

# Nottinghamshire County Council's Direction of Travel Assessment September 2006

## SETTING THE SCENE

Nottinghamshire is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest local authority in the UK; the area of the County covers 805 square miles and the county's population in mid-2004 was 759,700. The county is geographically diverse ranging from the Trent Valley in the south and east, to the more urbanised former coalfield in the north and west. Main towns include Mansfield (50,000), Sutton-in-Ashfield and Worksop (both 40,000), Newark and Kirkby-in-Ashfield (both 25,000) and Retford (20,000). The suburban areas surrounding the unitary Nottingham City in the south east contain concentrations of the most diverse population. About a third of the county's population live in small towns and villages. Large areas of the County are rural and sparsely populated and this can cause problems with the provision of, and access to, services.

The County has a slightly older population profile than the regional and UK average, with fewer under-16s and more people aged 65 and over. In the 2001 Census almost 20% of Nottinghamshire people said they had limiting long term illness. In recent years the percentages of children and young people have been increasing fastest in Rushcliffe and Bassetlaw and falling fastest in Mansfield.

The County has a complex administrative geography with seven district councils, mirrored by seven Primary Care Trusts and seven Local Strategic Partnerships. Many organisations, including the Learning and Skills Council, Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, JobCentre Plus, Connexions and so on, cover the whole County. Many of the above organisations are currently reorganising and this is making partnership working more challenging.

The County ranks as the 12<sup>th</sup> most deprived sub-region (out of 46) in the Government's 2004 Indices of Deprivation and several districts, including Mansfield ranked 33, Ashfield at 66 and Bassetlaw at 82, all out of 354, also rank highly. This deprivation has been recognised by Government through the granting of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

The County's economy has become more diverse in recent years as local partners have made concentrated efforts to address the legacy of structural economic change, including the decline in coal and the continuing effect of globalisation on other locally important industries including textiles and clothing. Unemployment has fallen from the peaks of the early nineties and now stands at rates which are better than the regional and national averages. In recent months, however, unemployment has begun to rise and is now 1,200 higher than a year ago. Worries also remain about the quality of local employment and skills and the effects that this has on productivity and wages rates. The recent success of the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative to Ashfield and Mansfield recognised the need to boost enterprise levels.

A recent economic, social and environmental audit of the County, commissioned by the County Council from the Local Futures consultancy, drew attention to the challenges facing the County in terms of its labour market and skills performance, its record of economic change and its social profile, which includes components on health, crime and relative prosperity.

In a recent MORI survey carried out in autumn 2004, 8% more respondents said that they felt public services were getting better than they did two years previously; they were also optimistic about exam results in schools, health services and training and education opportunities for adults. They were, however, less positive about community cohesion and employment opportunities.

In 2005, a wide range of public, private and third sector partners agreed to form a local strategic partnership for the County. In September 2005, the Nottinghamshire Partnership was established and approved a countywide Community Strategy for the period to April 2009. Also in 2005, Nottinghamshire successfully applied to be included in the second phase of Local Area Agreements (LAAs). Intensive negotiations between partners resulted in a series of targets based around four blocks being agreed. These targets were subsequently agreed by Government in March 2006 and the LAA, based upon the framework offered by the Community Strategy, will also run until April 2009.

Following County Council elections held in May 2005, 38 Labour Councillors, 25 Conservative and four Liberal Democrats were returned. A new Cabinet was appointed and the importance of the crime and community safety agenda was recognised by the creation of a new portfolio on community safety and partnerships. Drawing on the priorities set out in the Community Strategy, the County Council agreed a new Strategic Plan in spring 2006. This provides a long term agenda for the County Council to 2010.

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### Question 1: What evidence is there of the Council improving outcomes?

|            | KLOE   | Evidence   |
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| <b>1.1</b> | <p><b>Are services improving in areas the Council has identified as priorities and areas the public say are important to the community?</b></p>  |  |
|            | <p>Following extensive consultation, a new Community Strategy "All together better" was adopted by the Nottinghamshire Partnership in September 2005. This strategy has five themes given in bold below. These themes have also been taken as the basis for the County Council's new Strategic Plan agreed in April.</p> <p><b>Safer and Stronger Communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaths and serious injuries have been reduced on the roads by 2.4% in 2005/6 and 17% over the last three years to achieve the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA)</li> <li>• A Children's Executive and a Pathfinder Trust have been established as part of the implementation of Every Child Matters</li> <li>• A Local Safeguarding Board and Corporate Parenting Group have been established</li> <li>• An extended community role for 41 schools has been developed</li> <li>• The number of service users receiving intensive home care has increased to 1,197, an increase of 44%</li> <li>• Domestic burglaries have reduced by 19% over last year and met the three year LPSA target.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthier</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last year the proportion of schools involved in the Healthy Schools Programme has increased from 57% to 75%</li> <li>• Ofsted inspectors confirmed that 81% of schools inspected provided good to outstanding provision for learners to adopt healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Improved support has been provided for people with mental health problems including day support and social inclusion initiatives, addressing the service needs of minority groups and continuing with the modernisation programme</li> <li>• The target for nationally accredited recognised awards gained by young people through contact with the Youth Service was exceeded last year with over 3,000 young people gaining awards</li> <li>• The Council was awarded Beacon Status for its work using sport to improve the lives of 'hard to reach groups' in society. The sports service manages a number of projects specifically targeted at people with disabilities, people in rural areas and people economically disadvantaged in the former coalfield areas</li> <li>• We are on course to achieve the national target of a 50% reduction in under-18 conceptions by 2010. Nottinghamshire has exceeded the interim target of a 15% reduction by 2004 by achieving a 21.4% reduction since the baseline year of 1998</li> <li>• Funding was secured from the Active England fund to deliver a pioneering project which changes the way sport is experienced by young children, particularly in rural areas. Over three years there will be 211,500</li> </ul> | <p>LPSA report in Annual Performance Plan</p> <p>HH1 return/HH1 form APP</p> <p>SSD Business Plan 2006/07</p> <p>Inside Out – Annual Report<br/>Sport Direct – Annual Report<br/>SAZ (Sport Action Zone) – Annual Report<br/>Accreditation and Awards worker Service's Quality Assurance documentation<br/>Teenage Pregnancy – Report of the Social Exclusion Unit – June 1999<br/>Office of National Statistics – Under 18 Conception Statistics 2004</p> |

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| <p>attendances of which 10,575 will be by children with disabilities and 8,460 by BME members of communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County Council, as a major local employer, has agreed that all work places will be smoke-free from October 30<sup>th</sup> 2006</li> <li>• Improved the proportion of looked-after children receiving their health assessments from 75% to 82%</li> <li>• A range of projects have been funded through our safer communities – health inequalities budget to support and promote healthier lifestyles in our most deprived communities</li> <li>• A countywide tackling obesity strategy and action plan has been approved by all partners and is being implemented</li> <li>• The County Council has won a regional healthy work place award and run a targeted healthy living programme for senior managers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning and Earning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key Stages 1 and 2 attainment were both above the national average in 2005. Key Stage 3 is a weaker area though progress has been made with a high improvement ranking for English [Performance Rank 2003 – 95; 2004 – 88; 2005 – 79]. This trend resulted in a top quartile (A) ranking for 2003-05 on progress ranking</li> <li>• Key Stage Four (KS4) results in 2005 for those getting five or more A* - C grades remained below the national average. However, KS4 results in 2006 have improved, with some targeted schools making very significant progress in the number of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades. The overall figure, whilst improving, is still below the national average, however, and improvement in KS4 remains a very high priority. Additional funding of £500,000 a year has been invested to seek improvement. A KS4 Partnership Board has been established, bringing together head teachers and the Authority to lead the improvement work. We are concentrating on continuing the improvement of pupils from KS3 and are investing in additional training for secondary subject leaders</li> <li>• The number of young people aged 16 to 18 engaged in education, training and employment is above the national average and the number of 16 to 18 year olds in learning has increased by 9.5% over the last two years, whilst the resident population has decreased by 0.6%</li> <li>• The proportion of care leavers in employment, education or training has exceeded the LPSA1 stretch targets and stands at 85.7%</li> <li>• The Turbine Business Innovation Centre opened in May last year and already has 12 companies operating there. It received a BREEM award to recognise its excellence for environmental sustainability</li> <li>• Funding has been secured for a Newark Business Innovation Centre with building starting Summer 2006 and anticipated completion date of April 2007</li> <li>• The Mansfield and Ashfield areas have been successful in a joint bid with Bolsover in Derbyshire for a Local Enterprise Growth Initiative. The County Council continues to engage with this work and supports its links with the Local Area Agreement. Theme groups have been established and a programme manager appointed, due to take up post in September 2006</li> </ul> | <p>Active England Value mapping monitoring site<br/>Full Council approval - July 2006</p> <p>Corporate Health Inequalities strategy and action</p> <p>Nottinghamshire Obesity Strategy</p> <p>SSD Business Plan 2006/07 / Children and Young Person's Plan</p> <p>APP</p> <p>Decision Record and press release; business plan produced</p> <p>Decision Record and press release; business plan produced<br/>NBIC Busplan<br/>Newark BIC gets underway<br/>Bid submission</p> |
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|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the academic year 2004-2005, the Adult and Community Learning Service (ACLS) delivered 1797 courses to 11,482 learners in 467 venues. To date in the academic year 2005-2006, 7,511 learners have attended ACLS courses, of these 4855 were new learners. 80% of learners achieved their learning aim</li> <li>• For the first time, the County Council has developed key leadership skills for senior managers against which development will be identified to meet revised organisational needs</li> <li>• A Learning and Development Strategy has been adopted by the County Council which supports the overall HR strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cleaner and Greener</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling and composting has been increased to over 35% and the LPSA target was achieved</li> <li>• A 26 year PFI waste management contract has been signed, which will see 52% recycling and composting by 2020 and virtually no direct delivery of biodegradable material to landfill from 2011</li> <li>• CO2 emission from County Council buildings has been reduced by 9% over the year, a reduction of 6,500 tonnes</li> <li>• Usage of electricity from renewable sources has been increased over the year from 74% to 84%</li> <li>• The Council continued its Building Better Communities programme, completing some 150 schemes including 50 conservation projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Travel and Access</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County's A road network is now ranked fifth best in England</li> <li>• A major upgrade to the A60 through Arnold was implemented on time and within budget last September</li> <li>• Nottinghamshire Highways Partnership has been formed with three district councils to maintain the highway network</li> <li>• The percentage of users satisfied with public transport has risen from 65% to 73%</li> <li>• Bus patronage also continues to rise and has increased by 19% over the last 4 years</li> <li>• Access to education has been promoted through the 41 schools involved in the first phase of extended services.</li> </ul> | <p>ACLS Self Assessment Report 2004-2005<br/> ACLS Management Information Data for 2005-2006 01-08-06</p> <p>2005/06 BVPI results, LPSA report in APP<br/> Decision record and press release LPSA report in APP<br/> 2002 Carbon Management Plan and draft 2006 Carbon management Plan<br/> Building Better Communities – Year 2 brochure</p> <p>BVPI results 2004/05<br/> Local PI results 2004/05; Bus strategy</p> |
| <p><b>1.2</b></p> | <p><b>What contribution is the Council making to wider community outcomes?</b></p>  |   |
|                   | <p>The Council has made significant progress this year to develop partnership working to achieve community outcomes. The establishment of the Nottinghamshire Partnership and adoption of the Nottinghamshire Community Strategy have provided the basis for development of the county's Local Area Agreement signed with Government in March. This partnership is supported by strong sectoral partnerships, including those focusing on children and young people, health and older people, community safety and economic development and enterprise. The Children and Young Person's Plan has been established to drive the integrated agenda for services to Nottinghamshire's children. Through the Local Public Service Agreement 2003 – 2006, the Council has achieved significant improvements in service outcomes working with district councils, police and fire. In total, the partnership achieved 83% of the agreement, meeting 10 of the 12 targets. The County Council set up a Community Cohesion Board with representation from local district councils, police, fire, and voluntary and community sector. The aim of the Board was to develop and</p>   | <p>LAA<br/> Community Strategy 2005-9<br/> Children and Young Person's Plan</p> <p>APP</p>  |

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implement a Countywide Community Cohesion Strategy and action plan. This Strategy will be endorsed for formal adoption in the near future. To support the development of the Strategy, the County Council has set aside an annual budget of £50,000 to support local projects that aim to address gaps and or unite communities.

### Safer and Stronger Communities

- We are working jointly with partners in the seven Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. The Council has piloted the Operation Cubit scheme in all the seven districts of the county. Operation Cubit uses the skills and knowledge of CDRP partners input from the DVLA to tackle the blight of abandoned and untaxed vehicles. Over a four week period over 300 untaxed or dangerous vehicles were removed from the streets of Nottinghamshire
- Work through the LPSA has reduced burglaries from 7,832 to 4,717
- Robust safeguarding arrangements for children have been maintained: child protection investigations and conferences are held within national timescales (25 day target); all children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) are regularly reviewed – 98% within the 6 monthly timescale; most children on the CPR are receiving the level of visiting outlined in their protection plans; all children on the CPR have an allocated, qualified social worker
- The Council has funded a number of community cohesion projects, such as supporting the Nottingham Interfaith Council to extend its services to county residents, as well as running a number of specific faith-based projects e.g. production and distribution of 5,000 “faith files”. Another example is a competition that is open to anyone aged up to 19 with a theme of uniting communities, celebrating diversity.

### Healthier

- The Council has worked in partnership with seven Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts and the voluntary and community sector to promote healthier communities and tackle health inequalities in our most disadvantaged communities. This has included joint work in reducing the prevalence of smoking, supporting smoke cessation, tackling higher than national average obesity rates in the county, tackling the causes of avoidable injury for children and the elderly and reducing the inequalities gap in all cause mortality rates to increase life expectancy
- Improved the quality of life of adults with learning difficulties by opening two short break facilities in partnership with Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust; 36 community bases are used by adults with learning difficulties for day services, thereby promoting inclusion.
- Improved the quality of life of an increasing number of adults with physical disabilities who use an accessible transport scheme and take up equipment to enable people with a hearing impairment to remain at home
- The Council has agreed to recruit a joint appointment to the position of Director of Public Health in the new Nottinghamshire teaching PCT.

### Learning and Earning

- Almost all schools in the County provide access to extended services. The Authority was one of only six

APP

SSD Business Plan 2006/07/

Children and Young Person's Plan

Directors of Public Health Annual Reports X7; Regional DPH annual report; EMPHO Health Profile and data; EM Strategic Health Authority - Smoking data [LDP Lines

SSD Delivery Improvement Statement (DIS) 2006

SSD Delivery Improvement Statement (DIS) 2006  
Cabinet Report 26th July 2006 - A Joint Appointment of a Director of Public Health')

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|                   | <p>nationally to be involved in the successful Training and Development Agency (TDA) extended services pilot. This programme is now being rolled out nationally and Nottinghamshire will exceed the target of involving 50% of schools by 2008. Plans are well advanced for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to establish bases on the sites of four schools to provide better integrated services. The development of extended services is closely co-ordinated with the large Children's Centres programme to maximise synergies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has developed partnership working around the Children and Young Person's partnership. Children's sub-groups of Local Strategic Partnerships have been established to enable a more focused analysis of local need and local delivery. The Council has rolled out 22 Children's Centres in those communities known to have most difficulties in order to offer integrated, accessible services for 0-5 year olds. The first phase of the Children's Centres programme was the largest in the region, and the only one to be delivered on time and within budget. This achievement was due to the very good collaborative arrangements between the Authority and its key partners, particularly the PCTs. Plans are well-advanced to develop a total of 48 Children's Centres by 2008. Evaluation from the Meden Vale Surestart (now Children's Centre) presents very positive outcomes from the parents/carers who use it, including the overcoming of isolation and improvement of self-confidence</li> <li>• The Council has played a leading role in the development of both Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships (SSPs) covering the County. Both the Alliance SSP and Greater Nottingham SSP have senior political representation from the County Council on their respective Boards and the Council participates in the relevant working groups. In the Alliance area, the Council has secured support for the Innovation Centre Network and the development of the Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route Partnership's activities, while in Greater Nottingham the Council continues to engage with key issues within the conurbation</li> <li>• Following the inspection of the Adult and Community Learning Service last year that found the service to be "inadequate", the Council has implemented a Post Inspection Action Plan that has addressed the weaknesses identified by the inspection team. The Service will be re-inspected in October 2006.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cleaner and Greener</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LPSA target for reduced CO2 emissions which was shared between the County and seven district councils was achieved in full.</li> </ul> <p><b>Travel and Access</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A countywide free concessionary fare scheme has been introduced and has operated since April 2006, which involved working with the seven districts and the city council</li> <li>• 22 new children's centres provide childcare and a range of multi-agency services for children and parents.</li> </ul> | <p style="color: orange;">Children and Young Person's Plan</p> <p style="color: orange;">Alliance SSP and Greater Nottingham SSP Sub-Regional Investment Plans</p> <p style="color: orange;">ACLS Post Inspection Action Plan</p> <p style="color: orange;">APP</p> <p style="color: orange;">Children and Young Person's Plan</p> |
| <p><b>1.3</b></p> | <p><b>To what degree is the Council improving both access ....</b></p>  |  |
|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County's Contact Centre has developed to now cover improved access to over 37% of all County Council services. Approximately 70% of all enquiries are resolved at the first point of contact. Expansion plans have been approved and are being implemented including the purchase of a new CRM system, new property, acceleration of service transfer and recruitment of new contact centre advisors. Survey</li> </ul>  |  |

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|  | <p>results continue to show high levels of customer satisfaction with the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is leading a partnership bid with the City Council, district councils, Notts Police and Fire &amp; Rescue Service to deliver the 101 initiative in the county. This will improve access to a range of community safety services through a single telephone number. Services include street lighting, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and noise nuisance</li> <li>• County Contact dealt with 70,248 callers in nine locations across the County.</li> </ul>   | <p style="color: orange;">County contact stats</p>   |
| <b>....and the quality of services for all citizens ...</b>                          |   |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Children and Young People's service has been established from October 1st</li> <li>• Adult care has improved in a number of key areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ people receiving intensive home care has increased by 44%</li> <li>➢ delayed hospital discharges have decreased by 95%</li> <li>➢ people receiving a direct payment for their care needs has increased by 23%</li> <li>➢ delivery of community equipment, within seven days, has improved by 6.2%</li> <li>➢ access to services has improved to achieve performance rating within target.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <p style="color: orange;">Children and Young Person's Plan<br/>PAF PI Report 2005/06<br/>(PAF C28)<br/>(PAF D41)<br/>(PAF C51)<br/>(PAF D54)<br/>(PAF E48)</p> |
| <b>... - focusing on those who have been 'hard to reach' or previously excluded?</b> |   |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An electronic Service Diversity Review System has been established to support services to evaluate the impact they have and to develop fair and equitable services</li> <li>• A Race Equality Scheme has been published which sets out plans to eliminate inequality and promote diversity</li> <li>• 'How to' guides commissioned for staff undertaking consultation and engagement, including 'Encouraging People to Participate', which is around involving those hard to reach and engage.</li> </ul>  | <p style="color: orange;">Race Equality Scheme</p> <p style="color: orange;">'Encouraging people to participate' how to guide</p>                              |
| <b>1.4</b>   | <b>Is value for money improving as well as quality of services?</b>   |  |
|  | <p>The Value for Money (VFM) self-assessment has described in some detail the annual process of 'Resourcing Priorities', our internal VFM driver. Through a combination of cost benchmarking and performance monitoring, we regularly identify service areas that are relatively high cost and/or relatively poor performers. As part of the 2006/7 annual budget, a number of detailed VFM reviews led to a re-prioritisation of resources amounting to £21 million, including the removal of funding from a number of 'sacred cows'. Significant savings have also been made through changes in regeneration services. Our Annual Performance Report and ongoing performance management using the PRIDE system show that in many areas performance has been improved or maintained.</p> | <p style="color: orange;">APP</p>  |

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### Question 2: How much progress is being made to implement improvement plans to sustain future improvement?

|   | KLOE  | Evidence  |   |  |
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| 2.1   | <p><b>Does the Council have robust plans for improving? (aligned with other plans, detailed, resourced, agreed and widely communicated)</b></p>   |   |   |  |
|   | <p>In April 2006 the County Council approved a new Strategic Plan to run from 2006 to 2010. The Plan contains 32 commitments aligned to five high level objectives. These objectives are exactly the same as those in the County Community Strategy, aligning our priorities to those of our partner public service, voluntary, community and business organisations.</p> <p>A broad statement of the Council's improvement priorities are set out in its Annual Performance Plan and these are spelt out in more detail in service business plans, specific project plans and improvement plans. Last year's Annual Improvement Plan defined six priorities and named 20 improvement plans and projects. Progress against each of these is summarised below.</p> <p><b>Sustaining excellent performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Children and Young Person's Plan and its Implementation Plan were published in June 2006</li> <li>• An improvement plan for the transformation of adult home care services was approved and is being implemented through shifting the balance from direct services to direct payments and purchased home care.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building our capacity for the future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Human Resources Strategy, 'Excellence through People 2005-7', was developed in 2005. It is concerned with the delivery of effective people management services and acts as a focal point against which the workforce can be developed to suit the needs of the organisation. The strategy has a number of priorities:             <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the organisation is structured</li> <li>• how staff are paid and rewarded</li> <li>• how to become more efficient</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how skills are developed amongst all staff</li> <li>• how to encourage staff diversity</li> <li>• how to recruit and retain staff</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> </li> </ul> <p>It is being implemented by action teams across the Authority working to a series of action plans.</p> <p><b>Promote equality and diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Corporate Equality Plan contains the Council's plans to comply with new legislation and to achieve the LGA Level 3 equality standard</li> <li>• Nottinghamshire's emerging Community Cohesion Strategy spells out the Council's approach to the promotion of a sense of belonging for all communities in Nottinghamshire through strong and positive partnership working</li> <li>• Race Equality Scheme was published in December 2005</li> <li>• The Disability Equality Scheme is in progress and on target for publication in December 2006.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the organisation is structured</li> <li>• how staff are paid and rewarded</li> <li>• how to become more efficient</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how skills are developed amongst all staff</li> <li>• how to encourage staff diversity</li> <li>• how to recruit and retain staff</li> </ul> | <p style="color: orange;">APP<br/>Strategic Plan</p> <p style="color: orange;">Children and Young Person's Plan</p> <p style="color: orange;">SSD Delivery Improvement Statement (DIS) 2006 / Cabinet Report on Adult Care Study Group</p> <p style="color: orange;">'Excellence through People 2005-7'</p> <p style="color: orange;">ME to provide on return</p> <p style="color: orange;">Community Cohesion Strategy</p> <p style="color: orange;">Race Equality Scheme</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the organisation is structured</li> <li>• how staff are paid and rewarded</li> <li>• how to become more efficient</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how skills are developed amongst all staff</li> <li>• how to encourage staff diversity</li> <li>• how to recruit and retain staff</li> </ul>   |   |   |  |

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|                   | <p><b>Effective customer service and communications</b><br/>         The User Focus Action Plan is now almost complete. Actions which are completed include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the Consultation Database</li> <li>• Progress with the establishment of the Citizens' Panel</li> <li>• Production of guidance, information and training plans on engagement</li> <li>• Monthly articles in 'In Contact', the County Council newspaper, on the benefits of consultation</li> <li>• How to guides and FAQs</li> <li>• Approval of the Public Engagement Policy in December 2005</li> <li>• Nottinghamshire Consultation Practitioners' Forum developed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Working Effectively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Annual Efficiency Statement indicates the Gershon savings that the Council is making.</li> <li>• The ICT Integration project plan details the approach to service improvement in support for new information technology</li> <li>• The Corporate Asset Management Plan was approved in April 2006.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Partnerships and Community Leaderships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nottinghamshire Local Agreement, reflecting the priorities of the Community Strategy, was signed with Government in March 2006.</li> </ul> <p>Our Improvement Plan for 2006-2007 defines four improvement priorities under which 14 improvement projects are identified (p.32 in Annual Performance Plan). The priorities are: being civic leaders and good partners; being responsive; designing the future; working effectively.</p> | <p>Database can be viewed either by going to the intranet or the public web site.<br/>         training sessions - copy of outline agenda attached<br/>         First and second articles attached.<br/>         'How to guides' - see note above.<br/>         'Public engagement policy' - attached.<br/>         'Nottinghamshire Consultation Practitioners' Forum' – June agenda<br/>         1IT3 Programme Plan</p> <p>LAA</p> |
| <p><b>2.2</b></p> | <p><b>How well is improvement planning being implemented; are key milestones being achieved?</b></p>   |   |
|                   | <p><b>Sustaining excellent performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult care performance has improved and the new department established</li> <li>• Children and Young Person's Plan has been completed and a strategy for joint commissioning is well developed</li> <li>• PRIDE performance management system in place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building our capacity for the future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new structure for the Council was agreed in April and new strategic directors have now been appointed. This involves the creation of the new departments of Children and Young People, Adult Social Care and Health and Communities. The latter combines culture, community and environmental service areas. In addition, the new structure establishes four strategic directors with cross-cutting corporate responsibilities</li> <li>• Difficulties with the National Job Evaluation Scheme have been resolved and a new approach agreed</li> <li>• A management competency framework has been developed as a basis for learning and development for managers</li> <li>• A new Medium Term Financial Strategy was adopted in April</li> <li>• A Leadership Forum for senior managers has been established and met throughout the year.</li> </ul>  | <p>SSD Delivery Improvement Statement (DIS) 2006 / Department of Social Care and Health Information and Structure documents<br/>         CYPF</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>   |

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|     | <p><b>Promote equality and diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee diversity survey has been conducted</li> <li>• Race Equality Scheme published in December</li> <li>• Joint 20<sup>th</sup> in the Stonewall Corporate Workplace Equality Index of councils across the country</li> <li>• Supported four self-managed staff groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Effective customer service and communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 124 services now fronted by the Contact Centre. Full coverage expected to be in place by 2008</li> <li>• Decision to set up 15 'hubs' in libraries to improve face to face contact</li> <li>• Institute of Customer Service awards programme being implemented across the Council</li> <li>• Award-winning civic newspaper – Notts News</li> <li>• Commissioning of a citizens' panel has commenced</li> <li>• Pilot status and funding for Link Age Plus development over two years granted in principle by DWP.</li> </ul> <p><b>Working Effectively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Efficiency savings of £14.9m achieved</li> <li>• CPA score of three achieved for Use of Resources, despite the 'harder test'</li> <li>• Savings of over a quarter of a million pounds made in ICT spending through the integration improvement project</li> <li>• Corporate Asset Management Plan produced</li> <li>• Financial performance in 2005/6 was sound and expenditure was contained within budget. Actions arising from previous overspendings in Social Services have been successful</li> <li>• Cabinet Members regularly receive financial monitoring information regarding their portfolios and consolidated financial monitoring is presented to Cabinet</li> <li>• The Council Tax increase in 2006/7 was below the average increase for shire counties for the sixth year in a row.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Partnerships and Community Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Strategy adopted by the partnership in September</li> <li>• Local Area Agreement signed with Government with over £34 million of pooled funding</li> <li>• Establishment of new partnership structure and governance arrangements to deliver the LAA</li> <li>• Project with the NHS with regional and national support to enhance working between the LAA and the NHS Integrated Service Improvement Programmes (ISIP).</li> </ul> | <p>Employee Diversity Survey<br/>Race Equality Scheme<br/>Workplace equality Index<br/>All groups leaflet</p> <p>Link Age Plus Application (approved)<br/>Link Age Plus Cabinet Report</p> <p>11T3 Programme Plan</p> <p>Community Strategy 2005/09<br/>LAA<br/>Partnership agreement<br/>Structure diagram<br/>ISIP Process Flowchart / ISIP presentation</p> |
| 2.3 | <p><b>Are there any significant weaknesses or failures in corporate governance?</b></p>  |  |
|     | <p>There are no significant weaknesses. The Council has demonstrated the efficacy and robustness of its corporate governance framework by dealing with its first Standards Committee determination into a Member misconduct allegation. This took place in April 2006, involved a Cabinet Member and followed a complaint from a member of the public to the Standards Board for England. The hearing was chaired by the newly appointed Independent Chair of the Standards Committee, Canon Eddie Neale and was reviewed by the</p>   |  |

**Nottinghamshire County Council's Direction of Travel Assessment September 2006**

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| <p>Standards Committee at its meeting on 12 June 2006. The Council was further able to demonstrate the strengthening of its governance arrangements and continued member support and development work following comments from the External Auditor who investigated allegations of financial impropriety against another Cabinet Member. At its meeting on 12 June 2006 the Standards Committee were satisfied that adequate arrangements were in place including a Member's Toolkit (nominated for a national award September 2006), guidance in the Constitution and Member training given on conduct issues after the May 2006 elections. The Council has commenced a programme of identifying and cataloguing all strategic/operational policies such as the Public Engagement Policy, in order to incorporate consideration of all such policies where relevant in the decision making process.</p> |  |
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