



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Solihull Council Annual Report 2010-11

## What we achieved for our customers in 2010-11



# Annual Report 2010-11

## Foreword

### Welcome to this year's annual report.

In the last year, the Council has faced considerable financial challenges and will continue to do so in the coming years where, reflecting the national position, we will have to be increasingly creative with fewer resources. However we are working hard to address these significant pressures by adapting the way we work to ensure that we can continue to deliver positive outcomes for our residents.



**Councillor Ken Meeson**  
Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council



**Mark Rogers**  
Chief Executive, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

This document provides details of some of the successes that we have achieved in the last financial year against the priorities set out in our three year Council Plan.

Particular highlights from 2010-11 include creating new employment and business opportunities, helping residents in some areas of the Borough to get more involved by working with them to set up their own community groups, the launch of a new alcohol treatment service and delivering programmes to help ensure people are safe in their communities. These examples represent just a few of the activities we are doing for the people who live, work and visit our Borough.

We are also committed to openness and honesty in the way that we operate and how we spend public money. For information on how much we spend and why – please turn to our financial information pages.

However we appreciate that there is more to do, and we are constantly striving to build on our achievements and learn from any feedback we receive. So read on, and please take some time out to complete the on-line questionnaire detailed at the end of the report.

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# About the Council

We are one of the public bodies that provides local services to you.

This annual report focuses on those services where the Council has a significant influence and input. In many cases the Council delivers these in partnership with other providers from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors.

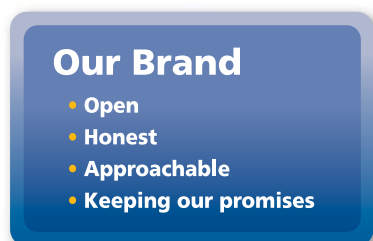
We place our customers at the heart of what we do and aim to provide services that meet people's needs, are of a high quality and are delivered in a cost effective way.

## Our Vision and Brand

Our 10 year Vision is *'Solihull in 2018: where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous'*

Our Brand is focused on demonstrating an approach which shows us to be **'Open, honest, approachable and committed to keeping our promises'** at all times.

Our research and consultation with local people has told us that these are the qualities that they value most in dealing with us.



## Council and Democracy

The Council is composed of 51 Councillors with one-third elected three years out of four to each of the 17 wards within the Borough.

Councillors have a very important role in helping shape future services for the community. All meet together as the Council who appoint a Leader who then appoints a Cabinet. The Cabinet is responsible for most day-to-day decisions with each Cabinet Member responsible for a range of different services. They meet collectively in public to take the most important decisions, particularly relating to those with significant impact on local communities.

The Council also appoints Overview and Scrutiny Boards to monitor performance and decisions made focussing on outcomes for local people. For more information about the Council's democratic process go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/council.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/council.htm)

## Customer Outcomes

- **Building Healthier Communities**
- **Building Safer Communities**
- **Building Stronger Communities**
- **Building Prosperous Communities**
- **A Brighter Future for our Children and Young People**
- **Good Value Services**

In the following pages we provide details of some of our achievements against these customer outcomes in the last year.

We have recently undertaken some work around refreshing our priorities. This has seen us focus our attention, in particular on five areas identified as being of vital importance going forward.

Further details on our new Top 5 priorities can be found in our latest Council Plan which is available at:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/performance.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/performance.htm)

# Customer Outcome – Building Healthier Communities

Good health is essential for quality of life and healthy people are more independent and live longer.

Although the majority of people in Solihull enjoy good health, we still have challenges. The five Building Healthier Communities priorities during 2010-11 were to:

1. Reduce health inequalities.
2. Improve people's emotional well-being and support people with mental health needs.
3. Increase the proportion of people making healthy lifestyle choices, particularly on diet, exercise, smoking and alcohol.
4. Enable older people and those with disabilities to live with dignity and independence.
5. Support carers.

## Headline Achievements

### Providing older people with choice and independence

By the end of 2010-11, 1,773 (33%) of our adult social care clients and carers had received a direct payment or personal budget out of a total of 5,362 clients and carers receiving a community based service. This was an increase of 21% from the previous year. Direct payments and personal budgets help to:

- Ensure that people are able to design and choose the support or care arrangements that best suit their specific needs.
- Increase the opportunities for independence, social inclusion and enhanced self-esteem.

### Supporting People with Mental Health Needs

There was a 9% increase in the number of adults in contact with secondary mental health services who were in settled accommodation. There was also a 2.5% increase in the number in employment.

### DocSpot Programme

DocSpot gives people over the age of 16 an opportunity to improve their health through taking part in a supervised programme of physical activity designed to meet personal needs and aspirations. By the end of 2010-11 there were over 700 participants, and of these:

- Over 95% improved an aspect of their physical health.
- Over 60% improved their mental wellbeing.
- Over 60% have maintained an increase in physical activity behaviours after a period of six months.

For more information about DocSpot go to:

**[www.solihull.nhs.uk/Help-and-advice/Eating-well-and-being-active/DocSpot](http://www.solihull.nhs.uk/Help-and-advice/Eating-well-and-being-active/DocSpot)**

### Stopping Smoking

Solihull's Stop Smoking Service was the best performing service in the West Midlands region for its Stop Smoking activity during 2010-11.

There were 1,496 smoking four week quitters in total, surpassing our target of 1,137. This is the second year running that Solihull has been the top performing area within the region. For more information about the service go to:

**[www.solihull.nhs.uk/stopsmoking](http://www.solihull.nhs.uk/stopsmoking)**

### Accessing Adult Social Services for the first time

In July 2010 we launched a 'One Front Door' phone number, for advice, information and access to Adult Social Services. The new number 0121 704 8007 is for anyone who is not in current contact with Adult Social Services and will provide general information, including services provided by partner organisations, as well as referrals and access into social care services. For more information go to:

**[www.solihull.gov.uk/carers](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/carers)**

# Customer Outcome – Building Healthier Communities

## Case Studies

### Healthy Schools

#### Breastfeeding

In January 2011 we launched two new breastfeeding cafes in Shirley and Smith's Wood in conjunction with our partners to take the total in the Borough to six. At these cafes, ante-natal 'feeding your baby' sessions are available for pregnant women, delivered by the breastfeeding team with the help of newly qualified breastfeeding peer supporters. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.nhs.uk/Help-and-advice/Motherhood-and-pregnancy/Breastfeeding](http://www.solihull.nhs.uk/Help-and-advice/Motherhood-and-pregnancy/Breastfeeding)

### Winter Warmth Campaign

Solihull's 2010-11 Winter Warmth Campaign included 30



training sessions and the distribution of 75 heaters, 100 hats, 600 newsletters and 6000 temperature information cards. This year there was a specific focus on reducing the numbers of households in fuel poverty and a dedicated event in the north of the Borough was held. This was hosted by a range of partners and provided a money-management and debt awareness support service. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/Attachments/WinterWarmthleaflet.pdf](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Attachments/WinterWarmthleaflet.pdf)

### Step into Solihull

The Step into Solihull Project is run by the Council in conjunction with Sport England and provides physical activity opportunities for older people. At the end of 2010-11 there were 1,350 participants with a total of 18,700 attendances recorded. In the last year the project has also worked closely with a range of disability groups such as the Alzheimer's association the Solihull Blind & Stroke Association and residential care homes to provide exercise opportunities for those with disabilities. For more information go to:

[www.solihullactive.co.uk/stepintosolihull](http://www.solihullactive.co.uk/stepintosolihull)

### Solihull Independent Living

In April 2010 'Solihull Independent Living' was established. This is a not-for-profit organisation set up by the Council and partners that offers people who are older, disabled or on a low income an affordable way to repair, improve or adapt their homes. It also aims to help people carry on living comfortably at home and stay independent rather than moving into residential care. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/housing/disabledfacilitiesgrant.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/housing/disabledfacilitiesgrant.htm)



### Preventing Homelessness

Homelessness and insecurity of occupancy can have negative health implications for individuals and families. During 2010-11, 456 households were prevented from becoming homeless as a result of case work intervention. The Solihull Community Housing Homeless Prevention Team can assist people to remain in their existing homes or support them to make a planned move into accommodation to meet their housing need. For more information go to:

[www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk](http://www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk)

# Customer Outcome – Building Safer Communities

Personal safety and the reduction in crime are amongst the greatest causes of concern for our communities. It affects quality of life and the way people think about the area in which they live.

The five Building Safer Communities priority areas during 2010-11 were:

1. Drug and alcohol misuse.
2. Violent crime (including domestic abuse).
3. Anti social behaviour.
4. Vehicle crime, burglary and robbery.
5. Road Safety.

## Headline Achievements

### New Alcohol Treatment and Support Service

This service was redesigned during the latter part of 2010-11 and officially launched to Solihull residents in April. The service is being provided by SIAS (Solihull Integrated Addiction Services), a partnership of Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, Aquarius and Welcome. It consists of teams of specialists based within Solihull Hospital and the community. These specialists will work closely with GPs and other services to ensure that residents who are drinking alcohol to harmful and hazardous levels can access the treatment services. For more information go to:

[www.freedomfromdrugs.org.uk](http://www.freedomfromdrugs.org.uk)

### Reducing Crime

- **Violent Crime** – There were 9% fewer incidents of serious violent crime in 2010-11 compared to the previous year.
- **Robberies** – In 2010-11 there was a 16% decrease in robberies from the previous year.
- **Vehicle Crime** – There was a 10% reduction in the number of vehicle thefts in 2010-11 compared to the previous year.

### Addressing Anti-social Behaviour

Overall satisfaction with the outcome of anti-social behaviour cases has increased to 97% (from 91% in the previous year).

For more information about crime and anti-social behaviour in your neighbourhood go to:

[www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

This is an interactive website that allows you to see up-to-date crime and anti-social behaviour information for your neighbourhood and provides links to police and partnership agencies that can assist.



### Road Safety

In 2010 serious road casualty figures for Solihull were at their lowest ever level of 59. This represents a 75% reduction from their peak. Working with the West Midlands Road Safety Partnership we have established several initiatives to improve road safety. These include the provision of training and equipment for a further six 'Community Speed Watch' Schemes which enable local residents to get involved in helping to cut down the numbers of motorists who exceed speed limits. We have also helped to deliver road safety educational programmes in all secondary schools in Solihull.

Furthermore, we have improved the entrances to a number of 30mph zones across the Borough. By March 2011 work had been carried out at 16 sites, with the Council either improving or replacing existing signs and road markings. For further information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety.htm)

# Customer Outcome – Building Safer Communities

## Case Studies

### Safer Solihull Partnership Open Day

The Safer Solihull Partnership Open Day at Solihull Police Station in September 2010 enabled residents to see first hand the work of partners to keep Solihull safe. The live reconstruction of a road traffic accident, police arrests and mock court trials at the police station, magistrates' court, and the civic suite, provided an insight into the whole process of the criminal justice system.



### Neighbourhood Sports Programme

The Neighbourhood Sports Programme uses the power of sport to inspire young people and foster self-confidence and ambition. The Programme operates six days a week and provides a range of sporting activities at locations across the Borough. In the past year it has built stronger links with West Midlands Police to address anti-social behaviour through the use of positive activity. In 2010 it also launched the Behavioural Model within schools, using physical education as a tool to help and mentor children with attendance and behavioural difficulties. The Programme has been accredited with Street Mark by the national charity Street Games which is a standard for quality community sport. In the last year it has engaged with 1,439 young people aged 8-19 and there have been a total of 9,540 attendances at sessions. For more information go to:

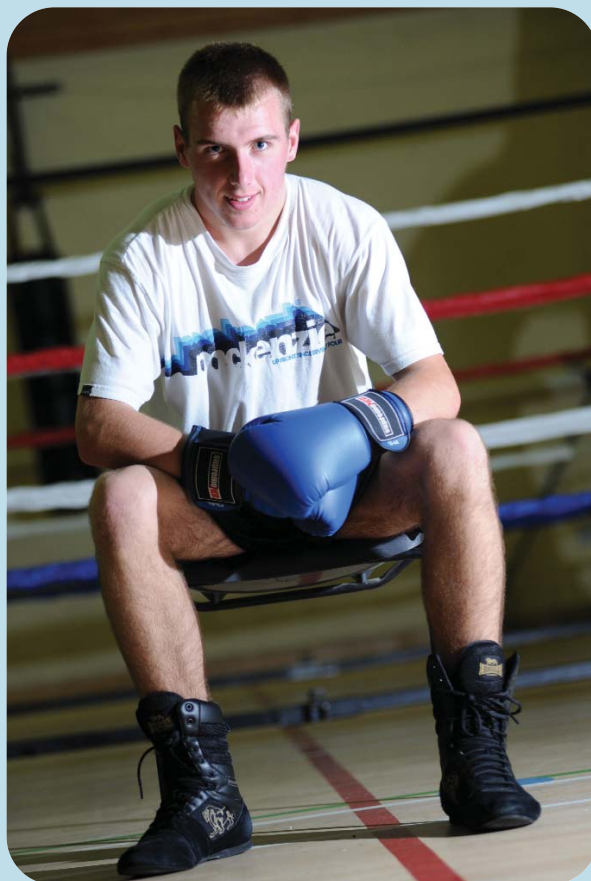
[www.solihullactive.co.uk/  
neighbourhoodsports](http://www.solihullactive.co.uk/neighbourhoodsports)

### Family Intervention Programme

Solihull's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Family Intervention Programme works with families when a young person is at risk or has been involved in crime or anti-social behaviour. The programme aims to reduce offending and prevent children moving into care.

Targeted families are given support packages with parents and carers being provided with skills to improve their parenting and young people are supported to improve their behaviour. This has resulted in improvements in school attendance and behaviour within the local community. In October 2010 the programme won an award at the Health and Social Care Awards. It was in recognition of the programme's multi-agency teamwork and commitment to working with families. For more information go to:

[www.nhslocal.nhs.uk/story/inside-nhs/  
solihull-family-intervention-programme](http://www.nhslocal.nhs.uk/story/inside-nhs/solihull-family-intervention-programme)



# Customer Outcome – Building Stronger Communities

Strong and happy communities have pride in where they live with the people and communities being confident, welcoming and resilient, enabling them to respond positively to the challenges they face.

The five Building Stronger Communities priorities during 2010-11 were to:

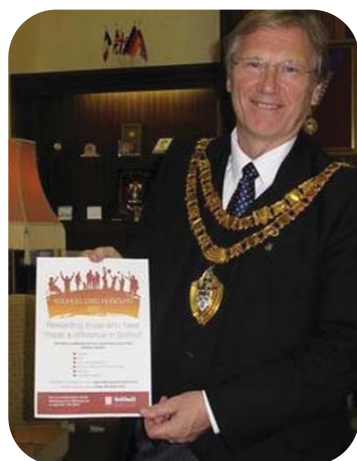
1. Build the capacity of communities to act on their own needs, concerns, ideas and aspirations, to tackle the problems they face.
2. Increase community tolerance, trust and understanding.
3. Increase involvement in active citizenship, engaging local people in decision making.
4. Increase social inclusion, addressing the hardest to reach families and communities.
5. Increase participation in culture, sport and other leisure activities.

## Headline Achievements

### Launch of Solihull Civic Honours Awards

In January 2011 the Mayor launched the Solihull Civic Honours. These aim to thank the unsung heroes in the Borough that regularly volunteer their time to help others and improve our communities. There are six award categories: arts, sport, community involvement, making a difference for young people, business and the Mayor's Award. Nominations can be received from any member of the community. The first Awards ceremony took place on 9 May. For more details about this please go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/civichonours](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/civichonours)



### Community Empowerment

The Council and its partners have been working with residents to set up their own community groups and improve their area. One group that started in 2010-11 was Smith's Wood Area Neighbourhood Network (SWANN). The group came together with the help of Council, Police and other organisations, wanting to improve community involvement in the area.

Recent achievements from SWANN include the setting up of a community centre in a vacant shop on Arran Way, a bike project (where young people are taught how to restore and repair bicycles), and obtaining funding for a garden maintenance project. Another example is Community Action in Fordbridge (CAFÉ) - a group of residents and service providers who came together in summer 2010. The group organised a week of community action in October 2010 to make some visible improvements to the environment and get new people involved. Meeting monthly the group focuses on the topics in their action plan, for example, things for young people to do, the environment and community safety. Similar groups have also been established in Kingshurst and Chelmsley Wood. To get help and advice on setting up a community group in your area go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/  
neighbourhoodmanagement](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/neighbourhoodmanagement)

# Customer Outcome – Building Stronger Communities

## Case Studies

### Black History Month

In October 2010 Solihull celebrated five years of Black History Month. It is a flagship festival that celebrates the cultural diversity of our Borough. One of the most successful events was the Caribbean Family History Exhibition which attracted media interest from both ITV Central News and BBC Radio 4. For more information go to: [www.blackhistorymonthuk.co.uk](http://www.blackhistorymonthuk.co.uk)

### Environment Champions

These are volunteers from across the Borough who help protect and improve Solihull's environment and help shape the service that is provided within their local area. In the last year they have worked on a huge range of projects, from small litter-picks in a single alleyway to the massive challenge of clearing up a park. To date we have over 280 Environment Champions in place and in 2010-11 they were shortlisted in the Community Involvement category of LGC (Local Government Chronicle) Awards. For more information including details of how to get involved go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/environment/environmentchampions.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/environment/environmentchampions.htm)



### Developing the Local Voluntary and Community Sector

The continuing commitment and hard work of the Solihull Partnership was recognised at the annual Compact Awards in November 2010, where it won an Excellence Award for Local Partnership Working. The accolade was for improved engagement and partnership working between local public bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations. For more information, including volunteering opportunities go to: [www.solihull-sustain.org.uk](http://www.solihull-sustain.org.uk)

### Solihull Active

The Council developed a web portal as part of a social marketing campaign to promote physical activity opportunities in Solihull. There have been over 8,000 visitors to the site each month and over 150 local providers of physical activity are registered. For more information go to [www.solihullactive.co.uk](http://www.solihullactive.co.uk)

### Exploring your Local Heritage

We have become one of the first councils in the country to offer access to the 1911 census on all of our library computers. Find My Past is now available at all libraries free of charge - all you need is a library card. As well as access to the 1911 census, Find My Past also offers information on overseas birth, marriage and death indexes as well as records from the Society of Genealogists and the British Library. For more information please go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/familyhistory](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyhistory)

### Parents Forum

The Parents' Forum is made up of parents and carers who have children of various ages and come from all parts of Solihull. They are all interested in making a difference and come together once a month to talk about things like:

- Keeping children healthy and safe.
- Schools and learning.
- Things to do and places to go.
- Support for parents and carers.
- How to make sure all parents are involved in making important decisions about services for children and young people in Solihull.

During the past year the Forum has also been actively involved in developing Solihull's parenting strategy. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/parentsforum](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/parentsforum)

# Customer Outcome – Building Prosperous Communities

Ensuring the future prosperity within Solihull is one of the biggest challenges facing our communities. It is dependent on creating productive and competitive businesses operating in a sustainable environment to provide local jobs, whilst at the same time developing the skills of local people.

The eight Building Prosperous Communities priorities during 2010-11 were to:

1. Ensure the Solihull economy and its businesses can compete in the global economy, developing local enterprise particularly in north Solihull.
2. Conserve and enhance the local built and natural environment and ensure that new development is well designed and enhances local distinctiveness.
3. Protect and promote high quality public places and spaces.
4. Seek to minimise and adapt to climate change by ensuring sustainable forms of economic activity and lifestyles which reduce carbon emissions and make more efficient use of natural resources.
5. Ensure strong transport connectivity and promote sustainable transport.
6. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent home and that new housing meets the needs of the whole community.
7. Increase economic inclusion, particularly in north Solihull, addressing worklessness and low skills.
8. Increase participation and achievement in learning for people of all ages and ensure a well qualified workforce to serve the people of Solihull.

## Headline Achievements

### Household Waste and Recycling

43.6% of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2010-11, an increase from 40.7% in the previous year. Only 11.9% of waste was land-filled, an improvement from 13.5% in 2009-10.

### Meeting Housing Needs

#### – *Through delivering affordable housing*

A total of 572 affordable homes were delivered in the three year period between April 2008 and March 2011 including 194 in the last year.

### Creating Employment Opportunities

#### – *Through the Future Jobs Fund*

By March 2011 a total of 233 jobs had been created in the Borough by the Council and Solihull Community Housing as part of the Future Jobs Fund. This was a nationwide initiative which started in 2009 and aimed to create jobs for young, unemployed people and those who face significant barriers to enter the labour market.

#### – *Through Small and Medium sized Businesses*

The Generating Employment Opportunities (GEO) Project was set up to provide a recruitment service for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) that have vacancies to fill. The project works with local SMEs to identify vacancies, provide support through the recruitment process and link opportunities to suitably skilled individuals from the local labour market with a particular focus on North Solihull.

Since April 2010, GEO has worked with 27 local SMEs to provide assistance and develop vacancy opportunities. In addition the project is working with partners to ensure that pre employment support is provided to individuals prior to them being considered for SME vacancies. A total of 46 residents living in North Solihull have been assisted by the programme into employment opportunities. For more information go to:

[www.solihullforsuccess.com/geo](http://www.solihullforsuccess.com/geo)

# Customer Outcome – Building Prosperous Communities

## Case Studies

### Money Advice

A series of Money Counts Advice Point sessions were held in North Solihull and Hobs Moat during February and March 2011. The Council and its partners came together to pilot these support sessions to assist residents with advice on employment, benefit, money/debt advice, parental and child support. These sessions were set up to provide practical help and advice to residents in areas of higher child poverty and will also help inform Solihull's Action Against Poverty Strategy. In total 89 households were provided with advice and guidance, and feedback from residents indicated that they found the sessions very useful. The pilot was especially successful in reaching a higher than expected proportion of people with a disability. Due to its success we will be running more drop-ins later this year.

For more information about money matters go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/moneycounts](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/moneycounts)



### Solihull for Success

A new e-portal, Solihull for Success, was launched on the internet in April 2010. It provides a one stop shop for local business support, with features including online property search facilities. By December 2010 this service had already led to a 64% increase in property enquiries – which will help to generate new investment in Solihull – and has attracted international visitors to the site, including from the United States, India, Germany and France. For more information go to:

[www.solihullforsuccess.com](http://www.solihullforsuccess.com)

### Achieving Green Flag Status for our Parks

In July 2010 seven of our parks were awarded green flags. Awarded by Keep Britain Tidy, the flags are seen as the gold standard for public spaces that are welcoming, safe and well maintained. They are also seen as a way of encouraging high environmental standards. The parks are judged against eight criteria which cover everything from access through to sustainability. The awards went to Malvern and Brueton, Shirley, Knowle, Elmdon, Lavender Hall, Dorridge and Meriden parks. For more information on Solihull's parks and open spaces go to [www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/parksandopenspaces.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/parksandopenspaces.htm)



### Promoting Low-Carbon and Sustainable Technologies

Solihull, Coventry and Warwickshire councils came together to organise the Opportunities in a Low Carbon Economy event held in November 2010. The event sought to promote opportunities in low-carbon and sustainable technologies to local businesses. Nearly 100 of the region's top senior executives attended from a range of technology industries including the motorsport, aerospace, medical, automotive and ICT sectors. The event highlighted the region as an area of growing technological excellence which has the potential to lead the way in the cutting edge innovation needed to provide a brighter future for the next generation.

# Customer Outcome – A Brighter Future for our Children and Young People

As major stakeholders in the future of Solihull, the needs, concerns and aspirations of our children and young people are fully integrated into our wider vision for Solihull to be healthier, safer, stronger and prosperous.

Our eight priorities for Children and Young People during 2010-11 were:

1. Safe from harm.
2. An equal chance for vulnerable children and young people.
3. Supporting parents and carers.
4. Good physical and emotional health.
5. Things to do and places to go.
6. Raising achievement for all.
7. Active Involvement.
8. Looking after the environment.

## Headline Achievements

### Educational Attainment

Solihull was the top ranked local authority in the West Midlands for GCSE attainment. 59.9% of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, an increase in performance of more than 5% from the previous year.

### Children's Social Work Services

Our Children's Social Work Services had their first Ofsted annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment in August 2010.

The feedback from the inspection was very positive. For further information go to:-

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/solihull](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/solihull)

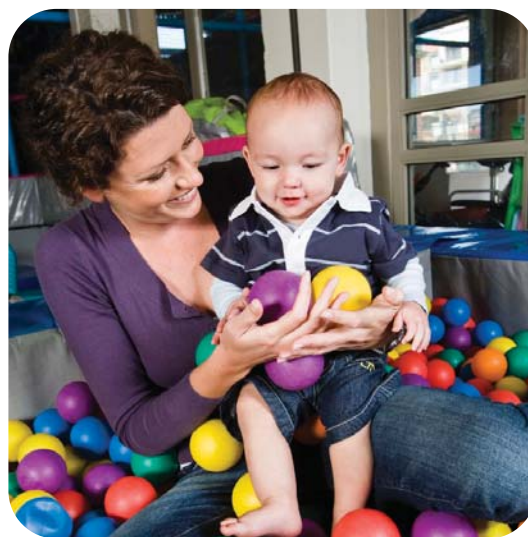
### Youth Offending Service

In January 2011, HM Inspectorate of Probation carried out a inspection of youth offending work in Solihull. It found staff members at Solihull's Youth Offending Service to be dedicated and committed to improving and developing the quality of their work with substantial progress being made and the overall inspection outcomes being above the national average. For more information about the youth offending service go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/community/youthoffending.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/community/youthoffending.htm)

### Reducing the numbers of Young People not in Education, Employment, Training

Connexions (which is a service for all young people aged 13-19, and up to the age of 25 for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) have been successful in reducing the numbers of young people not in Education Employment or Training. Despite the difficult economic climate, the percentage of 16-18 young people in this situation reduced at the end of 2010-11 to 5.3% (433 people) compared to 5.8% (486) in 2009-10. For more information about the work of Connexions go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/connexions](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/connexions)



### Children's Centres

Three new Children's Centres were opened in 2010-11 at Monkspath Junior and Infant School, Bentley Heath Primary School and Langley Primary School. The centres provide services and activities for parents and carers with children under five and children under eight with additional needs or disabilities. This includes information and advice on childcare, parenting and family support, links to training and employment services and stay and play sessions. For more information on any of Solihull's 14 children's centres go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/childrenscentres)

# Customer Outcome – A Brighter Future for our Children and Young People

## Case Studies

### Family Information Service Award

The Council's Family Information Service received the Families First Quality Award in March 2011 for the high quality service they provide to parents. The service helps parents find the information they need on things like childcare, clubs, activities, and supports parents to access services. The award recognises that the service exceeds the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and is working hard to meet the needs of parents in the Borough. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo)

### E-Safety Week

The Council works with schools across the Borough to make sure children stay safe when using the internet. As part of national E-Safety Week in February a number of schools delivered sessions to pupils and parents about the safe use of the internet at home, at school and on mobile phones. Special lessons and assemblies were provided explaining the potential dangers of giving personal details over the internet meeting up with people they been contacting online and spam mail. Some schools also held sessions for parents about keeping their children safe online. For more information and advice visit [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

### Welcome to Nursery

A new 'Welcome to Nursery' resource pack for schools was launched on 24 March 2011 to support parents and their children through the transition from home to nursery. Welcome to Nursery has been developed in in partnership with schools, and is now being rolled out across the Borough. For more information about pre-school education go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/education/preschools.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/education/preschools.htm)

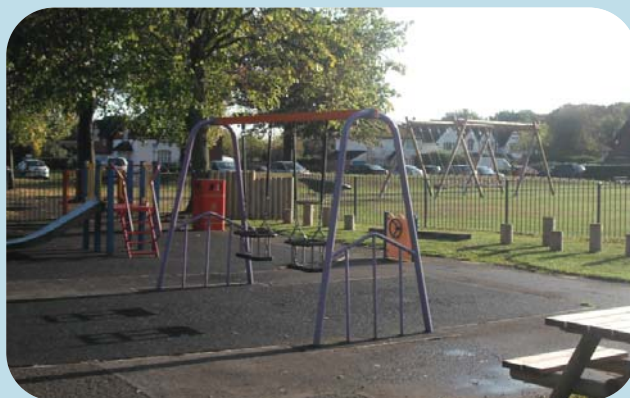
### DCATCH Project

The DCATCH (Disabled Children's Access to Childcare) project which began in 2008 and supported parents of disabled children to access childcare came to a successful conclusion on 31 March 2011. Benefits delivered included:

- More parental involvement in the design and delivery of services.
- Better, more timely information for parents.
- Increased confidence in parents who felt less isolated.
- Increased take up of provision and parents more aware of and better able to take up employment opportunities.

For more information go to

[www.togetherfdc.org/DCATCHNew](http://www.togetherfdc.org/DCATCHNew)



### Increasing Play Opportunities and Facilities

During 2010-11 seven play areas were redeveloped in Solihull as part of a three year national programme. Since 2008 a total of 23 play areas in the Borough have been revamped through £1 million of Government Playbuilder funding. At all sites we have engaged with the local community to provide innovative, stimulating equipment and landscaping to enable physically active play opportunities that are attractive to all children, including those with disabilities.

For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/playfacilities.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/playfacilities.htm)

# Customer Outcome – Good Value Services

We must commission quality services which are also seen as offering value for money.

Within this Customer Outcome our main aims during 2009-10 were to:

1. Commission quality services which are also seen as offering value for money.
2. Maintain a level of Council Tax which can be justified to our residents and which demonstrates good value.
3. Work towards ensuring all our commissioning activity is able to demonstrate good value.

## Headline Achievements

### Setting comparably low Council Tax and maximising Council Tax collection

- Despite receiving the lowest Government Grant per head of any Metropolitan Council (£208 compared to the average of £426), Solihull has an established track record of setting Council Tax levels that are amongst the lowest of comparable authorities.
- We are maximising our Council Tax receipts by maintaining a consistently high collection rate (at least 98.4% for each of the last three years). This represents the best performance for a metropolitan council. Solihull also came third highest this year for the collection of business rates, achieving 99.1 %.

### Effective Financial Management

In early December, the Council received the External Auditor's Annual Audit letter. The Auditors confirmed that the Council has met all significant tests for delivering value for money and in preparing the annual statement of financial accounts. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm)

### Collaborative Procurement

We revised our Joint Procurement Strategy with Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council in January 2011.

We continue to take advantage of greater purchasing power through working collaboratively with these two neighbouring local authorities.

For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/tenders/procurementpolicy.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/tenders/procurementpolicy.htm)



### Delivering Efficiencies

Each year we challenge our costs quite rigorously to make sure that we provide services which are value for money. As we receive the lowest Government grant per head of population of all metropolitan authorities, our medium term financial strategy is based on identifying substantial savings to continue to fund local priorities and protect front line services wherever possible in the light of national spending cuts. In 2010-11 we identified over £12m of savings, and the focus of the 2011-12 budget process was on identifying significant savings whilst striving to protect front line services.

[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm)

## Case Studies

### Innovation in Service Delivery

In July 2010 the Council achieved the Good Communications Award for Innovation for its use of Personal Data Assistants (PDAs) in Neighbourhood Management. A PDA is a handheld computer about the size of a mobile phone which can be used for emails and also acts as a camera and a phone. Neighbourhood Co-ordinators are able to instantly report any defects in the Borough's roads or footpaths to the appropriate team. They also help co-ordinators respond quickly to any reports from residents. Solihull was singled out from a host of other councils for having the most innovative approach to efficient remote working.

### Utilising social media for effective communication

Since 2009 we have been using Twitter to send out news and engage with residents and last autumn we joined Facebook too. We have used these to list when schools have closed, give important updates during severe winter weather and give details of upcoming events in the Borough.

Our follower numbers have grown steadily to more than 2,200 followers on Twitter (putting us among the top 20 most followed councils in the UK) with numbers still growing daily. For more information go to:

[www.twitter.com/SolihullCouncil](http://www.twitter.com/SolihullCouncil)  
[www.facebook.com/solihullcouncil](http://www.facebook.com/solihullcouncil)

### Highways Service

Of the 95 councils who took part in the 2010 National Highway Survey Solihull was ranked 14th for overall satisfaction. This placed us third amongst the 16 Metropolitan Boroughs and first from the West Midlands authorities who took part. The survey covered topics such as pedestrian facilities, cycling, road safety, road works, and the condition of roads. For more information go to:

[www.nhtsurvey.econtrack.co.uk](http://www.nhtsurvey.econtrack.co.uk)

### Open Data

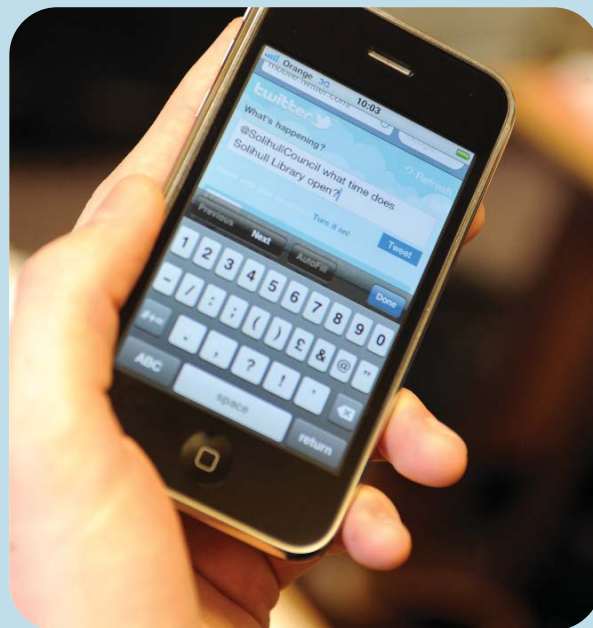
The Council is fully committed to the Government's transparency agenda. In support of this we have begun to publish data in an 'open' format that can be re-used for personal or commercial purposes in accordance with the national guidelines.

Information we are now publishing includes:

- Council Financial Information
- Decision Making Information
- Corporate Contracts
- Council Performance
- Expenditure over £500
- Policies and Plans

For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/opendata](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/opendata)



### Self Service in place at all our Libraries

All Solihull libraries now have self service machines installed following the completion of the final phase of the project. The final machines were installed at Marston Green, Hampton and Meriden libraries and went 'live' in March 2011.

[www.solihull.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/libraries)

# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Introduction

The next few pages set out the headline financial results of the Council's activities for the previous financial year. The Council produces two different types of financial information; management accounts and financial accounts (through our annual Accounting Statement). The management accounts are for use internally by Council staff, managers and by our elected Members. The financial accounts are produced to satisfy legislative requirements and to give information to members of the public, central Government and to provide comparison with other public and private sector organisations.

More detail is available in our **Accounting Statement** publication which can be accessed at: [www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm) or you can request a hard copy (see contact details at the back of this annual report).

## Revenue budget position 2010-11

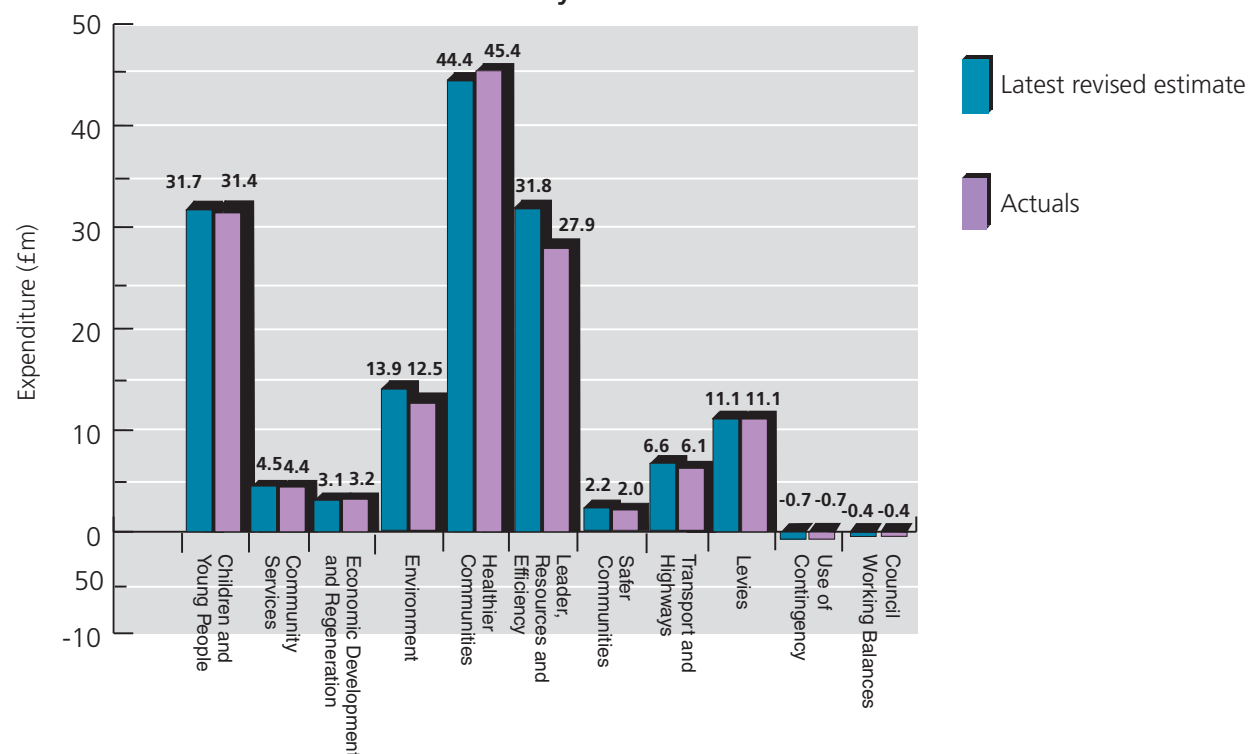
The Council's revenue budget for 2010-11 was £148.210m, excluding schools which are directly funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from central Government. Efficiency savings of £12.707m were identified as part of the 2010-11 budget process. This helped to reduce the overall net increase in the budget to £3.274m which resulted in a Band D council tax of £1,321, an increase of £28.18 (2.2%) over the previous year.

Actual spend during the year amounted to £142.884m compared to the budget of £148.210m

which represented an under spend of £5.326m. This included £0.218m DSG under spend which will be carried forward into 2011-12, leaving a net under spend for the Council excluding schools, of £5.108m. It was agreed by Full Cabinet that £4m of the under spend for 2010-11 is applied to contribute to the Council's budget savings targets over the next two years.

A breakdown of the overall financial position for 2010-11 for each of the Council's Cabinet portfolios (i.e. areas of service responsibility) can be found below.

Overall Financial Position 2010/11 by Cabinet Portfolio



# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Areas to Highlight

### 1) Introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

2010-11 was the first year in which all councils were required to produce their accounts in line with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The NHS and Central Government made this transition in 2009-10, so this is an important step towards the 'Whole of Government Accounts' being produced on a consistent basis.

The Council's 2010-11 accounts include IFRS compliant comparative figures for previous years. This has involved a number of changes to the main statements produced, as well as additional disclosure notes that provide further detail.

The main changes introduced are in relation to the accounting treatment for expenditure covering grants, employee pay, the Council assets and leases. Details of the changes made to the accounts as a result of implementing IFRS can be found in the Accounting Statement, available to access from [www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm)

### 2) Revaluation of Housing Stock

The value of the Council's housing stock has decreased by £146.170m, which has affected a number of financial statements including the Housing Revenue Account and the value of Council Dwellings on the Balance Sheet. The decrease is due to a fall in the regional factor which is applied to the valuation of Council housing, in order to arrive at a valuation appropriate for council housing. For the West Midlands area this factor fell from 49% in 2009-10 to 34% in 2010-11. The Council do not have control over this factor.

### 3) Academy Schools

Two secondary schools that became Academy schools during 2010-11 have been removed from the Council's Balance Sheet as they are no longer deemed to belong to the Council. This has resulted in a reduction in value of Land and Buildings on our Balance Sheet of £27.831m.

### 4) Pension Scheme

There is currently a net deficit, attributable to the Council, on the West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities Pension Fund. This is reviewed periodically by the Fund and steps have been taken to address this deficit within the medium and long term financial strategy of the Council.

### 5) Icelandic Banks

Early in October 2008, the Icelandic banks Landsbanki, Kaupthing and Glitnir collapsed and the UK subsidiaries of the banks, Heritable and Kaupthing Singer and Friedlander (KSF) went into administration. The Council had £3m invested across three of these banks, with varying maturity dates and interest rates. A £3m reserve was put aside by the Council to protect against any potential loss of this money. By the end of March 2011 the Council had received back £0.530m of the investment.

# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Cost of Council Services - Revenue Statement

The Revenue statement below shows how much has been spent by each service area and how these costs have been paid for. The services shown in the top half of the statement are determined nationally for comparability with other local councils and therefore, do not reflect exactly how our services are managed locally, which is on a Cabinet Portfolio basis. Further information on which service areas are in each portfolio is in the Cabinet Portfolios Allocation of Functions document available to access from: [www.solihull.gov.uk/decisions/thecabinet.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/decisions/thecabinet.htm)

The information shown below is drawn from two statements in the Council's Accounting Statement. However, the presentation of the information has been simplified in order to make this summary easier to understand.

	Spend £m	Income £m	Net Spend £m
Education & Children's Services	255.789	(194.896)	<b>60.893</b>
Cultural, Environmental, Regulatory and Planning Services	43.544	(12.518)	<b>31.026</b>
Highways & Transport Services	20.157	(6.322)	<b>13.835</b>
Adult Social Care	65.801	(8.784)	<b>57.017</b>
Corporate and Democratic Services	4.447	(0.054)	<b>4.393</b>
Housing Services	245.457	(97.693)	<b>147.764</b>
Central Services (e.g. land searches, collecting local taxes)	31.527	(28.282)	<b>3.245</b>
Other Services	0.319	0.00	<b>0.319</b>
Exceptional Past Service Pension Gain	0.000	(31.216)	<b>(31.216)</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>667.041</b>	<b>(379.765)</b>	<b>287.276</b>
Levy payments e.g. to Environment Agency			11.124
Schools that became Academies			26.415
Other operating expenditure			1.775
Financing and Investment income & expenditure			17.092
Revaluation of council housing - financed by Capital Reserves			(141.703)
Adjustments between accounting & funding basis under regulations			(36.300)
Transfers to/from earmarked reserves			2.487
<b>Amount to be met from general Government Grants &amp; Local Taxation</b>			<b>168.166</b>
<b>Funding of Spend:</b>			
Council Tax			(94.873)
Business Rates			(47.714)
General Government Grants			(21.311)
			<b>(163.898)</b>
<b>Contribution to working balances/Housing Revenue Account in year</b>			<b>(4.268)</b>
			<b>£m</b>
Council under spend for year against budget			(5.326)
Less budgeted use of working balances			0.429
Contribution to Council working balances			(4.897)
Use of Housing Revenue Account			0.629
<b>Contribution to working balances/Housing Revenue Account per Revenue Statement</b>			<b>(4.268)</b>

# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Balance Sheet

At the end of each financial year we prepare a Balance Sheet that gives an overview of the Council's financial position. It provides an end-of-year summary of the value of our assets (what the Council owns and what others owe to the Council), the value of our liabilities (what we owe to others) and our reserve balances.

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	
<b>What the Council owns and what others owe to the Council (Our assets)</b>	<b>£m</b>
Land, Buildings, Vehicles & Equipment	775.75
Investment Properties	82.34
Other long-term Assets (including parks and roads)	106.91
Investments	36.21
Stocks	0.32
Money owed to us	35.72
	<b>1,037.25</b>
<b>Less what we owe to others (Our liabilities)</b>	
Money owed to others	(57.53)
Bank overdraft	(8.70)
Borrowing	(167.61)
Grants and contributions not yet used (with conditions)	(6.24)
Pension Fund	(134.44)
Provisions	(2.59)
Other long-term Liabilities	(64.96)
	<b>(442.07)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>595.18</b>
<b>The Council has to retain some reserves. Others are available to be used to improve our services to local residents.</b>	
<b>Unusable reserves</b>	
Capital Accounting reserves	(654.87)
Pensions Reserve	134.44
Other Unusable reserves	(6.04)
	<b>(526.47)</b>
<b>Usable Reserves</b>	
Capital receipts reserve	(2.35)
Reserves set aside for a specific purpose	(41.26)
Reserves set aside for housing purposes	(4.19)
Grants and contributions not yet used (without conditions)	(8.68)
	<b>(56.48)</b>
<b>Other retained balances</b>	
General Fund Balance	<b>(12.23)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(595.18)</b>

# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Housing Revenue Account

It is a legal requirement that spend and income on Council housing is accounted for separately from all other services provided by the Council. Below is a summary of the costs and income for 2010-11 in relation to the provision of Council Housing.

<b>Spending</b>	<b>£m</b>
Repairs and maintenance	7.436
Supervision and management	11.264
HRA subsidy payable	6.168
Downward revaluation of Housing Stock	141.703
Other Capital Costs	16.164
Other Costs	3.352
<b>Total spend on Housing</b>	<b>186.087</b>
Removal of downward revaluation of council housing - financed by Capital Reserves	(141.703)
Other Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	(5.427)
Amount to be met by Housing Income	<b>38.957</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>	
Council House rents	(34.281)
Other income	(4.047)
	<b>(38.328)</b>
<b>Net use of Housing Revenue Account balance</b>	<b>0.629</b>
HRA balance at 31 March 2010	4.277
Use of HRA balance during year	(0.629)
<b>HRA balance at 31 March 2011</b>	<b>3.648</b>

The Council owned the following types and number of homes at 31 March 2011

Houses	<b>3,393</b>
Flats	<b>5,116</b>
Bungalows	<b>1,760</b>
Maisonettes	<b>79</b>
	<b>10,348</b>

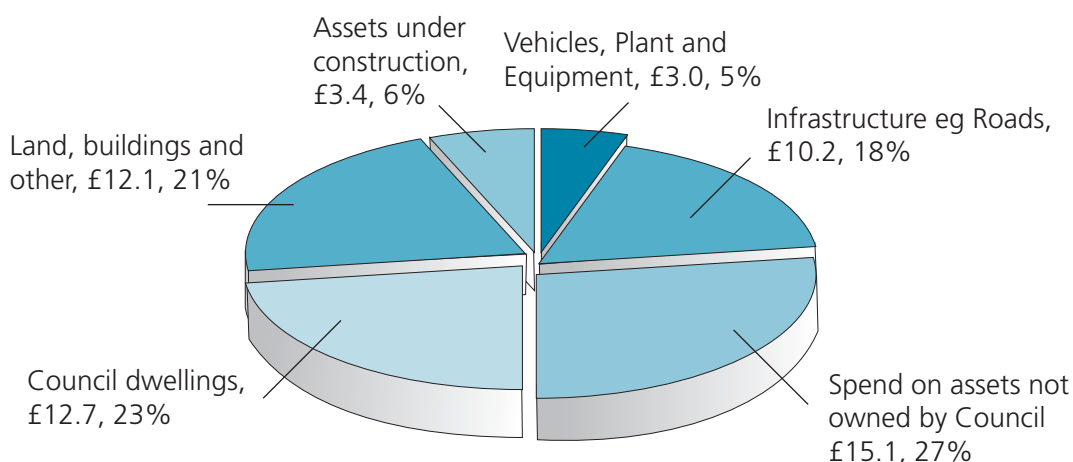
# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Capital Spending summary

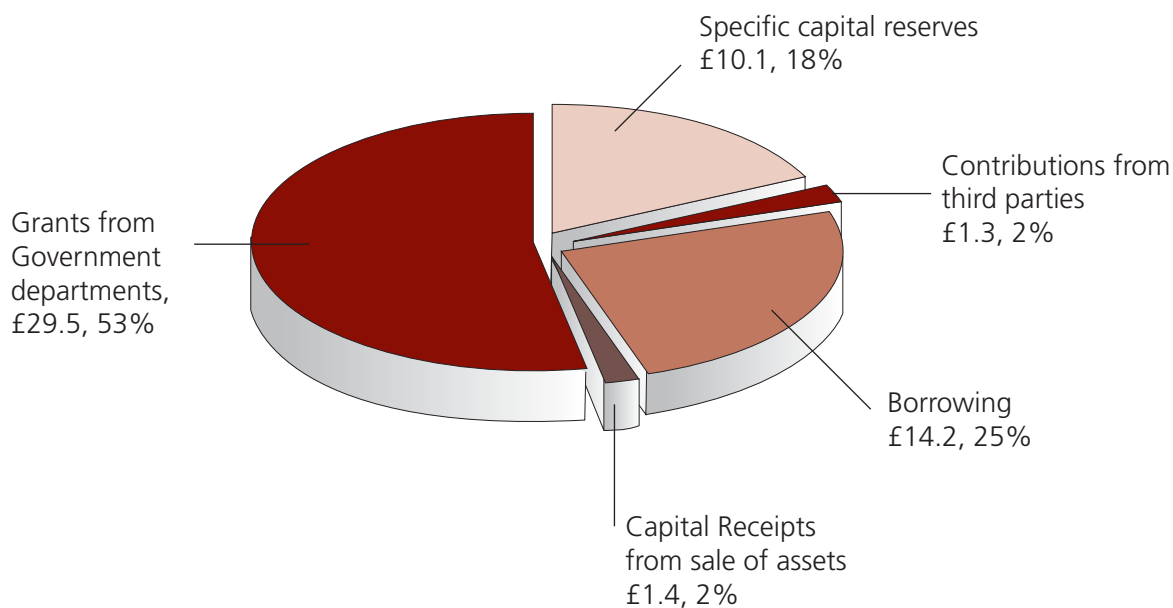
Capital spending is money spent on fixed assets that have a life expectancy of more than one year and, therefore, have the potential to benefit not just current but future taxpayers within the Borough.

The assets are usually funded over a longer period than one year, either from borrowing or from reserves built up over a period of time. The total spending on the capital programme for 2010-11, including Housing, was £56.508m compared with a revised budget of £61.351m, a net under spend in year of £4.843m (7.9%). Due to delays compared to anticipated progress across a number of schemes £4.184m of this will be re-phased into the general fund capital programme for 2011-12. Below are two pie charts detailing capital spend by type of asset, and capital funding during 2010-11.

### Capital Spending (£m)



### Capital Funding (£m)



# Our Finances – Review of 2010-11

## Capital Schemes

Specific examples of some of the schemes that make up our capital expenditure during 2010-11 are listed below, with a brief description of the scheme and its purpose. These assets are included within the Balance Sheet under Our Assets.

Capital Scheme	Expenditure in 2010/11 £m
<b>Council Dwellings - Decent Homes (internal works)</b> <i>To make sure all Council dwellings are comfortable, modern and fit for purpose.</i>	9.206
<b>ANITA Construction Project</b> <i>To improve public transport between Solihull, Birmingham International Airport and the NEC.</i>	6.207
<b>Contribution to North Solihull Regeneration</b> <i>To make North Solihull a better place to work live and play, including a new road at North Arran Way village centre and facilitating housing development in the regeneration area.</i>	5.416
<b>Schools - Primary Capital Programme</b> <i>Funding to improve the primary schools estate mainly focussed on Lady Katherine Leveson, Streetsbrook, Hatchford Brook and Valley Infants Schools.</i>	4.238
<b>Local Transport Plan</b> <i>To improve the local delivery of integrated transport and seek improvements to our transport systems and the quality of people lives within the Borough.</i>	4.112
<b>Schools - Devolved Formula Capital</b> <i>Budgets devolved to individual schools for improvements.</i>	3.842
<b>St Anne's School</b> <i>Construction of a new school.</i>	2.644
<b>Schools - Modernisation Programme</b> <i>Funding to modernise the schools estate mainly focussed on Alderbrook Secondary, Tudor Grange, St Margaret's and Oak Cottage Schools.</i>	2.604
<b>Property Services Programme</b> <i>Programme for the enhancement of the Council's corporate buildings excluding schools.</i>	2.150
<b>Housing Enabling Programme</b> <i>Contribution towards the provision of Social Housing within the Borough. In 2010-11 the council purchased social housing units at the site of the former Flemings Hotel and completed the redevelopment of Highfield Farm.</i>	1.616
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants</b> <i>Mandatory grants awarded for home adaptations in line with the disabled facilities grants framework.</i>	1.608
	<b>43.643</b>

# Environmental Information

## How we care for the environment

**The Council is committed to protecting and improving our environment and works with partners and the public to achieve this.**

**There are many aspects to improving and protecting the environment - from reducing and recycling waste to protecting biodiversity and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Here are some of our recent achievements:**



**Carbon management** continues to be a priority for the Council. Work on the accuracy of emissions data has continued and has been supported by the roll out of Automatic Meter Reading (Smart Meters). A wide range of initiatives have been implemented to reduce emissions. These include more efficient waste collection vehicles and electronic job allocation, further investment in building energy efficiency e.g. through insulation and high efficiency boilers, and automatic switch off of ICT equipment.

While these have all contributed to lowering emissions, service changes and the cold winter resulted in greater emissions for 2010-11 than the previous year. A review of how the Council is tackling emissions has been initiated, and a new programme focusing on schools has been set up through the setup of the Schools Carbon Group.

**Biodiversity** In 2010 the Council joined organisations and individuals around the world in celebrating International Year of Biodiversity. Events and activities included:

- Creating a dedicated 'Biodiversity is our Life' website and a 'Biodiversity in Solihull – a guide to nature in your area' leaflet.
- Designating Dickens Heath Country Park, Elmdon Coppice and Bickenhill Millennium Wood as Local Nature Reserves.
- Practical conservation volunteers carrying out 93 tasks in our woodlands and Local Nature Reserves.

**Recycling** In March 2011 we introduced additional recycling for flats which provided three more recycling bins for glass, tins and cans and plastic bottles.

The waste and recycling team have listened to residents' feedback regarding the recycling service and this has resulted in an improved, fortnightly recycling service. Launched in September 2011, the new service includes the collection of mixed plastics such as yoghurt pots, ice-cream tubs, food trays and corrugated cardboard. Find out more about the recycling service at:

**[www.solihull.gov.uk/recyclingchanges](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/recyclingchanges)**

The Council has also teamed up with other local authorities in the West Midlands to promote Love Food Hate Waste. The campaign is about raising awareness of just how much food we are throwing away and helping residents save money. The average household could save around £50 a month. For more tips and recipe ideas visit **[www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)**

**It's Electric!** The Council's Property Services Team has started to use an electric car to get around. A charging bay has now been installed in Church Hill Road car park in Solihull town centre. Anyone with an electric car can use the bay - which can be accessed from the island of Church Hill Road with Homer Road - you just need to register for a swipe card first. Anyone wanting to register for a card can call: **Chargemaster on 02074955270**

**Britain in Bloom 2010** was a great success with the Council achieving a Silver Gilt, RHS Britain in Bloom Award and a Gold Heart of England in Bloom Award. In addition Blythe Valley Park was awarded a RHS Britain in Bloom Discretionary Award for Conservation & Wildlife and a Heart of England in Bloom Discretionary Award in Landscape.

For more information go to:

**[www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullinbloom](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullinbloom)**

# Environmental Information

## How we care for the environment



### Transport – ANITA (Airport NEC Integrated Transport Access)

This major transport scheme was completed in March 2011 and opened by the Secretary of State for Transport in May. It has improved access to the job opportunities at Birmingham Airport and the NEC and sets the scene for future sustainable growth in this important economic area.

The scheme includes a variable bus lane, a new bus gate connection between the two key sites and improved walking and cycling provision. This allows for better accessibility and traffic management, particularly during busy events and promotes sustainable transport for the future. The road works were funded by the Department for Transport and the future demand for bus service enhancement in the area is being negotiated with the Airport and NEC.

### Environment Champions

This project has continued to grow and forge valuable links with local partners, including the private sector. Over the last year the number of individual Champions rose to 287 and the number of affiliated organisations to 122. Over 50 projects were completed and work to the value of £197,000 carried out.

In June 2010 the Environment Champions together with the North Neighbourhood team and partners such as local schoolchildren, Ringway, Enterprise, Glendale and others won a Silver Medal for their 'Alice in Biodiversityland' Garden at the NEC Gardeners World Show.

Other work undertaken during the year included a bulb planting festival which involved planting more than 14,000 bulbs across 19 different sites around the borough, relaying paths at Elmdon Nature Reserve, and tidying up a sensory garden on Ralph Road allotments.

### Solihull goes Fairtrade

The Council is a proud supporter of Fairtrade and in September 2010 Solihull officially became a Fairtrade Borough. Fairtrade helps to ensure disadvantaged farmers and workers in developing countries are treated fairly and get a better deal for their products.

More than 200 shops, businesses, faith groups, schools and community organisations in the Borough are now serving or selling Fairtrade products such as tea, coffee, sugar, wine and cotton products.

The Council has helped the Solihull Fairtrade Steering Group produce a 'Fairtrade and Local Food Directory' for Solihull, For more details see:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/fairtrade](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/fairtrade)

### Sustainable Schools

We are actively supporting schools to become more sustainable in a variety of ways that include:

- The Council continues to support the national Eco- schools programme. In 2010-11 six more schools achieved 'green flag' status for their achievement in the programme and one school, St Augustine's RC Primary, achieved its second 'green flag'.
- The Council co-ordinated the innovative, European Union funded 'Green Way – Developing Sustainable Schools' project which brought together teachers and educationalists from Solihull and Germany to share good practice and support the development and implementation of strategies for Education for Sustainable Development.



# Summary

We are proud of our recent achievements against our customer outcomes and priorities, as we aim to create communities where people thrive and want to work and live. However we will not stop there; we are committed to further improve services, to work closely with partners from the public, private, voluntary & community sectors and be attentive to our customers' changing needs and requirements.



## Solihull Partnership and Sustainable Community Strategy

The Solihull Partnership is the strategic partnership responsible for improving outcomes for all people in Solihull. The whole Partnership includes local communities and their elected representatives working with public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations.

The Sustainable Community Strategy outlines the vision and ambitions of the Partnership. Entitled 'One Borough: an equal chance for all (2008-18)' it sets out shared commitments to addressing the inequalities experienced by some of our communities within the Borough. The strategy was developed following consultation with a wide range of local organisations and launched in December 2008. For the latest information about the work of the Solihull Partnership go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership)

## Council Plan

This sets out the Council's priorities for 2009-12. Achievements against these are reported in the Council's Annual Report publication. Since the publication of our last Council Plan the national context is providing complex financial challenges which will reduce the resources the Council has available. We are prioritising our resources to ensure we are well placed to respond effectively to this.

Further details can be found in our latest Council Plan which is available at:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/performance.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/performance.htm)



# Further Information – where do I go?

Any queries on the Annual Report publication can be sent to:

[annualreport@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:annualreport@solihull.gov.uk)

## Contacting Solihull Council

### Online

Our online forms are a good way to get in touch with us quickly and easily. Visit our Council Services page at [www.solihull.gov.uk/councilservices/index.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/councilservices/index.htm) and use the Report, Apply, Pay and Find buttons for a full list of our online services.

Make a complaint or compliment at [www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/councilservice.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/councilservice.htm)

### Telephone, email or write

To contact a specific service or department there are contact details at the top of every Council web page to show the most appropriate telephone number, postal address and email for that service. To find the service you are interested in, use the search facility on the Council's website or alternatively, use the A to Z of Services.

[www.solihull.gov.uk/council/atoz.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/council/atoz.htm)



The Council also operate a corporate contact service [www.solihull.gov.uk/connect](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/connect) which handles enquiries for a number of popular council services. You may be directed to contact this team for your enquiry.

For other general enquiries please you can:

- phone our general enquiries line on 0121 704 6000 (open 8.00am until 6.00pm)
- For customers with hearing loss text "connect" and your message to 07860 010 000
- Main Fax: 0121 704 6971
- Email [connectcc@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:connectcc@solihull.gov.uk) or
- Write to:  
Solihull Council,  
Council House, PO Box 18,  
Solihull, West Midlands  
B91 9QS

### In person

Solihull Connect walk-in centres can deal with all your queries. Details of their locations can be found at:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/connect/walkincentre.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/connect/walkincentre.htm)

### Out of Hours Emergencies

The telephone numbers below can be used to report an emergency out of hours:

- Housing: **0121 717 1515**
- Social Services: **0121 605 6060**
- All other Services: **0121 704 8000**

### Where do I find out more information about Council plans, spending and equalities?

- The Council's latest full statement of financial accounts, including the auditor's latest report can be found at:  
[www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/financialdocuments.htm)
- Information about our Equality & Diversity work can be found at  
[www.solihull.gov.uk/community/equalitydiversity.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/community/equalitydiversity.htm)
- The Local Development Framework (LDF) is one of the key policy documents that will help shape the future of Solihull to 2026.  
[www.solihull.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/ldf)

# Feedback – Tell us what you think

Did you find this report useful? Is there anything missing? Was it easy to read? We would really like to know what you thought of our Annual Report. Any comments and ideas you have will help us create next year's publication. Please take the time to let us know what you think by completing the following short survey.

You can either complete this survey online at:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/eforms/survey.asp?survey=298](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/eforms/survey.asp?survey=298) or print this page, complete and return to us at Solihull Council, Council House, PO Box 18, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 9QS.

**1 How much of our annual report did you read?**

All of it       Most of it       Some of it       None of it

**2 Did you find our annual report easy to read?**

Yes       No

**3 Was the layout of the report suitable?**

Yes       No

If no, please tell us why

**4 Which parts of the annual report did you find interesting and useful?**

**5 If you found any areas not interesting and not useful, please tell us why**

**6 Did you find out something new from reading our annual report?**

Yes       No

**7 Please tell us if you think there is any type of information missing.**

**8 If you have any ideas on how we could improve our annual report, please tell us.**

**9 Do you think producing an annual report is an appropriate use of Council resources?**

Yes       No