

# Performance Plan 2005

*Towards a better future*



*Vision*  
*Town Centre*  
*Waste Management*  
*Community Safety*  
*Transport*  
*Decent Affordable Homes*  
*Young People*  
*Customer Focus*  
*Best Value & Performance*  
*Improvement*



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# Introduction



So much of what your Borough Council does and how it does it is controlled by Central Government. Recent changes in legislation, for example the transfer of the Licensing responsibility, all have to be catered for and financed from our limited resources. In order to ensure that we do not just meet Government targets but also the needs of our Community, we have established Local Priority Action Plans in the areas of Town Centre, Waste Management, Community Safety, Transport, Affordable Homes, Young People and Customer Focus. These action plans are featured in this Performance Plan. We are very aware that it is the resident of the Borough that has to pay the Council Tax. We hope these priorities demonstrate that we are committed to spending your money wisely.

## Working in Partnership

The Council's long term vision is to have in place sustainable projects which will increase the number of people, living, working and visiting the town. The Melton Community Partnership (MCP), which was formed three years ago, has been working hard to improve services and the quality of life for people in the Borough. This partnership's three priorities match three of our Local Priorities: those on the Town Centre, Young People and Better Access to Better Services (which is represented in our priorities as 'Customer Focus'). It acts as an 'umbrella partnership', and helps to co-ordinate existing groups, identifying gaps and avoiding duplication. It enables groups to see how they can work together more effectively to achieve partnership priorities. Melton Borough Council supports the objectives of this partnership through the work of our Community Policy Officer.

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## Our Local Priorities

Our Social and Economic Development unit leads our work on the local priority action plans for the Town Centre, Young People and Community Safety. We have appointed a Town Centre Manager and a Town Centre Member Champion to support the Town Centre priority. They have been working to raise the profile of Melton Mowbray town centre. This year alone we've seen the market place transformed into a fairytale winter scene, complete with Ice Rink and traditional market for Melton's first Frost Fair. Traditional Continental markets have also been held in the town, with stall holders coming from France to sell their produce. These events have all been successful and have attracted both residents and visitors to the Borough into the town centre.

Melton's Youth Forum provided an opportunity for the Council to connect with young people of the Borough. Over 50 young people were able to discuss real issues that affect them such as crime, bullying, Global Warming and Anti-Social Behaviour. Our Officer Champion and Member Champion for Young People will be working to encourage young people to take an active role in working with the Council to devise youth schemes and plan events in the future.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships are at the forefront of tackling crime, disorderly behaviour and misuse of drugs at a local level. One of the key projects developed by Melton's Safer Communities Partnership was the creation of an East Area Anti-Social Behaviour Team. Police Community Support Officers have been patrolling neighbourhoods and tackling anti-social behaviour on the ground in an effective and co-ordinated way. We encourage and support the development of community safety initiatives through the work of our Community Safety Officer.

We as a Council are committed to managing waste in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way. Melton is one of the most forward-thinking and environmentally aware Boroughs in the country. Between April and August 2005 we piloted an alternative weekly collection service, which improved recycling rates by 22% over the rates in the non-trial area. We are so grateful for the continued commitment of residents to our recycling programme and the co-operation we have been shown during this time of change.

For the next few years, Waste Management Officers at Melton Borough Council will continue to focus their efforts on recycling.



Melton's new Housing Strategy comes into effect this year and will aim to achieve a first class housing service throughout the Borough. The Housing Strategy identifies priorities that have been shaped from the results of the comprehensive housing needs survey we carried out last summer. The strategy is underpinned by the Council's Local Priority Action Plan to provide decent Affordable Homes in areas of identified need.

We are working on our local Development Framework. In the future, planning decisions will be considered against the policies laid down in this Framework. We have consulted extensively on these policies, and are continuing to do so. We understand that these proposals affect our community and we will continue to listen.

## Striving for Improvement

We try hard to meet as many of our Key Performance Indicators as we can within our limited resources. We strive to also pay the right attention to those things that are so important, but not measurable, such as the appearance of the Borough and the state of the local environment. I have set up an Action Team to highlight those things which are your Borough Council's responsibility but are not looking as smart or well maintained as they should be.

We will continue to keep all our assets under review and examine their future, especially the Waterfield Leisure Pool.

This Performance Plan reports the measures that we are taking to deliver improvements for local people, and records our achievements in the year from April 2004 to March 2005.

M C R Graham  
Leader of the Council

## A Joint Vision for the future of Melton

A consistent focus of the Council over a number of years has been to work together with our partners and the local community to ensure that we use resources effectively, in order to maintain the Borough's economic prosperity, manage its environment and improve our residents' quality of life. This focus was articulated in our 'mission statement', supported by a set of corporate values and driven by a set of 5 strategic objectives.

However, the preparation of Melton's first Community Strategy gave us a valuable opportunity to reassess our own priorities and to ensure that they truly reflect the needs and aspirations of our community. The Melton Community Partnership (MCP) in December 2003 and its vision, themes and 3 key priorities were formulated following extensive consultation and research.

In tandem with the work of the MCP, we began to reassess our own priorities in September 2003. Using the Audit Commission's guidance document 'Setting priorities and maintaining focus', councillors, senior members of staff, a union representative and the Chairman of the MCP (a non-councillor) worked together to initially identify key and low priorities. This work resulted in the approval of a new corporate plan in 2004.

In order to ensure that our vision and new priorities truly reflected the needs and aspirations of our community and partners we review our priorities and assess progress annually. The latest version of our Corporate Plan was approved in February 2005.

Our vision is one that is shared with our MCP partners:

**We want to enhance the quality of life for everyone in the Borough of Melton to achieve a sustainable, prosperous and vibrant community... a place where people want to live, work and visit.**

## Our Values

Our values are the key principles that underpin everything we do to achieve our Shared Vision. We conduct our business in ways which:

- Are customer focussed
- Strive for continuous improvement in service quality
- Provide value for money
- Listen to the views of the local community
- Provide strong community leadership
- Are open, fair and equitable
- Look after those who are most vulnerable in our society
- Work in partnership
- Are sustainable
- Value our staff

## Our Objectives

We have adopted a number of objectives that we believe will make a difference to the lives of people in Melton. These objectives have been organised under the following three themes:

- Strengthening the local economy
- Building communities
- Protecting the environment

## Our Priorities

To help us focus our scarce resources, we have identified the following objectives as key priorities:

- Enhance the vitality and viability of Melton Mowbray town centre;
- Provide high quality Waste Management services which reduce the impact of litter and waste on the environment;
- Encourage and support the development of community safety initiatives throughout the borough;
- Encourage sustainable forms of transport, develop an integrated transport plan for the borough and work to improve road safety;
- Ensure a well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes, and in particular provide or facilitate an appropriate supply of good quality, affordable housing within the borough;
- Create a step change in our approach to supporting and developing young people in the borough; and
- Conducting our business in a way which is customer focussed (from Our Values)

## What we are trying to do

Under each of these priorities the Performance Plan looks in more detail at:

- What we are trying to do
- Recent achievements
- The next steps
- Performance
- Finding out more

## What we are trying to do

Enhance the vitality and viability of Melton Mowbray town centre.

### Recent Achievements

- Appointed a Town Centre Manager in October 2004 and a Town Centre Member Champion.
- Through the Market Towns initiative, secured £17,000 of funding towards the King Street Regeneration Scheme.
- Began the process of obtaining funding for the Church Street Regeneration Scheme and the St. Mary's Way Improvement Scheme.
- Took over the management of the Secure Melton against Retail Theft (SMART) scheme from the Chamber of Trade.
- Organised the following events between April 2004 and March 2005:
  - A) Christmas Lights Switch On
  - B) Christmas French Market
  - C) Frost Fair and French Market
- Created a Town Centre database.
- Created and distributed Advice Packs to local newsagents and hairdressers on meeting the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act, grants, crime reduction and business seminars, and made them available to any business in the town.
- Developed a grant pack for Shop Front Improvement Grants.

## The next steps

- Draw up a Town Centre Masterplan
- Undertake planned maintenance and replacement of street furniture
- Review car park charging
- Review impact of charity shops
- Undertake Best Practice visits to examine ways to improve the town centre environment and economy
- Redevelop Town Station site, mainly for non-food shopping
- Continue to implement the King Street Regeneration Scheme
- Obtain funding for Church Street Regeneration Scheme and St Mary's Way Improvement Schemes
- Improve the town centre cleaning regime
- Extend the pedestrianised zone to Park Road, High Street and King Street
- Undertake environmental improvements at the Regal Cinema, Cattle Market approach and Norman Way
- Prepare, adopt and implement a town centre lighting strategy
- Prepare a shop front design guide
- Promote Shop Front Improvement grants and Heritage grants
- Implement the Shop Display improvement programme
- Continue to implement the Living/Working Over the Shop project
- Improve links between the Cattle Market and the town centre
- Encourage floral displays
- Provide information to prospective new businesses
- Prepare a town centre marketing and promotions strategy to include markets and food heritage.

### Finding out more...

- 'Melton Mowbray Town Centre: A Vision for the Future'. CTRU 2002
- Melton Local Plan, MBC 1999
- Melton Retail Study, White Young Green 2003
- Town Centre Monitor, MBC 2004
- Melton Mowbray Town Centre & Shopping Discussion Paper, MBC 2004

## Performance

**How we are performing, our targets for the future.**

Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Vacant units as a percentage of all commercial units	5.3%	Not Set	5.3%	Not Set
Percentage of town centre businesses saying that sales turnover has increased over the last year	29.9%	Not Set	35%	Not Set
New retail floor space created in or adjoining town centre (square metres)	0	0	0	0

# Waste Management

## What we are trying to do

Provide high quality Waste Management services which reduce the impact of litter and waste on the environment

### Recent Achievements

- A six month 'Alternate weekly Twin Wheeled Bin trial' collection service was trialled during 2004, and a subsequent full evaluation which included a customer questionnaire to all participating households, carried out by an external consultant, determined the method as successful.
- Expectation that the recycling targets for 2005/06 will be met.
- A review of recycling centres and maintenance of a small number.
- Decided to implement a single method of waste collection for the whole Borough from April 1st 2005.
- Useful data from the DVLA link and faster response on abandoned vehicles.
- Data analysis for the fly capture model.
- Trial of waste data flow (Defra model)
- Educational campaigns with partners.
- Development of the Leicestershire Waste Partnership.
- Establish a programme of recycling and waste education and awareness raising presentations. Introduce and offer support for the eco-schools initiative to a number of the Boroughs schools Community Strategy and Action Plan.
- Undertake background work and assess the implications of introducing an EMS.
- An investigation into potential improvements to the recycling services including increasing the range of materials collected or the way in which they are collected.
- Maximise the cost effectiveness and efficiency of the street cleaning services.

## The next steps

- Implementation of waste collection changes
- To take forward the Leicestershire Waste Management Partnership & Business Plan
- Review the mini-recycling sites to establish use, quantities collected, contamination levels etc
- Consider and introduce waste minimisation initiatives
- Establish partnership with Parish Council's on fly tipped waste
- Round-the-clock availability for street scene reporting; progress tracking of incidents reported
- Develop enforcement protocol for littering/dog fouling
- Establish a range of ongoing waste awareness and educational programmes.

## Performance

### How we are performing, our targets for the future.

Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

### Finding out more...

- MBC Waste service plan
- Leicestershire Household Waste Management Strategy

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Total % recycling rate	31.49%	37%	36.76%	48.65%
Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste	126	100	Not Available	80
Green waste tonnages	2051	Not Set	3045	Not Set

# Community Safety

## What we are trying to do

Encourage and support the development of community safety initiatives throughout the borough

### Recent Achievements

- We have been building relationships with the wider community through residents and tenants associations, ensuring they have a significant say in the next Community Safety Strategy.
- Recruited 4 full time Police Community Support Officers through CDRP and Home Office match funding.
- Pooled resources with 3 neighbouring local authorities to create an anti-social behaviour team.
- Established an early intervention programme for young children showing the first signs of withdrawal.
- Provided additional activities for young people affected by a dispersal order.

## Next steps

- To develop and seek approval of the community safety strategy
- To train all staff and members on Section 17 and produce a corporate S17 Action Plan
- To formalise existing procedures on Anti Social Behaviour into a coherent corporate policy
- To help sustain and expand SMART scheme into the evening economy through Pub Watch
- To improve safety and security of a town centre car park
- To review provision of emergency accommodation for domestic violence victims
- To train all front line staff and members in recognising and handling all forms of abuse
- To help sustain the continuation of the Melton Pyramid Project
- To review provision for a community centre based centrally in the Egerton Ward
- To review Council property and introduce measures to reduce incidence of drug taking.

## Performance

### How we are performing, our targets for the future.

Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

### Finding out more...

- Melton Community Strategy
- Melton Crime, Disorder & Drugs Strategy
- Local Public Services Agreement

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Domestic Burglaries per 1,000 households	11.7	11.0	10.2	9.4
Vehicle Crimes per 1,000 population	11.4	Not Set	7.5	6.8

## What we are trying to do

Encourage sustainable forms of transport, develop an integrated transport plan for the borough and work to improve road safety.



### Recent Achievements

- Supported Leicestershire County Council (the Highways Authority) in developing a transport management package for Melton Mowbray. This included local consultation on traffic issues.
- Lobbied for the provision of a bypass/ring road for Melton Mowbray.
- Consulted local people and businesses on whether new development should contribute to the provision of a bypass.
- Reviewed off-street car parking charges.
- Supported the Leicestershire Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Partnership.

### Next steps

- Consider the creation of a Transport Officer post
- Review car parking charges
- Respond to de-criminalisation of on-street car parking enforcement
- Public car park condition survey
- Extension of pedestrianised zone in town centre
- Develop programme of bus shelters replacement/improvement in Melton Mowbray.

### Finding out more...

- Leicestershire Transport Plan
- Melton Local Plan

## What we are trying to do

Ensure a well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes, and in particular provide or facilitate an appropriate supply of good quality, affordable housing within the borough.

### Recent Achievements

- We have appointed a Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer to provide a more strategic approach to housing in the borough.
- We have appointed a Head of Physical Environment to provide leadership in development control.
- The Council's Homelessness Strategy was produced, published in June 2003 and evaluated by the ODPM in August 2004.
- The service has met the Government's Bed and Breakfast target, where no homeless families are accommodated in B & B for longer than 6 weeks. This was achieved ahead of target. The Council avoids the use of B & B altogether for families except in dire emergencies.
- A Tenants Incentive move on scheme has been developed that provides financial incentives for tenants who move to a smaller property, to make more effective use of available resources.
- A rent deposit scheme has been put into place that assists priority homeless cases, by loaning them the deposit to move into private accommodation.
- A thorough review has taken place of the Council's allocation policy, to ensure that it is fair and consistent and avoids inefficiency and duplication. The new policy will be made simpler and priorities will reflect the actual need for applicants. A review of the Council's housing allocation policy is on-going. A task group has been created and has to date reviewed some aspects of current policy, and has looked at choice based lettings as an alternative way of allocating properties in other Council's. The work of the task group is expected to complete later this year with a full set of recommendations regarding the Council's allocation policy.
- The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) code of good practice for rented housing is being applied.
- Completed a borough-wide Housing Needs Assessment.
- Increased the requirement for the provision of affordable housing in major new housing developments.

### Next steps

- The 5 year Housing Strategy and the HRA Business Plan are both completed in draft form and have been sent for evaluation to the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) with the aim of achieving "fit for purpose".
- Successfully complete Stock options Appraisal sign-off
- To bring Grettton Court up to "Extra Care" Scheme standards
- Review the allocations policy and implement any agreed changes (including Race Equality Scheme)
- Consult local people on changes to planning policy to help meet the housing needs of all the community.

### Finding out more...

- Melton Housing Strategy 2004
- Leicestershire Supporting People Strategy 2004
- Melton Local Plan
- Melton Local Development Framework
- Melton BC HRA Business Plan 2004
- Melton Community Strategy
- Melton Homelessness Strategy
- Melton BC Capital Strategy & Asset Management Plan 2003
- Welland Housing Strategy
- Regional Housing Strategy 2004

### Performance

**How we are performing, our targets for the future.** Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Capital programme is delivered in the financial year	55%	80%	65%	90%
SAP ratings for public sector housing increases annually	48%	60%	48.4%	50%
Housing Needs Assessment is regularly updated	YES	YES	YES	YES

## What we are trying to do

To effectively engage with young people to identify gaps in service provision and create appropriate changes

### Recent Achievements

- Elected a Youth Champion (Council Member)
- Developed an Action For Youth group, which has met 18 times and meets monthly.
- Painted 100% of the play areas in the Borough.
- Replaced play equipment at The Crescent and Thrush Close, Melton Mowbray and built a new play area at Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray.
- Established better links with local and County level Youth Services and Connections.

## Next steps

- Sustain the Action for Youth group
- Carry out an audit of clubs and facilities for young people
- Produce a booklet giving information on activities for young people in the Borough
- Produce the annual 'Summer Plus' booklet
- Establish and sustain at least one new Youth Venue/Project in the Borough within each of the next three years
- Utilise our resources to assist other key agencies to assist with targeted intervention for disadvantaged children
- Support an initial event to help establish a Youth Forum for the Borough
- Investigate the possibility of sustaining such a forum
- Develop a Youth Strategy for the Borough
- Hold a major Youth event in Bottesford
- Hold a Youth event in Melton Mowbray
- Work in partnership with other agencies to deliver activities for the youth of the Borough of Melton
- Build a Skate Park in Melton Mowbray
- Build a Skate Park in Bottesford
- Continue to maintain play areas and replace equipment as needed
- Work with County Youth Services to develop activities for young people at risk or involved in offending or anti social behaviour
- Work with local schools and Connections to prevent exclusions from school and create alternative options for disadvantaged children.

### Finding out more...

- Melton Borough Council Community Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Arts Strategy

## Performance

How we are performing, our targets for the future.

Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Provision of open spaces for children and young people (hectares per 1,000 head of population)	Not Available	N/A	0.27	N/A
The amount per head spend year on year on diversionary activities	£1.57	£2.12	£3.59	£3.25
Number of Young People involved in positive consultation that has allowed them to make a positive contribution	25	60	90	120
Increase year on year of young people attending summer activities	48	60	224	150

## What we are trying to do

Conducting our business in a way that is customer focussed by providing a range of information and services that will make a difference to the lives of customers

### Recent Achievements

- Established a clear vision for each service, which is detailed in the service's annual plan.
- Identified the key service areas for the first tranche of Business Process Re-engineering.
- Developed a Customer Service Strategy.
- Supported a Capacity Building bid to obtain funding to implement effective monitoring systems to measure performance.
- Set up a 'Connect' service shop in partnership with Leicestershire County Council.
- Relocated the Tourist Information Centre to a town centre site.
- Established and lead a Leicestershire Customer Service network to share best practice and benchmarking.
- Revised the complaints policy.
- Reduced the number of complaints being directed to the Ombudsman.

## Next steps

- Carry out Business Process Re-engineering exercise within the first tranche of identified key service areas
- Refocus Corporate Service Standards and implement a monitoring system
- Co-ordinate consultation exercises throughout the Council and draw up an action plan to implement and deal with any issues raised
- Improve communication with customers
- Develop the use of technology for service delivery, including telephony, integration of key services identified for BPR and processes
- Ensure effective contract management for service delivery and focussed on the customer
- Implement effective monitoring systems to measure performance
- Improve complaint handling
- A) Training of all staff on process    B) Standardised monitoring    C) Evaluation
- Develop the Council website to ensure that:
  - A) comprehensive information is available    B) it provides customers with the facility to carry out enquiries and transactions online
- Develop and encourage behavioural standards towards customer focus
- To implement the Priority Outcomes and Transformations contained within IEG
- To aim to provide increased access to other service providers through the Customer Service Centre.

## Transfer of Staff

- No contracts have been entered into during the year which included the transfer of staff

### Finding out more...

- Implementing e-Government
- Melton Community Strategy
- Melton Borough Council's Corporate Service Standards
- Melton Borough Council's Customer Service Strategy
- Melton Borough Council's Communications Strategy
- Melton Borough Council's Complaints Policy
- Melton Borough Council Service Plans 2005/06

## Performance

How we are performing, our targets for the future.

Further information can be found in the Performance Plan 2005 Annexe

Performance indicator	Performance 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Performance 2004/05	Target 2005/06
Percentage of overall customer satisfaction	43%	70%	Not Available	70%
Percentage of telephone calls answered within 13 seconds	Not Available	Not Set	60%	80%
Lost call rate	Not Available	Not Set	17%	10%
Number of organisations using the CSC to deliver their service or distribute their information (permanent service)	0	1	1	3

# Best Value and Performance Improvement

For many people, the services provided by the Council, have a significant impact on their quality of life. It is therefore vital that these services are delivered to a high standard and are responsive to the needs of the users.

The Local Government White Paper, Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services sets out a new performance framework within which the Government is committed to working in partnership with local government to secure progressive improvements in performance.

## Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

CPA is a key element of the Government's performance framework for local government. It supports improvement planning in local authorities through a co-ordinated and proportionate audit and inspection undertaken by the Audit Commission. The Audit Commission has formed a judgement on the performance of every local authority in England and produce a 'scorecard' for each. The CPA scorecard is a summary of the Commission's judgement of the overall quality of local services delivered by the council and whether they will improve, and how well the council is run. The scorecards show an overall result for the council (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor) and the results for key local services.

Melton Borough Council is rated 'fair' overall, according to the Audit Commission's inspection which was published in September 2004. Based on our current plans the report says that we are likely to continue to make improvements.

The assessment of Melton found that the Council is doing well in some areas:

- It has a track record of building capacity through its successful partnership working. In particular, it has access to significant external funding through the Welland Partnership.
- Modernisation of the council's internal systems, including significant investment in customer service and, with good councillors and staff, it has the key building blocks to ensure future improvements are delivered.
- Some core services such as housing, waste and recycling are improving, and the council has been successful in supporting the local farming economy.

But the assessment also found room for improvement:

- A new vision and priorities for the area have yet to be fully translated into plans for action;
- Management of performance is weak and the council's focus in this area is insufficient to ensure the benefits of change are delivered consistently; and
- Improvement in services such as benefits over the past three years has been patchy.

The Annexe to this document sets out our high-level Improvement Plan- our formal response to the CPA report. The actions in our High Level Improvement Plan aim to deliver real improvements and better services to the community by building on our strengths and addressing our weaker areas.

This high-level plan is supported by a detailed improvement plan. A copy of this detailed improvement plan is available for inspection at the Council offices.

## Local Public Service Agreements (LPSA's)

LPSA's are voluntary agreements negotiated between individual local authorities and the Government. The overall aim of LPSA's is to improve delivery of local services through a greater focus on outcomes.

Following a pilot exercise in 2000 a roll-out programme to all upper-tier authorities started in September 2001. Whilst this did not directly affect this Council, the opportunity has been taken to link into the LPSA which has been negotiated between the County Council and the Government. This Council has given a commitment to support four target proposals: waste recycling, vehicle crime, domestic violence and cost effectiveness. As well as driving up performance in these service areas it will provide access to a share of a pump priming grant and if the targets are achieved it will result in the Council receiving a performance reward grant of £105,800.

The LPSA will run for a period of 3 years and will end in March 2006.

## Best Value Reviews

### The Process:

Best Value reviews are designed to ensure that new approaches to service delivery are considered, and demanding performance targets are set for services to help achieve continuous improvements. In practice reviews are expected to:

- challenge why, how and by whom a service is being provided;
- compare their performance with others across a wide range of relevant indicators;
- consult with local stakeholders as to their experience of local services and their aspiration for the future;
- use fair and open competition wherever necessary as a means of securing efficient and effective services.

Now that the Government has withdrawn the requirement to review all services over a 5 year period it has provided the opportunity to focus reviews on priority areas.

## Inspected Reviews:

The Inspector's judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection. The judgements received so far are:

Service	Review Completed	Judgement
Planning, Policy and Development Control	June 2001	A good (two star) service that will improve
Waste Management	October 2001	A good (two star) service that will probably improve
Revenue Services	May 2002	A fair (one star) service with promising prospects for improvement
Leisure Services (Gap inspection)	July 2003	A fair (one star) service with uncertain prospects for improvements
Housing repairs and maintenance (re-inspection)	April 2004	A fair (one star) service that has promising prospects for improvement

The first inspection of the repairs and maintenance service took place in January 2003 and concluded that it was a 'no star' service, with 'uncertain' prospects for improvement. A report was produced for the Council that outlined a series of recommendations for us to act on. Since then the Council has been working hard to improve the service and although areas in need of improvement remain, much has been achieved.

The Housing Inspectorate is committed to re-inspecting all no star services and the full re-inspection of the repairs and maintenance service took place in January 2004. Re-inspections take into account findings from the previous inspection, then concentrate on progress made, improvement and impact achieved and relevant development since then. The improved score reflects the Council's achievements and commitments in this service area.

## Our Future Review Programme:

We have carried out a number of reviews that have not been inspected. As we have been heavily involved in the comprehensive performance assessment process we do not intend at this stage to undertake any new reviews. However, discussions with the Audit Commission following our CPA indicate that there will be a further inspection of the housing repairs and maintenance service and a county-wide review of how resources can be best used through partnership working.

## Partnership Working

### Melton Community Partnership

The Melton Community Partnership brings together public, private, community and voluntary organisations that work in the Borough of Melton to support each other and work together. The Council is a lead partner in that partnership.

The partnership's main role is to develop a Community Strategy to enhance the quality of life of local communities. It must take account of local needs and priorities and co-ordinate actions of local organisations to reduce duplication.

In December 2003 the Melton Community Partnership adopted its first Melton Community Strategy which sets out a vision for the borough. It has three main priorities:

- To regenerate Melton Mowbray town centre so that it is a place where the community can be proud of
- To create a step-change in our approach to supporting and developing young people in the borough
- To deliver better access to better services across the whole borough.

The Melton Community Strategy embraces the Countryside Agency's Market Towns initiative. The project is funded by the Countryside Agency, Melton Borough Council and Samworth Brothers. In January 2004 a Project Manager was employed for three years to help co-ordinate and implement the Action plan that underpins the Community Strategy. The Community Strategy Action Plan is regularly reviewed by the partnership.

A copy of the Community Strategy is available on the website: [www.meltoncp.org.uk](http://www.meltoncp.org.uk)

### Welland Partnership

In February 2000 five local authorities from four counties of varying size and political control came together to form the Welland Partnership. The five local authorities are: East Northamptonshire District Council (Northants), Harborough District Council (Leics.), Melton Borough Council (Leics.), Rutland County Council (Rutland) and South Kesteven District Council (Lincs.).

The Partnership is committed to working together to provide improved service delivery, to exploring and pursuing opportunities for joint financing and grant aid, to protecting the heritage of the area and to sustaining the rural economies for the benefit of the communities in the Partnership area.

# Best Value and Performance Improvement

## Parish Councils

We have worked closely with our parish councils for many years. In consultation with them, in March 2003, we agreed to amend the way we communicate with them. We now have an annual meeting with the agenda set in consultation with parish councils and three meetings a year with grouped parish councils with the agenda set by parish councils through the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local and Parish Councils (Melton Branch). Ad hoc meetings, workshops and training sessions are also held.

The Council is also party to the Village Appraisal Protocol which was prepared in partnership with the Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Community Council. The protocol provides clear guidance to village appraisal groups and service providers on preparing village appraisals to ensure that there are clear lines of communication and proper consideration is given to issues raised in village appraisal reports.

## What our Auditors Say

The Audit Commission Code of Audit practice requires the Council's auditors to consider and assess the relevant significant operational and financial risks that apply to the Council and the arrangements that we have put in place to manage these risks.

A summary of the recommendations from last year's assessment and our Action Plan is included in the Annex to this Performance Plan. The auditor's opinion with respect to last year's Performance Plan is set out below.

## What their findings were:

The Council's auditors, KPMG, considered that the Council prepared and published its best value performance plan (2004) in all significant respects in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance.

Although KPMG issued an unqualified opinion on the Performance Plan, a number of amendments were needed retrospectively to the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) included in the plan. The Council is invited to consider the timing of the audit of the BVPIs so that those published in the Performance Plan are the final outturn figures. The Council may also wish to involve Internal Audit in the BVPI review process.

## What we have done:

We have raised the profile of completing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and performance management. BVPIs are being completed in accordance with requirements and methodology. There has been a review by Internal Audit of the BVPI collection process and the audit of BVPIs has commenced before the publication of the Performance Plan.

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