

Annual Report & **Summary** Statement of Accounts



for the year ending 31st March 2009

Summary

This document is available on our website at www.cambridge.gov.uk

Annual Report

Who we are and what we do

Cambridge City Council is one of five district councils which, together with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, provide services to the people of Cambridgeshire.

The City Council serves a population of 122,800 residents in an almost entirely urban area. However, as part of the 'London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough' Growth Area, that population is set to increase considerably, so that by 2021 the population of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire is likely to be 33% higher than it was in 2000.

The City has a target to provide at least 19,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021. These new homes are planned mainly for sites on the southern, north west and eastern fringes of Cambridge. One of the effects of the current downturn in the economy has been to seriously set back the timetable for the delivery of this growth, with construction work on sites almost at a standstill. Cambridge, though, is predicted to weather the recession better than most cities and we anticipate development will resume as soon as the economic climate improves.

The Council employs around 1,250 full-time and part-time staff who provide a wide range of services for residents, local businesses, and people who work in and visit the City. We understand how important it is that we provide value for money in all the services we deliver, especially in these difficult economic times. The main services we deliver include:

- ◆ Keeping the streets and public open spaces clean
- ◆ Championing recycling and emptying refuse and recycling bins
- ◆ Providing a range of leisure facilities including swimming pools and community centres and providing entertainment in the City's parks and the Corn Exchange
- ◆ Awarding a wide range of grants to support local organisations and community groups
- ◆ Offering planning advice, progressing planning applications and making sure that new buildings and alterations are safe
- ◆ Monitoring and enforcing food and drink hygiene standards together with the control of pests, diseases, noise and air pollution
- ◆ Licensing food premises, street traders and entertainment venues
- ◆ Managing council-run car parks
- ◆ Organising and managing elections and the electoral register
- ◆ Providing housing advice and support and working with partners to meet peoples housing needs
- ◆ Providing and maintaining over 7,400 council dwellings
- ◆ Processing housing benefit and council tax benefit applications

- ◆ Promoting long-term policies which encourage sustainability

Council Structure

Cambridge residents elect 42 councillors across 14 wards in the City. The full Council meets formally at least five times a year. Its main function is to approve the Council's most significant policies and its budget framework. In February each year the Council sets the level of Council Tax for the coming financial year.

Council elections during the 2008/09 financial year resulted in no change in the Council's political leadership. The Council is currently made up of 28 Liberal Democrats led by Councillor Ian Nimmo-Smith, 11 Labour, one Conservative, one Green and one Independent councillor.

The Executive

The Executive is made up of the Leader of the Council and six executive councillors. Each Executive Councillor is responsible for a specific group of services. These are currently:

- ◆ Arts and recreation
- ◆ Climate change and growth
- ◆ Community development and health
- ◆ Customer services and resources
- ◆ Environmental and waste services
- ◆ Housing, and
- ◆ Strategy

Executive Councillors can make decisions individually, usually at a meeting of a Scrutiny Committee that is relevant to their group of services. The appropriate Scrutiny Committee examines and comments on recommendations that lead to key decisions before the Executive Councillor makes the final decision. Executive Councillors also meet once a year to decide the overall budget to be recommended to the Full Council.

Committees and Council Meetings

The Council has three different types of committee where councillors make decisions on important issues that affect the City:

- ◆ Regulatory
- ◆ Scrutiny
- ◆ Area

Regulatory Committees make decisions that are not allowed by law to be made by an Executive Councillor alone. These committees include: civic affairs, licensing, planning and standards.

Scrutiny Committees receive reports with background information and advice and guidance on issues where decisions need to be taken. Each committee comments on the content of reports and makes recommendations to the relevant Executive Councillor who considers these views before making their decision.

Area committees cover four geographical areas within the City of Cambridge – north, south, east and west/central. Their purpose is to take decision-making out into the community and to make it easier for people to have a say about decisions that affect them in their local area.

The Councils Objectives, Performance and Plans

The Council has four Medium-Term Objectives that determine how we prioritise the use of our resources. These objectives are also reflected in the Sustainable Community Strategy for Cambridge which sets out a vision of what the City Council and its partners from the public sector, the private sector and the voluntary and community sectors want to see happen in the City over the next two years to 2011.

In the following pages we tell you how we are performing against each of these objectives, what we have achieved over the past year and what our plans are for 2009/10.

1 To promote Cambridge as a sustainable city, in particular by reducing carbon dioxide emissions and the amount of waste going into landfill in the City and sub-region.

During 2008/09 we:

- ◆ Implemented recycling provision at 25 blocks of flats with priority being given to large blocks first
- ◆ Installed a battery recycling bank at Mandela House and another in Budgens at Arbury Court
- ◆ Exceeded our target of 15% of cardboard and glass trade waste being recycled for the year by 7%
- ◆ Successfully trialled the netting of blue recycling boxes at 400 properties with the aim of reducing the amount of litter blown out
- ◆ Adopted a Climate Change Strategy for the City and launched a Climate Change Fund to help the City Council minimise its own impact on carbon emissions and climate change
- ◆ Set a target to reduce CO₂ emissions from the Council's own operations by 11% by 2010/11
- ◆ Installed solar hot water panels on Arbury Court public toilets and rainwater harvesting technology at Chesterton Road toilets
- ◆ Initiated a Green Fleet Review of the Council's fleet of 134 vans with the Energy Saving Trust and purchased three new electric vans for use by the Council's Street Scene team
- ◆ Received a Greener Festival accreditation for the Folk Festival
- ◆ Commissioned the Wildlife Trust to prepare a Management Plan for Midsummer Common



- ◆ Invested £1.4 million in energy efficiency measures within Council housing stock, saving more than 7 million kWh of energy, 1600 tonnes of CO₂ and more than £290,000 in energy costs
- ◆ Worked with the Cambridge Housing Society to develop a zero carbon affordable housing scheme on the Simon's House sheltered scheme site.

Our plans for 2009/10 include:

- ◆ Encouraging and promoting recycling in student accommodation
- ◆ Encouraging improved energy efficiency in private housing through the use of grant money, an accreditation scheme for landlords and identifying and implementing two Energy Action Zones in the City
- ◆ Carrying out a full review and assessment of air quality in the City
- ◆ Reducing the carbon footprint of the communal areas in our housing stock by improved monitoring and control of heating and lighting
- ◆ Reducing the level of carbon emissions in the building of new affordable housing
- ◆ Organising and running events for the Cambridge Environment Festival 2009
- ◆ Completing work on the Meadow's Community Centre that will improve its environmental performance by up to 30%
- ◆ Organising recycling and conservation projects in four neighbourhoods
- ◆ Install rainwater harvesting at a further two public toilet sites
- ◆ Working with Cambridgeshire county-wide partnerships for climate change, recycling and biodiversity

2

To ensure that residents and other service users have an entirely positive experience of dealing with the Council

During 2008/09 we:

- ◆ Successfully integrated Revenues and Benefits, Home-Link, Housing Options and Advice, Electoral Services, Switchboard and Environmental Services into the Customer Service Centre



- ◆ Answered over 14,000 emails within 4 hours of receiving them and answered 84% of switchboard calls within 15 seconds

- ◆ Responded to 331 Freedom of Information requests compared to 133 in 2007/08
- ◆ Introduced a new more user-friendly design for the Council's website and received an 'excellent' rating for usability from the Society of Information Technology Management
- ◆ Were assessed by the Audit Commission as achieving a 'good service' with 'excellent prospects for improvement' rating for our Landlord Services
- ◆ Improved the average time taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax claims and changes of circumstances to 18.5 days
- ◆ Achieved Charter for the Bereaved status for our cemeteries and the Crematorium and expanded the choice of memorials available

Our plans for 2009/10 include:

- ◆ Bringing all remaining services into the Customer Services Centre by the end of 2009
- ◆ Consulting on, reviewing and renewing the Council's customer service standards
- ◆ Completing a review of the Corn Exchange
- ◆ Redeveloping part of the ground floor of the Guildhall to create a new Tourist Information Centre and shop, coffee shop and visitor experience
- ◆ Creating a new Box Office for the Corn Exchange on Wheeler Street
- ◆ Increasing the range of information and services to Housing tenants that are available on the website
- ◆ Monitoring the Home-Link choice based lettings scheme to ensure that it is reaching ethnic minority, vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups effectively
- ◆ Refurbishing the Brandon Court sheltered housing scheme
- ◆ Making our racial harassment service available to migrant workers

3

To maintain a healthy, safe and enjoyable city for all, with thriving and viable neighbourhoods

During 2008/09 we:

- ◆ Successfully delivered the Heart of the World cultural diversity festival in partnership with others



- ◆ Completed major recreation ground improvements at Thorpe Way, Histon Road, and Ramsden Square

- ◆ Implemented a summer Street Games programme with approximately 1,000 participants
- ◆ Coordinated the Best 8 event at Chesterton Sports centre to celebrate the 2008 Paralympics and highlight pathways and support for young people with disabilities in sport
- ◆ Implemented a new programme to support allotment holders, sites and societies
- ◆ Made improvements to our council homes so that 92.1% now meet the government's 'Decent Homes' standard and are on course for this to be 100% by 2010
- ◆ Targeted zero and one star food premises to bring about improvements in food safety
- ◆ Obtained a grant to fund a Health Promotion Coordinator
- ◆ Developed joint working arrangements with the police on handling dangerous dogs and stray dogs outside normal hours and at weekends

Our plans for 2009/10 include:

- ◆ Working with the Primary Care Trust to increase the numbers of smokers who wish to quit in particular targeting workplaces and locations where there are a high number of smokers
- ◆ Implementing an extended GP Exercise Referral programme
- ◆ Improving arrangements for tackling incidents of domestic violence, racial harassment and hate crime more effectively
- ◆ Reviewing how we manage anti-social behaviour cases to make sure that they are dealt with consistently
- ◆ Aiming to achieve the Government's target of a 50% reduction in the use of temporary accommodation to house people by 2010
- ◆ Implementing measures to try to reduce the number of people who become homeless as a result of the economic downturn
- ◆ Working with partner organisations to confirm the need for additional gypsy and traveller sites in Cambridge and agree the criteria for selecting sites
- ◆ Producing a five-year Arts Strategy for Cambridge
- ◆ Working with Cambridge University on its 800th anniversary celebrations

- ◆ Increasing by 3% the number of visits to neighbourhood community centres by groups who tend to use them least
- ◆ Undertaking a study of the need for community facilities in the Abbey area with Abbey Action and other interested groups
- ◆ Consulting with the Area Committee for the East of the City on the use of money provided by developers for community development in the area
- ◆ Launching, with the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the Cambridge City Fund to provide a sustainable source of funding for voluntary work in the City
- ◆ Supporting the Cambridge Celebrates Age Project, in particular activities that encourage contact between generations

4

To lead the growth of Cambridge to achieve attractive, sustainable new neighbourhoods, including affordable housing, close to a good range of facilities, and supported by transport networks so that people can opt not to use the car

During 2008/09 we:

- ◆ Were allocated £1.5 million of Housing Growth Fund money for the fringe development sites around the City
- ◆ Adopted a Quality Charter for Growth for the City
- ◆ Issued more than 14,500 National Concessionary Fares bus passes in the first year of the scheme
- ◆ Adopted the Cambridge Area East Action Plan and progressed the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan to the public examination stage
- ◆ Produced a Developers' Guide to Air Quality
- ◆ Successfully opened the new Grand Arcade car park and refurbished Annex



- ◆ Achieved the Park Mark Safer Parking award for Castle Hill surface car park
- ◆ Completed the refurbishment of Grafton East car park
- ◆ Were designated a Cycling Demonstration Town by Cycling England and were awarded £3.6 million for the further support and development of cycling in the

City which is being match funded by Cambridgeshire County Council and developers

Our plans for 2009/10 include:

- ◆ Working with developers and other partners to provide public art projects
- ◆ Developing an investment programme to support existing and new community sport facilities
- ◆ Investigating ways of increasing allotment provision in the City and reducing the waiting list for an allotment
- ◆ Working with residents in areas of the City affected by new housing development and growth to encourage good community relations between existing and new communities

How do we compare?

In 2008/09 the City Council began collecting a new set of national performance indicators called the National Indicator Set (NIs). These indicators have been introduced by government as part of a new performance framework for local authorities and our partners such as the police and health service, called Comprehensive Area Assessment. This means that we cannot compare some of our performance indicator data for 2008/09 against previous years' data to measure how we are progressing, because the indicators are no longer the same or are calculated differently. For many of our performance indicators 2008/09 data will set a baseline against which we can measure our progress in future years.

Information that allows us to compare our performance against that of other district councils is not yet available for 2008/09.

One of the service areas that is a priority for the Council is waste minimisation and recycling, and this is an area where we continue to perform well.

Indicator	Our performance in 2006/07	Our performance in 2007/08	Our performance in 2008/09
Percentage of waste reused, recycled and composted	39.63%	41.52%	41.26%

The City Council, together with our partners, has a substantial work programme to deliver the government's agenda for growth in the sub-region centred in and around Cambridge. The recent economic downturn has slowed the development of new housing but we fully expect building work to increase when the economic climate improves.

Indicator	Our performance in 2006/07	Our performance in 2007/08	Our performance in 2008/09
Additional homes provided (net)	662	523	366
Number of affordable homes	173	70	128

An area where we continue to perform less well is the time taken to process planning applications. The growth of the City places considerable demands on our planning resources. We anticipate that recent restructuring of our planning teams to make better use of resources will result in improvements to our performance next year.

What do residents say about our services?

In the autumn of 2008 the Council conducted two surveys. These surveys were required by government as part of the new national framework for assessing how local authorities perform.

Place Survey - 2008

1,124 Cambridge citizens replied to a postal survey asking them for their views on the City as a place to live and their satisfaction with the Council and the services we provide.

- ◆ 87% of respondents expressed satisfaction overall with the local area as a place to live
- ◆ 86% agreed that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- ◆ 77% of respondents told us that they were treated with respect and consideration by local public services 'all' or 'most' of the time
- ◆ 50% of respondents told us that they were satisfied with the way the City Council runs things, which was the highest score for all the local authorities in Cambridgeshire
- ◆ 41% of respondents agreed that the City Council provides value for money and this was also the highest score for all the local authorities in Cambridgeshire. However, 32% neither agreed nor disagreed which suggests that we need to do more to inform people about Council spending
- ◆ Only 39% agreed that they could influence decisions in their locality but the City Council was still ranked 6th highest of all local authorities. Despite the economic downturn there continues to be significant development and change in the City, and we are actively working to ensure that our citizens are more informed about and involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

When asked about how satisfied they were with services provided or supported by Cambridge City Council, survey respondents told us that they were most satisfied with:

- ◆ Parks and open spaces (83%)
- ◆ Refuse collection (70%)
- ◆ Doorstep recycling (69%)
- ◆ Museums and galleries (68%)
- ◆ Theatres and Concert Halls (68%)
- ◆ Keeping the land clear of litter and refuse (63%)

Services that were felt to be in most need of improvement included:

- ◆ Level of traffic congestion (51%)
- ◆ Cycle lanes (48%)
- ◆ Activities for teenagers (32%)
- ◆ Road and pavement repairs (32%)
- ◆ Affordable decent housing (29%)

Most of these areas for improvement cannot be tackled by the City Council on its own. We need to work with our partner organisations in the public, private and third sectors to bring about real change.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey – 2008

The City Council retains a housing stock of over 7,400 properties. In the autumn of 2008, council tenants were sent a postal survey asking them about their satisfaction with housing services and what were the main areas for service improvement. 1,136 tenants replied.

- ◆ Overall satisfaction with services provided was 82%, a 4% improvement on the response to the same question asked in 2006
- ◆ Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance rose to 76% in 2008 from 70% in 2006
- ◆ 82% of tenants expressed overall satisfaction with services provided by the landlord (the City Council)
- ◆ 65% of tenants expressed overall satisfaction that their views were being taken into account

We asked tenants about those services they thought were most important. They told us that these were:

- ◆ Repairs and maintenance (81%)
- ◆ Overall quality of their home (56%)
- ◆ Dealing with anti-social behaviour (38%)

When asked about the problems in their neighbourhood, tenants identified the following as being fairly or very big problems:

- ◆ Car parking (37%)
- ◆ Rubbish and litter (31%)
- ◆ Noisy neighbours (24%)
- ◆ Disruptive children and teenagers (24%)
- ◆ Drug dealing and use (24%)

We will be looking to see how we can make improvements in these areas of concern during 2009/10.

How to find out more

Further information about the Council's performance and the Council's priorities for 2009/10 is available in our Service Plans and Improvement Plans on the Council's website at <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk>

Summary Statement of Accounts

This summary provides an overview of the Council's detailed statement of Accounts for 2008/09.

Revenue Account

The total cost of running all our services was £184.5 million. Service Income, such as fees and charges, property rents and special grants was £100.4 million. The net cost of £84.1 million is shown in our revenue account. We paid for this net expenditure from the council tax, government grant and a share of national business rates.

The Council's Income and Expenditure Account, shown below, includes various items in addition to the net cost of services. These include investment income, reductions in the value of investments and payment of a share of housing sale receipts to central government. Of the resulting deficit of £68.3 million, only £1.4 million was required to be funded from the Council's reserves.

	Net Expenditure
	£ million
Local tax collection	1.5
Cultural & related services	9.4
Environmental services	7.1
Planning & development services	6.7
Transport	0.6
Council housing	50.8
Other housing services	2.9
Corporate and democratic services (including elections)	3.3
Past service pensions cost	1.5
Impairment on surplus assets held for disposal	2.6
Exceptional income on VAT settlement	(2.3)
Net cost of services	84.1
Interest & investment income	(4.4)
Housing capital receipts payable to central government	0.7
Net pensions cost and expected return on pensions assets	1.7
Impairment of investments	2.6
Other operating expenditure	2.6
Net operating expenditure	87.3
General government grants	(2.0)
Share of national business rates	(10.8)
Council Tax	(6.2)
Net accounting deficit for the year	68.3
Net accounting adjustments	(66.9)
Net general fund deficit for the year	1.4

Employee Remuneration

Details of the numbers of City Council staff whose remuneration was £50,000 or more are set out below. These are shown in bands of £10,000.

	2008/09
£50,000 - £59,999	8
£60,000 - £69,999	7
£70,000 - £79,999	1
£80,000 - £89,999	4
£120,000 - £129,999	1

Members' Allowances

The total allowances paid to members during the Municipal year 2008/09 were £243,422 and they were also reimbursed for expenses of £2,836. Further details can be found on the Councillors pages of our website at <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/>

Balance Sheet

At the end of each financial year, we draw up a balance sheet that presents how much the Council's land and buildings are worth, what is owed to others, what others owe us and how much cash and other reserves we have.

	Net Assets at 31 March 2009 £ million
Value of land, property, equipment & vehicles	720.8
Cash at bank & cash investments	61.9
Stock	0.4
Money owed to Cambridge City Council	18.3
Money owed by Cambridge City Council	(84.9)
Total assets less current liabilities	716.5
Cambridge City Council's reserves	(716.5)

The Council's reserves include cash reserves of £51.7 million together with non-cash reserves and statutory adjustment accounts of £664.8 million.

Cash Movements

The Council handled significant amounts of cash during the year.

	2008/09 £ million
Cash at bank at 1 April 2008	0.3
Cash receipts	247.1
Cash payments	(246.5)
Cash at bank 31 March 2009	0.9

Capital Spending

We also spend money on buying assets and improving our council housing and other assets. We account for this type of expenditure separately from the day-to-day running costs of services.

	2008/09 £ million
Capital Expenditure	
Software licences	0.3
Council Dwellings	12.5
Other land & buildings	2.7
Vehicles, plant & equipment	2.1
Infrastructure assets	0.3
Community assets	0.1
Assets in the course of construction	0.5
Surplus assets held for disposal	2.6
Capital expenditure charged to the Income and Expenditure account	4.1
Private sector housing loans	0.1
Total	25.3
Financed by	
Capital receipts (from sale of council houses and other assets)	9.5
Revenue & reserves	12.1
Grants & contributions	3.7
Total	25.3

Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records income and expenditure relating to the management and maintenance of Council housing.

During 2008/09 the Council was responsible for an average of 7,455 properties.

	2008/09
	£ million
Income	
Council House Rents	27.1
Other income	3.3
Investment income	0.5
Total	30.9
Expenditure	
Repairs & maintenance	5.5
Supervision & management	6.3
Payments to government	11.9
Depreciation and impairment	57.1
Other costs	4.5
Total	85.3
Net accounting deficit for the year	54.4
Net accounting adjustments	(53.9)
Net HRA deficit for the year	0.5

The HRA deficit for the year of £0.5 million was offset against the previously accumulated surplus which is 'ring-fenced' by law for use for the HRA. The remaining accumulated surplus on the HRA at 31 March 2009 was £6.1 million.

Director of Finance's Statement

The Council's Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2008. The figures in this summary were originally compiled having regard to proper accounting practice. To help make this summary easier to understand we have simplified the presentation of some figures.

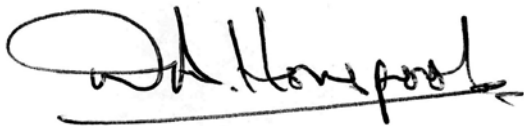
The full 2008/09 Statement of Accounts has been audited by the Audit Commission who gave an unqualified audit opinion.

A full copy of the Council's 2008/09 audited accounts is available on our website or from:

Head of Accounting Services
Cambridge City Council
Lion Yard
Lion House
Cambridge
CB2 3NA

The Council can also produce computer disk or large print copies. We can arrange for a summary in Braille, on tape or in another language, although this will take longer.

David Horspool CPFA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Horspool', with a horizontal line underneath it.