

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2011/12

North West Leicestershire District Council



CONTENTS

01	Welcome from Cllr Blunt and Christine Fisher
02	North West Leicestershire District Profile
03	How the Council works
04	The North West Leicestershire Corporate Team
05	Increasing our Engagement with Young People
06	Key achievements for 2010/11
06	Pride in the Community
08	Green Footprints Challenge
10	Value for Money
12	Coalville's Changing
14	What we plan to do in 2011/12
14	Our Vision and Council Priorities for 2011/12
15	Actions and Outcomes for 2011/12
15	Pride in the Community
16	Green Footprints Challenge
17	Value for Money
18	Improving our Town Centres
20	Managing the Council's Finances
21	Building Confidence in the Council's Performance



WELCOME

from Cllr Blunt and Christine Fisher

Welcome to the Council Delivery Plan for 2011/12, which sets out our achievements over the last year and our plans to improve North West Leicestershire in the year ahead.

In reflecting on our achievements during 2010/11 we have been pleased at the progress we have made towards delivering services specific to places and communities. We want our residents to be proud to live in North West Leicestershire, and we are committed to offering fair and equitable services based on customer need and expectation which protect the most vulnerable in our community. The Council will be working more closely with residents to identify and improve services they value.

The Council has responded proactively to the challenging financial conditions we face and the authority is well positioned to meet and respond to the increasingly uncertain environment. Heading into the future, we will need to operate with a significantly lower budget. This year we have had to make some tough choices about funding while making sure we continue to deliver the services that are important to our customers. The way the Council provides services may need to change, but we still remain firmly committed to delivering excellent customer service and value for money.



We are proud of our location at the heart of The National Forest, and will continue to focus on delivering environmental improvements and building closer links to the Forest through the Green Footprints Challenge.

Our market towns and villages are the lifeblood of our communities, and we also intend to focus our efforts on making them greener, more attractive, safer and cleaner places to live, work and visit. We will be developing closer relationships with local businesses to support our economy and deliver growth in jobs and prosperity.

Our aim is to make the best possible use of the money we have to provide the services our customers need. We value the support of our staff, contractors and partner organisations; their creativity and commitment has enabled us to make real differences to the people of North West Leicestershire.

PROFILE

North West Leicestershire District Profile

North West Leicestershire is an area of busy market towns, close-knit picturesque rural villages, rolling farmland and wooded countryside. It is located at the heart of The National Forest, one of Britain's boldest environmental projects, which aims to restore and link the ancient forests of Charnwood and Needwood across 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire.



Our history stretches back many centuries; from monks who lived on Breedon Hill in Saxon times, to the ruined 13th century Priory at Grace Dieu; the great families who once lived at Ashby-de-la-Zouch's medieval Castle and Donnington-le-Heath Manor House, and the great houses of Staunton Harold and Coleorton Hall. Local award winning museums display proud reminders of our heritage and celebrate our more recent mining and industrial past.

The district is home to about 90,500 people, around half of which live in our largest market towns of Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch. The remaining half of our residents live in one of over 60 villages of varying size, which presents us with a unique challenge – how best to serve the needs of our towns and our rural communities.

Facts about the District

- The District covers an area of 108 square miles.
- Conkers, Snibston, Staunton Harold, Ashby de la Zouch Castle and award winning museums showcase the strong and diverse cultural heritage and tourism offer throughout our area.
- The beautiful National Forest has been evolving as a holiday destination over the past 15 years, and now has a visitor economy generating £280 million per year.
- East Midlands Airport at Castle Donington serves over 4 Million passengers every year. The Airport is on target to make all ground operations carbon neutral by 2012 and is the winner of national and international awards for its outstanding environmental innovation and performance.

- Castle Donington also hosts the Donington Park racing circuit, a world class racing car museum and major events such as the Download Festival, the 2nd largest annual outdoor music festival in England.
- North West Leicestershire's economy includes major sectors in manufacturing, distribution, transport, wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles. Tourism, while still a small sector overall, is steadily increasing.
- The value of North West Leicestershire's tourism industry has been consistently growing presenting an encouraging 1% increase in 2010 given the current economic climate. Despite these conditions, visitor expenditure in food and drink, recreation and shopping has risen by an impressive 30% since 2008.





How the Council works

Your local Councillor is one of 38 elected members representing residents of North West Leicestershire across its 20 wards. The council is currently led by members from the Conservative group following the 2007 local elections. Residents will be heading to the ballot box on 5th May 2011 to elect a new Council administration for the next 4 years.

Hundreds of decisions are made by the Council every year about the services it provides and how they are paid for. To inform this process, councillors sit on a number of committees whose responsibility it is to evaluate all the available information and make recommendations and decisions based on the results.

The Council's key day-to-day decisions are made by Cabinet, which is made up of 7 Councillors from the leading political party. Each Cabinet member is responsible for a portfolio of Council services, and works closely with Council staff to shape and improve those services according to Cabinet decisions.

Major items of policy, like the setting of the council budget, are decided by all Councillors at the "Full Council" meeting. Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of Cabinet and Full Council. Details of the dates and a copy of the agenda papers can be downloaded from the council's website www.nwleics.gov.uk.

PROFILE

The North West Leicestershire Corporate Team

Strategic Management



Christine Fisher
Chief Executive



Steve Bambrick
**Services Director and
Deputy Chief Executive**

The Corporate Management Team



Sue Haslett
**Head of Planning and
Engagement**



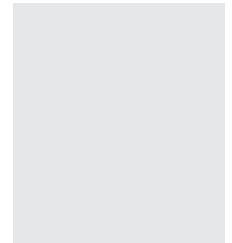
Chris Lambert
**Head of Housing and
Customer Services**



John Richardson
**Head of Community
Services**



Elizabeth Warhurst
**Head of Legal and
Support Services**



Sue Goodhall
**Interim Head of
Finance**

INCREASING OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The North West Leicestershire Youth Council

The Council is working closely with the County Youth Service, the Voluntary and Uniformed Sectors to provide opportunities for young people to discuss issues and concerns and suggest ideas for improvement. The North West Leicestershire Youth Council ensures that young people remain an integral part of the community and Council decision making.



During 2010/11, North West Leicestershire was the first Youth Council in the County to move to local area forums to ensure that the voice of young people is heard from different parts of the District. These forums, currently run in Coalville, Whitwick, Ibstock, Northern Parishes and Ashby are organised by young people linking in with School Councils and the County Youth Council of Leicestershire (CYCLe).

Area forums have already demonstrated successes at a local level including young people from the Coalville forum successfully bidding for money from Find your talent, and helping to decide on the activities

at Battle of the Bands and Picnic in the Park for 2010. The Northern Parishes Youth Forum have done a number of environmental projects during 2010 and are now focusing on creating a community garden.

The role of the Youth Council is set to develop even further in 2011/12 with an exciting and ambitious programme for the coming year. Looking forward, the District Council aims to use the Youth Council as a consultative group and to involve young people in shaping the delivery of Council services.

KEY COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2010/11

Pride in the Community key achievements



- The Coalville Festival Weekend returned to the town in June, incorporating the biannual Picnic in the Park and Battle of the Bands, and a new event, Brassfest, featuring brass bands who entertained shoppers in the town centre. Young people helped to plan and run several of the events including BMX workshops on the skate park and a graffiti art workshop. Visitors to Picnic in the Park were treated to a 50ft Chinese dragon procession, live music, performances and a range of stalls and activities.
- Successful partnership working between the Private Sector Housing team and local landlords has resulted in a pool of properties becoming available at rents lower than market rates this year.
- The Decent Homes Intervention Programme working with grant aid and the available properties service has seen the living accommodation of over 275 vulnerable households improved to the decent homes standard.
- The Ashby de la Zouch Tourist Information team has won a prestigious Tourism Oscar at the East Midlands Tourism Enjoy England Excellence Awards.
- Customer satisfaction with Disabled Facilities Grants and Aids and Adaptations consistently running at over 90%.
- Latest figures from Sport England show North West Leicestershire is the most active district in Leicestershire, with 18.9% of residents taking part in 3 sessions of 30 minutes a week of moderate activity or sport.
- A series of neighbourhood walks during the year has given residents an opportunity to comment on the quality of their local services. Representatives from the District and County Council, the Police and local Parish Councils visited residents in Coalville, Greenhill, Ibstock, Ashby, Measham, Moira, Castle Donington, Oakthorpe and Ellistown. A large number of useful and positive comments were gained through our doorknocking campaign, and these have been fed back to various Council departments to help focus improvement and service development for the future.
- The village of Donington-le-Heath has been designated as a Conservation Area to preserve its medieval history and character for future generations.
- Several key senior roles at the Council, including the Council's Chief Executive, were taken over by sixth-form students from local schools as part of the national Takeover Day event in November. Students benefited from the opportunity to experience the world of work and make their voices heard, and our senior officers gained a fresh perspective on what they do

CASE STUDY

Young people transform their local park

South Street Recreation ground in Ellistown underwent a transformation in April 2010 from a run down, unloved area with only a couple of old pieces of play equipment, to an amazing, fun filled, friendly space, thanks to a £90,000 refurbishment.

Young people in Ellistown worked with the Parish and District Councils to bid for Playbuilder funding and then sourced and approved the designs making sure that the park would be a hub for recreation and activity for many years to come.

Nathaniel, age 13, of the young persons group involved in the project said on the opening day: "This is amazing, I'm really proud of what we've done, the park used

to look boring and no one bothered to come but now it looks great."

Over the summer months the area has been a hive of activity with children and families of all age ranges using the park to play, socialise and enjoy. It has been an incredible project and a demonstration of how having quality places and spaces can make a big difference to communities expressed an interest in getting involved with a community garden."



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Green Footprints Challenge key achievements



- North West Leicestershire District Council has won a prestigious Green Apple Environment Award for the second year running - this year for its work with the Green Footprints Business Network which helps local businesses to improve their environmental performance.
- A district-wide network of community groups interested in green initiatives has been brought together to establish the Green Footprints Community Network.
- A programme to increase participation in the Council's recycling collection schemes has been undertaken in areas where recycling performance is lower than average. Advisors knocked on 24,000 household's doors giving free personalised advice and answering questions from residents.
- The Council has launched a design initiative for new developments of 10 or more houses which aims to increase design standards and create better places to live. The 'ourplace' scheme ranks new developments against the Building for Life criteria and gives each development an A+ to C rating. The initiative won the Urban Design Group Public Sector Award for 2010.
- 1500 trees were given out to local residents, groups and schools as part of an initiative with the National Forest Company to improve biodiversity across the District.
- The Council's Waste Management team won the Local Authority Team of the Year at the National Recycling Awards.
- 'Stinkerbell' the dog-poo fairy fronted a month-long council blitz on irresponsible dog owners which led to a 90% reduction in dog fouling at Hermitage Recreation Ground. Two irresponsible owners were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices during the campaign.
- Our Leisure Centres have continued to increase their energy efficiency, including projects to install a Combined Heat and Power unit at Hood Park and an ongoing programme to replace leisure centre lighting for more energy efficient models.
- North West Leicestershire is proud to have been the first District Council to sign up to take part in National Climate Week. The Council led a series of events and activities with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors focused on reducing CO₂ emissions.





CASE STUDY

They've got the Veg Factor

Residents on Nursery Farm Estate in Ashby proved they have the 'Veg Factor' after they took part in a 'Grow Your Own' project run by the Council's Green Footprints team in partnership with Nursery Farm Residents' Association and MRC Community Action. The project aimed to encourage more people to grow their own produce to save money, eat more healthily and reduce their carbon footprint.

Local families thoroughly enjoyed a family fun day on the estate, with a range of activities, games and competitions laid on. By the end of the day 50 local families had planted up their own pot of tomatoes, courgettes, lettuce, dwarf beans and alpine strawberries. Participating families also received a free compost bin with expert advice from a master composter as well as a special diary to record their progress.

Families were then invited back a couple of months later to proudly display their produce, with prizes given for the 'best in

show'. The next step is to set up a local community garden where residents can continue their Veg Factor experience.

Philip James Dillon-Oakes, Chairman of Nursery Farm Residents' Association, said: "This has been a fantastic event and really well supported by people on the estate. Everyone has really enjoyed themselves and we're really excited as many of the people who attended have expressed an interest in getting involved with a community garden."

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Value for Money key achievements

- Savings of £(152k+savings from 10/11 programme tbc) within the Housing Planned Improvement Programme have enabled us to carry out more work to improve residents lives.
- North West Leicestershire is now sharing services with other Councils for Communications, Building Control, Burials, Property and Legal services which means that we are reducing the overall costs of the council. Further shared service arrangements are also underway for the Revenues and Benefits service which is due to share services with Hinckley and Bosworth and Harborough District Councils in summer 2011.
- A bid for grant funding to increase the proportion of Council-owned houses classified as decent has been submitted to central government.
- We revised the Council's management structure and reduced the number of Senior and Service Managers, which will mean a £570k ongoing saving helping to keep council tax rate increases down.
- Work is underway to map out the most energy efficient routes for household recycling and waste collections. This will reduce both fuel costs and energy consumption.
- Streets are noticeably cleaner after an increase in both rural and residential road sweeping in key areas.
- The Council launched a new website which improves the way that customers can access and request services



- A £1.2m refurbishment funded by grant from Sport England of Ibstock Leisure Complex has delivered improvements for customers with a new pool roof, refurbished changing rooms, spectator and reception areas.
- The Council is working more closely with communities to provide the services they need following a restructuring of several Council teams. Dedicated officer support has been allocated to 3 different areas of the District which will provide a consistent contact for Parish Councils, elected Members, community groups and residents.
- In order to ensure that we continue to deliver value for money services to the community, a rolling programme of reviews

to Council sections has been undertaken during the year. These reviews will release savings through restructuring, shared service arrangements, better procurement and more efficient working practices.



CASE STUDY

Procurement savings mean more improvements to tenants' homes

Efficiency savings in our Housing Planned Investment Programme have enabled the Council to make improvements to more tenants' homes than we originally anticipated.

Council tenants were consulted on what they would like to see improved within their homes, and tenants chose doors, windows, roofs and electrical rewiring as priorities for improvement.

To ensure that the Council delivers value for money on the improvement programme, contractors were invited to tender for the improvement works contracts (known as procurement).

The efficiency savings can be demonstrated by the success of the door replacement programme. The Council had set aside a budget

for door replacement, however as a result of our procurement, we were able to provide this work at 15% less than budgeted. We were able to pass on these savings to our customers replacing doors at an additional 19 properties.

One customer who benefited from the door replacement programme was Mr John Baggaley of Ashby. Mr Baggaley said: "The design of the doors is brilliant and they have made a significant improvement to my home. I'm saving money on my heating and my house is more secure."

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Coalville's Changing key achievements



- Working in partnership with the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, a Regeneration Strategy for the long-term future of Coalville has now been completed. Feedback from community representatives and partners was overwhelmingly positive, and the Strategy has been developed into a 4 Squares and Streets Investment Plan which will start making a real difference to the town centre.
 - Improvement works are underway to tidy up Oliver's Crossing, the area at the end of the train line from Snibston on Belvoir Rd. We will also be installing a zebra crossing on Belvoir Rd to make the area safer for pedestrians by slowing down traffic.
 - An exciting programme of events attracting visitors to Coalville was held including St George's Day, the Coalville Film weekend, the Coalville Festival Weekend, Coalville by the Sea, the Miner's Gala at Snibston and the Christmas light switch-on featuring X-Factor finalists Miss Frank.
 - Colourful banners have brightened up lamp posts in Coalville town centre since their installation in May. The banners were produced with local primary school children, residents and representatives of local organisations using funding contributed by local partner organisations.
 - Building on the work to approve major development schemes for the town centre commenced last year, the Tesco and Belvoir Centre applications were passed by the Secretary of State. Work has continued to support developers to deliver on schemes with planning approval, and a detailed planning application for Tesco has now been approved.
 - The Council has worked with town centre businesses to determine whether they are interested in setting up a Business Improvement District (BID) which would raise funds for improvements to the town centre. A 2% levy on business rates for businesses within the BID area would be charged to provide this funding pot. A postal vote on the BID is scheduled for 24th February to 24th March 2011. The Council are leading on this agenda and have determined in advance that we will commit resources to the BID and vote yes in the ballot.
-



CASE STUDY

Memorial Clock Tower protected for future generations

Efficiency savings in our Housing Planned Investment Programme have enabled the Council to make improvements to more tenants' homes than we originally anticipated.

Council tenants were consulted on what they would like to see improved within their homes, and tenants chose doors, windows, roofs and electrical rewiring as priorities for improvement.

To ensure that the Council delivers value for money on the improvement programme, contractors were invited to tender for the improvement works contracts (known as procurement).

The efficiency savings can be demonstrated by the success of the door replacement programme. The Council had set aside a budget for door replacement, however as a result of our procurement, we were able to provide this work at 15% less than budgeted. We were able to pass on these savings to our customers replacing doors at an additional 19 properties.

One customer who benefited from the door replacement programme was Mr John Baggaley of Ashby. Mr Baggaley said: "The design of the doors is brilliant and they have made a significant improvement to my home. I'm saving money on my heating and my house is more secure."

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO IN 2010/11

Our vision for the future

“ North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home. ”

Essential to the delivery of this Vision are the Council's priorities. In preparation for a more demanding financial situation in the coming year, the Council has reviewed its priorities. The authority's resources will be directed to those areas that most improve the wellbeing of the District's residents.

Council priorities for 2011/12

- **Pride in the Community**

We aim to improve the wellbeing of people in North West Leicestershire

- **Improving our Town Centres**

We aim to make our Town Centres better places to live, work and visit

- **Green Footprints Challenge**

We aim to make people feel proud to be part of a greener district

- **Value for Money**

We aim to provide Council services that people feel provide good value for money




PRIORITY

Pride in the Community

The wellbeing of people in North West Leicestershire is improved

What we want to achieve	How we will achieve it
Residents feel safe in their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To develop a range of activities for young people■ To work with partner organisations to reduce anti social behaviour■ To protect children and vulnerable adults■ To provide appropriate support to vulnerable adults
Residents live healthy active lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To improve leisure facilities across the District■ To develop healthy lifestyle opportunities through sport, physical activity and wellbeing
Residents have pride in communities where they feel they belong	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To improve the decency of homes■ To develop a Community Plan for each of the District's community forum areas■ To develop attractive outdoor spaces■ To reduce instances of environmental crime■ To provide a choice in the location and type of accommodation offered



PRIORITY

Green Footprints Challenge

People feel proud to be part of a greener district

What we want to achieve	How we will achieve it
Businesses are motivated to be greener	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To coordinate the Green Business Network■ To influence more sustainable developments through the 'ourplace™' scheme
Residents are inspired to live a greener lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To encourage activities that help support local wildlife■ To maximise recycling levels■ To minimise waste sent to landfill■ To improve the cleanliness of the District■ To encourage energy efficiency■ To work with community partners to improve the local environment
People feel that the Council demonstrates community leadership in being green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings■ To develop more energy efficient methods of delivering Council services



PRIORITY

Value for Money

People feel Council services provide good value for money

What we want to achieve	How we will achieve it
Customers are happier with services provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To develop a Public Involvement Plan■ To support elected Members in their role as Community Leaders■ To make improvements to the Planning service■ To ensure customers can access the services they need■ To improve the quality of our customer services
People feel the Council is spending money well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To undertake and implement service reviews that identify the most cost-effective means of service delivery■ To ensure the community better understands how we spend money■ To engage the community in discussions over priority budget areas



PRIORITY

Improving our Town Centres

Our Town Centres are better places to live, work and visit

What we want to achieve	How we will achieve it
Businesses choose to stay in our Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To support existing businesses
People choose to spend time in our Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ To co-ordinate improvements to the appearance of our Town Centres■ To run events which attract people to our Town Centres■ To ensure businesses are safe for staff and customers





2011 – 2015

Managing The Council's Finances

The Council has three sources of income which finance our services and functions. The first of these is a grant from the national Coalition Government, the second from locally raised Council taxes, and the third from local sources such as charges for use of leisure centres, car parking, and planning applications, and the sale of recyclables collected.

In December 2010, the Government informed all authorities of their Local Government Finance settlement. This settlement covers two years: 2011/12 and 2012/13. Taking into account local trends, the net effect on the Council's budgets is a reduction of 27% for those two years. It has also been estimated that for the following two years to 2014/15, the total level of savings required may reach 40% (approximately £4 million).

The Council has been extremely proactive in anticipating this level of savings and has released significant savings during the year 2010/11 which will feed into 2011/12 (savings so far of more than £ 1.4 million). In setting budgets for 2011/12, further opportunities have been taken to seek even more savings through a "zero based" budgeting method. The aim has been to continue to seek efficiencies whilst maintaining service quality.

Following the District elections in May 2011, the new Council will need to continue to seek new sources of income, reconsider existing fees and charges and challenge the sustainability of delivering the existing range of Council services. Ultimately the target of cash savings to be achieved is a further £2.2 million.

During these challenging times the Council has strived to be creative, innovative and thorough in looking at opportunities to make savings internally and externally. This has included shared services with other authorities, new income opportunities, and working closer with the business sector and local partners. These will be the key drivers for the future direction of the Council.

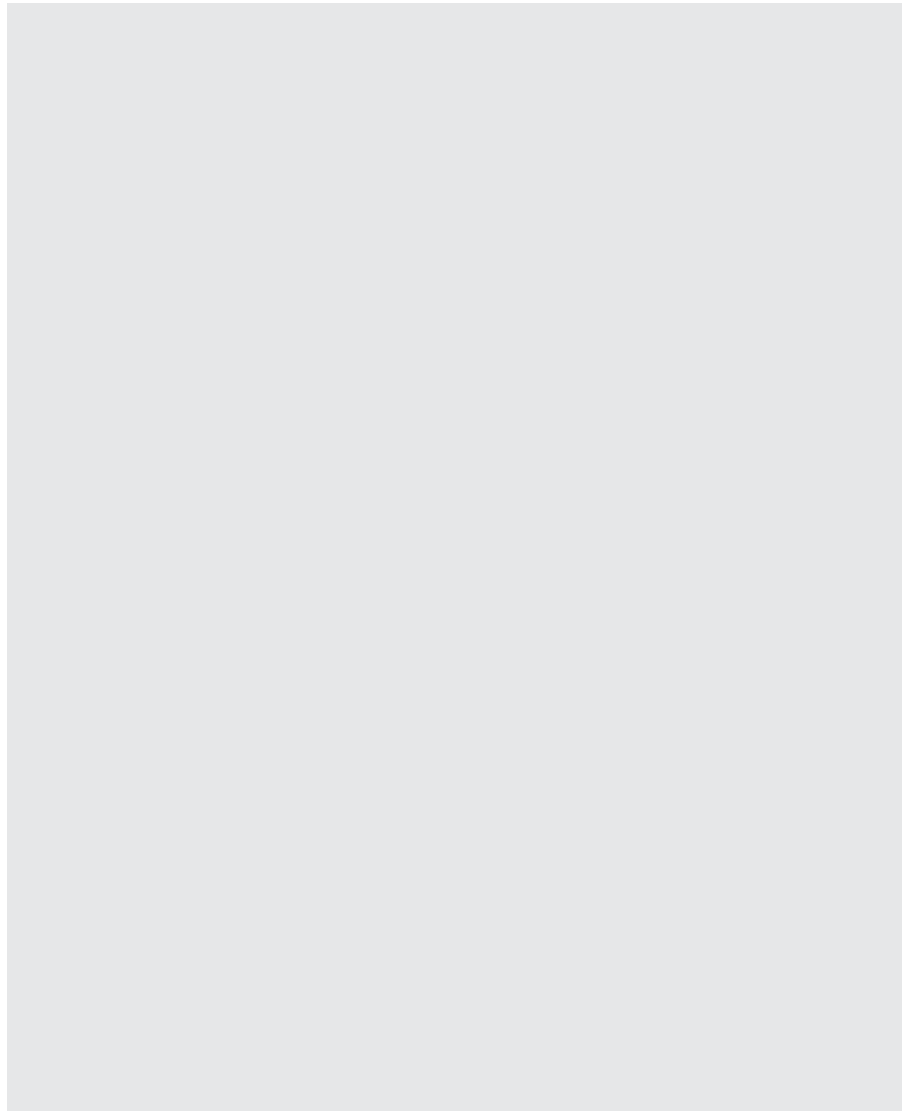
Building Confidence in the Council's Performance

A major drive to improve the Council's performance has taken place in recent years, driven both externally and internally. Significant improvements have been achieved as a Council and on the provision of Services.

There have been significant changes to what is required to monitor Council performance on a national level since the Coalition Government came into power in May 2010. The Council is no longer required to report on a number of performance indicators which were previously national requirements, and as a result this has removed a significant burden of technical reporting.

The Council has taken this opportunity to review its performance management framework including the performance requirements of the Local Strategic Partnership. The outcome of this review is to build confidence in the Council's ability to perform effectively and efficiently whilst ensuring the processes are streamlined and meaningful. This review will be complete early in 2011/12.

Over the past years the Council has welcomed external challenge to ensure its performance has been assessed against the best in the country, and we continue to win national awards which recognise our achievements. In the last year we have been awarded a Green Apple award for our Green Business Network, Recycling Team of the Year, the Urban Design Group's Public Sector Award for our place, and a Tourism Oscar at the Enjoy England awards for our Ashby-de-la-Zouch tourist information staff.



The future of improving the Council will be a performance programme incorporating the following:

- engaging our customers and communities in shaping our services
- responding to locally Elected Members case work and views
- valuing the views of our partners and customers to improve our performance
- engaging external best practice to challenge what we do and how we do it
- establish clarity on what outcomes we are aiming to achieve to support the Council's priorities
- working as one Council and one Team to deliver the best we can

USEFUL INFORMATION

Should you require further help and are unsure about who to contact, please find details below.

Post:

North West Leicestershire District Council,
Council Offices,
Coalville,
Leicestershire,
LE67 3FJ.

Telephone:

01530 454545 (Main Switchboard)

If you have an emergency outside of normal hours, please call **01530 454789** to speak with our out of hours service.

Fax:

01530 454506 (Reception)

E-mail:

customer.services@nwleicestershire.gov.uk