
Use of Resources 2009 – Evidence Submitted in Support of Scored Judgements

Shropshire County Council

Audit 2008/09

Date October 2009

Use of Resources

This report summarises the key judgements submitted to the Audit Commission from my assessment of how Shropshire County Council is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

Overall for 2008/09 we assessed the Council as "performing well" (level 3) in its arrangements for *Managing Finance*, *Managing Resources* and *Governing the Business*. The following tables set out the theme summaries and scored judgements, followed by the scores and commentary for each of the KLOE and their specified focus areas.

Table 1 Theme summaries and scored judgements

Theme Summaries	Scored Judgement
<p>Managing finances - How effectively does the organisation manage its finances to deliver value for money?</p> <p>The Council has good arrangements to plan its finances to secure sound financial health. There is a good clear process for linking financial planning with strategic service planning and the medium term financial strategy clearly identifies the amounts that are allocated to achieve each of the Council's priorities. There is a good process of consultation with local people over the development of the financial strategy.</p> <p>The Council's budget is well managed and is balanced annually. The Council has a very good understanding of its performance and finances and how the two relate in a range of key service areas. Extensive benchmarking is carried out of costs and performance and data is used to make decisions designed to improve services. The Council has an excellent record of achieving efficiencies.</p> <p>The Council works well with partners in delivering cost effective services, especially for older and vulnerable people. The Council has good procedures in place to provide good financial monitoring reports. Information is timely, and the variance reports to Cabinet are clear. The Council provides excellent statutory accounts backed by clear and fully referenced working papers.</p>	3

Theme Summaries	Scored Judgement
<p data-bbox="235 256 1615 316">Governing the business- How well does the organisation govern itself and commission services that provide value for money and deliver better outcomes for local people?</p> <p data-bbox="235 355 1615 443">The Council has a good record of basing its commissioning and procurement activities on thorough needs analysis. There are good examples to demonstrate how the Council has used local needs to commission services to make the most impact for local people.</p> <p data-bbox="235 483 1641 603">The Council has a strong approach to involving local people, stakeholders and staff in commissioning and procurement decisions. Improvements have been made for customers through the use of IT and redesigning services. There is evidence of good working with local suppliers to manage and improve markets, eh services for older and vulnerable people, school meals.</p> <p data-bbox="235 643 1518 699">The Council has a good record of developing its approach to data quality in a way which has led to improved performance. It has worked well with partners to improve the collection of data.</p> <p data-bbox="235 738 1518 762">Good arrangements ensure that timely and relevant performance information is provided to decision-makers.</p> <p data-bbox="235 802 1648 898">At a more strategic level, good performance arrangements within the LSP has enabled close monitoring of the LAA/LSP targets , resulting the in the LSP being on target to receive substantial level of performance reward grant. Good arrangements exist for data security. IA monitors internet traffic with no significant findings.</p> <p data-bbox="235 938 1608 994">There is a good approach for promoting good governance. The Council has invested in training for members around governance and ethical standards. It also works well with partners to improve governance arrangements.</p> <p data-bbox="235 1034 1619 1090">Robust and effective approach to risk management is in place. The Council needs to be able to assess the return it is getting on its investment, especially in the service departments.</p> <p data-bbox="235 1129 1648 1185">A sound system of internal control is in place led by a strong Audit Committee and effective IA service. This has led to a strong assurance framework.</p>	<p data-bbox="1816 300 1839 323">3</p>

Theme Summaries	Scored Judgement
<p data-bbox="235 256 1666 316">Managing resources - How well does the organisation manage its natural resources, physical assets, and people to meet current and future needs and deliver value for money?</p> <p data-bbox="235 355 1666 443">The Council is generally aware of its use, and the impact it has on the local environment and its natural resources. A draft Sustainable Construction Policy is in place which is leading to the reduction of the environmental impact of the built environment. The Council also expects its contractors to make reductions in their environmental impact.</p> <p data-bbox="235 483 1666 571">The Council are using their understanding of the impact on the environment to make improvements in service provision, e.g. domiciliary and residential care for older people, etc. There is not, however, a clear, strategic approach developed in conjunction with local people to reduce the impact of Council activity on the environment and improve outcomes.</p> <p data-bbox="235 611 1666 699">The Council has a good corporate approach to asset management. Comprehensive condition and performance data is collected and benchmarked. It has a planned maintenance programme and bids for capital expenditure are required to be linked to the Council's priorities. Individual service areas are required to produce Asset Management Plans.</p> <p data-bbox="235 738 1666 798">As part of the move to Unitary, the Council worked well with the demising District Councils to put in place detailed plans to make better use of the former district assets. The Council also works well with partners to make better use of assets.</p>	<p data-bbox="1816 296 1839 320">3</p>

Table 2 Scored judgements against the KLOE

KLOE Criteria	Description	Scored judgement
1.1	Does the organisation plan its finances effectively to deliver its strategic priorities and secure sound financial health?	3
1.2	Does the organisation have a sound understanding of its costs and performance and achieve efficiencies in its activities?	4
1.3	Is the organisation's financial reporting timely, reliable and does it meet the needs of internal users, stakeholders and local people?	3
2.1	Does the organisation commission and procure quality services and supplies, tailored to local needs, to deliver sustainable outcomes and value for money?	4
2.2	Does the organisation produce relevant and reliable data and information to support decision making and manage performance?	3
2.3	Does the organisation promote and demonstrate the principles and values of good governance?	3
2.4	Does the organisation manage its risks and maintain a sound system of internal control?	3
3.1	Is the organisation making effective use of natural resources?	3
3.2	Does the organisation manage its assets effectively to help deliver its strategic priorities and service needs?	3
3.3	Does the organisation plan, organise and develop its workforce effectively to support the achievement of its strategic priorities?	N/A

Table 3 Managing finances - How effectively does the organisation manage its finances to deliver value for money?

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
<p>1.1 - Does the organisation plan its finances effectively to deliver its strategic priorities and secure sound financial health?</p>	<p>The Council has good arrangements to plan its finances to secure sound financial health. There is a good, clear process for linking financial planning with strategic and service planning and the medium term financial strategy clearly identifies the amounts that are allocated to achieve each of the Council's priorities. This process is extended to the Council's corporate plan where the Council's commitment to identifying resources to meet its priorities is clear with recent examples including additional funding for demand responsive transport and for looked after children. The Council's capital programme is also well linked to priorities.</p> <p>There is a good process of consultation with local people over the development of the financial strategy. This includes some discussion around value for money as well as how resources should be allocated against priorities. Specific consultation takes place with CYP stakeholders via the School Forum, with parish council representatives via SALC and with the senior citizens' forum. Members of all of these groups have a detailed and constructive involvement in budget setting. A number of changes to spending plans were made as a result of the consultation including 0% Council Tax rises, the introduction of free swimming for children and pensioners, increased funding for extra-cost housing and additional resources for LAC.</p> <p>The Council's budget is well managed and is balanced every year. Decisive action is taken in budget planning to match budgets to resources and to take account of changes in demography, such as the increase in the number of older people in the County. Departments operate well within specific budgets and targeted levels of reserves are met. Even during the credit crunch treasury management has managed cash balances well and has exceeded budgeted interest receivable. The Council has set challenging targets for income collection and has achieved the targets set. There is a clear budget reporting structure although the links with performance are less well developed.</p> <p>There are good arrangements to manage and develop financial skills within the Council. Roles and responsibilities for financial management are clearly set out in the financial procedure manual and there is a structured programme of training for both finance staff and managers with budget responsibilities. In addition, members are provided with training to enable them to engage in financial planning and budget monitoring.</p>	<p>3</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
<p>1.2 - Does the organisation have a sound understanding of its costs and performance and achieve efficiencies in its activities?</p>	<p>The Council has a very good understanding of its costs, of its performance and how the two relate in a range of key service areas. Managers carry out extensive benchmarking of costs and performance and this data is used to make decisions designed to improve services. Along with benchmarking the Council has a range of other management processes designed to improve value for money such as the lean service review process, the value for money review process and discussions with partners over levels of both spending and performance in the LAA. As part of the move to Unitary, the Council undertook a range of assessments of the costs and benefits of transactions such as the electronic payment of bills, car parking fees, direct debit for Council Tax payments and the administration of the blue badge scheme. This has led to more economical and efficient processes.</p> <p>There is a consistent pattern across the Council of how a good understanding of costs and performance is used to make decisions to improve services. The process of primary school amalgamation was informed by a good understanding of costs and pupil numbers and decisions have led to more money being available for a smaller number of schools. The Council uses cost and performance data in its Customer Service Centre and access points to ensure that resources are allocated in the best way to maximise customer service. Variable targets are set across the County to reflect the differences in demand in rural and more urban areas. In adult social care an assessment of data on performance and costs led to a successful programme of increasing direct payments and work with contractors providing residential care homes has led to reduced costs and improved quality. Part of the approach in this area is to increase payments to contractors where quality, as measured by CQC scores, is high. Work with partners in the voluntary and community sector has led to reductions in cost and increases in quality with the development of a single contract with the CAB. The Council works well with its partners in delivering a cost effective benefits service for older and vulnerable people. The Strategic Management Board, made up of the Council and key partners such as the DWP, the pensions service and voluntary sector agencies, meets regularly to assess demand for benefits services and allocates resources accordingly. As a result, the Council and its partners are on track to meet four of the five LPSA targets around benefit take-up. Finally, assessments of cost and performance quality led to a decision to merge the Youth Service with Connexions, resulting in savings and an improved service to young people.</p> <p>The Council has a very good record of achieving efficiencies. It has exceeded its three year efficiency savings target and is on track to deliver £13.55m against a target of £12.6m. Examples during 2008/09 of efficiencies being made include the co-location of a number of services following the move to unitary which has made more efficient use of properties. Services that do not need a local presence have been centralised and a wider mix of services have been located at local offices. In addition, other organisations have been brought together</p>	<p>4</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
	such as Age Concern, Citizens Advice and the Police. This generates capital receipts, reduces revenue costs and improves customer access.	
<p>1.3 - Is the organisation's financial reporting timely, reliable and does it meet the needs of internal users, stakeholders and local people?</p>	<p>The council has good procedures in place to produce good financial monitoring reports. The information is timely, and the variance reporting to cabinet of amounts over £10k is clear with managed adjustments to budgets being made to take account of prospective overspends. Corporate finance staff have been allocated to budget holders and regularly meet up investigate variances and other budget holders' concerns.</p> <p>The Council has a good approach to using financial reports to support strategic decision-making, with a clear example being the forecasting used to support its strategic decisions around the move to unitary. The Council has compared the actual achievements it has made around budget projections against the business case projections. A key area was the overall budget savings which have been more than projected - £10.8m compared to £7.8m. The one-off transitional costs have been higher than anticipated, mainly due to higher redundancy and early retirement costs. £1.1m has been achieved in efficiency savings from existing County Council services, over and above unitary savings. The Council has used financial forecasting to allocate investment in a number of services taken on from the districts including affordable housing schemes, street cleansing, concessionary travel, improved customer access points - however, outcomes have yet to be quantified. Other aspects of the new unitary that are being resourced based on corporate finance reports are the 28 joint committees with delegated budgets and the network of telly-talk and broadplaces outlets across the County.</p> <p>Shropshire Council produces excellent statutory accounts backed by clearly and fully referenced working papers which are robust. They are fully compliant with statutory requirements and keep exactly to the closedown timetable which is fully resourced</p> <p>The Council has a good approach to producing annual reports bringing together costs and performance for local people. Its Council tax leaflet sets out clearly how the Council's resources are allocated and it produces a quarterly Shropshire Matters magazine which sets out further information on levels of performance and spending. this magazine contains information on value for money</p>	3

Table 4 Governing the business- How well does the organisation govern itself and commission services that provide value for money and deliver better outcomes for local people?

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
<p>2.1 - Does the organisation commission and procure quality services and supplies, tailored to local needs, to deliver sustainable outcomes and value for money?</p>	<p>The Council has a good record of basing its commissioning and procurement activities on thorough needs analyses. Examples of this include the decisions to extend the customer access points which were influenced by a good understanding of demography, geography and local transport routes. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is well used to inform commissioning of services for vulnerable and older adults and the food for schools procurement exercise was informed by a good understanding of local suppliers and the need to protect the local natural environment. This latter procurement has led both to reduced costs, less environmental damage and an improved quality of school meals which is helping to improve health outcomes for children. Work with the district councils in Shropshire to understand the needs of benefit claimants and users of the planning services has meant that new systems have been procured based on a good analysis of the challenges facing the new unitary Council. Finally, a good analysis of the needs of people in rural parts of the Council informed the commissioning of the new demand responsive transport system.</p> <p>The Council has a strong approach to involving local people, stakeholders and staff in commissioning and procurement decisions. Examples include working with Shropshire Partners in Care (SPIC) to improve the commissioning of both residential and domiciliary care, liaison with the PCT and the Soil Association to procure health food for schools, working with the PCT in developing mental health services for children and young people, working with the VCS to develop packages of preventative services for older people, engaging with Supporting People partners to provide services for homeless people and, finally, joint work with neighbouring authorities to procure such goods as library books and road materials.</p> <p>There are many good examples where the Council has improved the customer experience through the use of IT and by redesigning services. There is a good relationship between the corporate IT officers and service managers in using technology to improve access to services for local people. Examples include the development of the Customer Service Centre with a consequent reduction in the number of abandoned calls, the increased use of teletalk and the broadplaces which mean that people can access a wider range of services without having to travel out of their local area and work with Parish Councils to improve their ICT base, allowing them to work more efficiently. A good example of the Council's work in improving access to a wider range of services is the extended schools programme which is enabling young people and parents to obtain advice and signposting and, in some cases, access to specific services, from</p>	<p>4</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
	<p>their local school. The Monkmoor campus project has specifically led to improvements in services for young people with mental and physical health problems.</p> <p>The Council has a good record of working with local suppliers to manage and improve markets. The best example of this is the work the Council does with SPIC to move towards a more flexible and efficient way of packaging both domiciliary and residential care packages. In addition, pre-procurement events were held with potential contractors in the procurement of meat and vegetables to enable the Council to better understand the market and, thereby improving the procurement itself. The Council also has a good approach to using a wide range of procurement activities. By using corporate knowledge and experience the most appropriate procurement method is used including e-procurement, block contracts, framework agreements, post-tender negotiations and purchasing cards.</p> <p>The result of the Council's strong approach to commissioning and procuring goods and services is that it achieves good levels of value for money across most services. At a corporate level, comparative data shows that the level of spend across the key areas of children's and adults' services is low with high performance, and this is combined with a low level of Council Tax. Specific examples of improvements in value for money include the rights of way service, the Shropshire Link transport service, placements for looked after children, the Council's transport fleet, benefits take-up services and school meals. In all of these areas the Council has used commissioning and procurement to manage costs and improve performance.</p>	
<p>2.2 - Does the organisation produce relevant and reliable data and information to support decision making and manage performance?</p>	<p>The Council has a good record of developing its approach to data quality in a way which has led to improved performance. It has worked with partners to improve the collection of data in mental health services to enable better focusing of resources. A specific issue between the Council, the PCT and the local hospital in understanding the data around delayed discharges was resolved. This has led to key workers being able to focus on the needs of patients rather than debating the data. In the area of initial and core assessments for children and young people the Council recognised that the data was poor. This has been improved following the allocation of more resources to safeguarding processes. Improved road casualty data has been used to consult with residents to put in place speed limits in villages. Finally, sickness absence data has been improved, leading to improvements in key service areas such as Shire Services</p> <p>The Council has good arrangements to ensure that timely and relevant performance information is provided to decision-makers. The performance management reporting timetable and processes provide various channels for keeping members and senior officers informed of performance issues: portfolio holder briefings, CE/portfolio holder/leader meetings, scrutiny chair</p>	<p>3</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
	<p>briefings and leadership board meetings. The p/h for performance attends the quarterly corporate performance management group which reviews performance against the corporate plan, the LAA and the LPSA. These processes have helped the Council to identify and address a number of performance issues across the Council. In children's services close performance monitoring highlighted the rising costs of out-of-county placements and the worsening of placement stability. Corrective action was taken which included the building of a new children's home which has led to reduced costs and improvement in stability for children. During the unitary programme the Council had a robust approach to managing the overall programme and individual projects within it. This allowed the Implementation Executive to identify and deal with relative weaknesses in the housing and customer access projects. Performance management with partners has led to action being taken to improve performance against alcohol misuse targets and the development of the multi-agency teams in localities means that issues with individual families can be spotted earlier and interventions made more appropriately. At a more strategic level, good performance management arrangements within the LSP has enabled close monitoring of the LAA/LPSA targets with the result that the LSP is on track to receive a substantial level of performance reward grant</p> <p>The Council has arrangements in place for ensuring data security. It has a corporate information security policy which includes information on security requirements of systems and validation rules for data input. The Council also has a data quality strategy and, as part of the move to unitary, work has been done to ensure that county and district data is secure with a unitary data migration plan being put in place. An improved focus on data security and confidentiality is beginning to show a return, in particular with the Customer Service Centre where staff report that an emphasis on confidentiality is enabling them to provide a wider level of service to callers.</p>	
<p>2.3 Does the organisation promote and demonstrate the principles and values of good governance?</p>	<p>The Council has a good approach to promoting good governance. It has produced a code of corporate governance with sections covering the CIPFA/SOLACE model - focussing on the purpose of the Council, members and officers working together, promoting values and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour, risk management, developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective and engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability. Its Annual Governance Statement demonstrates that the Council has approved this code and describes the culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled. It also contains sections on establishing and monitoring the achievement of the Council's objectives, the facilitation of policy and decision making, ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations, ensuring the economical, effective and efficient use</p>	<p>3</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
	<p>of resources, financial management and performance management.</p> <p>The Council has invested well in training around governance and ethical standards for members – both from the County Council and Parish Councils. This has led to no complaints or investigations against County Councillors in 2008/09. There were 18 ombudsman cases, but none were serious enough to be taken up formally and the information commissioner was only involved in 3 out of the 300 cases brought by local people. As a result of the investment in governance and ethical standards, the Council is able to demonstrate impact for local people. The children’s services portfolio holder was able to advocate for and defend the decisions around school amalgamations, member involvement in the Rethink Energy project has led to successful grant applications, members’ visits to residential homes has led to improvements in quality and the involvement of members in assessing children at risk cases has identified some problems with process.</p> <p>In addition to developing internal governance arrangements, the Council works well with its partners to improve governance and, as a result, makes impact on local people. Members have worked with officers in the consultation process for rolling out customer access points and have worked with some Parish Councils to improve the liaison between parish and county services. The Council has worked with older people’s groups to improve their governance and, as a result, enabling them to engage more effectively with policy formulation. The Joint Commissioning Unit has a solid governance structure with a membership board made of partners which has led to improved performance management arrangements and a consequent reduction in costs and improvement in performance. Similarly, the Children’s Trust has a governance structure made up of partners which is allowing them to make better and quicker decisions. As part of the move to unitary the Council has set up a system of partnership governance for the County which consists of 27 Local Joint Committees, three strategic partnerships covering a third of the County each, and the County-wide Local Strategic Partnership.</p> <p>The Council has adequate arrangements to maintain focus on its purpose and vision. Its approach is to ensure that there is a golden thread through the planning a delivery process. Priorities with the LAA are identified within the Corporate Plan and these priorities are used as the basis for Service Planning across directorates. All LAA and LPSA indicators, where the Council has lead responsibility, are in the Corporate plan. An example of how the Council focuses on priorities is the LAC placements which is a strategic priority in the Corporate Plan. Performance against target was slipping and remedial action was put in place resulting in improved performance.</p>	

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
<p>2.4 Does the organisation manage its risks and maintain a sound system of internal control?</p>	<p>The Council has put in place a robust and effective approach to risk management. The risk management strategy and policy clearly set out the roles, responsibilities and processes that managers, members and staff are required to follow in order to identify and address strategic and operational risks. The effective implementation of this approach has enabled the Council to improve outcomes in a number of areas. When the Customer Contact Centre was set up, a risk was identified around disclosure of sensitive child protection information, so training was provided for key staff. The Council has worked with its SPIC partners to risk assess their ability to respond to a flu pandemic in their role as providers of residential care. Risk assessments of the Council's vehicle fleet led to the procurement of more efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles and assessments of damage in schools led to the installation of CCTC and, as a result, a reduction in vandalism. The Council's highways service is, as a result of its improved risk management process, more able to defend claims against it for accidental damage to people and vehicles. A robust risk assessment of a potential contractor led the Council to withholding signing a contract, soon after which the contractor became insolvent. Finally, as a result of its improved approach to risk management, the Council's insurance premium has reduced by £600,000. In addition, the Council encourages managers to identify opportunities that come from the risk assessment process and although these are monitored, there is no consistent assessment of the impact they make on local outcomes.</p> <p>The Council has a sound approach to manage the risk of fraud and corruption. It has a Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy, the implementation of which has led to a very small number of minor cases being investigated by internal audit. It works with contractors to inform them of its approach to fraud and corruption and it has improved the insurance claim forms to reduce the number of fraudulent claims made against the Council. In addition, it works with the Audit Commission on the NFI project and has come up with very few matches. Finally, it closely monitors the use of the internet by its staff. Despite this good approach, it is not able to link its attempts to reduce fraud and corruption to improved outcomes for local people.</p> <p>The council has developed a sound system of internal control led by a strong audit committee which has knowledgeable members who have had training to fully understand their roles. They have been supported by an effective internal audit service that has helped to develop a strong assurance framework with clearly defined roles in the authority and ownership by individual directorates of their own assurances to go into the annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS covers all areas and clearly shows the issues which either require monitoring such as the implementation of the Unitary Council or issues to be addressed such as Supporting People. An example of the Council's internal audit function helping to improve outcomes is its work with the</p>	<p>3</p>

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
	educational finance team in training governors in schools to roll out new finance management standard rules. As a result many schools have reached standard and money can be better spent with small schools.	

Table 5 Managing resources - How well does the organisation manage its natural resources, physical assets, and people to meet current and future needs and deliver value for money?

KLOE	Commentary	Scored judgement
<p>3.1 Is the organisation making effective use of natural resources?</p>	<p>1) The Council has a good level of awareness both of its use of energy and natural resources, and the impact it has on the local environment. Energy consumption and CO2 emissions data is collected and monitored by Energy & Sustainability Officers and analysed to produce league tables of building energy performance and CO2 emissions. These are used to prioritise energy audits and this leads to actions being taken to improve consumption such as reduced gas consumption at St Lawrence Primary School. Prior to the installation of a pool heat recovery system, the pool was heated by gas boilers. Since the heat recovery system has been installed, gas consumption has fallen from around 600,000 KWH per annum to around 220,000 KWH per annum.</p> <p>2) The Council has a good level of detail on the CO2 emissions of its vehicles. The Council Fleet was subject to an internal Value for Money Review and an external Best Value Review by consultants between 2006 and 2008. One of the environmental beneficial outcomes of this review was improvement in fuel economy and vehicle emissions across the fleet with newer, safer, more fuel efficient vehicles being brought in. Further work has been done to reduce the emissions of its grey fleet by the purchasing of additional low emission fleet vehicles and the grey fleet is under review as part of its new Travel Plan. The Meals on Wheels Service combined fleet age has reduced from 76 years to 12 years and average age from almost 13 years to 3 years. New vehicles show 37% improvements in CO2 emissions and, in addition, the vehicles have an improved mpg of 61.4mpg on the combined cycle. In a separate initiative, since 2005, a pool car scheme has been piloted with significant success. At August 2009, 300 staff had registered to use them, and in July 2009 a fourth vehicle was purchased to cope with the take up in use. The cars are booked out 95-98% of the time, and a further expansion is being considered.</p> <p>3) The Council is on target to meet a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% of 1990 value by 2010, The Council took part in the Councils for Climate Protection Project in 2000 where it signed up to the 40% reduction target. The total CO2 emissions at 1990 were 42,206 tonnes (including buildings, streetlights, employee commute, vehicle fleet and waste). At the end of 2006 the figure stood at 27,265 tCO2, a 36% reduction.</p>	<p>3</p>

	<p>By the end of 2007 the move to unitary meant that the previous target, whilst likely to meet the original 40% on 1990 levels, became irrelevant as it did not include any data from the former district and borough councils, and more crucially, included savings made from the use of green electricity, which was being specifically excluded by the new legislation. The decision was therefore taken to set a new baseline monitoring year to fall in line with the changes and this has been set from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009. As Shropshire Council has formally adopted NI185 as an LAA target, the Council is using the NI185 Defra created spreadsheet to record all data from this point onwards. A CO2 reduction target needs to be set against NI185 and this will be agreed with Government Office West Midlands, but will reflect the target already agreed under carbon management programme.</p> <p>In May 2009, Shropshire Council was accepted on to the Carbon Trust Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and has set a target to reduce CO2 emissions by 35% by 31 March 2014 from 2008/09 levels. Total CO2 emissions are 89,889 tonnes. Prioritisation of energy and carbon saving measures under this scheme has already begun, making use of existing Display Energy Certificates data and the most recent energy consumption data collected. It is likely that this will in time replace the original league tables, but become a more updated and accurate assessment.</p> <p>4) Changes to the use of printers at Shire Hall has resulted in a 28% reduction in paper usage. The target was to reduce paper consumption by 25% by enabling all devices to print duplex as standard. Six Multifunctional units replaced 31 separate printers, copiers, scanners and faxes. A measurement of actual paper usage per month under the new arrangements shows that although number of copies produced had increased (from 46,000 to 55,282 per month) paper consumption had fallen by 28%, outperforming the target. This indicates that more duplex copying is now taking place and more paper is being saved.</p>	
<p>3.2 Does the organisation manage its assets effectively to help deliver its strategic priorities and service needs?</p>	<p>The Council has a good corporate approach to managing its assets. It collects comprehensive condition and performance data which is benchmarked. It has a planned maintenance programme and bids for capital expenditure are required to be linked to delivery of the Council's priorities. Individual service areas are required to produce Asset Management Plans which identify how service assets contribute to delivery of overall priorities. An example of this is the plans to improve the library facilities which led to an increase in the number of people using the libraries. Other examples include the linking of assets used for the Youth Service with those used for the Connexions service, improvements to the Craven Arms discovery centre, and a reduction in the number of highways depots. At the same time, the Council has increased the accessibility of its buildings to people with disabilities and it has also delivered a reduction in CO2 emissions across its assets. Finally, as part of the move to unitary, the Council worked</p>	<p>3</p>

	<p>well with the demising district councils to put in place detailed plans to make better use of former district assets. In an attempt to build on these good examples of asset usage, the Council is developing processes to improve the linkage between assets and performance. The aim of this is to improve the extent to which decision-makers can see the impact that different assets have on performance levels across the Council and to assess the extent to which assets are assisting the Council in improving value for money for local people.</p> <p>As well as working well internally, the Council works well with its partners to make better use of assets. Examples of this include working with the PCT to deliver improved services from Oak House and from the former district swimming pools. Increasing joint use by the VCS is made of the Lantern Centre, Louise House and the former South Shropshire DC offices at Ludlow. In this latter case, the use by advice agencies of the Ludlow building was specifically linked to meet targets around benefit take-up. In addition, the former North Shropshire District Council offices at Wem are being part-used by the Police.</p>	
<p>3.3 Does the organisation plan, organise and develop its workforce effectively to support the achievement of its strategic priorities?</p>	<p>Not applicable in 2008/09</p>	<p>n/a</p>