

Summary of strengths / weaknesses

Issues which are not already being highlighted in the council’s improvement plan have been highlighted below in bold text.

Area of focus	Strengths	Weaknesses	Notes	Update
<p>How well does the council contribute to the management of the physical environment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly adopted local plan</li> <li>• Invested in environmental framework &amp; proactive approach to conservation</li> <li>• Guidance used to influence good quality design &amp; management of public space</li> <li>• Many town improvements to enhance street scene</li> <li>• Use of developer contributions (S106)</li> <li>• Enforcements made in variety of areas</li> <li>• Un-audited figures show improvement in speed of planning decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audited planning PIs below average</li> <li>• Staff shortages led to service failures and missed targets</li> <li>• Some customer care issues eg: poor and not improving customer satisfaction rates for planning</li> <li>• Some gaps in partnership working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the Inspector noted the strengths of the planning service our comparative performance in terms of the Best Value Performance Indicators, including customer satisfaction, was seen as a weakness.</li> <li>• The Inspector cited specifically work with local businesses and work on green travel plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets for improved performance against statutory indicators is included in the Best Vale Performance Plan, and the Planning service plan</li> <li>• <b>Consideration to be given to our response to this alleged weakness</b></li> </ul>

Area of focus	Strengths	Weaknesses	Notes	Update
Does the council help keep the locality clean?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste collected in the best 25 per cent and improving</li> <li>• Good &amp; improving customer satisfaction rates</li> <li>• Fast response to fly tipping</li> <li>• Generally clean and tidy public spaces</li> <li>• Prosecutions and enforcements made</li> <li>• High composting take up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No improvement to recycling rates for four years – lack of firm strategy to increase recycling above 18 per cent</li> <li>• Will not meet government recycling targets</li> <li>• Little joint working on initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inspector noted the council's plans to increase recycling, although not to Government targets</li> <li>• The inspector cited specifically work with local business, parish councils, utility companies and the railway authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans are underway to increase our recycling rates by 4% with the introduction of a kerbside collection of glass. Included in the MTWP</li> <li>• <b>Consideration to be given to our response to this alleged weakness</b></li> </ul>

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