

Wychavon's Corporate Assessment Self Scoring and Summary of strengths, weaknesses and response

Theme	Score	Strengths	Weaknesses and response
Ambition	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging yet realistic vision with overall aim, 3 priorities, goals and annual promises with clear responsibility for delivery • Member led 5 year service and financial strategy to set longer term enhanced ambition for the new Council – includes ambition of all services to achieve Charter Mark status within 5 years • Clearly stated & communicated priorities, internally and in the community, with many examples of using consultation to shape priorities • Community Plan has been developed with partners, including the County Council, Police and Primary Care Trust and progress shared widely • Team Wychavon ethos between Members and senior officers provides effective leadership to services • Strong community leadership demonstrated e.g., building a community hospital, delivered the Evesham Shop, Broadband pilot, and tackling Gangmasters issue , all working through partnerships • Significant progress made post pathfinding on social inclusion to audit current practice and drive improvements • Good track record of delivering major capital projects and innovation in service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps in the 5 year strategy still to be finalised and translated into future promises - <i>promises planning process is currently shaping these in this budget round, following agreement of overall strategy.</i> • Long term ambitions need to be further developed with partners to extend Community Plan horizon – <i>to be driven through the Core Coordinating Group</i> • Outgrowing 'good services, good value' strapline – <i>brand update needed?</i>
Prioritisation	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear rationale for priorities based on importance to people and consultation • Effective local information gathering, evident in overall Priorities and Promises and more recent work to define inclusion areas and target groups • Good balance between national priorities (recycling, health, crime, market towns regeneration, youth facilities) and local priorities (flooding) • Strong financial position and use of external funding e.g., to deliver e Government and market towns programmes • Statutory services and universal services like waste collection are high priority • Clarity on services and areas that are not a priority e.g., funding tourism directly, running museums and running effectively outsourced services again • Service and financial planning brought together effectively to demonstrate that resources follow priorities • Resources allocated to priorities, e.g., recent investment in new housing service capacity • Promises planning process allows resources to be focused on priorities • Devolved financial management allows management flexibility to fund priorities within existing budgets through the virements process • Innovative investment opportunities will give a future income stream and external resources are considerable e.g., Canal and regeneration activities • Procurement strategy sets out innovative procurement e.g., in services through Leisure Trust and historic Council Tax increase provided a strong value for money driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong financial position means the council has not needed to disinvest from priorities to deliver improvement – <i>our presentation of financial information makes it clearer how we have moved money around</i> • We need to review and define service levels – <i>will be included as part of the service planning process</i>
Focus	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to focus demonstrated by delivery of nearly all of the Promises set last year and successful delivery of the capital programme • 5 year strategy to focus our time and money • Service plans show how priorities will be delivered and have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some strategies need revisiting – <i>hence plans review exercise underway to evaluate effectiveness and</i>

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		<p>improvement plans for all services with risks and financial costs explicit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear focus on a strategic basket of key measures by the Management Team, Executive Board and Scrutiny • Focus remains high even when problems – e.g., Lido, and sustained focus over time e.g., No 8 Theatre project, special needs housing unit In Droitwich, Waitrose supermarket • Ability to respond to community concerns e.g., Pershore hospital closure, low pay in food sector and gangmasters issue • Historically good at service focus – and demonstrated focus to improve in planning and environmental health • Consistently kept low council tax – helps with focus • Partnership review to make sure Council playing effective role • Meeting agendas, performance information and forward planning mechanisms used well 	<p><i>possible streamlining</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership review exercise while completed has not yet been considered formally – <i>hence item for next Executive Board and joint Senior Management Team meeting to consider implications of the review</i>
Capacity	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong political leadership and capable senior management and quality staff • Clarity of councillor and officer roles and excellent working relationships and open and honest culture • Succession arrangements in place at MD level and understudies of Board members builds capacity and expertise for the future • Can demonstrate additional capacity into priority areas – many using partnership funding capacity, including additional housing, recycling, neighbourhood wardens and customer service staff • Culture of using consultancy skills and expertise to increase capacity – in line with our procurement strategy • Excellent financial capacity, with low council tax, debt free status and high external funding ratio and effective use of reserves • Our People Strategy implementation and building capacity in middle managers group through training and development package • Partnerships well established and external funding ratio excellent • Member development strengthened with structured training programme with training co-ordinators for all groups • Strengthened scrutiny capacity with new members and effective training and policy development role • Building community capacity through partnerships, community grants and parish council support e.g., bursaries and litter picks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 people on long term sick means our percentage above average since we are low staffed – <i>active sickness monitoring and management guidelines</i> • Although scrutiny much improved we need to provide a more robust challenge to the Board – <i>we can visit elsewhere and learn new ways of working</i> • Yet to demonstrate how staff and member training programme explicitly links to the priorities – <i>this is being set out</i>
Performance management	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic basket Of key Promises and PIs drive progress with active top team and scrutiny involvement • Wider performance management framework set out and corporate information system being put in place to manage all aspects and improve consistency • Simplified PI monitoring system and communicated clearly eg, Annual Report • Community Plan communicates what people can expect from partners • Budgetary control very strong – monthly reports • Strong financial & capital management • IIP council and appraisals translate Ps and Ps formally into individuals objectives • 2 Charter Marks and ISO quality standards in place • Staff briefings and council presentations share progress with members and staff, as well as team meetings and day to day management and meetings • Risk management arrangements in place including risk registers and consideration in relevant reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management needs to be consistently strong across the Council – <i>part of the rationale for the Consilium tool</i> • Service Standards not made explicit for all services - <i>will be consistent next year, within service plans and communications</i>
Achievement in quality of service	3/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High satisfaction overall with community views of Wychavon as high quality services and value for money – confirmed by Pathfinding • Many excellent services including waste collection, benefits, loos, planning, building consultancy • Recognition of customer focused service through Charter Marks and quality marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Didn't meet our promise to designate a nature reserve or cut CO2 emissions – <i>our staff travel plan will help, the first will need to re-look at</i>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two thirds of PIs are above average or top quartile Kept Council tax increases kept at 2.5% for 4 years Clear demonstration of achievement in priority areas eg Well managed examples of credit card payments, , readable publications. Healthy and Safe examples of CCTV, Local Plan consultation, quality leisure centres and parks, recycling expansion to 93% of homes, waste collection and flood alleviation, Prosperous local economy examples – community grants to support local groups, business support and training, welfare and money advice service, significant investment through market towns programme Charter marks and other external recognition such as ISO quality and IIP and loo of the year awards Excellent and joined up public access through one stop shops 	
Achievement of Improvement	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend for PIs is improving – tow thirds going up Delivered on nearly all promises – and set out in our Annual report Can demonstrate improvement in priority areas . Well Managed examples of exceeded income targets, speeded up planning processes, improved access through Evesham Community Contact Centre, improved street cleansing, increased percentage of electronic business, Healthy and Safe examples of improving our environmental health and building consultancy services following successful best value reviews, increase proportion of new homes on brownfield sites, increase recycling rate. Economic Prosperity examples – made improvements to housing service e.g., speeded up process times for housing list applications, cleared backlog, holding surgeries, and updating information to improve strategy; delivered many regeneration and market towns schemes e.g., Evesham riverside, No 8 Arts in Pershore, Abbey Park improvements Outcome measures in development – Council keen to build on public perception again – MORI planned for 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing service weakest – <i>improvement plan in place</i> Increase in household waste collected – <i>hence emphasis on waste minimisation and promotion of recycling doorstep scheme</i>
Investment	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building blocks for future improvement are clear and progressing – policy improvements (e.g., plans on procurement, risk, capital and people), management arrangements (succession planning), performance management and consultation/ communications with extra investment internally and in the community Partnerships review well progressed – to help council improve and streamline involvement Financial plans for longer term 5 year strategy being developed from sound existing basis, as risk management arrangements Investment in additional officer capacity in key areas Successful approach to procurement Good at securing external funding – and have got partners actively contributing to officer capacity as well as project funding Council very open to challenge and willing to learn from others - such as pathfinding, peer review, experts' advice, innovators, 360 degree reviews and seeking critical feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could do more to explicitly review what we do n community capacity building – <i>suggest we simply set out current practice to identify any obvious gaps</i>
Learning	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathfinder work has improved self-awareness and where issues found the council has responded e.g., housing, scrutiny and social inclusion – and invited AC advice and guidance Many learning points – improvement comes from within, use of national agenda for local benefit, importance of good communication and to be proactive on Regional and National level Enough 'grit in the Oyster' to challenge complacency Range of mechanisms to share across departments – e.g., cross council meetings, focus groups and intranet Responded to previous best value inspections Shares Wychavon experience widely on planning performance, Leisure Trust, CPA, shops and loos Some success in delivering with neighbouring councils – e.g., Member development and training courses, Community Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Worcs Joint Working has not delivered joint building control services – <i>we've learnt that internal cultures matter</i>

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		Partnership	
Future plans	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPA Improvement plan in place to drive improvement across the council • 5 year strategy providing a useful focus for future • Review of main plans shows significant progress and way forward e.g., longer term for community plan, local Plan, Social Inclusion Review • Re- survey Residents and Staff in 2004 • More active capacity and performance reviews so that we invest earlier in services • Commitment to Charter Mark for all services together with service standards to be explicitly set out • Continuity of strong leadership with succession arrangements at MD level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing strategy needs improving – <i>subject to review this autumn</i> • Culture of investment in services before failure needed – <i>to be addressed through improved performance management</i> • CPA action plan need to be more widely communicated – <i>hence a summary version is in the pipeline</i>