



Corporate Plan 2009-2013

Buckinghamshire County Council





Serving You & Your Community

Buckinghamshire County Council works hard at the heart of your community to deliver essential services seven days a week, all year round.

Touching the lives of everyone, we provide over 100 services from childcare to country parks, schools to social care and from roads to the registry office. From over 500 different locations, we provide local services to every community in Buckinghamshire. Our Corporate Plan 2009-13 sets out our priorities for the next four years. Each year we will publish an Annual Report giving details about what we are planning to do to achieve our priorities and how we did the previous year.

Buckinghamshire – A County of Opportunity

Buckinghamshire is a great place to live, close to many amenities and in general successful and prosperous. But we still face challenges. We have used what we know of these and your concerns to decide on our priorities for the next four years, from 2009-2013.

They are:

- The ageing population and planning for the future
- Roads and traffic congestion
- People being and feeling safe
- The impact of housing growth and new communities
- Looking after the environment
- Looking beyond the economic downturn to help build a successful economy
- Working with communities and partners to tackle disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity
- Encouraging people and communities to help themselves
- Supporting vulnerable families and children

Funding Services

The financial situation for people living in the county and for the public sector is difficult. Cuts in public funding mean that we cannot deliver everything we

want to and we will need to make difficult decisions over the level and range of services we provide. We are responding to this challenge by changing the way we do things: becoming more efficient, cost conscious and customer focused. We are looking at everything we do to make sure that we get the most out of every pound we spend on your behalf. We are contracting others to deliver services for us and are looking at different ways of providing services where this will improve them. The priorities in this document are based on our current funding position and our best estimate of future finances. If these change, it is likely that we will need to revisit our priorities.

Delivering Services Locally

Although we all share a common county boundary, we know that not all areas of Buckinghamshire are the same and that different communities have different needs for services. So we work alongside local people and groups in our 19 local community areas to understand these differences and adapt what we do to meet local need. We believe that the best way to ensure that communities are well served is to listen to you and involve you in the decisions we take. We also understand that the best way of finding solutions to local problems is by working with you and your communities.

David Shakespeare OBE



"The Council delivers a range of high quality services, while maintaining below average council tax and net revenue expenditure. The Council is well led both politically and at a senior managerial level and is developing good plans for the future, especially in the face of the credit crunch and budgetary pressures."

Audit Commission,
Annual Audit Letter 2007/8

Working Together

We know that the only way to deliver excellent services that meet the needs of Buckinghamshire residents is to work in partnership. Working with other people and organisations is simply the way we do things. Some of our most important partnerships are:

Buckinghamshire Strategic Partnership

This partnership includes representatives from a wide range of organisations, including county, district, town and parish councils, health, police, fire and rescue, voluntary groups and local businesses. Together we plan for Buckinghamshire's future, taking joint responsibility for improving services that are important to local people. The long-term vision for Buckinghamshire is set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Buckinghamshire Children & Young People's Trust

The Trust believes that the lives of children and young people can be changed for the better by organisations such as health, education, police, councils and voluntary organisations working together in partnership. Set up in 2006, the Trust plans and co-ordinates all of the services that support children and young people in Buckinghamshire.

And YOU

Not everyone has the same opportunities in life or the same needs for services. We could not deliver what you want without listening and taking action over your concerns. Although we can never meet everyone's expectations, we strive to improve things where you tell us to. But we need YOUR help. We can only deliver what you need with your support and active involvement. We can stretch our services further by encouraging people to be independent and self-reliant wherever possible.

Making A Difference

Achieving our priorities will make a difference to the lives of all who live and work in Buckinghamshire. We know that we will have less money over the next four years but we want to make every penny count. Working in partnership with you and others, these are our principles for the next four years:

For individuals we aim to provide:

- Easy access to good advice and services
- Support when you need it and choice in your care
- Excellent educational opportunities for every child
- Cultural, health and learning opportunities throughout life

For communities we aim to:

- Provide opportunities to have your voice heard and respond to your views
- Deliver services locally
- Make communities safer
- Tackle disadvantage wherever it occurs
- Work with families as a whole to develop self-reliance

On your behalf we aim to continue to:

- Invest in road and pavement repairs
- Represent your views and promote Buckinghamshire
- Lobby for Buckinghamshire at a regional and national level
- Plan ahead to make sure services are in place to meet future demand
- Develop new ways of working to improve our service to you

We cannot change things without your help. To improve Buckinghamshire for the future we encourage you to:

- Make the most of the opportunities on offer
- Take responsibility for yourself and your family
- Respect and protect our environment by helping to reduce our carbon footprint, recycling more, disposing of litter properly and minimising waste
- Work with us to solve local problems
- Talk with us about your needs and our services
- Show respect and concern for others through helping your neighbours, getting involved in your local community, behaving responsibly and passing these standards on to your children

Build & Sustain Prosperity

This is a challenging time for many people and the global economic downturn is likely to have long-lasting effects on individuals and communities across Buckinghamshire.

We will support people and businesses during the economic downturn and look beyond the recession to ensure Buckinghamshire will have a successful economy in the long-term. We will endeavour to strike the right balance between retaining jobs, encouraging job growth and protecting our environment.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

1. Make it easier to do business in Buckinghamshire

- Maximise opportunities for small businesses
- Encourage and promote local businesses including those in rural areas
- Create the best environment and infrastructure for businesses to prosper

2. Promote Buckinghamshire as the place to do business

- Develop the county as a centre of entrepreneurial excellence
- Support the development of a wider range of businesses
- Increase the amount of incoming investment
- Balance the need to retain jobs and encourage job creation with protecting our natural environment

3. Develop a local workforce for local businesses

- Provide opportunities for people to develop the right skills needed for local businesses
- Improve access to learning opportunities
- Provide extra support to those communities that need it so they can look after themselves

4. Manage growth so that the right infrastructure, services and jobs are available at the right time

- Identify opportunities to help local people to afford to live in the county
- Develop a skilled and flexible workforce

5. Make sure our transport networks work well and are kept to a good standard

- Work to reduce journey times and congestion
- Lobby at a regional and national level for better public transport links
- Improve road safety

Business Challenge Fund

The County Council has provided a £100k Bucks Business Challenge Fund to help businesses develop and grow through innovation during the recession.

"We recently applied to the Bucks Business Challenge fund and were delighted to be awarded a 50% grant to help grow our business, Gemelli Childcare Vouchers Ltd, which was a real boost in the current economic climate. Through the innovative childcare voucher scheme, we help working parents manage their childcare costs, benefitting both employers and employees through financial savings and improved staff morale."

"Thanks to the Challenge Fund, we can now take our business to the next level and broaden our offering to include other salary sacrifice schemes. We can also employ an additional member of staff and improve our marketing by developing our website and literature. The Challenge Fund provides exactly the sort of help small businesses need."

Heather Start, Managing Director
Gemelli Childcare Vouchers Ltd
www.GemelliChildcareVouchers.co.uk



Manage, Improve & Protect Our Exceptional Environment

We will protect our unique, historic and beautiful environment by tackling the issues raised by challenges such as climate change, housing growth and enhancing the economy.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

6. Cut our carbon dioxide emissions and reduce our carbon footprint and energy use

- Adopt emissions standards for all new properties
- Lobby for better public transport links
- Review our policies such as street lighting and use greener fuel materials

7. Encourage people to live in a way which protects our environment

- Reduce waste and find the best way to deal with the remaining waste
- Make it easier to recycle waste
- Campaign for reduced packaging
- Campaign to keep our environment clean and cut fly-tipping, litter and graffiti

8. Give people choice about the way they travel

- Improve all travel options for people
- Provide walking, cycling and public transport links in major new housing developments

9. Protect our beautiful countryside

- Improve and manage the countryside for everyone to enjoy
- Protect the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Green Belt
- Make it easier for people to access the countryside

Keeping our environment clean

The way we deal with fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles is reaping rewards. Councils across Buckinghamshire launched a campaign to reduce fly-tipping, through the use of warning signs, CCTV and a 24-hour hotline for reporting offences. As a result, fly-tipping incidents have reduced by a third since 2004 and over 100 individuals and businesses have been successfully convicted.





Promote Opportunities For All

From the earliest years, through an excellent education system and into adulthood, we will promote opportunities for all residents to make their lives as rewarding and enjoyable as possible.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

10. Give all children and young people the chance to develop the skills they will need to do well in life

- Encourage schools to work together and to provide facilities for local communities
- Improve the performance of our lower achieving schools
- Raise attainment for everyone
- Develop a range of academic and occupational opportunities

11. Encourage everyone to keep learning throughout their lives

- Provide opportunities for learning throughout life

12. Encourage people to lead healthier lives

- Get more young people involved in their local communities and in sports, creative arts and volunteering by providing a range of opportunities and activities
- Promote sensible eating and drinking habits
- Encourage older people to keep active for longer
- Encourage walking and cycling for health and leisure

Aylesbury Vale Academy

The new Aylesbury Vale Academy opened for business on 1 September 2009 and will transfer in the future to new 'state-of-the-art' buildings in Berryfields, Aylesbury. Sponsored by the Diocese of Oxford and Buckinghamshire County Council, this multi-million pound investment will provide its students and the community with a purpose-built Academy. Specialisms in Science and Technology with ICT mean that the Academy will have an innovative, futuristic ICT provision.

The Academy will make links with other education providers and local businesses to offer a wide range of work-related learning and vocational experiences alongside more traditional academic pathways, giving students of all abilities a broad and balanced curriculum. The Academy will also offer learning opportunities to the local community, making a significant contribution to the local area.



Support People Who Need Our Help

Although Buckinghamshire is a relatively prosperous county, some areas are doing less well. People living in these places are less likely than others to be successful. We will support those people who most need our help when they need it and will work with others to tackle disadvantage and encourage self reliance.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

13. Support those who need help to live independently

- Provide help and advice for people to make decisions for themselves
- Provide a range of work and leisure opportunities
- Support those who care for others
- Ensure equipment and services are delivered when needed
- Prepare young people in our care for independence

14. Work with families to help them to reach their potential

- Improve co-ordination of services to maximise their impact on families
- Tackle child poverty
- Support vulnerable families by providing a range of services when it is of most benefit

15. Help to improve the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people

- Tackle social and rural isolation throughout the county
- Encourage people to meet their aspirations
- Make sure everyone has the same access to opportunities

16. Provide support early on to help prevent people and families from slipping into crisis

- Identify those who are struggling to cope and let them know where they can go for help
- Assess and provide support where it is most needed
- Improve services to people and families by finding more ways for health and social care to work together

Rapid Response service

The Rapid Response service operates across the county to help people to regain their independence after a spell in hospital. Working closely with health service staff, over 148 clients have been able to continue living independently after having the Rapid Response service.

One service user said, "Thank you so much for the service, as it gave me confidence when my arm was suspected broken. The ladies have been very helpful and cheerful. This is a very good service for the community".



Promote Community Spirit

Although community spirit in Buckinghamshire is generally strong, there are concerns in some areas, particularly around community safety and the impact of growth. We will work with communities to build neighbourliness and a sense of belonging.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

17. Work with you to make you and your communities safer

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drug misuse
- Make sure safety is taken into account when planning major housing developments

18. Work with you to build neighbourliness

- Make it easier for people and communities to support one another
- Encourage local volunteering across all age groups
- Help the voluntary and community sector to thrive
- Encourage people to take an active part in their community

Community spirit in Micklefield

A group of disabled people from Micklefield Outreach project and local pupils had fun painting a large mural on a wall of the dining room at a local primary school, producing something of which both the school and Outreach are very proud. The headteacher said, *"It was a great project and our pupils enjoyed working with the Outreach group. The mural will give great pleasure to all the pupils at the school when they are eating their lunches."*

Tailor Services to Meet Local Need

We will work with residents and local communities to identify local priorities, find local solutions and give more people a say in what and how services are delivered.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

19. Strengthen local leadership

- Develop a plan which identifies local priorities for each area by working with local community leaders
- Involve district, parish and town councils together with police, health, fire & rescue and voluntary bodies in setting local priorities and improving service performance

20. Provide more opportunities for you to influence local decisions

- Make it easier for you to be involved in decisions that affect you
- Work with local people to find lasting solutions to local issues
- Give communities more say in how funds are spent on improvements in their area

21. Join up services locally

- Develop our understanding of what services are required in each community
- Work together better with partners to plan and deliver services locally
- Increase the number of services, support and activities delivered in local communities
- Provide local advice and signposting to services
- Make it easier for communities to deliver their own services

Improving local areas

Following local consultation by Stokenchurch and Radnage Parish Councils and the local community action forum, a Community Action Group was set up to investigate with young people the possibility of creating a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).

The Community Action Group was supported by local community groups, district and county representatives and with help from the County Council's Community and Youth Engagement service, local young people made a successful application to the Youth Bank for £50,000 for the MUGA.





Deliver Effective & Efficient Services

There are some basic principles that do not change and we will continue to represent and serve the people of Buckinghamshire to the best of our ability. We must become more streamlined, cost effective and efficient, working in innovative ways with partners to reduce costs and provide services tailored to meet the needs of residents.

During the next four years, with our partners, we will:

22. Make it much easier for you to find out about and access services

- Set up joint customer service centres where it makes sense to do so
- Solve most queries at the first point of contact
- Make it easier for you to access the services you need, when you need them

23. Provide the highest value for every pound we spend on your behalf

- Continually look for ways to reduce the burden on the tax payer
- Deliver services in the right way, at the right time, to the right people
- Work better with others to make the best use of limited funds
- Make sure Buckinghamshire's interests are listened to regionally and nationally
- Improve the way we manage our assets and value our employees

24. Find new, better ways of doing things

- Commission others to deliver services for us where it makes sense to do so
- Make it easier for others, particularly voluntary and community organisations and communities, to work with us
- Plan now for population and other changes which will have an effect on future demand for services
- Use technology where we can to improve services, without forgetting about the personal touch

Getting more for our money

On 1st April 2009, 'Transport for Buckinghamshire', a partnership with Ringway Jacobs, was launched. As a result of the savings made, by the end of 2009/10 we will have been able to increase road repairs by 24% at no extra cost compared with last year.



Find Out More

To find out more about how we are working towards the priorities each year, please visit www.buckscc.gov.uk and click on 'Corporate Plan'.

If you don't have access to the internet, the Implementation Plan 2009-10 and Annual Reports for future years will be available for reference at the following places:

- Libraries across Buckinghamshire
- County Hall in Aylesbury
- County Council Area Offices in Amersham, High Wycombe and Winslow

Alternatively, call Buckinghamshire County Council on 01296 387969 or, if you are a Tynetalk user, 18001 0845 370 8090.

A large print copy or audio tape version can be made available on request. Please call 01296 387969.

Partnerships

To find out more about the work and plans of the Buckinghamshire Strategic Partnership and the Children & Young People's Trust, please visit www.buckinghamshirepartnership.gov.uk

Getting Involved

There are lots of ways in which you can have a say in what we do, from commenting on plans or decisions or becoming a member of our Residents' Panel to reporting road faults or standing for election next time round. To find out more about how you can get involved, please visit www.buckscc.gov.uk and click on 'Have Your Say'.



PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLIED BY STANTON MEDIA:

FRONT COVER – CHILDREN & CAR ENGINEER

PAGE 4 – CHILDREN

PAGE 8 – COMMUNITY HELP

THIS PAGE – COMMUNITY SPIRIT