

Buckinghamshire Committed to Quality



COUNCIL PLAN

Aims and Supporting Policies

2001 - 2004



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Overall Aim 1

To be a modern top performing council which delivers high quality services, affordable to the Council Taxpayer.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Through this document provide strategic direction that can be delivered locally.
- b) Recruit, develop and retain well-motivated staff.
- c) Choose the most appropriate and cost-effective way of delivering each service, whether in-house or by externalising, e.g. through trusts, public or private partners.
- d) Review all services from the point of view of those that use and benefit from them.
- e) Set targets for improving performance, especially in areas where you tell us we need to do it better.
- f) Strive each year to achieve 2% efficiency savings across all controllable budgets.
- g) Identify new sources of funding and service improvements.
- h) Endeavor to set an annual Council Tax at or below the average increase of South East counties.



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Overall Aim 2

To work in partnership with others to secure integrated public services which meet the needs of our individual customers.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Work with our stakeholders such as health, police, businesses, voluntary organisations, parishes and other councils to encourage co-operation, and develop services that meet local needs.
- b) Work with all partners, including the Police, to make Buckinghamshire a safer place in which to live work and travel.
- c) Encourage individuals and groups in Buckinghamshire to contribute ideas and comment on policy proposals and standards of service.
- d) Be the voice of Buckinghamshire on a wide range of public bodies.



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Overall Aim 3

To improve the quality of life in the County and strike the right balance between encouraging prosperity and protecting the environment.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Work regionally, nationally and internationally to secure a strong, dynamic, sustainable economy and highly skilled workforce within Buckinghamshire.
- b) Protect the rural nature and beauty of Buckinghamshire whilst enhancing the urban environment.
- c) Devise and implement policies which support rural communities to reflect the changing nature of agriculture and the difficulty of providing services in rural areas.
- d) Support policies to provide affordable, suitable homes to meet the needs of the County.



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Overall Aim 4

To be open and accountable; to consult and listen.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Make our services and policy-making more easily accessible by giving information freely, using plain language, and making the most of modern technology.
- b) Make communication a two-way process so as to improve our policies and services in the light of consultation.
- c) When consulting have consideration of the timescales of those we consult with.
- d) Give feedback after consultation.



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Overall Aim 5

To lead and act for the well being of the whole community.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Lead and reflect public opinion in Buckinghamshire on key issues facing the County.
- b) Be seen by Buckinghamshire people to be the “natural choice” to take care of their interests, both now and in the future.
- c) Play a major part in developing a community strategy for all who live, work and travel in Buckinghamshire.
- d) Give our Councillors the opportunity to develop and extend their knowledge and skills so that they can be ambassadors for their areas and for the County Council.
- e) Have the courage to take the right decisions in the interests of the County as a whole.



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Service Aim 6

To meet the assessed care needs of individual adults promptly and effectively within available resources.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Provide for preventative help, rehabilitation and other care arrangements to enable older people to maintain their dignity and independence.
- b) Enable Learning Disability clients to achieve their potential and to participate fully in the life of their community e.g. supported employment, access to community resources and lifelong learning.
- c) Encourage independence and maintain a reasonable quality of life for our physical disability clients e.g. increased use of direct payments.
- d) Through joint working with the new Mental Health Care Trust, ensure that our mental health clients live as independently as possible, taking into account the safety and well being of themselves and others.
- e) Devise improvement plans that achieve service quality and efficiency targets.
- f) Proactively establish partnership arrangements with Health, Primary Care Groups and Primary Care Trusts, and other key partners, to provide seamless “one stop” services for: Learning and Physical Disability, Mental Health and Older People clients.



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Service Aim 6

- g) Work with the Health Authority to meet its responsibilities under the NHS plan and discuss its policies and performance in Buckinghamshire on a periodic basis.
- h) Evaluate unit costs to achieve best value and where feasible reduce costs to those of similar authorities.
- i) Put in place the necessary management information to enable the service to be managed as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- j) Develop policies that take into account the ability to pay and which support clients to claim all relevant state benefits, protecting the provision of care to those most in need.
- k) Develop and implement service strategies that reflect the resources allocated to Adult Care Services



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Service Aim 7

To promote and facilitate the delivery of public services tailored to the needs of local communities.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Promote safer communities, highlighting concerns to the Police and other responsible agencies and using our own resources to support and develop improvements.
- b) Facilitate formal and informal learning activities within the community for all ages.
- c) Protect and enhance the environment and heritage of Buckinghamshire, conserving key elements of it whilst enabling greater access to and understanding of the County and its countryside.
- d) Work with young people in a way that builds on their contribution, motivation, skill and enjoyment and will help prepare them for adult life.
- e) Encourage a fair, honest and safe trading environment, giving particular attention to providing consumer advice, giving guidance to small businesses and tackling those issues of greater concern to the public.
- f) Work with other authorities to reduce the amount of waste we all produce and develop a waste disposal strategy aimed at reducing our reliance on landfill.
- g) In partnership with the Learning and Skills Council support the continued provision of high quality continuing education in Buckinghamshire.



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Service Aim 8

To improve the care, health and education of vulnerable children, including those with special educational needs.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Strive to protect children and young people from abuse and harm and promote the interests of children within the community.
- b) Undertake with partners the joint assessment of a child's needs (whether health, care or education) to make a positive difference to each child's life.
- c) Improve the support available to children with special educational needs.
- d) Improve the quality of children's lives and help them individually to achieve more by implementing coordinated children's services.
- e) Provide and develop services for children and families which are shaped around individual needs and are easy to access.
- f) Recruit, develop and retain staff to provide and develop children's services.
- g) Continually improve specific services, which affect a child's life including expanding fostering and adoption services, minimising exclusions (social/educational) and ensuring appropriate support, as children become adults.
- h) Reduce youth offending and re-offending by supporting the Youth Offending Team.



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Service Aim 9

To raise pupils' achievement by challenging and supporting all schools within the County's successful selective education system.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Support schools in strengthening the quality of leadership and management at all levels, including governing bodies, headteachers, deputies and middle managers.
- b) Improve the quality of teaching to improve literacy and numeracy at all ages, to increase attainments at GCSE and to enhance personal development.
- c) Allocate appropriate levels of funding across all schools and strive to ensure that schools have the resources they need to do the job.
- d) Target efforts and appropriate funding towards schools improvement where this is most needed in order to raise levels of attainment.
- e) Work in partnership to provide school places where they are needed by encouraging infant and junior schools to combine where appropriate while protecting small rural schools and addressing changing numbers within secondary schools.
- f) Improve educational opportunity for all children by expanding educational placements for three year olds and increasing childcare placements; and by delivering the special educational needs policy with a focus on early identification and appropriate funding.
- g) In partnership with the Learning and Skills Council support the continued provision of high quality sixth form education in Buckinghamshire.



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Service Aim 10

To integrate our planning and transportation services to support appropriate development within the County and enable people and goods to move safely and efficiently

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Promote investment in the transport infrastructure of the County to ensure its long-term viability.
- b) Tackle the effects of increased traffic through the promotion of road safety and traffic calming schemes where appropriate.
- c) Provide wider travel choices and seek innovative ways of providing public transport services, particularly in rural areas.
- d) Improve the level of routine maintenance on all classes of road and pedestrian facilities.
- e) Secure maximum government funding, through the Local Transport Plan, to deliver the above aims.
- f) Effectively manage development in the County to achieve sustainable development through the preparation of Development Plans.



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Service Aim 11

To continue delivering and adopting innovative ways of supporting services.

Supporting Policies

We will:

- a) Use information and communications technology to assist in the improved delivery of services and reduce costs.
- b) Be a good employer by improving skills and competencies, encouraging full accreditation by Investors In People and implementing other appropriate quality initiatives.
- c) Produce and implement an integrated approach to managing the Council's assets, maximising the benefits from more efficient use and increased Council branding of property and services.
- d) Improve value for money in service delivery by working with other authorities, the independent and private sectors and supporting the market testing of services where appropriate.
- e) Provide high quality advice and support in the areas of finance, human resources, information and communications technology, law, procurement and property