



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Corporate Plan 2006-09

creating a better Southend

working together to achieve a safe, clean,
healthy and prosperous Southend



www.southend.gov.uk



welcome to the
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Corporate Plan
2006-09

“ We are creating
a better Southend ”

Councillor Murray Foster, Leader



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about this plan

This Corporate Plan sets the future direction for the Council. It commits us to working with our partners in the public, business, voluntary and community sectors to meet our vision of creating a better Southend and contribute to the objectives in Southend’s Community Plan. It provides a summary of how the Council has performed over the past year and gives improvement targets for the three years ahead. This document is intended primarily for staff, councillors and partners of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and is available on the Council’s website www.southend.gov.uk. This Plan is supported by Departmental Summary Plans, Service Plans and individual performance agreements for all staff.



“We are creating a better Southend”



Councillor Murray Foster
Leader



“We are proud of Southend”



Rob Tinlin
Chief Executive

Perspectives from Councillor Murray Foster, Leader and Rob Tinlin, Chief Executive

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and its partners have a leading role to play in developing our community and town. The community relies on us to work in partnership, particularly through ‘Southend Together’, to provide the best for our town. We are proud to lead and direct the future of this Council. We have this year, reviewed our longer term vision and aims, and have taken on board the views and opinions of residents, staff, councillors, and partners in doing so. We hope that you will embrace our new vision and aims and help us to make Southend a better place.

“...addressing the needs of Southend people...”
Our residents have told us about their aspirations for Southend and expectations of their Council. They were clear that they want us to tackle anti-social behaviour, reduce crime and eliminate the fear of crime. They also want us to do more on regenerating deprived and run-down areas and to keep Southend clean and tidy. This plan helps to prioritise these aspirations.

“...a better Southend...”
We are passionate about creating a better Southend. To support this we are shifting our focus to deliver on some critical corporate priorities. This programme started last year and has already had success. We know that change can be difficult but, by sticking with the change, it becomes easier and better. We also recognise the vital need for good

communication across staff, councillors and the community. We know that way we’ll end up with a better result – and a better Southend.

“...we will stick with our priorities...”
We are in a challenging period of scarce resources and tough decisions. We are very clear about our critical priorities and have redirected some £2.35 million of extra resources to help deliver them. We have used our priorities and the feedback we have received to safeguard some services and prioritise others. We have also made other existing resources available to support the critical priority programme. All of our time and resources are limited and need to be used wisely and we acknowledge the work of our staff, councillors and partners in helping to make best use of what we have.

“..we are proud to do a great job for Southend...”
Our people are our greatest assets. Staff told us in our employee opinion survey last autumn that they understand how their work contributes to the objectives of their service, but want to know more about the longer term corporate goals. We hope that this plan helps to do that and to guide fresh work on core competencies, appraisals and personal and organisational development. We hope that the Council’s new vision, aims and priorities inspire you to make Southend a better place.

the future

our vision, values and aims

Many people who have a stake in Southend-on-Sea Borough Council have contributed to developing a new vision for the Council. The Council has actively engaged with staff and councillors in a series of workshops to ensure that the aims and priorities contained within this Plan reflect the aspirations of those that will make them happen. The Council will also continue to develop and agree its values during the coming year.

our vision – creating a better Southend

This is the Council's 'reason to be'. Staff and councillors can make this vision real and create a better Southend to be proud of. The Council commits to working together with our partners in the town and the region to achieve this vision. In particular the Council will develop a Sustainable Community Strategy with our partners in Southend's Local Strategic Partnership, 'Southend Together' that addresses the prioritised needs of the community.

values

The Council's existing core values are value for money, our people, integrity, honesty and openness, customer care and equality and diversity. These have been in place since 2004 and we are currently taking stock on whether these continue to reflect our values as an organisation. This review will involve staff, members and partners in the discussion and some emerging themes to be considered along with our existing values include:

- Communicating and listening
- Leading the community
- Achieving better outcomes through innovation
- Championing the town
- Joint sense of purpose between councillors and staff

aims

To achieve the vision, the Council will focus on a small number of corporate aims. The vision and corporate aims will guide us, over the three year life of this Plan, in setting priorities and allocating resources. These aims also focus our contributions to meet the Community Plan objectives. Our identified aims are:

Working together to achieve a safe, clean, healthy and prosperous Southend.

The Council will deliver the corporate aims primarily by working with partners and focusing on Critical Corporate Priorities and Key Local Delivery Projects. These will be reviewed each year so that we can be sure we are tackling the most important things. We also aim to develop the Council beyond its role as a direct provider of services towards an enabling and facilitating organisation.





critical corporate priorities

The Council's Critical Corporate Priority programme will be the key driver to deliver the Council's vision and aims. For 2006/07 the programme will include the following areas.

- **Improving community safety and reducing anti social behaviour** – Will build on the staff training undertaken this year to strengthen the Council's mainstream focus on crime reduction and identified actions for 2006/07. This includes prioritising areas that contribute to the overall crime levels in the Borough, notably criminal damage to vehicles and Council property and putting in place a robust community safety performance management system
- **Driving up performance of the housing service** – Will focus on improving the quality and efficiency of the repairs service provided to customers, a critical element in enabling South Essex Homes to achieve '2 stars' in its next Audit Commission inspection. Targets relating to re-letting homes and level of rent arrears are included to retain the focus on other important measures of service efficiency
- **Improving outcomes for Looked After Children within agreed budgets** – Will focus on ensuring appropriate budget management within the Children & Learning Department and reducing numbers of Looked After Children. The priority will also aim to meet critical indicator targets in areas that impact significantly on the quality of life for Looked After Children, including stability of placements (in short and longer term), the numbers in foster placements or placed for adoption and numbers adopted
- **Securing a new solution to the Council's waste disposal and refuse collection needs and improving recycling performance** - Will continue work to drive up current recycling rates to meet national statutory targets and implement the delivery programme to reduce levels of waste going to landfill in the long term and the interim, in the context of replacing the cleansing contract (excluding waste disposal) in 2008
- **Making a difference to improve public satisfaction (new)** - Will focus on key drivers of public and customer satisfaction with the Council and its services and will put in place measures to address this. These include targets that focus on action to embed customer care more effectively at first point of contact through a corporate customer charter, improving the Council's communications with residents through a modernised magazine and improving the quality of the Council's web site (increasingly used by residents and others to access services)
- **Promoting and improving the economic well-being of Southend (new)** – Targets are aimed at re-establishing the town's leisure and tourism offer as a key driver of economic growth by beginning re-instatement works on the Pier and releasing the development potential in the Council's land and property assets within the town centre and central seafront areas. Targets also include putting in place the measures to ensure the successful opening of Futures College in 2007 - a key project in raising education and skills attainment rates
- **Initiating a programme to embed a high performing culture across the Council (new)** - Will oversee a large scale cultural change programme, focusing on whole organisation improvement and embedding a high performing culture. The programme will build on recent projects, engage staff, councillors and partners in preparing for a process of change that will include planned intervention in the areas of people management, improved communication and achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard

The progress of each Priority is measured through a number of clearly defined milestones which will be monitored by executive members, senior managers and project teams on a monthly basis throughout 2006/07.

key local delivery projects 2006/07

The Council has also identified some Key Local Delivery Projects for 2006/07 that departments will be responsible for to help deliver the Council's vision and aims. A key selection of examples is given below and is not exhaustive. Further details of Key Local Delivery Projects can be found in departments' Service Plans.



aim: a safe Southend

- The Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy sets out a clear programme of action for the Council and partners in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- The Children and Young People Plan sets out how outcomes related to 'Staying Safe' will be further improved for children and young people. This includes supporting more potentially vulnerable children preventatively, for example through the development of integrated multi-professional teams



aim: a clean Southend

- Improve the level and public satisfaction of street cleanliness in the Borough, focusing on the High Street
- Focus efforts on regenerating the town's run down areas, and continue to implement initiatives, such as Rubbish Watch, to keep Southend's streets clean



aim: a healthy Southend

- Implement improvements to the Supporting People function
- The Children and Young People Plan sets out how outcomes related to 'Being Healthy' will be further improved for children and young people, for example, through a range of activities that promote 'Choosing Health'
- Modernise the Learning Disability service
- Work more closely with the Primary Care Trust so that joint services are delivered to best meet the needs of local people
- Direct resources to the town's cultural and leisure facilities, such as repairs to Warrior Swim Centre and securing Heritage Lottery Funding for the Priory Museum
- More efficient repairs and maintenance of housing stock



aim: a prosperous Southend

- Improving transport and infrastructure
- Enhance opportunities and, with partners, deliver two new secondary schools at Thorpe Bay and Prittlewell
- The Children and Young People Plan sets out how outcomes related to 'Enjoying and Achieving' and 'Economic Well-being' will be further improved for children and young people. This includes the opening of two secondary schools – one on a Fresh Start basis and the other as a Trust in partnership with Prospects College. The 'Economic Well-being' outcome includes delivery of Southend's strategy for the education and training of 14-19 year-olds
- Determine the future for the Pier, Museums, Theatres, Libraries and a replacement Swimming Pool. Reappraisal of strategic direction and delivery options will involve Southend residents, business partners and other interested partners such as Essex University, Renaissance Southend and the Heritage Lottery Fund
- Undertake renovations to the Pier to reinstate fire-damaged portions with a view to getting the Pier re-opened and undertake a new development strategy for future of the Pier
- Deliver capital schemes to improve Council assets
- Continue to improve the Council's performance in preventing homelessness



delivering our aims

The tables below summarise the Council's main intentions for each aim in 2006/07.

Working together to achieve a safe Southend

Key Partners	Southend Together; Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership; Southend Police
Critical Corporate Priority	Improving community safety and reducing anti-social behaviour
Additional resources	£50,000 for enforcement to improve community safety
Contribution to Community Plan objective	Safer Community
Contribution to national / local government shared priorities	Safer and Stronger Communities

Working together to achieve a clean Southend

Key Partners	Southend Together; Essex County Council; Cory Environmental Services (current contractor)
Critical Corporate Priority	Securing a new solution to the Council's waste disposal and refuse collection needs and improving recycling performance
Additional resources	£200,000 to improve recycling facilities. Agreement for additional budget requirement from 2008 for waste disposal arrangements. Additional corporate support provided: interim project manager to implement the long/medium term solutions. Also support from performance improvement capacity building project
Key Local Delivery Projects (and resources)	Improve the level and public satisfaction of street cleanliness in the Borough, focusing on the High Street. (£50,000 provided to retain Rubbish Watch. Additional corporate support of performance improvement capacity building project)
Contribution to Community Plan objective	Environmentally Aware
Contribution to national / local government shared priorities	Sustainable Communities and Transport

Working together to achieve a healthy Southend

Key Partners	Southend Together; Joint Health and Community Service Board; The Primary Care Trust
Critical Corporate Priority	Improve outcomes for Looked After Children within agreed budgets
Additional resources	£2.05 million provided
Key Local Delivery Projects (and resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement improvements to the Supporting People function - Modernise the Learning Disability service - Closer work with The Primary Care Trust - Direct resources to leisure facilities
Contribution to Community Plan objective	Healthy Community, Supportive Community
Contribution to national / local government shared priorities	Healthier communities, Children and Young People, Older People

Working together to achieve a prosperous Southend

Key Partners	Southend Together; Renaissance Southend
Critical Corporate Priorities	Promoting and improving the economic well-being of Southend Driving up performance of the housing service
Additional resources	£2 million from the capital budget has been identified to support town centre and sea front developments
Key Local Delivery Projects (and resources)	<p>Improve transport and infrastructure (Local Transport Plan capital funding; £170,000 identified in capital budget for traffic schemes)</p> <p>Enhance opportunities and, with partners, deliver two new secondary schools at Thorpe Bay and Prittlewell (Additional DfES funding)</p> <p>Determine future for the Pier, Museums, Library and replacement swimming pool</p> <p>Deliver capital schemes to improve Council assets (capital programme)</p> <p>Continue to improve performance on preventing homelessness</p>
Contribution to Community Plan objective	Prosperous, Cultural and Learning Community
Contribution to national / local government shared priorities	Sustainable Communities and Transport

our current performance

In 2005 Southend was rated by the Audit Commission as a Council that is improving adequately and providing two-star performance (out of 4) overall. The Council’s new Chief Executive and Leader were acknowledged to be driving improvement in a more focused way. Two of the main service areas achieved the highest rating of 4 – culture (including libraries and leisure) and the benefits service, this year described as an “excellent” service.

The CPA judgement is set out below:

	2005 rating	Previous judgements and comments
Benefits	4	Also 4 in 2003 and 2004. Now an “excellent service”
Culture	4	Improved from 3 in 2004 and previous years for “libraries and leisure”
Environment	3	Improved from 2 in all previous years since CPA introduced in 2002
Children and young people	2	Combined two categories in 2004: Education – 3 and children’s social care – 2
Adults social care	2	Consistent score of 2 in all years since CPA introduced in 2002
Housing	1	Score of 1 in 2004, previous score of 2 in 2003. Critical Corporate Priority to improve performance from 2005/06
Use of resources	2	Score of 4 in 2003 and 2004. More stringent criteria introduced this year

We also have key strengths in ‘focusing on users’, achieving a judgement of 3 overall - it is the first time this assessment has been made. Our Customer Contact Centre also won “Call Centre of the Year” at the Good Communications Awards 2005 and a number of staff received Institute of Customer Services Awards. We commit to continuing to involve users in decisions about services and making the best use of our new Southend Consultation Panel.



A selection of successes this year includes:

- Thorpe Bay School has been successful in being removed from special measures and will move forward as an exciting new school with Prospects College. Prittlewell Technology College has also been successfully removed from special measures and will have a Fresh Start in September 2006. Leigh Infant School and Westcliff High School for Boys featured in Ofsted's annual list of particularly successful schools. Temple Sutton Primary School was also praised as an outstanding school
- Establishment of South Essex Homes – the new Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) for Housing – in October 2005
- Five of Southend's parks have been awarded the Green Flag in recognition of their high standards. Southend has one of the highest numbers of Green Flags in the country
- The Council has worked with our management partner, Creating Leisure, to achieve Quest accreditation for the five sports facilities. This is external ratification of good performance standards, showing that we are making the best use of our current sports facilities
- Six resort and seaside management awards and four Blue Flags, plus one of only twelve national gold awards from the HM Coastguard for our Visitor Information Centre at Southend Pier
- The Airshow celebrated its 21st birthday
- Southend rated as one of the safest towns in the country, with the lowest rate of serious crime in England and Wales
- The Council actively supported the development of Southend's new university and associated facilities
- Launch of the successful Rubbish Watch scheme – an innovative campaign to improve the street scene
- The Critical Priorities programme in 2005/06 has started to result in significant improvements in Southend
- The most energy efficient housing authority in the Eastern Region
- Southend secondary schools' GCSE passes are well above the national average
- Positive feedback on the Council's Learning Disabilities Services from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)
- Our Customer Contact Centre named "Call Centre of the Year" at the Good Communications Awards
- Planning services were awarded a "fair service" with promising prospects for improvement. Performance in dealing with planning applications has improved over the last year
- Priorities for the effective running of our business have been delivered, including;
 - The employee opinion survey was undertaken for the first time in 2005. This showed some considerable strengths, but also some key areas to address
 - Communication with staff has improved with a monthly team briefing being issued by Corporate Management Team and regular briefings given by the Chief Executive
 - Corporate performance management has improved with monthly reporting to Cabinet members and the Corporate Management Team

Staff Transfer

During the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006, 268 Council staff were transferred to South Essex Homes - an Arm's Length Management Organisation set up to deliver the Council's Housing Service. This transfer complied with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts. Where future contracts involve a transfer of staff, and where applicable, these will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements in the Code of Practice.





how we will achieve our vision

Making the Most of Resources

The CPA Assessment of the Council's use of resources (including financial reporting, financial management, financial standing, internal control and value for money) is rated as 2 this year, under new and more stringent assessment criteria, having previously achieved the highest rating of 4. The Council will focus on making the best use of our resources and ensuring that they are closely aligned with our aims. The broad area of 'embedding a high performing culture across the Council' has been identified as a critical corporate priority. This will help to address issues to make the most of our resources.

People Management

The People Management Strategy has been revised and the Performance Management and Development Scheme has been re-launched for 2006/07, and includes the Core Competency Framework. This gives clearer direction about the skills, behaviours and expectations of staff to perform at their best. An action plan to respond to the employee opinion survey is being developed to address concerns raised by staff. Job Evaluation has now been implemented.

Financial Management

The Cabinet has provided extra resources to support the delivery of the critical corporate priority programme. Despite a tight budget in 2006/07 and having to achieve significant savings to keep the council tax levy within the Government's capping, extra resources have been provided for some of the critical priorities. To the budget for Looked After Children, £2.05 million has been added; £200,000 has been added to enhance recycling; £50,000 has been added for enforcement of community safety and £50,000 has been added to retain the Rubbish Watch scheme. In addition, some of the resources within Corporate Initiatives are available to support organisational development. Some community safety measures such as CCTV were not subject to budgetary savings.

The Council will focus on delivering value for money in all services and ensure ongoing efficiency improvements of at least 2.5% each year. The Council is expected to make significant procurement cost reductions during 2006/07 and the Corporate Procurement Strategy will play a major role in setting out how this will be achieved.

Asset Management

Council owned property is a major resource which needs to be used efficiently and effectively to assist the Council in delivering services. Property assets are currently valued at over £500 million and use energy and water costing £2 million per annum.

Continuous improvement in service delivery relies on managing the Council's assets appropriately. This may include changing the use of some assets to allow the introduction of new technology, respond to residents' needs or work more closely with our partners. In particular, opportunities to share premises or co-locate with other public organisations are sought. Property is expensive to own. When appropriate, and if there is a financial benefit, the Council may sell off property that is no longer required for delivering Council services. Properties that the Council continues to own are reviewed each year to ensure their effective contribution to existing and future service delivery.

Some existing Council owned property has potential for development. Where regeneration schemes impact on Council owned property, these need to be managed carefully to enable regeneration projects to proceed.



Performance Management

The Council is undergoing a step change in the development of its performance culture. Staff at all levels are becoming increasingly engaged with the drive for continuous performance improvement. Notable improvements include:

- Chief Executive and Leader commitment to drive performance management through the Performance Improvement Task Group (PITG) and critical priority programme
- Aligning resources to priority areas through improved budget and corporate planning
- Monthly performance reports and management of performance information by Portfolio Holders and the Corporate Management Team
- Corporate support for service planning and project management through training, workshops and corporate advice
- A more robust target setting process, with targets set at start of the year and closely linked to resources and priorities
- Enhanced performance management and development scheme for all staff

This is starting to result in improved outcomes for Southend. In 2005/06 there were improvements to some high priority performance indicators. A comprehensive analysis of the Council's performance against Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) and local indicators is shown in the booklet in the pocket at the rear of this plan

Future actions to develop performance management include:

- Embedding the Core Competency Framework allowing staff to strive for clear personal development goals
- Reinforcing the corporate project management framework
- Introduction of web-based performance management software, giving staff and councillors access to real-time Council performance information



managing business risks

We have set challenging targets for areas that must improve, but there are risks associated with these. Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team have identified and ranked these risks and agreed an action plan to reduce their likelihood and impact. More information can be found in the Corporate Risk Register and Action Plan for 2006/07.

Rank	Risk
1	Inability to draw down approximately £60m funding from Government to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010 in the event that South Essex Homes fails to achieve 2 star rating by 2007
2	Waste management costs may increase above the anticipated level if Essex County Council's Waste Private Finance Initiative is not selected to proceed by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
3	Inability to maximise human resource potential fully (Combination of 'staff skills gaps' and 'ineffective use of staff')
4	Customer and public satisfaction with the Council and its services may not achieve targets
5	Internal corporate communications may not be fully effective
6	Ability to maintain or improve assets (assets include property, highways, vehicles, plant and other infrastructure) adequately may impact on quality of services, achievement of Council objectives and overall public perception of the Council
7	Community safety targets may not be met
8	Financial resources may not be sufficient to achieve the Council's key objectives
9	Effective performance management culture may not be fully embedded
10	Business and project planning may not be fully entrenched
11	Placements for Looked After Children may incur expenditure beyond agreed budgets

related plans

- 1 Critical Corporate Priorities 2006/07 – targets and project plans
- 2 Critical Priorities 2005/06 – year end report on performance
- 3 Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2005/06 results
- 4 Corporate Risk Register and Action Plan 2006/07

All available at www.southend.gov.uk or from the Strategy and Performance Team on 01702 215187 or via email at adebutteriss@southend.gov.uk





further information

For more details about the Corporate Plan - and how it affects you - speak to your line manager or contact the Strategy & Performance Team on 01702 215187 or adebutteriss@southend.gov.uk

This plan can be translated into alternative languages and can be provided in other formats, including large print. Please contact the Media & Communications Team on 01702 215020 for details.

Albanian

Nëse dëshironi një kopje të kësaj fletushke në gjuhën tuaj amtare, ose nëse doni të në kontaktoni, ju lutemi telefononi në numrin e poshtë-shënuar. Ne do të përdorim një përkthyes për mes telefonit të ndihmojmë me kërkesën tuaj.

Hindi

यदि आप इस लीफ़लेट की कॉपी अपनी मातृ-भाषा में चाहते हैं या आप हमसे संपर्क करना चाहते हैं तो कृपया नीचे दिए नम्बर पर फ़ोन कीजिए। हम आपकी वृच्छता से निपटने के लिए टेलिफ़ोन दुभाषिए की सहायता लेंगे।

Kurdish

ئێه ئه تۆی نوسته بێک لهم مه نشوره به زمانێ خۆن
یان ئه تۆی په چوه نهدیان بهک بهکه له سهر ئهم ژماره ک
هنداره وه . ئه و کاته موتره جیسا بوته ئاماده ئه که بێ له سهر
ئه له خۆن بێ بياره هه ئی دانته . ده بهاری په چوه سته کانت .

Urdu

اگر آپ اس لیف-لیٹ کی کاپی اپنی مادری زبان میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں یا اگر آپ ہم سے رابطہ کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم مجھے دینے کے نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے۔ ہم آپ کی مطلوبہ معلومات فراہم کرنے کے لئے ٹیلیفون پر ترجمان زبان کی خدمات استعمال کریں گے۔

Chinese

如果你想索取此冊的中文譯本，或想與我們聯絡，請致電下列號碼。我們會經電話傳譯員幫助你查詢。

