>	<p>Reduced flooding in District.</p> <p>Number of complaints.</p> <p>Number of known problem areas.</p>