


## IMPROVING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Our aim is to develop a more enterprising, vibrant and diverse local economy that strengthens local businesses and enterprises and will attract investment, share prosperity and create better employment opportunities for local people.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

 **Strengthen the local economy, secure the development that Darlington needs, attract resources and make best use of assets through being positive, problem solving, innovative and entrepreneurial.**

**We said we would** progress major development and investment projects and ensure implementation of the Gateway Development Framework; develop the town centre to maintain Darlington's attractiveness as a market town; implement the Town Centre Business Plan; and continue to develop our project management process and practice to ensure delivery of strategic outcomes. **We have delivered** progress on all major development projects, including the outstanding success in winning the Argos distribution development for Darlington and getting it operational on the ground very quickly. The Commercial Street retail development has been kept on course despite the withdrawal of the original developer. **The impact has been** further investment and building towards a strong, sustainable economy for the future, with its consequent impact on quality of life, with over £570 million now invested in projects to strengthen the local economy within the Gateway Framework. This is a long-term strategic project, and the outcomes for local people will become apparent in future years.

 **Tackle unemployment and low wages and reduce relative deprivation.**

**We said we would** implement the Local Public Service Agreement target for supporting people into work in target wards. **We delivered** significantly stretched performance in supporting people into work in four target wards, working jointly with Job Centre Plus through the 'Into Work' programmes, although we only partly achieved the demanding LPSA targets. Our work under this priority is much broader than the LPSA, and we have been successful in addressing our key regeneration objectives of narrowing the gap between local and national unemployment rates beyond our target for the year, and attracting and retaining high quality jobs, notably in helping Whessoe to relocate within Darlington instead of the planned move to the Middle East. **The impact has been** relative improvement in employment and pay prospects for local people in comparison with the region and the country as a whole. The gap in unemployment rates between Darlington and Great Britain as a whole fell slightly during 2005/06 from 0.6% to 0.5%.



**Promote the Borough's heritage to residents and visitors.**

**We said we would** implement the 'Marketing Darlington' strategy to promote Darlington as a location for business and tourism. **We delivered** a wide range of promotional programmes and initiatives, including the Marketing Darlington strategy. Visits to Darlington, measured by usage of the Tourist Information Centre and other measures further increased in 2005/06, against a backdrop of falling visitor numbers generally across the region. Museum visits significantly increased through a successful events programme, despite the need for major building repair works. A £400,000 Northern Rock Foundation grant was secured for refurbishment of the museum. **The impact has been** further growth in the contribution that visitors make to spending within the local economy. Tourism is now an important component of Darlington's economy, and one that is strengthening year-on-year.



**Manage key relationships nationally, regionally and sub-regionally, and engage with companies and other partners to lobby Darlington's case for investment.**

**We said we would** influence regional and sub-regional strategies, partnerships and funding streams in pursuit of good outcomes for Darlington; implement the Economic Regeneration Strategy; engage with major companies and implement the Investor Development Programme; and continue to secure external funding and develop the External Funding Team and processes. **We delivered** ongoing benefits for Darlington in terms of promoting the borough's interests within the region and sub-region. There was particular success in securing The Northern Way initiative. Two markers of success in our regional lobbying were the securing of *One North East* funding for the Pedestrian Heart and Highways Agency funding for the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor. We completed the new Economic Regeneration Strategy and maintained our engagement with and support for private sector partners. External funding secured for Darlington projects again exceeded our target for the year. **The impact has been** continuing to build, develop and secure the relationships and resources that provide the platform for our business support services and economic regeneration programmes.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Strengthen the economy by supporting key economic drivers and attracting inward investment.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage major development projects to deliver outcomes in line with project plans: Central Park; Pedestrian Heart; Commercial Street; Dolphin Centre; Eastern Transport Corridor; Morton Palms; Darlington College; Faverdale East Business Park; Durham Tees Valley Airport.</li> <li>Develop the vision for Darlington beyond the current Gateway Strategy.</li> <li>Continue to develop and roll out corporate project management methodology to support delivery of major development projects.</li> <li>Linked to the major development projects priority, deliver capital receipts from asset disposals required to support the Council's capital programme.</li> </ul>	<p>Milestones set in project plans for each project</p> <p>September 2006 report on research and strategy development</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DE13 DE78</p>
<b>2. Encourage the growth and start-up of businesses.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to deliver business support services to existing and prospective businesses.</li> <li>Work with partners to deliver the package of support and development initiatives funded out of the British American Tobacco (BAT) Legacy Fund.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Deliver 2nd year programme and develop year 3</p>	<p>DE78 DE11a</p>
<b>3. Share prosperity and reduce economic inequalities.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to secure external funding for community and other projects, and develop the External Funding team and processes.</li> <li>Seek new sources of funding to continue the Central Into Work employment support project</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2006</p>	<p>DE13 DE15 DE65 DE77</p>

4. Promote tourism and maximise the economic impact of visitors.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore ways of safeguarding, developing and promoting Darlington's role and identity as a market town for the future.</li> <li>Develop a comprehensive approach to maintaining, promoting and marketing the town centre focused on the Pedestrian Heart project and managing perception and satisfaction issues arising from its implementation.</li> </ul>	<p>Report on markets July 06 Consultation/ debate to end 2006</p> <p>June 2006 Consultant report – develop and implement programmes on Communications , Branding, PR &amp; Promotions</p>	<p>BV170b DE4</p>

### Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

Regeneration and Planning Portfolio – Councillor David Lyonette

### Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)

Environment Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Stella Robson

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## PROMOTING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Our aim is to reduce social inequalities, renew disadvantaged neighbourhoods, protect the vulnerable and ensure equality of access for all members of the community to services and opportunities.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

 **Improve the life chances of those experiencing or at risk of experiencing disadvantage.**

**We said we would** deliver actions targeted at improving life chances in each of Darlington's twelve priority communities. These actions were to be developed in consultation with members of these communities themselves. **We have delivered** 'on the ground' action plans for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy through Darlington's eleven Community Partnerships. Leisure and Arts are piloting a new approach to socially inclusive pricing. The Council led on the development of the '*Information for All*' DVD – a resource aimed at explaining how to access public services for people whose first language is not English. The 'Darlington: a Breast-Feeding Friendly Town' scrutiny project has raised the profile of this issue in Darlington. **The impact has been** that new work placements for Looked After Children have been delivered and the number of Looked After Children reduced. A new inter-faith forum, facilitated by Darlington Partnership, has been established and is leading the development of good interfaith practice in the region. Disabled people, older people and those from minority ethnic groups (among others) have had their say on the way the Council provides services in a specialist piece of consultation. This has led to changes in Council service plans for this year. The Race Equality Council now takes direct responsibility for the implementation of key aspects of the Social Inclusion Strategy.

 **Reverse the spiral of decline in Darlington's priority wards by building the capacity of communities.**

**We said we would** implement the first year of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and develop the Community Partnership Network. **We have delivered** local action plans for all 11 Community Partnerships. The Partnerships are delivering a range of projects such as refurbishing the community centre at Red Hall, making neighbourhood gardens, developing activities for young people, organising community events and intergenerational projects. A Fair Share Community Development Worker has been appointed to diversify membership of two Community Partnerships. **The impact has been** seen in over £350,000 external funding that has been brought into Community Partnership areas. Over 120 new volunteers were involved with the Community Partnerships.

 **Complete corporate programme of equalities impact assessments.**

**We said we would** complete impact assessments in all areas of the Council's business, commission external challenge for our equalities programme and improve our performance against the Equality Standard for Local Government. **We have delivered** 28 impact assessments covering all the Council's areas of business for which a service plan is produced. The Putting the Quality into Equality project produced a diagnostic report highlighting areas for improvement. These have been addressed in order for the Council to secure Level 3 of the Equality Standard. The Council published its second Race Equality Scheme. **The impact has been** seen in the way that every Council department is able to demonstrate how the way that it delivers services has changed as a result of the impact assessment process. A new Code of Practice for Equalities in Procurement shows how the Council is beginning to raise the 'equalities bar' for the organisations with whom it does business.

 **Improve access to legal advice and welfare benefits for the most vulnerable.**


**We said we would** establish a Welfare Rights Advice Service and increase benefit take-up, as well as increasing the number of Quality Mark providers and expenditure on the Community Legal Service. **We have delivered** a new Welfare Rights Service. It has been fully established and a targeted pension credit marketing campaign has commenced. The Council has worked with six organisations to help them gain Quality Mark accreditation. In January 2006 the Welfare Rights Service became the first of its kind in the North East to receive Legal Services Commission (LSC) Specialist Quality Mark accreditation. The expenditure on the Community Legal Service did not reach planned levels due to national changes to the Community Legal Service Scheme. **The impact has been** an increase in benefit income for Darlington residents of over £300,000.

 **Improve standards within private sector housing.**

**We said we would** review the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy. **We have delivered** a new Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy, which was agreed by Council in March 2006. This was a result of the review of the existing strategy. The Landlord Accreditation scheme has been successfully launched along with a new Landlord's Forum. We achieved our demanding Public Service Agreement stretch targets. **The impact has been** that over £2 million of funding has been secured for improving dwelling conditions in the private sector through a new financial assistance package and disabled facilities grants. Excellent progress has been made on the private sector performance indicators.

 **Achieve the Decent Home Standard.**

**We said we would** implement a business plan target to meet the Decent Home Standard. We also said that we would develop and implement partnering arrangements that are Egan compliant and market-test all repair contracts. **We have delivered** a review of the repairs and maintenance service, working together with external consultants. A Marketing Day took place on 10 May 2006 with a great deal of interest from potential partners. **The impact has been** that all Council housing stock met the Decent Homes Standard by the end of the 2005/06. We aim to maintain this high level of performance in the future.

 **Increase tenant involvement in the management and delivery of housing services.**

**We said we would** review tenant participation structures and Tenant Compacts and develop a Tenant Empowerment Strategy. **We have delivered** a new Tenants' Board. It was established, involving a broad range of tenants, which has facilitated greater tenant influence and empowerment. A Tenant Empowerment Officer was appointed in order to give voice to the needs and issues of tenants within Darlington and to facilitate more involvement in the services provided to them. A new borough-wide tenant compact has been developed and implemented. The Tenant Empowerment Strategy has been developed and is out to consultation. **The impact has been** an increase in residents' satisfaction with opportunities to participate, which was rated at over 70%.

 **Improve performance in the administration of Housing Benefit and comply with performance standards in relation to Housing Benefit /Council Tax Benefit.**

**We said we would** implement the LPSA target to improve Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit performance and performance in key BVPIs together with reducing fraud and error by meeting security targets. **We have delivered** on LPSA targets for the speed of processing claims and accuracy. This is a considerable improvement on previous year's results. We have achieved targets for both SAFE (Security Against Fraud and Error) and the verification framework visiting and interventions criteria. Changes to the way the Council deals with overpayments have been implemented. Local authority error overpayments have been reduced to below the required threshold such that the Council suffered no penalties in this area. **The impact has been** continued improvement in processing claims and reducing error overpayments for claimants.



**New Children's Services Department to benefit children and their families in Darlington by providing better and integrated services.**

**We said we would** focus on improving a number of things for children: their educational attainment, attendance, their physical and emotional well-being, their safety from abuse and neglect, their involvement in shaping their own lives and their economic well-being. **We have delivered** improvements in education attainment, including reading, writing and maths at Key Stages 1 and 2. Developing Healthy Schools Status, Sure Start Local Programmes and training for Bengali Community Sports Leaders has been important. Ensuring 100% of child protection cases are reviewed within the required timescales are contributing to making Darlington's children healthier. Children and young people have been engaged through the Darlington Assembly and Children and Young Person's Plan consultation. All 39 schools in Darlington now have fully operational school councils. Economic well-being has been supported through the increased take-up of education, employment and training through the Skills+ programme. All young people leaving the care of the Council now have a personal pathway plan. Performance in school attendance has been below target, as has the re-registration on the Child Protection Register. **The impact has been** wide-ranging. Students' performance at KS1 and 2 is now above the national average. School Counselling Services last year supported 149 children. Sure Start delivered 1000 activity sessions. 2,580 young people voted in the UK Youth Parliament Elections (up from double figures at the last election). The youth service has involved over 200 young people in interactive planning and research. 92% of Looked After Children have communicated their views in their statutory reviews. Pupil attendance continues to be a priority for us, and is a key feature of our Local Area Agreement.



**Develop services for older people.**

**We said we would** refurbish 10 Sheltered/Good neighbour communal facilities and review the use of Assistive Technology. **We have delivered** an outline of the refurbishment of sheltered housing schemes, which has been approved by the Tenants Board. We have worked with Hanover Housing Association to secure funding for a programme of extension and remodelling at Rosemary Court to provide for the Extra Care facilities. Remodelling of the Extra Care Scheme for vulnerable older tenants at Oban Court has been completed. Ted Fletcher and Roxby Court have had their technology updated to Telecare capability. **The impact has been** improved accommodation for older people in 10 schemes across Darlington.



## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Work with our partners and the community to promote inclusive safe communities through the effective administration of community capacity building and regeneration initiatives and by engaging residents in the provision and delivery of services.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract external funding into the priority wards and diversify membership of Community Partnerships.</li> <li>Community Partnership steering group to identify and take forwards one strategic funding bid.</li> <li>Deliver on the Fair Share Community Development Worker project.</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>September 2006</p> <p>March 2007</p>	<p>CS40 CS30a</p>
<b>2. Improve the life chances of those experiencing or at risk of experiencing discrimination and disadvantage.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research, devise, publish and implement a disability equality scheme.</li> </ul>	December 2006	<p>BV2a BV175 BV11a BV11b</p>
<b>3. Improve the corporate approach to community engagement.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research, devise and adopt a Community Engagement strategy.</li> </ul>	March 2007	Strategy Developed
<b>4. Improve access to legal advice and income maximisation.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Welfare rights income maximisation targeting campaign.</li> </ul>	January 2007	CS055b
<b>5. Strengthen partnership working with the voluntary and community sector to further empower residents in service delivery and regeneration initiatives.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out a review of the Council's vision for the voluntary and community sector engagement.</li> </ul>	September 2006	Review complete
<b>6. Protect public funds by prevention, deterrence, detection and investigation of fraud and error applying sanctions where appropriate.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Fraud and error by meeting security targets.</li> <li>Undertake high risk interventions in accordance with the verification framework.</li> </ul>	March 2007	<p>BV76a BV76b BV76c BV76d CS146 CS059</p>

<b>7. Regenerate deprived areas to create sustainable communities by working in partnership with key stakeholders including private and registered social landlords.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Housing Act 2004 in respect of private sector housing issues.</li> <li>Review and update Landlord Accreditation Scheme.</li> <li>Implement new private sector housing renewal strategy and investment.</li> </ul>	January 2007	BVPI 64 CS179
	March 2007	CS118c CS184
	April 2006	CS185 BV63 BV184a BV184b
<b>8. To deliver joined-up Children's Services, focused on achieving better outcomes for children and their families</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a pilot multi-disciplinary team who will develop detailed knowledge of local schools, communities, children, their extended families and social support networks to provide early intervention packages of support.</li> <li>Improve the long-term stability of Looked After Children (LAC). Closely monitor the numbers of LAC and improve communications with them.</li> <li>Complete full reviews for all Child Protection Cases falling due for review</li> </ul>	March 2007	BV45 BV46
	Ongoing	SS12(D35) SS30(C63)
	March 2007	BV162(C20)

### Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

Leader of the Council – Councillor John Williams.

Consumer and Environmental Services portfolio – Councillor Stephen Harker.

Community and Public Protection portfolio and Deputy Leader – Councillor Bill Dixon.

### Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)

Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Doris Jones.

Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee - Councillor Marian Swift.

### Key contacts:

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## RAISING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Our aim is to ensure the highest quality opportunities exist in education, learning and training, improving school performance and raising aspirations and standards of achievement for all age groups.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06



**Lead, challenge and secure support for schools in raising the achievement of children and young people helping them to become active and fully engaged citizens.**

**We said we would** continue to support the 14-19 Trust including broadening the KS 4 curriculum and extending opportunities for vocational training. **We have** piloted a Skills + programme in partnership with Darlington College, the Pupil Referral Unit and Eastbourne Comprehensive School to offer children with a history of attendance difficulties, and who were at risk of leaving school with no qualifications, the opportunity to access a vocational curriculum. Of the 73 young people who started the programme 45 students remain. The 14-19 Trust continues to meet on a half-termly basis, and is the vehicle for collaborative working between 14-19 providers in the borough. Common curriculum blocks at KS4 are established across all secondary schools in the borough and over 840 Year 10 students access vocational learning through in-school provision and through the increased flexibility programme, junior apprenticeships and customised vocational learning for schools. Learning mentors and transition mentors continue to have a positive impact in our schools and colleges. Learning mentors mainly work with under-achieving pupils on a 1:1 basis, but also in small groups to support them to overcome barriers to their learning and enable them to achieve their potential. Transition mentors have supported 98 students in the move from Year 11 to Year 12. **The impact** from the above actions have yet to be realised whereby the number of young people leaving school with no qualifications will decrease as will the number of young people not in Education, Employment or Training.

**We said we would** improve standards at Key Stage 1, particularly in writing. **We have delivered** improved performance at Key Stage 1 in all subjects at Level 2B+ with notable improvements in reading and writing which are now both in the A quartile band for year on year improvement. **The impact has been** that children have a firmer foundation for progression at Key Stage 2.

**We said we would** improve standards at Key Stage 2. **We have delivered** improved performance at Level 4+ in English, Reading, Mathematics and Science. However, performance deteriorated in Writing at Level 4+ and at the higher Level 5+ in all subjects other than Science which improved and Reading which remained unchanged. **The impact has been** that despite an overall improvement in performance we failed to meet our targets in this area. Three schools remain below the Key Stage 2 national floor target in English, one for Mathematics and one for both English and Mathematics.

**We said we would** improve standards at Key Stage 3. **We have delivered** notable improvement in ICT at Level 5+, with modest improvement in other core subjects. However, performance at the higher Level 6+ deteriorated in all core subjects. **The impact** is that conversion rates from Key Stage 2 Level 4 to Key Stage 3 Level 5+ are in line with national performance for English but notably below for Mathematics and Science. One school out of our seven secondaries is below the national floor target in Science.

**We said we would** improve standards at Key Stage 4. **We have delivered** improved performance in the percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE's grade A\* -C rising from 48.5% in 2004 to 56.8%. However, performance between schools remained diverse and the percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSEs grade A\* - G deteriorated as did the percentage of pupils attaining no entry level qualifications. **The impact has been** that Darlington is now in band A for year on year improvement for passes at GCSE grade A\*-C and no school performed below the 30% national floor target.

**We said we would** continue to enhance support for able, gifted and talented pupils including offering summer schools. **We have delivered** through the promotion of the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE), the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY), and by brokering training and networking opportunities for school based gifted and talented coordinators. We have also been working with the North East Regional Gifted and Talented Partnership on the introduction of National Quality Standards. **The impact has been** seen in examination results at Key Stage 4 by increasing the percentage of pupils achieving 3 or more GCSEs grade A\*- C. Performance at Key Stage 1 has also increased at Level 3+ in all areas except Mathematics. However, performance at key Stage 2 Level 5+ has deteriorated or remained static in all subjects with the exception of Science and at Key Stage 3 performance has deteriorated in all core subjects at Level 6+.



#### **Promote educational and social inclusion.**

**We said we would** expand extended school activity to all schools/clusters through the production of cluster plans. **We have delivered** a school cluster based model for the planning and delivery of extended services. Four of our five clusters have prepared and commenced implementation of cluster plans. The fifth cluster of schools is receiving the national extended schools remodelling training. **The impact has been** enhanced collaboration between schools and the delivery of a broader range of extended services within schools.

**We said we would** improve processes for the safeguarding of children including agreeing a protocol for the admission arrangements of 'hard to place' pupils. **We have delivered** by introducing more effective systems to keep young people in schools, improving partnership working across the Children's Services Department and with other agencies; through the introduction of enhanced safeguarding arrangements, whilst challenging unsafe practice, for example, the use by some schools of part time timetables. A new admission protocol for 'hard to place' pupils has been agreed and implemented. **The impact has been** a significant reduction in the number of cases being referred to Duty of Care meetings from 253 in 2004/05 to 143 in 2005/06.


**We said we would** review the Looked After Children Strategy. **We have delivered** by completing a review of the Strategy and its supporting action plan. The revised action plan identifies the need to review and broaden the scope of Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children to include both in school and after school activities and targets linked to achievement and personalised learning programmes and Pathway Plans for care leavers. **The impact** will be seen in improved outcomes for Looked After Children.

**We said we would** implement the recommendations resulting from an independent review of Special Educational Needs. **We have delivered** by increasing the level of SEN budget delegated to schools (Bands 1 and 2 of the Individual Learning Support budget). **The impact** of the initial transfer of funds is that the number of statements of SEN has decreased by 4.5% (from 516 to 491) in 2005/06.

**We said we would** continue implementation of the Local Public Service Agreement Action Plan and Attendance Strategy including the extension of the education management system attendance module to all schools. **We have delivered** by increasing the team of Education Welfare Officers to offer more support for all schools, developing a school pass system across the town, increasing the number of prosecutions and fast track prosecutions and penalty notice warnings and penalty notices. **The impact has been** seen through improvement in primary school attendance rates and that 5 out of our 7 secondary schools also improved their attendance rates. Despite an overall improvement in performance we failed to meet our targets in this area.

**We said we would** review the Access Strategy and School Access Plans. **We have delivered** by completing a review of the Access Strategy. **The impact has been** that a framework now exists through which we can assess School Access Plans to ensure Disability Discrimination Act compliance and to prioritise the distribution of resources according to departmental priorities and individual school priorities.

**We said we would** improve Education Other than at School (EOTAS) provision by increasing hours and rates of reintegration, including the completion of a needs analysis. **We have delivered** by securing funding for the Skills + pilot which took a number of EOTAS pupils. We have undertaken with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) a project to determine whether young people within the EOTAS service have undiagnosed mental health issues to try and identify whether or not earlier intervention could have effected a different result for the young people. We have worked with our secondary schools to embed the reintegration carousel for permanently excluded pupils. **The impact has been** that for those young people on the pilot they have improved their attendance and have achieved GCSE equivalents and all of them at Year 11 have applied for and been accepted on courses post 16. We have succeeded in reintegrating 15 young people back into mainstream education. An increase in the numbers of pupils permanently excluded has meant that we failed to meet our targets in this area. The number of pupils on the roll of EOTAS remains unacceptably high which means that not all pupils can be offered full time hours.

 **Maximise efficiency and effectiveness within available resources through the provision of high quality responsive and customer focussed services.**

**We said we would** continue to implement workforce reform including the development of a pay and grading model for all support staff. **We have delivered** by supporting all schools with the introduction of staffing restructure regulations and the development of whole school staffing structures along with the introduction of generic profiles for all groups of school support staff. These profiles allow career progression and support schools with their implementation of the National Agreement. **The impact has been** better recruitment and retention of school based staff.

**We said we would** improve the coordination of training and professional development opportunities for schools and the department. **We have delivered** by establishing a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) group within the Children's Services Department to map current patterns of CPD provision and take-up, including budgetary provision. In order to make training and CPD opportunities more accessible a single CPD manual was prepared. **The impact has been** that 74% of schools rated our support for the professional development of the workforce as satisfactory or better.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

Strategic Objectives		
Actions	By when/ Milestones	Measures of Success
<b>1. Children and young people getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood (enjoying and achieving)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of academy proposals for the replacement of Eastbourne Comprehensive School.</li> </ul>	Submit expression of Interest – June 2006	Academy agreed by Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the Darlington Primary Strategy for School Improvement and raise attainment through focused support and challenge.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV40, BV41, BV194a/b
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the Darlington Secondary Strategy for School Improvement by contributing to the development of teaching and learning.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV181a/b/c/d BV38, BV39, ED18a/b
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and develop the attendance strategy.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV45, BV46
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish multi-disciplinary locality team based on school cluster/Children's Centre model.</li> </ul>	March 2007	Team established
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with joint strategy to improve educational outcomes for Looked After Children (LAC) including the implementation of the personal education plans for LAC and their use in target setting.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV50 (A2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the capacity of schools to manage pupil behaviour; reduce the number of pupils identified as having significant Emotional Social &amp; Developmental Special Educational Needs and reduce rates of permanent and fixed term exclusions.</li> </ul>	March 2007	ED53
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise standards of achievement for vulnerable children and those at risk of being missing from education.</li> </ul>	March 2007	BV39, ED121
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Longfield Sports College Extended Schools BLF project.</li> </ul>	September 2006	CS198

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>2. Children and young people not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life (Economic well-being).</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and audit childcare need across the Borough and maintain current stock.</li> </ul>	May 2006	BV38 BV39
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of 14-19 education across the Borough.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	ED121
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment education and training (EET) for care Leavers.</li> </ul>	March 2007	BV161 (A4)
<b>3. Effectively Plan, co-ordinate and manage the delivery of services and resources ensuring that they are of high quality and responsive to the needs of children, young people and their families.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Workforce Strategy and Workforce Unit for Children's Services.</li> </ul>	March 2007	Strategy adopted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Children's Services Communications Strategy.</li> </ul>	September 2006	Strategy adopted

### Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

Children and Young People – Councillor Chris McEwan.

### Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)

Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Cyndi Hughes.

### Key contacts:

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## STIMULATING LEISURE ACTIVITIES

**Our aim** To stimulate participation in cultural pursuits, promoting creativity and extending opportunities for people to experience high quality recreational and leisure activities.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

 **Enhance leisure and arts contribution on the quality of design to urban regeneration, rural development and Darlington's built environment.**

**We said we would** adopt a Public Art Policy by the Council and consequently develop a Public Art Strategy and an Outdoor Event Strategy. **We have delivered** The Public Art Policy that will be implemented in 2006/07. The Outdoor Event Strategy has been adopted. **The impact has been** a more co-ordinated approach for the delivery of public art projects and events, which in turn, will help improve provision of leisure services to the community.

 **Extend leisure and arts provision to under represented groups and promote community development and capacity building.**

**We said we would** develop neighbourhood leisure and arts plans to provide more diverse provision and implement the Zone Active bid to increase levels of physical activity in three priority wards. **We have delivered** neighbourhood plans that are to be linked to the new zonal approach. In delivering Zone Active a Zone Active Coordinator commenced work in April 2005 and has engaged with local communities. Activities delivered include: low level activity classes for older people, breakfast and after school clubs, boxercise for young people, walking groups, mini health MOTs and a range of learning and leader/volunteer education programmes. **The impact has been** that over 2,000 local people have participated in physical activities in the first year of the project.

 **Undertake effective marketing and strengthen information systems for leisure and arts to promote greater usage and provide better access to services electronically.**

**We said we would** develop IT systems to increase the scope of users information collected, establishing the extent to which the service meets needs and to inform future service delivery and marketing activities. **We have delivered** upgrades to IT systems to give us better user information. Following a review of the pricing policy the 'Live Darlington' discount card has been launched. The Swipe card technology will provide data to identify which activities people take part in. The system is ready to go live and will be implemented late 2006 with the implementation of the pricing policy. **The impact has resulted** in a better understanding of the customer base. Once the swipe cards have been implemented we will be able to target marketing campaigns to sections of the population who are not currently accessing the services, and provide the activities that local people want.

 **Seek investment in existing and new cultural facilities and events.**

**We said we would** take forward the refurbishment of the Arts Centre and Dolphin Centre. **We have delivered** funding for the refurbishment of the Arts Centre, to include the creation of accessible dressing rooms, an extended studio theatre space, improved customer facilities, the creation of a plaza for public art performance and outdoor cafe area. The work will be completed by March 2007. A £5 million facelift for the Dolphin Centre is underway to bring the venue into the 21st century. Work will be completed by January 2007 and will include new changing facilities and a new Register Office and Marriage Hall. **The impact has been** both venues are undergoing refurbishment at the moment, which has led to some disruption to the visitor experience. Satisfaction targets have not been met. Despite not meeting these targets we still remain in the upper quartile for customer satisfaction with council leisure venues compared to other councils. Once refurbishment is complete, we will deliver improved facilities which we hope will lead to increased customer satisfaction with their leisure experience.

 **Increase sport, physical activity and recreational opportunities for young people.**

**We said we would** implement the LPSA target to increase the number of school children taking part in sport and physical activity for at least 45 minutes beyond the school day, deliver the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) initiative in 9 schools, and work with our partners to tackle obesity, smoking cessation and alcohol abuse. **We have delivered** mixed results. Due to a dramatic fall in the cohort numbers for the 2005/06 academic year, we are unable to reach the target for involving the school pupils in years 1–6. Steady progress is being made on increasing participation levels of girls in years 7–11 and also children in years 1–11 in special schools. Due to delays in the construction of the NOF sites, not all schools have developed community access procedures to date. It is a priority to ensure that all facilities are accessible to the community in Spring 2006. We continue to work with partners to tackle obesity, smoking cessation and alcohol abuse. **The impact has been** that NOF schemes will improve community access to leisure facilities. Although not all of the LPSA targets have been met, there are still considerably more school children in Darlington taking part regularly in sport and physical activity.



**Pursue the personal and social development of young people promoting social inclusion and assisting people at risk.**

**We said we would** implement the OFSTED Action Plan for the Youth Service and develop a Youth Strategy. **We have delivered** an Action Plan submitted to and signed off by Government Office North East. Actions are being implemented in conjunction with external consultants. We have committed extra funding to the Youth Service and this has enabled extra capacity in the Youth Participation/Involvement Team to expand opportunities for all young people to have a voice in decisions and service delivery. The Youth Strategy has been superseded by a Children and Young People's Plan for Darlington, which has been developed, ready for implementation in 2006/07. **The impact has been** a Youth Service which is now focused more around young people's priorities.



**Provide opportunities for older people to engage in leisure.**

**We said we would** expand the '*Get Everyone Motivated*' (GEM) into the community and implement the action plan for the GP referral scheme. **We have delivered** GEM through the Zone Active Project. GEM will continue to be developed in 2006/07, including the possibility of accessing other funding sources to expand the GEM concept across the town. **The impact has been** 9 new GEM classes which has enabled many more elderly people to participate in gentle exercise and leisure activities.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Develop rich and diverse leisure and arts opportunities which enhance the health and social well-being of the community, developing and implementing programmes of diversionary activities.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Westside project providing diversionary activities for young people living in priority wards.</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive Summer Programme of activities for young people.</li> <li>• Deliver a varied programme of sports events and festivals.</li> <li>• Host Tees Valley Partnership Youth Games.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2006</p>	<p>CS201</p> <p>CS17aii</p> <p>CS17cii</p> <p>CS202</p> <p>CS203</p> <p>CS198</p> <p>CS155a</p> <p>CS155b</p>
<b>2. Provide a wide range of stimulating leisure and arts services, which are accessible for all.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver &amp; implement Public Arts Policy.</li> <li>• Deliver the Zone Active Project.</li> <li>• Develop Lifestyle on Referral Scheme and improve the Lifestyle referral pathway.</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CS199</p>
<b>3. To provide Best Value services throughout Leisure &amp; Arts and proactively work towards recognised quality standards.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a Darlington Sport and Physical Activity Strategy ensuring a strategic approach to the development of sport and physical activity in Darlington.</li> <li>• Implementation of Playing Pitch Strategy ensuring a strategic approach to the provision of playing pitches.</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>May 2006</p>	<p>CS200</p> <p>BV119e</p>

<b>4. Continue to develop the Healthy Lifestyles theme within schools and the community</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Turning the Tables: Transforming School Meals Recommendations</li> <li>Community Services to adopt the target nutrient specifications circulated for consultation by the Food Standards Agency.</li> </ul>	September 2008	100% of Primary Schools where Community Services are the meal provider
	Ongoing	

## Relevant Cabinet Member

Leisure Services portfolio – Councillor Lee Vasey.

## Relevant Scrutiny Chair

Environment Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Stella Robson.

## Key contacts:

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## PROMOTING COMMUNITY SAFETY

Our aim is to reduce crime and disorder and enhance feelings of safety amongst local people.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06


 **Reduce the impact on local communities of anti-social behaviour and disorder.**

*Tackling anti-social behaviour is a core theme within Darlington's Crime, Disorder and Substance Misuse Reduction Strategy 2005-2008.*


**We said we would** develop an anti-social behaviour strategy. **We have** appointed an Anti-Social Behaviour Team, which complements the work of the uniformed wardens by providing support to victims and taking the appropriate action against those who cause problems for others. **The impact has been** increased levels of working with the community to tackle a wide variety of cases. Nine people are subject to individual Anti-Social Behaviour Agreements to moderate their behaviour. Work is underway with partners to develop an Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and accompanying protocols. We have also launched the Westside Project, which is aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour by young people by providing diversionary activities. We recognise that we need to do more to address citizens' concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and this year we plan to do more work with our partners and the community to tackle the increasing trend.

 **Reduce crime in line within the governments Public Service Agreements.**

**We said we would** raise awareness of the factors that contribute towards vehicle crime and reduce house burglary. We also wanted to raise awareness of the factors that contribute towards violent crime and reduce the level of violent crime. **We have** re-launched the Hawkeye Initiative, which aims to reduce offences of theft from vehicles by raising awareness amongst vehicle owners who leave property unattended and on display on the seats of their vehicles. However, we failed to meet our stretching PSA targets for vehicle crime, and this remains a priority area. We are working with partners and are seeking funding to purchase a property marking system, which will allow us to mark property in hot spot areas and identify stolen property. In addition, the Burglary Reduction Officer provides advice and support to victims of burglary to reduce the potential of them becoming a repeat victim. We have launched the Nightsafe Initiative to increase awareness that alcohol is a contributory factor in many violent offences. **The impact has been** that 256 vehicle owners have been given appropriate advice on preventing vehicle crime. We are providing an improved service to individuals who have been victims of burglary and are striving to reduce crime in all areas. We are increasing awareness of the effects of drug and/or alcohol and that it is a contributory factor in many violent offences. Positive action has been taken in partnership with licensees that violent behaviour will not be tolerated in Darlington. Despite upward trends in crime we are making progress to address these problems.

 **Reduce the impact of alcohol related crime and disorder on local communities in line with the National Alcohol Harm Minimisation Strategy and reduce drug related crime in line with the National Drugs Strategy.**

**We said we would** reduce the impact of alcohol related crime and disorder on local communities. **We have** consolidated a small therapeutic team of 4 staff from a range of professions and agencies to support and offer treatment to those young people aged between 10 and 18 years experiencing difficulties with drugs and/or alcohol. A number of social events based on the national "Talk to Frank" campaign have been delivered with a focus of raising awareness about drugs and alcohol. A supported accommodation project has been commissioned by the "Supporting People" Unit to meet the needs of individuals who experience problems with drugs and/or alcohol. The Darlington Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy is now being implemented. Drugs Education is now delivered in the majority of Darlington schools, with incident management polices being operational, monitored via the Healthy Schools Programme. A process has been agreed and publicised regarding drug related litter. **The impact has been** a raised awareness of the effects of drug and alcohol misuse and increased services available to individuals experiencing difficulties with drugs and/or alcohol.

 **Increase the numbers of drug users into treatment and increase the proportion of people discharged from treatment being retained for 12 weeks.**

**We said we would** increase the numbers of drug users into treatment and increase the proportion of people discharged from treatment being retained for 12 weeks. **We have** continued to expand Drug & Alcohol Treatment, which is delivered by a number of drug and alcohol services. We have published and distributed a Directory of services for appropriate professionals and service users. A website has been developed and launched to enhance awareness of service provision. **The impact has been** a greater awareness and take up of treatment services available for those individuals suffering from drug misuse and support services for families/parents and carers.

 **Reduce the impact of prolific and priority offenders on the community.**

**We said we would** reduce the impact of prolific and priority offenders on the community. **We have** implemented the Prolific & Other Priority Offender Scheme. The scheme incorporates three strands – Catch & Convict, Rehabilitate & Resettle and Prevent & Deter. **The impact has been** that we have adopted a joined up multi agency approach to delivering the three strands of the scheme, although we recognise more work needs to be done in terms of reducing the impact of prolific and priority offenders on local communities.

 **Deal effectively with domestic abuse and develop services for victims and their families.**

**We said we would** deal effectively with domestic abuse and develop services for victims and their families. **We have** developed a wide range of initiatives to address domestic abuse including the Freedom programme, which raises awareness to women and young people relating to the issues of what constitutes healthy and positive relationships. We have developed the perpetrator programme, which aims to minimise the risks to partners/ex partners and any children by creating an awareness of violent abusive behaviour and challenging this pattern through group work with perpetrators. A Domestic Abuse Advice Circle has been established which provides a wide range of services for victims in a safe environment. **The impact has been** an increase of services and support services available to victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse. Whilst a lot of progress has been made in respect to Domestic Abuse we recognise more work needs to be done. Through the Local Area Agreement we plan to develop a Domestic Abuse Virtual Service.



## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

Strategic Objectives		Safer & Stronger Communities	
Actions	By when/ Milestones	Measures of Success	
<b>1. Develop an intelligence led approach to crime &amp; anti social behaviour</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a whole systems approach to intelligence gathering, leading to a more informed and effective deployment of resources to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in local communities. Facilitated through the appointment of a Partnership Analyst and the development of the appropriate IT packages.</li> </ul>	Appointment of Partnership Analyst – October 2006	Analyst in post	
	Roll out of Intelligence led partnership approach to tackling crime and ASB (based on manual data sources) - November 2006	Partnership resources deployed via Tasking and coordinating multi-agency meetings	
	Detailed specification for implementation of GIS/ICT packages – January 2007	Specification agreed	
	GIS/ICT fully operational – June 2007	System operational and providing relevant data	
		QoL15a & b, BV45, BV46, SS9, SS10, BV 126a, BV128a, BV127a & b, CS174, CS173, BV99bi/ii	

<b>2. Enhancing our response to Crime &amp; ASB</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve visibility through the appointment of additional Police Community Support Officers and the implementation of Neighbourhood Policing in its broadest sense.</li> </ul>	<p>Recruitment of Police Community Support Officers August 2006</p>	<p>PCSO's in post</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a virtual domestic violence service.</li> </ul>	<p>Deployment of Police Community Support Officers – November 2006.</p>	<p>Implementation plan agreed</p>
	<p>Design virtual service and implementation plan – July 2006</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop timely multi media campaigns to reduce and prevent crime and anti social behaviour and to raise awareness amongst communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Domestic Abuse plan completed – November 2006</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse Plan implemented. BV225</p>
	<p>Timely Media campaigns developed based on intelligence – to start November 2006 – will be an ongoing action</p>	<p>Number of media campaigns</p> <p>QoL15a &amp; b, BV45, BV46, SS9, SS10, BV126a, BV128a, BV127a &amp; b, CS174, CS173, BV99bi/ii, CS177, CS178</p>
<b>3. Promote Young People's Participation to enable them to contribute to the development of their own, and the wider, community.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the Youth Opportunity Fund</li> <li>Develop the active involvement of young people in decision-making</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007 July 2006</p>	<p>CS152 CS153 CS221 CS222</p>

<b>4. Children and young people being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social behaviour</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue close monitoring of warnings and convictions in line with agreed protocols and enhance services to support Looked After Children involved in/ at risk of offending.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	SS1 (C18)
<b>5. Ensure a clean, safe and well maintained environment for the residents of the borough</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the Environmental Crime Enforcement Team working across the Council and with external partners.</li> </ul>	December 2006	BV199a BV199b BV199c BV199d BV218a BV218b

## Relevant Cabinet Member

Community Safety Portfolio - Councillor Bill Dixon

## Relevant Scrutiny Chair

Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Chair - Councillor Doris Jones

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## IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Our aim is to improve the health, well-being and social care of local people, reduce inequalities and help at all stages in their life to enjoy the best possible health.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

 **Ensure that a greater proportion of adult service users are supported to live safely and independently within their homes**

**We said we would** maintain zero waiting times for those people requiring occupational therapy assessments. **We have delivered this;** throughout the year waiting times have remained at zero. In addition we have improved our performance on the percentage of items of equipment and adaptations delivered within 7 working days from 77% in 2004/05 to 80% in 2005/06. **The impact has been** that more people have received an assessment of their needs and these needs have been met more promptly to enable them to be supported safely and independently at home.

 **Ensure strategies are in place which commission, purchase and monitor an adequate supply of appropriate cost effective and safe health and social care provision; working with a range of partners where possible.**

**We said we would** extend the range of services available to increase the number of people who are helped to live at home. **We have delivered** changes in the in-house home care service delivery to improve customer satisfaction and quality of service. We have developed a home care team to support people within extra care settings and integrated support workers into the intermediate care service to facilitate seamless transition from intermediate care to home for service users. We have also commissioned from the voluntary sector services that provide low-level support such as shopping, be-friending and social interaction. **The impact has been** more qualified staff delivering a broader range of services. The Home Care service was awarded Charter Mark in 2005. 196 additional people have been supported to live safely and independently within their homes.

**● Improve life chances, employment prospects and protect vulnerable service users from potential abuse; ensuring effective safe guarding systems are in place for contracting, monitoring and reviewing of all services.**

**We said we would** appoint an Adult Protection Coordinator who would take the lead for the department on all adult protection issues. **We have delivered** on this objective and in addition, the postholder has recently transferred to the Access and Contact team, the single entry point for Adult Social Services. This has resulted in a more co-ordinated approach and ease of access from other agencies and improved initial response to concerns. Additionally we now provide an extensive training programme for Adult Social Services and partner agency staff. **The impact has been** that adult protection concerns are responded to in a more co-ordinated and effective way to maintain the safety of vulnerable adults.

**● Increase physical activity and improve fitness by promoting walking and cycling as viable transport options.**


**We said we would** increase opportunities for people to increase physical activity by promoting walking and cycling as viable transport options. **We have delivered** the Town on the Move project that has led to “Local Motion” which looks at travel needs and is opening up more opportunities to the people of Darlington. We have won the National Cycling England competition to make Darlington one of 6 nationally designated cycling towns. **The impact has been** an additional £3 million investment in the infrastructure of Darlington for cycling. Additionally, 25% of trips in Darlington are undertaken by walking.

**● Ensure that appropriate workforce development processes resulting in effective staff recruitment and recruitment outcomes.**


**We said we would** implement our revised Workforce Development Strategy to improve the recruitment and retention of staff. **We have delivered** this strategy, and action plan. There is now a robust induction programme which is delivered to all new starters in the department. We have also devised a comprehensive training directory which has been made available to staff. **The impact has been** that we have achieved a reduction in staff turnover from 9.43% in 2004/05 to 6.94% in 2005/06. Furthermore the percentage of directly employed posts vacant on 30 September 2005 was 6.36% and this reduced from 8.67% compared to the previous year. This has meant a speedier response to the assessment of needs, so that 91.7% of people were assessed within 4 weeks. For those who required services, 81% got them within 4 weeks of the assessment being carried out.

 **Improve standards within the private sector.**


**We said we would** work in partnership with the independent sector to link what we pay them to the quality of care that they provide. **We have delivered** this quality standard and 54% of all care providers now meet the higher standards that have been set. These standards are monitored each year by Contracts staff who check the quality of care against the agreed standards. **The impact has been** an improvement in the quality of care that is provided to those receiving residential and nursing care in Darlington.

 **Identify individuals with needs who are eligible for public support, to assess those needs accurately and consistently and to review packages of care to ensure that they are appropriate, cost efficient and effective.**

**We said we would** improve the speed at which we carry out an assessment of the needs that a person has and also make sure that service users get a copy of their care plan each year. **We have delivered** changes to the way that we are structured and work and have set up an Access and Contact team, so that people can get information about social services and an assessment of their needs more easily and speedily. We have also improved our working practices and ways of checking to make sure that as many people's care as possible is reviewed and an up to date care plan is sent out to tell them exactly what help they will get. **The impact has been** a speedier response to the assessment of needs. For 2005/06, 97% of all care plans were sent out, an improvement on the previous year's performance of 91%

 **Develop floating support services and accommodation services for people with drug and alcohol misuse problems.**

**We said we would** develop floating support and accommodation based services for people with Drug or Alcohol problems. This was in response to identified unmet need as part of the Supporting People 5 Year Strategy. **We have delivered**, through a procurement exercise, 8 accommodation based units and 10 floating support units of housing related support for vulnerable people, to help them access or maintain their accommodation, along with signposting to other relevant services. This service will start in July 2006. **The impact will be** joint strategic outcomes linked to key strategies including the Community Strategy, Crime and Disorder Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy. The new services will reduce the number of failed tenancies and accommodation issues for service users, along with assisting them to engage with relevant agencies.

 **Ensure that service users are enabled to make choices, to include access to direct payments, which improve quality of life, and to assist informal carers to continue with support/care independently for as long as they and the service user wish.**

**We said we would** improve the information on Direct Payments and encourage more people to use them. We also wanted to provide more support for carers in their role.

**We have delivered** a marketing plan to promote Direct Payments, which included advertising campaigns, revamped promotional literature and put in place a training package for staff that makes sure that people are offered Direct Payments as an alternative way to meet their needs. A scheme to offer vouchers to carers so that they have choices about when they take a break from caring was also set up.

**The impact has been** that the number of people using a Direct Payment to meet their needs has increased from 65 in 2004/05 to 107 in 2005/06. This gives people greater flexibility and control over the way that their needs are met. The voucher scheme is operational with 10 providers signed up to accept vouchers and high levels of satisfaction have been expressed by those people who have used the vouchers.

 **Ensure that effective mechanisms for dealing with comments and complaints are in place.**

**We said we would** implement new Government guidance on separate complaints procedures for Adult Social Services and Children's Social Services due to be published in October 2005. **We have not delivered** this because the guidance has still not been published by central government, with the implementation date now July 2006. **The impact has been** we have continued to use the existing Social Service Complaints procedure to resolve complaints as speedily as possible and learn from the mistakes we have made. This has meant that in 2005/06 we received 57 complaints compared to 69 the previous year. We also resolved 95% of those complaints at the informal stage of the process. This is slightly down from 97% the previous year but better than the target of 90%.

 **Develop services for older people.**

**We said we would** assess the needs of older people more quickly and would extend the range of low-level preventative support services for older people. We would also look at setting up an Older People's Strategic Board that would make sure there was a partnership approach to developing services in the future. **We have delivered** new services for older people that include shopping, be-friending and social support by working in partnership with the voluntary sector. A multi agency Older Persons Partnership Board is now established and includes representation from older people. Older people are also able to influence service delivery through the themed task groups, which have shaped the Growing Older Living in Darlington (GOLD) Older Persons Strategy. **The impact has been** older people now have access to a greater range of services to support them to remain independent and have a voice as to how services are developed in the future.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Ensure that a greater proportion of adult service users are supported to live safely and independently within their own homes.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessments of adults to be carried out more promptly.</li> <li>Provision of services to be more prompt.</li> <li>Develop short break stay facility at Oban Court for people with physical Disabilities (50+).</li> <li>Develop pilot project for telecare in partnership with Housing Services.</li> <li>Ensure effective access arrangements and protection of vulnerable people.</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>March 2007 December 2006</p> <p>March 2007</p> <p>March 2007</p>	<p>BV195 (D55) BV196 (D56) BV54 (C32)</p> <p>BV54 (C32)</p> <p>BV53 (C28) SS15 (C29)</p>
<b>2. Ensure that service users are enabled to make choices, to include access to direct payments, which improve quality of life, and to assist informal carers to continue with support/care independently for as long as they and the service user wish.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop self assessment processes to enable people to make choices using learning from the 'In control' pilots.</li> <li>Provide personal care support to additional extra care tenancies.</li> <li>Develop Home Independence Shop.</li> <li>Increase uptake of Direct Payments from people with a learning disability.</li> </ul>	<p>December 2006</p> <p>March 2007</p> <p>June 2006 July 2006</p>	<p>BV195 (D55) BV196 (D56) SS16 (E50) SS34 (C72) SS35 BV54 (C32)</p> <p>BV56 (D54) BV201 (C51)</p>
<b>3. Ensure strategies are in place which commission, purchase and monitor an adequate supply of appropriate, cost effective and safe health and social care provision; working with a range of partners where possible.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality Standards to be developed across Adult Social Services.</li> <li>Meet the requirements of the preventative agenda to provide low level services.</li> <li>Deliver person centred care for adults, which meet the National Service Frameworks.</li> </ul>	<p>September 2006</p> <p>March 2007</p> <p>As per each NSF</p>	<p>BV54 (C32) SS36 (D41)</p> <p>BV54 (C32)</p> <p>BV54 (C32) BV58 (D39)</p>



<b>4. Identify individuals with needs who are eligible for public support, to assess those needs accurately and consistently and to review packages of care to ensure that they are appropriate, cost efficient and effective.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessments of adults to be carried out more promptly.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV195 (D55)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of services to be more prompt.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	BV196 (D56)
<b>5. Improve life chances, employment prospects and safeguard vulnerable service users from potential abuse; ensuring effective safe guarding systems are in place for contracting, monitoring and reviewing of all services.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modernise day care services for people with a learning disability, into community based services, including a broader range of day services.</li> </ul>	December 2006	Increase of 20 service users each year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Supported Living options for people with a learning disability.</li> </ul>	July 2006	SS31 (C30)
<b>6. Recruit and support employees to perform and maximise their potential in a safe working environment. To ensure that appropriate workforce development processes for staff recruitment and retention are in place.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen and develop the skills of the adult social care workforce in the advent of integrated teams and more user-centred services.</li> </ul>	July 2006	To be developed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement revised management structure.</li> </ul>	July 2006	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Workforce Plan.</li> </ul>	March 2007	
<b>7. Develop and improve partnership working to improve service delivery through integration and develop the technology to support this.</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the requirements of the joint social care and health White Paper.</li> </ul>	March 2007	To be developed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop opportunities for integration across Community Services.</li> </ul>	May 2007	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to the changes in health structures to ensure we continue to meet statutory duties for adult social care.</li> </ul>	Ongoing from June 2006	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a model of integration with Darlington PCT.</li> </ul>	March 2007	
<b>8. Children and young people enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle (being healthy).</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote healthy school status</li> </ul>	December 2006	50% of schools achieving new standard ED133 SS29 (C19)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the outcomes for Looked After Children through maintaining health assessments and joint work with CAMHS</li> </ul>	Ongoing	

## Relevant Cabinet Member(s)

Adult Social Care portfolio – Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite.

## Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)

Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Marion Swift.

## Key contacts:

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## ENHANCING THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Our aim is to create a more attractive environment that is safe, clean and tidy as well as a more healthy and diverse natural environment.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06



#### **Streets and open spaces that are clean, throughout the borough.**

**We said we would** conclude the review of 'street scene' services and integrate the delivery of street cleansing, refuse collection, grounds maintenance and related services. **We have delivered** an innovative new structure of five generic teams, each delivering co-ordinated street services in its own area of the borough. These teams will be fully operational from July 2006. Whilst developing this structure we have continued to deliver the 'In Your Hands' litter initiative. **The impact has been** a 45% improvement in the cleanliness of streets and open spaces between 2004/05 and 2005/06, as measured by recognised national indicators.



#### **Streets that are safe by being well maintained and well lit.**

**We said we would** deal effectively with abandoned cars and repair of street lighting faults, and continue to improve the condition of roads and footpaths. **We have delivered** streamlined arrangements for removing abandoned cars and handled a big increase in street lighting repairs. We've invested an extra £2.5 million in road maintenance to tackle local repair priorities. **The impact has been** excellent performance on abandoned cars, with 100% removed within 24 hours, and further measured improvement of road conditions. Despite an increase in the number of faults rectified, the speed of repair of streetlights remains an area for improvement. At the same time the conversion programme to bright 'white lights' has progressed well.



#### **A healthy and sustainable environment.**

**We said we would** implement new requirements to identify and monitor contaminated land, continue to prepare the best possible planning policy framework for Darlington and ensure that the majority of new houses are built on previously developed land. **We delivered** a register of contaminated land in the borough and made good progress on preparing the Local Development Framework based on sustainable development principles, 76% of new homes have been built on re-used land. **The impact has been** continuing progress towards achieving the development that Darlington needs for economic and social well-being within sustainable environmental limits.



**Increased recycling and composting and reduced landfill.**

**We said we would** work to minimise waste landfill and the associated costs of Landfill Tax and Biodegradable Waste Permits and make progress towards a new Waste Disposal Contract. **We delivered** a new Household Waste Recycling Centre to support our recycling targets, and made progress on developing a new contract. Recycling and composting performance was under target in 2005/06. This can be attributed to the closure of the Civic Amenity Site to enable its redevelopment as the Household Waste Recycling Centre as an investment for the future. **The impact has been** to strengthen the foundations for a sustainable, affordable waste management service in the future with a significant reduction in the amount of waste generated. We aim to improve our performance with regard to recycling and composting in 2006/07.



**An efficient and effective waste management collection service.**

**We said we would** provide an efficient and effective waste collection service. **We delivered** a completely new area approach to waste collection as part of the Street Scene project. This will be fully operational from July 2006, with waste collection integrated with street cleaning, grounds maintenance, road maintenance and the warden service. Whilst developing this new approach we have continued to provide an effective and efficient service. **The impact has been** continuing good performance reflected in our performance indicators. The full impact of the new area service, in terms of cleanliness, reliability, public satisfaction and cost effectiveness, will be measured during 2006/07.



**Undertake a review of all aspects of the Building Service.**

**We said we would** review and improve the Building Service, focused on repairs and maintenance. **We delivered** the review, completed in October 2005, and real improvements have been implemented since then. These include a new appointments system, hand-held information technology for quick, mobile working, multi-skilling the workforce, extending the working week and reviewing rates for repair jobs. Partnering arrangements for procurement of repairs and maintenance are being investigated. **The impact has been** a move to more efficient and faster ways of working. Our aim is to improve customer satisfaction, which will be measured during 2006/07.



**Positive, problem solving services pursuing local needs and Council priorities whilst meeting statutory duties.**

**We said we would** improve the speed of decision making in the Planning Service whilst maintaining its quality, outcomes and user satisfaction. We also said we would improve children's play areas. **We delivered** improvement in the speed of planning decision making whilst also improving the quality of service and maintaining satisfaction levels. Faster handling of applications was also achieved in the Building Control Service. However, satisfaction with play areas has not yet achieved our targets. **The impact has been** in further strengthening the reputation of the planning service, a contributory factor to the Council's success in securing the development that Darlington needs. Children's play areas remain a departmental priority for investment.



**Operate services in an open, accountable and responsive manner, and seek to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.**

**We said we would** progress the implementation of the Pedestrian Heart project, and implement grant schemes to support improvements to buildings around the Pedestrian Heart and in Northgate. We also said we would consult on and develop a programme to address pavement maintenance issues. **We delivered** the enabling works and first phases of Pedestrian Heart. The project schedule has been maintained despite a major gas utilities issue arising. The grant schemes are progressing. A pavement maintenance programme, based on public priorities, has been incorporated in the £2.5 million 'Let's Get Cracking' project. **The impact has been** in building for the future vitality of the town centre. Public satisfaction has reduced in the short-term with the impact of works in the town centre, and the Council is responding proactively to address the concerns of businesses and the public.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Maintain and enhance the quality of the environment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress implementation of the Pedestrian Heart project. Develop a comprehensive approach to maintaining, promoting and marketing the town centre.</li> <li>Address public satisfaction with the upkeep of the town centre.</li> <li>Investigate and consult on the future development and safeguarding of Darlington's markets and on sustaining the market town culture.</li> <li>Progress proposals for safeguarding the character of conservation areas in the borough.</li> <li>Work with Groundwork, Tees Forest and local volunteers to carry out environmental improvements in priority wards, support nature conservation and improve countryside access.</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 - Ongoing</p> <p>2006/07 - Ongoing</p> <p>Report July 2006 followed by public consultation</p> <p>2006/07 - Ongoing</p> <p>2006/07 - Ongoing</p>	<p>DE50 BV109a BV109b BV109c BV111 CS27 BV219a BV219b DE3a DE3b BV178</p>
<b>2. Manage the environment to improve 'liveability' and make it cleaner, greener and safer for residents and visitors</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the Street Scene service fully operational and improve environmental management through generic teams working closely with residents.</li> <li>Continue to develop the new Licensing Service, and strengthen enforcement activities to support a vibrant and safe night time economy.</li> <li>Work with the Primary Care Trust and other partners to promote Darlington as a smoke-free town in advance of any future legislation on smoking in public places.</li> <li>Improve play opportunities for young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adopt Equipped Play Area Action Plan.</li> <li>- Develop Play Strategy linked to LAA.</li> <li>- Work with Groundwork to improve outdoor play.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>July 2006 – ongoing</p> <p>2006/07</p> <p>Implement 2007 action plan; further work subject to legislation</p> <p>June 2006 December 2006 Ongoing</p>	<p>BV199a BV91a BV224a/b BV90a/b/c BV99ai/ci BV103 BV104 BV165 BV187 BV179 BV166a/b DE19a/b DE89 DE90 BV89 CS26</p>

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>3. Ensure a sustainable environment for future generations</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress the preparation of the Local Development Framework as a policy framework for sustainable development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Core Strategy submitted to SofS</li> <li>– Complete Affordable Housing supplementary document</li> <li>– Consult on Design and Planning Obligations supplementary documents</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take forward the Darlington Gateway concept as the strategic and cultural initiative for pursuing economic, social and environmental sustainability</li> <li>• Continue to promote recycling and composting of waste whilst developing a new waste strategy and progressing towards a new waste disposal contract focused on waste minimisation and recycling and on minimising landfill costs.</li> <li>• Progress the Town on the Move/Local Motion and Cycle Town programmes to increase the use of sustainable transport modes and reduce traffic congestion:</li> </ul>	<p>Early 2007/08 End 2006/07</p> <p>December 2006</p> <p>Sept 2006 – report on research and strategy development</p> <p>Key report Sept 2006; contract procurement April 2007; waste strategy July 2007</p> <p>2006/07 – ongoing (see Environment Theme for Local Motion milestones)</p>	<p>BV82a BV82b BV84 BV200a/b/c BV106 BV63 BV102 DE80</p>

## Relevant Cabinet Members

Regeneration and Planning portfolio – Councillor David Lyonette.

Consumer and Environmental Services portfolio – Councillor Stephen Harker.

## Relevant Scrutiny Chairs

Environment Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Stella Robson.

## Key Contacts:

Ian Thompson Assistant Director – Environmental Services Community Services Department Phone: 01325 347592 E-mail: Ian.Thompson@darlington.gov.uk	Steve Petch Head of Planning Services Development and Environment Department Phone:01325 388553 E-mail: Steve.Petch@darlington.gov.uk
Bill Westland Assistant Director – Public Protection Development and Environment Department Phone:01325 388553 E-mail: Bill.Westland@darlington.gov.uk	



## DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Our aim is to produce a safe and effective transport system that balances the needs of all users.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

#### Convenient transport choices for all.

**We said we would** complete the preparation of the second Local Transport Plan (LTP) and implement LTP programmes and projects; and continue to implement 'Town on the Move' to tackle congestion and improve travel choice. **We have delivered** the second LTP on time and achieved an improved 'above average' rating for delivery of LTP programmes and projects. A new phase in Town on the Move, the 'Local Motion' travel marketing campaign, was launched in March 2006. We were also successful in securing the £3 million Cycle Town project to improve and promote cycling. **The impact has been** continued success in securing investment in transport, amounting to over £20 million over the five year span of the first LTP. The full impact of Town on the Move and other transport programmes will be seen in future years, but there have been improvements in road condition, facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, and public transport infrastructure. There are also signs that the rise in congestion is now being slowed, with a 1% decrease in the proportion of trips by Darlington residents being made by car in 2005/06.

#### A high quality pedestrian town centre environment.

**We said we would** complete preparatory works for the Pedestrian Heart project. We also undertook to progress proposals for parking decriminalisation and transfer of Police parking enforcement powers to the Council, to contribute to the quality of the town centre through effective control and management of car parking. **We delivered** the traffic management, bus re-routing and other preparatory works for Pedestrian Heart on time. The project itself is progressing on schedule, despite a major utilities issue arising. Preparations for decriminalisation have been progressed and a timetable established for seeking transfer of powers from Parliament. **The impact has been** the progress made on these high profile and long-term projects. The full impact of this investment in the future vitality of the town centre will be seen on completion.

#### Well-maintained roads.

**We said we would** consolidate recent improvements in road condition and deliver LPSA road condition targets, consult on and develop a three year programme to further improve roads and footpaths (see 'Improve Footways') and improve the targeting of road maintenance and co-ordination with other street services through the 'Street Scene' Review. **We delivered** the LPSA targets, and all classes of road are now amongst the best in the country in terms of independently measured condition our performance shows huge improvement since the Council took over responsibility for roads in 1997. £2.5 million of prudential borrowing was secured in 2005/06 to invest in further improvements, with a

particular focus on residents' concerns and priorities, established through consultation in late 2005.

This is the basis of the 'Let's Get Cracking' road and footway improvement programme launched in April 2006. **The impact has been** improved roads and additional funding through the LPSA and prudential borrowing for further improvements. Public satisfaction with roads has not improved, and we aim to target the problems that most concern local people with the 'Let's get Cracking Initiative'.



### **Improved footways.**

**We said we would** undertake a three-year programme to achieve real improvements in footway condition across the borough. **We delivered** a big improvement in the measured condition of footways through our established maintenance service. In addition we secured £2.5 million and developed the Let's Get Cracking programme that is now being implemented. **The impact has been** better maintained footways that have resulted in fewer insurance claims arising from tripping and a high level of success in repudiating such claims due to the effectiveness of maintenance arrangements.



### **Effective input to Darlington Gateway and other key strategies.**

**We said we would** contribute to the development and implementation of major Gateway regeneration projects; and continue to seek funding for the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor project. **We delivered** a wide range of transport inputs to Gateway projects, including physical infrastructure, accessibility and travel planning, and public transport. The Highways Agency has agreed funding for the Eastern Transport Corridor project and design work on this has been progressed. **The impact has been** to support and facilitate the ongoing investment in Darlington's economic sustainability and quality of life through the Gateway programme.



### **Positive problem-solving services to customers.**

**We said we would** roll-out project management to improve delivery of transport project outcomes; consolidate arrangements to implement the Traffic Management Act and Roads and Street Works Act; implement the Highway Asset Management and Maintenance Plans, and review the procurement of highway maintenance works. **We delivered** progress on Traffic Management Act and RASWA arrangements fully in line with DfT guidance and regulations. Asset management and maintenance planning is being developed in partnership with the other Tees Valley authorities. Whilst the procurement of highway maintenance works has yet to be fully reviewed, a full procurement process resulting in the appointment of a private contractor was carried out for the Let's Get Cracking programme. Transport project managers have adopted the project management procedures being rolled out across the Council and, whilst further development of these arrangements are planned, there is now a clear focus on achieving required outcomes in project delivery. **The impact has been** seen in the improved assessment for the Local Transport Plan annual progress report, ongoing improvement in the co-ordination of Council and utilities street works, and continuing improvement in the condition of highway assets.

 **Improve customer focus of highway services and improve public satisfaction with highway maintenance.**

**We said we would** participate in the Street Scene review to develop co-ordinated street services, including highway maintenance, focused on communities and responsive to residents' concerns. We also undertook to develop a three-year programme to tackle residents' road and footway condition priorities and improve public satisfaction. **We delivered** the funding, consultation and programme planning for the £2.5 million Let's Get Cracking programme. We have linked highway inspection and maintenance into the Street Scene design, to be launched as a new service from July 2006. **The impact has been** the establishment of new service arrangements and significant investment focused on customers. Public satisfaction with road and footway maintenance has remained static to date, but we are aiming to further improve service provision and customer satisfaction with the impact of Let's Get Cracking, as well as more responsive Street Scene services.

 **An accessible transport network for all.**

**We said we would** continue to improve facilities for disabled people, and to provide road safety training to schools to support children's mobility and accessibility. **We delivered** continued partnership working with Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) to provide wheelchair accessible routes, crossings with facilities to assist disabled people, and enhanced disabled access information. Our road safety work in schools has had a highly successful year, with record numbers of children taking cycle training and the launch of pedestrian training. **The impact has been** recognised in the winning of a national accessibility award for our work with DAD. Our cycle training service has been nationally accredited, and there have been sustained increases in children cycling and walking to school, easing school gate congestion and contributing to healthy living. Performance on the single measure of this priority, percentage of crossings with facilities for disabled people, has deteriorated. However the percentage of crossings with facilities provided in accordance with local needs has increased in line with the target for 2005/06 and we remain committed to increasing accessibility to transport.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006 – 2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Improve accessibility to jobs, services and other facilities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the first year's programme of the second Local Transport Plan.</li> <li>• Roll-out Accessibility Planning across the Council and partner organisations.</li> <li>• Implement the provisions of the Traffic Management Act with a phased roll-out.</li> <li>• Progress proposals for decriminalisation of parking and transfer of Police enforcement powers to the Council.</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 - ongoing</p> <p>September 2007</p> <p>In line with DfT programme</p> <p>July 2007 – transfer of powers</p>	<p>DE80 BV100 BV165 DE50</p>
<b>2. Provide well-maintained roads and footways</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the first full year of the 'Let's Get Cracking' programme.</li> <li>• Review term contract with Community Services work for highway maintenance works.</li> <li>• Make the Street Scene service fully operational and ensure that the highway inspection and maintenance co-ordinate with the generic street service.</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 - ongoing</p> <p>September 2006</p> <p>July 2006 - ongoing</p>	<p>BV223 BV224a BV224b BV187a DE16a DE16b</p>
<b>3. Improve public transport and promote the use of sustainable transport modes</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver second year Town on the Move Sustainable Transport demonstration programme focused on the Local Motion marketing campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Travel marketing programme</li> <li>○ Medal Motion schools programmes</li> <li>○ Local Motion Festival</li> <li>○ Travel Research Survey</li> <li>○ Local Motion Christmas Festival</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Deliver first year of the Cycle Town demonstration programme</li> <li>• Monitor and review the operation of the new Concessionary Fares scheme with particular reference to travel for hospital visits outside the borough</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 - ongoing</p> <p>April-August 2006</p> <p>May &amp; Oct 2006</p> <p>July 2006</p> <p>Sept-Oct 2006</p> <p>December 2006</p> <p>2006/07 - ongoing</p> <p>July 2006 - survey</p> <p>Oct – negotiations with operators</p>	<p>BV102 DE80 DE81 DE61 DE62 DE63</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out reviews of supported bus services and of bus network</li> <li>• Contribute to measures to promote the economy and environment of the town centre, focused on improving public perceptions and satisfaction (see Environment theme)</li> </ul>	<p>July 2007 – completion</p> <p>2006/07 – as required by action plans</p>	
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## Relevant Cabinet Members

Highways and Transport portfolio – Councillor Nick Wallis.

## Relevant Scrutiny Chairs

Environment Scrutiny Committee Chair – Councillor Stella Robson.

## Key contacts:

<p>Simon Houldsworth Transport Policy Manager Development and Environment Department Phone: 01325 388701 E-mail: Simon.Houldsworth@darlington.gov.uk</p>	<p>John Ray Head of Highways Development and Environment Department Phone:01325 388744 E-mail: John.Ray@darlington.gov.uk</p>
<p>Steve Brannan Highways Maintenance Manager Development and Environment Department Phone:01325 388627 E-mail: Steve.Brannan@darlington.gov.uk</p>	

## ENHANCING OUR CAPACITY TO IMPROVE

Our aim is to provide high quality, value for money services for Darlington's communities, stakeholders and visitors to the Borough.

### Key outcomes in 2005/06

#### Develop, implement and communicate vision and strategy.

**We said we would** continue to help deliver our role in the Community Strategy, and refresh our organisational strategy in a bid to become a Leading Edge authority. **We have delivered** the council's first Public Finance Initiative scheme, the Education Village. Work is well underway on the £170m Central Park development. The Leading Edge change agenda is embedded; with a programme of change in place and delivering key benefits for local people. **The impact has been** a big investment in jobs and training at the Central Park development, with up to 2000 jobs created. Some 1900 pupils will be taught at the new Education Village. A project management culture is being embedded in the authority as part of the Leading Edge agenda.

#### Be a good local employer

**We said we would** undertake regular personal development reviews with employees, and monitor sickness absence rigorously. We would continue to invest in training and consult with employees through the annual staff survey. **We have delivered** the Positive Action Strategy, which sets out how we will recruit and retain more disabled people and people from minority ethnic groups. We have made improvements in reducing sickness absence by 2.4% overall from the previous financial year. 85.4% of council employees believe the authority is a good organisation to work for. We fell short of our target of conducting 96% of Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) and this is an area for development. **The impact has been** continuing investment in our employees.

#### Best practice in corporate financial management

**We said we would** continue to collect the maximum amount of local taxation possible, maintaining collection percentages in the top quartile. We said we would review the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and quarterly reporting. **We have delivered** an improvement in council tax collection rates. Quarterly reporting on the MTFP has been reviewed and timely Cabinet reports were submitted on both revenue and capital spend throughout the year. **The impact has been** an improvement in council tax collection, although the collection of business rates dipped from last year to 97.6%. Quarterly budget reporting will now combine service and efficiency performance.

 **Improving external recognition**

**We said we would** work to retain our excellent rating in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, and achieve a score of 3 out of 4, or higher, for the Use of Resources element, including Value for Money. We continue to seek external recognition and to learn and improve as an organisation. **We have delivered** a 4-star rating in the CPA, the highest award available, and achieved a 3 out of 4 for Use of Resources. We have been classified by the Audit Commission as 'improving well' as an organisation and hold corporate Investors in People status and continue to achieve and retain other quality awards including Charter Mark. **The impact has been** to strengthen our approach to value for money and efficiencies, ensuring that we strive to provide high quality cost-effective services.

 **Improving access to services**

**We said we would** provide a state of the art £0.9m Contact and Customer Service Centre and continue to promote effective community engagement. **We have delivered** the centre, which opened in the autumn of 2005. We also gave a commitment to fundamentally review our approach to community engagement and produce a community engagement strategy by March 2007. **The impact has been** to provide a single point of contact for our customers.

 **Promote equality and diversity**

**We said we would** strive to achieve level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. **We have delivered** level 3 in March 2006, and have made a commitment to achieve level 4 by March 2008. We have published our second Race Equality Scheme. **The impact has been** to enhance service accessibility and raise the profile of equalities in service provision. The 'putting quality into equality' review gave external challenge on the attainment of level 3 and led to improved action plans.

 **Deliver improvement in performance and maximise efficiency and effectiveness**

**We said we would** improve the overall performance of the authority, as measured by performance indicators. We set out to monitor progress of our Local Public Service Agreement targets, to deliver procurement and efficiency savings and to maximise our effectiveness wherever possible. **We have delivered** an overall improvement across all non-financial Best Value performance indicators of 10.15%. Eight of the twelve LPSA targets ended in March 2006, with over 70% performance reward grant achieved for those eight targets. Procurement savings continue to be identified. The use of collaborative contracts led to a £24,835 rebate in the last 6 months 2005/06. This is in addition to saving in the region of £30,000 over a 3 year contract by joining the NEPO contract for library books and saving an estimated £125,000 over 3 years by utilising the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation contract for photocopiers. **The impact has been** to further demonstrate that our services are improving, and that the Council is using its resources efficiently and effectively.

## Key actions planned to address corporate priorities 2006–2009

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>By when/ Milestones</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
<b>1. Shaping a better Darlington</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Leading Edge, improve corporate efficiency and reduce spend</li> </ul>	2006/07 - Ongoing	% Leading Edge projects blue circle or better.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Local Area Agreement with partners</li> </ul>	2006/07 - Ongoing	% LAA projects blue circle or better.
<b>2. Providing excellent services</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Procurement Strategy</li> </ul>	2006/07 - Ongoing	£ Gershon identified at inception of project. £ Identified during project. £ Realised. % milestone activities completed in National Procurement Strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate and improve the authority's CPA score</li> </ul>	December 2006 - Ongoing	Overall 4 Stars Use of Resources –3 or better. Value for Money judgement – 3 or better.
<b>3. Putting the customer first</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver effective community engagement.</li> </ul>	March 2007	Positive direction of travel judgement. Strategy published.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve internal and external communications.</li> <li>• Ensure effective arrangements are in place to resolve complaints and to aid learning.</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 - Ongoing</p> <p>October 2006</p>	<p>% news releases successfully placed in the media.</p> <p>CR50 (complaints resolved at stage 1).</p> <p>CR51 (complaints transition from stages 1 to 2).</p>
<b>4. Ensuring access for all</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement phase 2 of the Access to Services improvement plan.</li> <li>• Deliver improved performance in social inclusion and begin work on achieving level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.</li> </ul>	<p>October 2006</p> <p>2006/07 and ongoing</p>	<p>Phase 2 implemented.</p> <p>BV2a.</p> <p>BV2b.</p>
<b>5. Enhancing our capacity to improve</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure performance management arrangements are further develop and integrated.</li> <li>• Deliver a sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan.</li> <li>• Deliver Gershon efficiency savings (£1.8 million by 31/03/07)</li> <li>• Enhance our external reputation by applying for national awards.</li> <li>• Complete the detailed design stage of the Darlington and Stockton Partnership.</li> <li>• Implement the equal pay model.</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07 and ongoing</p> <p>2006/07 and ongoing</p> <p>2006/07 and ongoing</p> <p>2006/07 and ongoing</p> <p>December 2006</p> <p>September 2006</p>	<p>Use of Resources score 3 or more.</p> <p>Value for Money score 3 or more.</p> <p>Use of Resources score 3 or more.</p> <p>Annual Efficiency Statement.</p> <p>CR9a/b (Awards entered/won).</p> <p>Member approval to implement.</p> <p>Agreement of new pay structure.</p>

## Relevant Cabinet Members

Leader of the Council – Councillor John Williams

Resources portfolio – Councillor Don Bristow.

## Relevant Scrutiny Chairs

Resources – Councillor Ian Haszeldine

## Key Contacts:

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**SECTION 4 – APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1	Best Value and Local Performance Indicators
APPENDIX 2	Local Area Agreement Reward Element Targets
APPENDIX 3	Statement on contracts
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## Appendix 3

### Statement on contracts

*ODPM Circular 05/2006* requires a brief statement that contracts awarded in the previous year, which involved the transfer of staff either into or out of the authority, complied fully with the 'Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.'

The following tables set out the information that complies with that requirement.

<b>Nature of Contract</b>	Operation of East Street Car Park
<b>Date of Contract</b>	June 2005
<b>Brief Detail</b>	Darlington Borough Council took over the operation of East Street Car Park from NCP in June 2005. This required the transfer of 3 employees from NCP to Darlington Borough Council under TUPE regulations. Consultation was carried out with the affected staff to ensure employees' existing terms and conditions were maintained and enhanced where appropriate (i.e. access to the Local Government Pension Scheme).

<b>Nature of Contract</b>	Facilities Management at PFI Education Campus with Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, built on two sites.
<b>Date of Contract</b>	September 2005
<b>Brief Detail</b>	<p>The new Harrowgate Hill Primary School and The Education Village opened to pupils and staff in September 2005 and April 2006 respectively. The contract for design, build and facilities management was awarded to Kajima Partnership in March 2004. This involved the transfer of staff from Darlington Borough Council under TUPE regulations as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 Facilities Management Staff to MITIE PFI.</li> <li>• 19 Cleaning Staff to MITIE Cleaning.</li> <li>• 15 Catering Staff to Scolarest.</li> </ul> <p>Consultation was carried out with the affected staff to ensure employees' existing terms and conditions were maintained. The contract provides for this as a 'Super TUPE' arrangement i.e. ensuring no two tier workforce for the 25 years of the contract.</p>

<b>Nature of Contract</b>	Catering Service at St Augustine's Primary School
<b>Date of Contract</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2006
<b>Brief Detail</b>	<p>In December 2005 Darlington Borough Council won the contract to provide a Catering Service at St Augustine's Primary School. This involved the transfer of 2 staff from Hallmark to Darlington Borough Council under TUPE regulations.</p> <p>Consultation was carried out with the affected staff to ensure employees' existing terms and conditions were maintained and enhanced where appropriate (i.e. access to the Local Government Pension Scheme).</p>

<b>Nature of Contract</b>	Catering Service at St Bede's Primary School
<b>Date of Contract</b>	1st April 2006
<b>Brief Detail</b>	<p>In December 2005 Darlington Borough Council won the contract to provide a Catering Service at St Bede's Primary School. This involved the transfer of 2 staff from Hallmark to Darlington Borough Council under TUPE regulations.</p> <p>Consultation was carried out with the affected staff to ensure employees' existing terms and conditions were maintained and enhanced where appropriate (i.e. access to the Local Government Pension Scheme).</p>