

# **Corporate Strategy**

## **2008-2011**

**Revised 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

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# **1 Foreword: Councillor Michael Doody, Leader of the Council**

## **Our Commitments to You**

In this document, we present the Corporate Strategy for Warwick District Council 2007 - 2011.

Underlying the Strategy is our ambition to deliver a better quality of life for communities of Warwick District. It is based on what local people have told us are their priorities and on the significant challenges facing Warwick District over the next four years such as the need for more and better quality affordable housing, safer neighbourhoods, clean and tidy streets, more opportunities for younger people, maintaining and protecting our environment, providing opportunities for thriving businesses, tackling climate change and ensuring our services are accessible for everyone.

The Strategy sets out a clear statement of Council priorities in relation to these challenges, along with the targets we plan to achieve, over the next three years. It also sets out our improvement programmes which aim to ensure to deliver our priorities.

The Strategy is a clear statement of our commitments to Warwick District ; we will work with energy and enthusiasm to deliver these priorities. Through this Corporate Strategy and the hard work of everyone associated with the District Council, we aim to rise to the challenges to play our part in achieving our vision for the District: "Warwick District: a great place to live, work and visit".

## 2 Our Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Values

### Our Vision

Our Vision for Warwick District is :

“Warwick District: a great place to live, work and visit”.

### Our Mission

To provide the high quality, value for money services our customers expect, we will need to continue to improve. We have therefore set our mission as:

“Building upon Excellence, to become World Class by 2012”

### Our Objectives

We aim to achieve our vision and mission by focusing our efforts on 7 key objectives :

Leadership	Provide clear community leadership and effective management of resources whilst delivering responsive public services in an open and transparent manner
Housing	Improve housing services efficiency to meet the housing need of the district
Culture	Increase participation and attendance in the Council’s cultural offering
Environment	Provide high standards of environmental services across the district delivering a sustainable and quality environment
Development	Create thriving town centres, keep pleasant villages and make the district an attractive place to live and work
Communities	Promote safe, healthy, vibrant and sustainable local communities
Customers	Improve the efficiency of service delivery to the Council’s customers

### Our Values

Our values set out the way we aim to conduct ourselves in the work we do. They are a statement of the behaviours our customers can expect from us when they deal with the Council and they underline the kind of organisation we would like to be seen as. Members of staff should be expected to act in accordance with such values but also should expect to be treated likewise by the Council as an employer and by the community.

- **Honesty and Openness:** We will be truthful and transparent about how we run the council
- **Value for Money:** We will make efficient use of our resources to offer the best possible services at the best price
- **Fairness and equity** - We will value all our citizens and our work will be without bias or prejudice

- **Community focused** - We will put the needs and aspirations of our local communities to the fore and we will work flexibly and collaboratively as one Council and with others in response
- **Environmentally sensitive** - We will ensure our long term impacts are minimised and are sustainable for future generations.

### 3 Priorities for Action - The next four years

**Objective CS1 : To provide clear community leadership and effective management of resources whilst delivering responsive public services in an open and transparent manner. (CORPORATE & STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO)**

#### CS1 Priorities

- To set out and fulfil a clear vision with our partners to improve the wellbeing of the District
- To improve the satisfaction levels of the Council as viewed by local residents
- To manage the Council's resources effectively and ensure its services are of a high quality.

#### CS1 Targets

- To increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live by 8% to 94% by 2011.
- To increase the percentage of residents either very or fairly satisfied with the Council overall by 8% to 80% in 2011.
- Maintain a rating of 3 out of 4 in the Audit Commission's annual Use of Resources Assessment.

#### CS1 High Level Actions 2008- 2011

- Develop and improve emergency planning and response
- Active participation in the development of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) blocks and active performance management to maximise the potential for LAA targets to be achieved
- Undertake activities with our partners to implement the key tasks of the LAA
- Work with partners on the Warwick District Local Strategic Partnership to develop and implement a new Sustainable Community Strategy
- Implement proposals for neighbourhood / locality working
- Improve communication between WDC and all its residents and users
- Broaden the range of and improve our methods of communication
- Use performance data to prioritise service area reviews
- Assess consultation results and react positively to what customers and residents are telling us
- Regularly assess satisfaction levels and where satisfaction is below our target, identify the reasons why and take action to address these
- Put in place processes and procedures to address level three of the Use of Resources criteria and along with all managers ensure these are followed
- Annually review Audit Commission and other externally generated reports, addressing gaps identified and acting on recommendations made.

**Objective CS2 : Improve housing services efficiency to meet the housing need of the district**

**(HOUSING PORTFOLIO)**

**CS2 Priorities**

- To reduce rent arrears
- To maximize affordable housing provision
- To use current stock as effectively as possible

**CS2 Targets**

- To reduce rent arrears from 3.2% in 2007 to 2.35% in 2011.
- To provide 400 new affordable homes by 2011.
- Reduce the % of rent loss through properties being empty from 0.78% in 2007 to 0.58% in 2011.

**CS2 High Level Actions 2008- 2011**

- Development of targeted campaigns depending on locality or level of arrears
- Review and implementation of improved arrears recovery policy and procedures
- Promote requirements as set out in the Local Plan for 40% of housing to be affordable on schemes above a certain size
- Be pro-active with Housing Associations and Developers in promoting our affordable housing policy
- In partnership with others, bring forward 100% of affordable housing proposals where possible
- Introduce initiatives to reduce refusals of housing after successful bidding
- Analyse demand patterns and develop proposals to use low demand stock more effectively
- Continue good management of contractors and effective decision making on programming, whether the work is undertaken pre or post letting
- Meet the needs of the travelling community
- Appraise stock transfer options and any self-financing initiative for the housing stock

**Objective CS3 : Increase participation and attendance in the Council's cultural offering to meet the needs of the whole community**

**(CULTURE PORTFOLIO)**

**CS3 Priorities**

- To increase involvement by younger people
- To increase involvement by older people
- To ensure culture caters for the whole community

**CS3 Targets**

- Increase the number of under 18's participating in targeted sports activities run by WDC by 1% year on year
- Increase the number of over 50's participating in targeted sports activities run by WDC by 1% year on year
- Maintain the number of public cultural events, currently 17 annually, specifically promoting inclusion and community cohesion organised by or in partnership with WDC

**CS3 High Level Actions 2008- 2011**

- Develop and implement promotional campaigns for targeted sports activities to increase participation and attendance by under 18 year olds
- Fully utilise opportunities available through other agencies and voluntary organizations
- Develop and implement promotional campaigns for targeted sports activities to increase participation and attendance by over 50 year olds
- Contribute to the 2012 Olympic effort
- Maintain an annual programme of events to be arranged or supported by WDC with specific measures to promote inclusion and cohesion.

**Objective CS4 : To provide high standards of environmental services across the district delivering a sustainable and quality environment**

**(ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO)**

**CS4 Priorities**

- To maintain a clean and tidy environment across the district
- To significantly increase recycling rates & reduce waste
- To promote high standards of environmental health
- To reduce the Council's direct impact on climate change

**CS4 Targets**

- To achieve the target of 99% of land at an acceptable standard of cleanliness (litter and detritus), up from 95% in 2007.
- To increase the % of household waste diverted from landfill (recycled & composted) by 14% to 45% in 2011.
- To achieve improved satisfaction of local business with Local Authority regulatory services (baseline and targets to be developed)
- To reduce CO2 production from operations under direct control of WDC (excluding waste collection and council housing) by 19%.

**CS4 High Level Actions 2008- 2011**

- Utilisation of the integrated waste management contract to ensure consistent standards of cleanliness across all public land within the district.
- Support local biodiversity through the careful management of local nature reserves
- Improve the Council's response to graffiti and fly posting
- Undertake a programme of education and awareness regarding recycling opportunities and waste minimisations together with the introduction of restricted collection of residual household waste.
- Double the schools education programme
- Develop a monitoring programme to meet the needs of the new Government National Indicator Guidance
- Develop and implement programme of energy efficiency projects to reduce fuel inputs necessary to deliver core services and maintain council properties
- Develop proposals to take steps towards becoming a carbon neutral Council



**Objective CS5 : Create thriving town centres, retain pleasant villages and make the district an attractive place to live, work and visit**

**(DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO)**

**CS5 Priorities**

- To support the development of thriving Town Centres
- To exploit appropriate opportunities for new business growth
- To ensure a high standard of quality in new developments and promote regeneration where needed in our towns and villages

**CS5 Targets**

- For Leamington, Warwick and Kenilworth to be ahead of average regional town centre performance by at least 1%.
- For 100 new jobs to be created annually as a result of projects enabled / implemented
- By 2011 30% of all applications received to be improved through either pre application or post application officer negotiation to reflect design guidance

**CS5 High Level Actions 2008- 2011**

- Pro active annual programme of town centre promotional activities via Town Centre management and partnerships
- Re-develop Chandos Street in Leamington
- Complete Kenilworth Town Centre redevelopments
- Complete renewal of Althorp Street / Old Town and related areas, including the railway station and Ford Foundry site
- Explore potential further improvement to Warwick Town Centre
- Support the redevelopment of NAC at Stoneleigh
- Develop inward investment projects including seeking funding
- Develop employment creation projects in association with partner agencies
- Hold discussions with potential investors to promote and explain the opportunities provided in Warwick District
- Actively promote design guidance
- Find effective ways of meeting the need to build additional houses in the District
- Improve the offerings the District makes for visitors and extend the range of visitor markets
- Encourage applicants to seek pre-application discussions and advice

## **Objective CS6 : Promote safe, healthy, vibrant and sustainable local communities**

### **(COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO)**

#### **CS6 Priorities**

- To make neighborhoods feel safer
- To understand and support the differing needs of our communities focusing support where it is most needed
- To promote equality of access to our services for all members of the community
- To support sustainable and vibrant rural communities
- To promote healthy lifestyles within our communities

#### **CS6 Targets**

- Percentage increase in success of first intervention in reducing anti-social behaviour for all individuals other than local authority tenants, members of their household or visitors to their property, from 72.4% in 2007 to 77% in 2011.
- Increase the number of Town & Parishes with a local plan for their area from 1 in 2007 to 6 in 2011.
- Achieve the “Hear By Rights” standard for identified services to improve involvement of children, young people and parents/carers in key services.
- % of residents living in rural areas who perceive that access to essential services\* is fairly or very easy from 61% in 2007 to 69% in 2011.  
\* essential services defined as the top 10 services identified by the Citizens’ Panel and includes Corner Shops; Shopping Centres/Supermarkets; Post Offices; GP/Doctor; Hospital; Park/Green Space; Public Transport; Recycling; Bank/Cash Point; Childcare Facility/School.
- Promote healthy eating by supporting 3 local food outlets each year to achieve the Heartbeat Healthy Food Award

#### **CS6 High Level Actions 2008- 2011**

- Utilise contacts made through Operation Guardian as an early warning system, advising parents of the whereabouts of their children and to give them the opportunity to address any anti-social behaviour.
- Improve the sharing of information on individual and community anti-social behaviour issues.
- Work with partners to promote and develop opportunities for volunteering
- Introduce and manage an electronic case management in order to share information with other agencies, automatically generate advisory and warning letters and to create quarterly intervention reports for Safer Neighbourhood Areas and the Home Office.
- Support Parish Councils to develop plans as part of Rural Excellence initiative
- Encourage parish councils to participate through the Rural Initiatives Grant scheme
- Introduce a subsidised taxi service scheme for rural areas
- Increase resources available for the Rural Initiatives Grant scheme

## **Objective CS7 : Improve the efficiency of service delivery to the Council's customers**

### **(CUSTOMER & BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PORTFOLIO)**

#### **CS7 Priorities**

- To use best practice to improve service delivery
- To use technology to provide services which are easy for our customers to use
- To promote multi-agency working for the benefit of our customers

#### **CS7 Targets**

- To improve citizen perception of improvement in key services to be 7.5% by 2011
- Overall, the extent to which customers find WDC services easy to access and use to be 80% in 2011
- Increase the number of multi-agency one stop shops from 1 in 2007 to 5 in 2011.

#### **CS7 High Level Actions 2008- 2011 (CUSTOMER & BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PORTFOLIO)**

- Identify services which are poorly performing or where performance is declining and then ensure we focus improvement efforts (with the customer in mind) on these, including identifying and using best practice from other organisations.
- Introduce process for undertaking Service Reviews including benchmarking to identify best practice
- Provide a clear and consistent service regardless of how people contact the Council
- Examine business processes to deliver improvements to service delivery
- Continue work towards implementation of Customer Service technology to ensure customer choice and consistency of service across all access channels
- Implement the Strategy for one stop shop development with the County Council and other agencies
- Maintain or improve service quality through a range of activities undertaken by service area staff, as detailed in section 4 of this Corporate Strategy
- Implement the strategy including introduction of more multi agency One Stop Shops
- Work to expand the range of agencies whose services are accessible through the One Stop Shops

#### **CS7 High Level Actions 2008- 2011 (HUMAN RESOURCES PORTFOLIO)**

- Maintain high levels of training and performance amongst customer service staff

## 4 Managing Delivery

The successful delivery of the Corporate Strategy relies heavily on two key aspects.

- having the finances and resources in place to support the activities and targets is vital.
- having the right management arrangements and processes to ensure we stay focused on our priorities.

### Finances and resources

The finance and resources will be identified, developed and managed through the Council's four resource strategies, covering, Finance, People, Assets and ICT. Each of these strategies details the key principles behind managing the resource and shows the key developments needed. Each resource strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that changing contexts and demands can be included. The key principles from each of the strategies is shown in section 5 below

The details of our management arrangements and processes to ensure the delivery of the Corporate Strategy are summarized below. Section 5 below details our approach to finances and resources.

### Management arrangements and processes

To be fully effective, the resource strategies need to sit alongside a structured approach to ongoing management of the priorities. The key tools in this are :

Programme Management : a structured approach to ensuring that linked projects are carefully managed and that they deliver not only new capability, but also the planned outcomes or benefits. Programme Management has the potential to be an effective tool for the delivery of key areas of work such as meeting our budget challenges whilst continuing to improve our services.

Project Management: a more robust approach to project management will be used requiring improved wider training to develop the pool of project managers. In this way, Project Management can help to ensure that the resources needed to deliver projects are minimised and that the outputs from projects are maximised.

Effective Service Planning: significant improvement projects will be managed through the corporate approach to programmes and projects (as described above). The service plans will become the tools for service managers to allocate their resources, manage their day to day activities and drive performance improvements

Governance arrangements and the role of Members : the Governance arrangements for the managing the Corporate programmes and the resource strategies will be finalised through the process of consultation described below. However a number of principles have already been developed :

- The Executive remains the overarching decision making body in relation to priorities and resources allocations
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committees have a role to play in ensuring focus on priority projects and their benefits is maintained and that the planned outcomes are achieved
- Member's Task and Finish groups have the potential to be closely linked to priority projects and to add value to these

Effective Performance Management : In addition to maintaining existing performance management reporting, there will need to be a strong link between performance reporting / management and the management of the Corporate programmes

Consultation and Training : the details of how the tools described above are put in to practice have not been finalised. However a process of consulting with managers and providing training on programme and project management for all relevant staff is planned to ensure the tools we put in place are supported, understood and used effectively.

## **5 Finances and Resources**

This section outlines the principles we intend apply to our management of resources to ensure we have the right resources to deliver the Corporate Strategy at the same time as improving our efficiency.

### **Financial Principles**

Our revenue money comes from three main sources: Council Tax, Government Grants and Fees and Charges. The way we plan to manage and use this money is detailed in the medium term financial strategy. The following are the over-arching financial principles which will need to be constantly renewed in the light of the political resource demands of the strategic priorities in this document.

- Savings and developments will be based upon corporate priorities as set out in this Corporate Strategy. In order to achieve the targets in the Corporate Strategy the Council has and will continue to ensure that resources are deployed to meet them.
- In order to achieve further savings there will be a need to explore all avenues including schemes for joint-provision and procurement.
- The Council retains ambitions in its search for high quality services provided openly effectively and efficiently. The new administration will need to decide what its policy will be on Council Tax levels as part of its review of the financial forecasts in the light of the new Corporate Strategy.
- Council house rent increases will be in line with the requirements of the Government's rent restructuring scheme or any superceding policy.
- Fees and charges will be increased so that income is at least maintained in real terms and where it is below average, move to average. The Council is committed to making good use of the ability to raise funds through charges and put them to good use for the community.
- Our capital money comes from receipts when we sell things, grants we apply for specific items and borrowing if we can support the financing in our revenue budget. We anticipate that new capital resources will be severely limited over the medium term.

### **People Management Principles**

The people strategy aims to support the mission, values and objectives of the Council through achieving the following priorities:

- Employing people in the most cost efficient manner through effective advertising; controlling the use of agency staff; streamlining the recruitment process and managing probationary periods.
- Managing people fairly and equitably through holding appraisals; setting objectives, targets and expected behaviours; rewarding achievement and addressing capability and conduct issues.
- Training and developing people to embrace change both within their current jobs and in future ways of working and delivering services.

- Involving people in the way their work is organised in order to develop improved processes that lead to greater efficiencies and customer satisfaction.
- Planning the structure of the organisation and workforce to provide the right number of people with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes at the right time.
- Leading organisation change and development in an open and transparent way that enables people to consider their own futures.
- Communicating with people in honest and accessible ways that allow everyone to understand what the Council is trying to achieve and how to play their part in it.
- Providing a healthy work place that values diversity and seeks to minimise the environmental impact of the workforce.

## **Assets Management Principles**

The Council owns a significant portfolio of property, including houses, offices, car parks, leisure centres and cultural facilities, parks, sports facilities and various other buildings. These are managed through the Asset Management Plan. The key principles of the Council's approach to Asset Management are that we will:

- Ensure that the Council's service property assets are provided and used to meet the current and future needs of the individual service users and to maximise the ability to meet the Council's Key Priorities
- Ensure that the Council's investment portfolio of property is actively managed to meet the identified required level of financial return in support of the delivery of the Council's Key Priorities.
- Ensure that asset acquisition or disposal is in line with the above.
- Explore partnership opportunities for the good use of assets.
- Continue to promote energy management with a view to reducing carbon emissions.

## **Technology Principles**

In order to support the Corporate Strategy 2007-11 and the Chief Executive's Building on Excellence vision agenda, it is being proposed that a number of programmes deliver the improvement activities. The ICT Strategy would underpin these programmes and can be further defined under a number of principles, therefore, we will:

- Work with partners to explore ways of improving our services, through joined-up service provision to meet the needs of our citizens, or through improved and efficient information exchange.
- Seek to strengthen the democratic processes of the council by improving the availability of information, including council performance indicators, by encouraging greater participation through e-democracy, and improving the economic well-being of the District through greater interaction with business.
- Will provide modern business applications to support effective service delivery to our citizens, including the provision of management information, to support service reviews and the service planning processes.
- Use leading edge technology to deliver high quality, joined up services, which are secure, easily accessible through a variety of channels, and are available at a time and location, that meets the needs of our citizens.
- Give staff the equipment and information they need to do their job effectively and efficiently, ensuring that they have the skills to exploit new technology and provide a flexible working environment that is not constrained by location.

**Monitoring**

The objectives, targets and performance indicators in the Corporate Strategy will be monitored by the Corporate Management Team and Executive on a quarterly basis through the Performance Management Framework. Managers responsible for specific indicators will monitor progress at team meetings on a monthly basis where data is available.

Progress in relation to Corporate Projects and Programmes will be monitored through regular Project Board meetings, the Programme Office and Programme Manager(s).

Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee will have responsibility for monitoring the progress of the Corporate Strategy and will receive a detailed annual report on progress

**Assessment and Review**

A further review of the Strategy will take place in 2009 to ensure any changing circumstances can be taken into account for the final two years of the Corporate Strategy

The whole Corporate Strategy will also be assessed and reviewed on an annual basis in April or May to ensure overall progress is satisfactory.

Following the quarterly monitoring through the performance management framework approaches will be assessed and reviewed to identify mitigating circumstances and corrective actions for all indicators which are below target.

Assessment and review of The Corporate Projects and Programmes will be achieved through regular performance management, end of tranche reviews and project and programme closure reviews

Risks associated with achieving the targets within the Corporate Strategy will be included in the Corporate and/or Service risks registers and will be managed through the Council's risk management processes.