



Annual Report Summary 2008

This summary sets out a snapshot of what the Council has achieved over the last year. It identifies some of the Council's successes and explains how we have spent your money. The money we spend comes from three sources: the national taxpayer, local council tax and charges for services.

The summary also sets out the aims and priorities we are currently working to achieve. Next year we will be reviewing those aims and priorities and your views about these are very important. There are some questions set out at the end of the summary to help you to respond, but please feel free to comment on any aspect of our services and plans for the future.

Adrian Busby, Leader of the Council.

What the Council has achieved in the last year:

Cleaning the streets

South Bucks District Council has changed its refuse and street cleaning contract and set higher standards for street cleanliness. A new Rapid Response Team has been introduced that deals with incidents of litter, graffiti, chewing gum and fly posting.



- ◆ Enabling affordable housing - working with L&Q Beacon we redeveloped redundant garage sites to provide affordable housing.
- ◆ Working with the Police to reduce crime - over the last 3 years vehicle crime has steadily reduced by 1033 crimes (or 55%), the most significant drop being theft from vehicles. Burglary has reduced by almost a third with 227 less domestic burglaries, a 27% reduction. Reports of Violent Crime have risen by 6% in the last year due, in part, to the growing confidence of victims in reporting incidents of domestic abuse.
- ◆ Keeping South Bucks District green - in 2007, 96.8% of new buildings were built on previously developed land, assisting in protection of the Green Belt.
- ◆ Activities for teenagers - we have repeated the extremely popular 'Chillin' in the Park' event providing opportunities for teenagers and young people to enjoy free fun activities such as football, rounders, tag rugby and cricket.
- ◆ Making our services easier to access - residents can apply for and review current planning applications on line.

- ◆ Listening to young people - working in partnership with Bucks County Council, young people can have their say on what they think of the area and the community through the 'airspace' project, helping us to improve the neighbourhood.
- ◆ Improving South Bucks - completed the Denham Green community improvement scheme which now provides a better shopping experience for residents including improved parking facilities.
- ◆ Residents driving the services we offer - following resident demand we have doubled the number of glass and can collections moving from four weekly to fortnightly collections.

Improving leisure facilities

Beacon and Evreham Centre gyms have been upgraded with state of the art equipment as part of the new contract with Nexus Community.

	2006/07	2007/08
Beacon Centre	76.8%	81.5%
Evreham Centre	84.1%	85.5%

Over the last year satisfaction ratings at both of the centres have seen an increase.



Financial Summary

Our Finances

We want the Council's finances to be as clear and open as possible. This section explains how we have spent your money over the last year, and shows you what resources the Council has at its disposal.

Summary

Last year the cost of providing all the District Council services was £8.9m. This includes income from fees and charges for services provided by the Council totalling £3.4m.

Central Government gave general grants totalling £3.5m to help cover the cost of providing these services, and we earned a further £2.0m from interest and investment earnings. Council taxpayers contributed £4.0m.

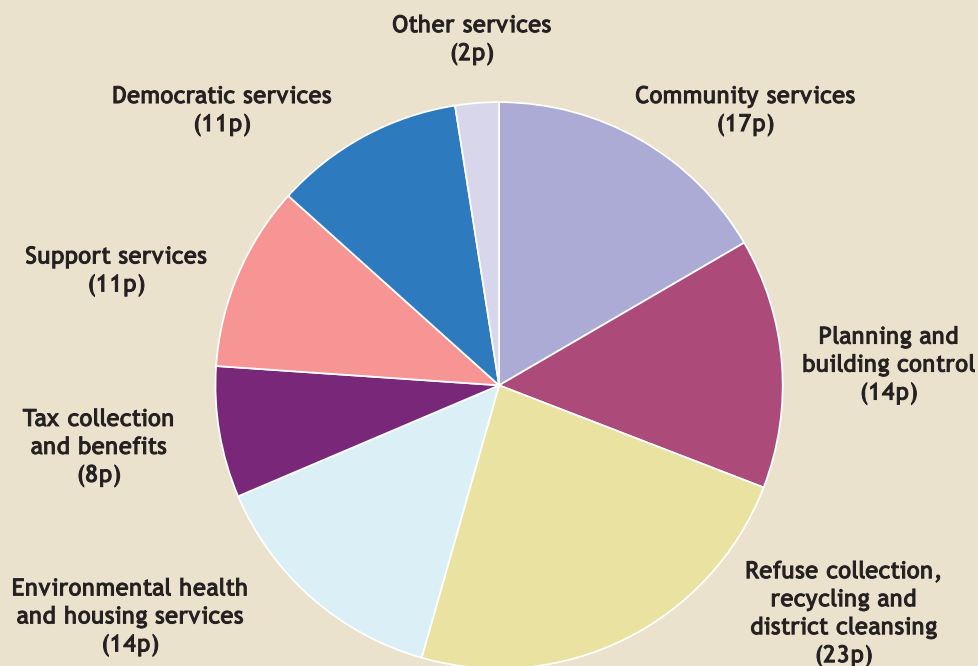
There was an overall surplus for the year of £0.6m, which will be added to the Council's reserves to meet future spending needs.

Financial Performance 2007/08

The following table shows the cost of running the Council services between April 2007 and March 2008.

	Planned Spend £'000	Actual Spend £'000
Community Portfolio		
Community services	264	246
Elections and electoral registration	193	162
Bus passes and dial-a-ride	266	251
Community safety	243	240
Cultural and leisure services	542	652
Other community services	81	79
	1,589	1,630
Environment Portfolio		
Planning and building control	1,810	1,425
Refuse collection and recycling	1,579	1,470
District cleansing	779	852
Other environmental services	158	68
	4,326	3,815
Health & Housing Portfolio		
Environmental health	633	666
Housing	774	744
Licensing	150	137
Cemeteries	42	32
	1,599	1,579
Resources Portfolio		
Housing and council tax benefits	427	395
Council tax and business rates collection	439	356
Support services	1,052	1,055
Democratic services	1,080	1,078
	2,998	2,884
Internal charge adjustments	(1,273)	(1,274)
Items funded from reserves	272	239
	9,511	8,873

Every pound last year was spent as follows



Capital Programme

In addition to income and expenditure for the day-to-day running of services, we have a capital programme for funding large projects. These projects are funded from capital receipts from the sale of surplus assets, Government grants and other contributions.

The following table shows our capital expenditure in 2007/08.

	£'000
Environmental Schemes	
Environmental improvements (Denham Green and other minor schemes)	131
Stoke Common	125
Grants	
Housing improvement grants	344
Grants to community projects	17
Improvements to Community Facilities	
Car park resurfacing and other works	141
Improvements to leisure facilities	86
Improvements to cemeteries	16
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	
IT equipment and systems	258
New refuse and recycling bins	94
CCTV	46
New Dial-A-Ride vehicle	21
Other Schemes	63
Total	1,342

Successful projects funded through the capital programme include providing grants which enable housing to be adapted for people with disabilities, funding community projects such as helping to start up a Youth Club in Dorney and the roll out of new refuse and recycling bins around the district.

Statement of Assets

The following table shows what the Council owned and was owed as at 31 March 2008.

	£m
Land, buildings and other assets	13.9
Investments	25.5
Cash in bank	3.6
Money owed to the Council	4.4
Money owed by the Council	(4.0)
Other items	(0.4)
Total	43.0
Financed by:	
Borrowing	-
Non distributable reserves	13.6
Capital receipts *	22.0
Other available reserves	7.4
Total	43.0

* Capital receipts can only be used to fund items in the capital programme.

Further Details

Further details about the Council's finances can be found in the Council's formal statement of accounts document which can be found on the Council's website at www.southbucks.gov.uk

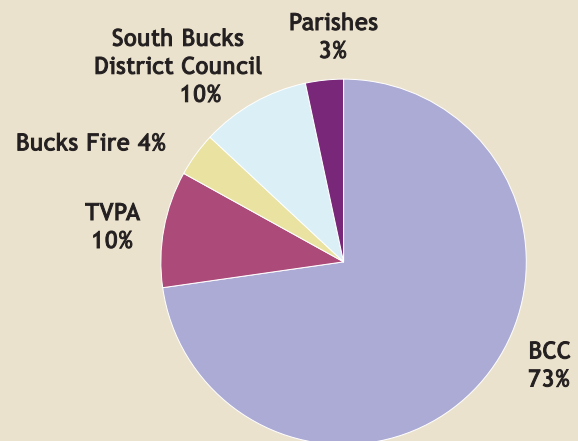
Council Tax and Business Rates

South Bucks District Council (SBDC) collects Council Tax on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC), Thames Valley Police Authority (TVPA), Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, and local parish councils.

Last year we collected a total of £39.6m in council tax for all of the above organisations, with a collection rate of over 98%.

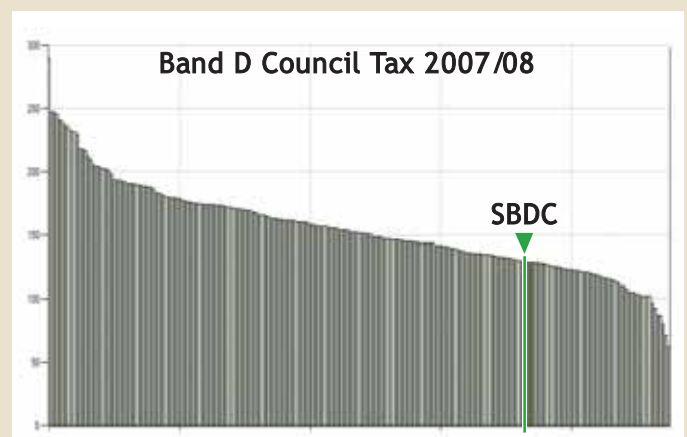
We collected £23.0m in business rates on behalf of the Government, with a collection rate of 99.5%.

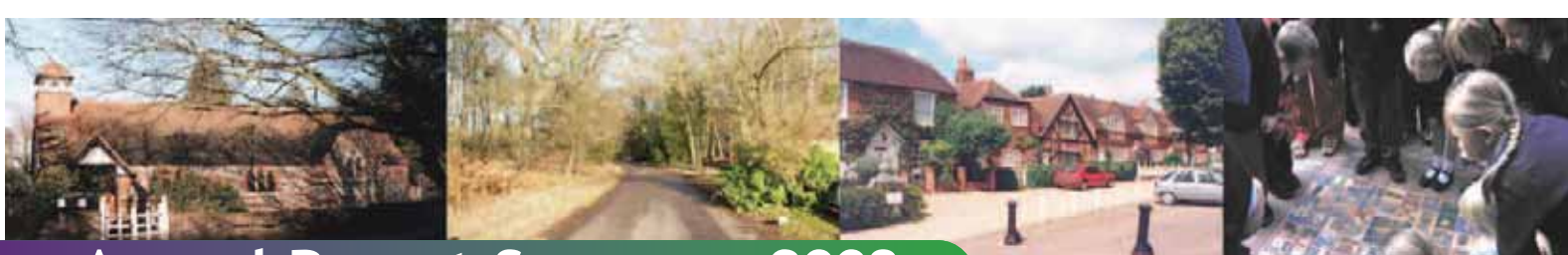
Where your Council Tax went in 2007/08



South Bucks District Council retains 10% of the money collected to help fund the services that we provide.

We have consistently set our element of council tax lower than average. In 2007/08 the South Bucks District Council Band D council tax was set at £128.90 for the year. This was ranked 186th lowest out of 239 district and borough councils as illustrated in the graph below.





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Have Your Say

In 2007 we introduced our new consultation facility on our website.

This provides residents with an opportunity to get involved and have a say to influence decisions in the District. Thanks to your suggestions and input, which helped us to develop our Play Strategy, we successfully attracted an additional £250k grant from the Big Lottery Fund to improve children's play provision. Visit our website at www.southbucks.gov.uk for more information

We want to know what you think about the Council's vision

We are improving South Bucks as a place to live, work and visit. The Local Strategic Partnership in South Bucks which includes South Bucks District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, the Police, Primary Care Trust, Chamber of Commerce and Voluntary Services working together to achieve this through community planning. The current plan is now three years old and we will be reviewing it to ensure it meets the needs and well-being of the community. Tell us your views on how we can improve the quality of life in South Bucks. Below is the vision from the current plan.

South Bucks to be a place with:

- ◆ **Aim 1** Falling crime and fear of crime
- ◆ **Aim 2** Greater community pride and a sense of belonging
- ◆ **Aim 3** A sustainable and thriving community
- ◆ **Aim 4** Green space, character and the environment of the District is preserved and enhanced
- ◆ **Aim 5** Flexible public services meeting with the needs of the community
- ◆ **Aim 6** Improved health and well-being, especially for those in deprived groups
- ◆ **Aim 7** Reduced traffic congestion and enhanced road safety and public transport

For more information about what the council is doing to achieve these aims please go to www.southbucks.gov.uk and click onto the community and living section to see the Community Plan.

We are interested in your views on our long-term aims and the financial information provided in this summary.

Thinking about what is important to your community:-

- ◆ Do you think we have got the right vision for the future?
- ◆ Are there any other areas that we should be considering?
- ◆ How do you think the Council could allocate its resources in a more effective way?
- ◆ How do you think we could improve the financial information provided?

We would really like to hear your views, 'Have your say' on our website www.southbucks.gov.uk alternatively email us at haveyoursay@southbucks.gov.uk, or write to us at our freepost address:

All responses will be considered as part of our forthcoming review of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Financial Plan. This consultation will close at the end of August 2008.

'Have your say'
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