



2004-2005
Supporting People
2006-2007
Waste and Recycling
2006-2007
*Culture and Sport for
Hard to Reach Groups*



**POLICY AND BUDGET
FRAMEWORK
2008/09**

Babergh District Council
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www.babergh.gov.uk

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Message from the Chairman of Strategy Committee

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out our current aims and corporate priorities, which are listed on page 32 and these are based on extensive consultation.

This Corporate Plan is being comprehensively reviewed to ensure that the Council has a clear focus and future direction for the long term benefit of the area. This is important in ensuring that we provide the services people want and indicates the outcomes we will be looking to achieve for our residents and other stakeholders in the coming years.

A clear and understood Policy and Budget Framework is key to delivering the Corporate Plan and there has again this year been an integrated approach to the review of the Corporate Plan, consultation and the formulation of the budget for 2008/09.

In addition, we have a Medium-Term Financial Strategy that looks forward for the next 3 years. This ensures that the Council can plan ahead effectively. Our aim and achievement in recent years has been to do our best to deliver Council Tax increases that do not exceed the rate of inflation. With this budget for 2008/09, we will have achieved that over the last 5 years.

This has only been possible by redirecting resources, finding additional income and making significant efficiencies and savings of around £700,000. The result is a Council Tax increase for Babergh's services of 3.9% next year, in line with the headline RPI rate in September 2007. This is used by the Government to fix Business Rates and uplift Pensions.

This publication sets out and explains how the budget has been arrived and provides information on the efficiencies, savings and additional income that have been identified to pay for financial commitments and service improvements. It also indicates the Council's Vision, Values and Priorities in the current Corporate Plan - this can be accessed on the Council's website at www.babergh.gov.uk. A revised Corporate Plan will be available later this year.

By working in partnership with other organisations, both in the public and private sector and with staff, we are working hard to achieve what the public wants. However, we are aware that future years will almost certainly pose an even tougher challenge for Babergh to maintain this balance between service provision and Council Tax increases. The Government has indicated grant increases of only 2% for the next 3 years and a requirement to achieve efficiency savings of 3% each year. So, it is forecast that further year-on-year savings or additional income of £700,000 in each year are likely to be needed.

I hope that you will find this a useful document, and one that gives you a clear indication of what the Council is trying to achieve on your behalf.

Nick Ridley
Chairman of Strategy Committee
February 2008

Policy and Budget Framework Process

The Policy and Budget Framework process for 2008/09 is set out below and shows how consultation, the Corporate Plan and the annual Service & Financial Planning process were integrated and linked.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Consultation</i>	<i>Corporate Plan</i>	<i>Budget</i>
2007			
June/July		Strategy Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committees agree integrated plan and approach to the Corporate Plan, Service & Financial Planning Process and budget formulation for 2008/09.	
	Corporate Plan Working Group (CPWG) agrees approach to reviewing Corporate Plan and consultation arrangements.		Members Seminar and Service & Financial Planning (SFP) Group consider key financial issues and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
August	CPWG starts to develop Corporate Plan for 2008 onwards and approach to State of District Debate in October.		
September/ October	Make detailed arrangements for consultation.	Both Groups give further consideration to the issues relating to producing a 10 year Corporate Plan, linked to the Suffolk Community Strategy and developing the 2008/09 Budget.	
	State of District Debate to inform what changes should be made to the Corporate Plan.	Budget position reviewed in the light of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR 07).	
November	Use Babergh Matters to advise and consult public on outcome of the State of District event.	CPWG work on a draft Corporate Plan in the light of the State of District event.	SFP Group work with officers to deliver a budget that reflects the Corporate Plan and the Financial Strategy. Strategy Committee to approve new Capital Strategy & Asset Management Plan.
December		Joint meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committees to consider progress on the development of the Corporate Plan and make recommendations to Strategy Committee on the 2008/09 budget and Financial Strategy.	

Month	Consultation	Corporate Plan	Budget
2008			
January		Strategy Committee to consider progress on the development of the Corporate, the Budget for 2008/09 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.	
February			Overview and Scrutiny Committees scrutinise 2008/09 Budget proposals.
			Strategy Committee recommends and Council approves 2008/09 Budget.