

Law and Democracy Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – 2006/07- 2008/09

Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To implement Single Status Agreement	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep under review policies, practices and procedures. • Challenge and test results of sore thumbing exercise. • Develop an effective appeals process. • Advise on implications of the new pay and grading structure. • Assess the effect on associated companies and partners. • Approve (Part 3) terms and conditions. • Determine all outstanding equal pay/equal value claims. • Respond to appeals in the EAT. • Assist in the management of industrial relation issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful implementation of Single Status Agreement • Fair and equitable employment practices and procedures. • Reduction in the number of Employment Tribunal claims and appeals. • Improved staff morale and improved industrial relations.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: Re-align resources to deliver key Council priorities	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify priorities. Identify gaps in skills/knowledge and staff resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved use of resources. Improved business planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude review of future support service provision to Tristar Homes Ltd and Tees Active Ltd. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrain staff in new areas of law eg company/commercial and employment/equal pay. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new service structure. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build capacity for service planning issues. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a case management system. 	

Theme: Liveability	
Objective: Deliver major regeneration projects and initiatives in partnership with external legal advisors	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet targets set out in individual regeneration project plans for acquisition of properties, compulsory purchase order confirmation, planning inquiries and completion of development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes delivered according to Project Plans. Successful completion

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Theme: Liveability	
Objective: To provide an on line Local Land Charges Register	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer data from manual Register to TLC system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data transfer complete by March 2007.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to NLIS Level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLIS Level 3 achieved by September 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider implications of Home Information Packs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with HIP Regulations

Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To implement the new and improved co-ordination arrangements for Scrutiny	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a consistent approach - focused and directed • Strengthen Project Management arrangements • Work collaboratively on Scrutiny Reviews - consultation with all stakeholders • Establish clear communication arrangements throughout the Scrutiny Review • Establish requirements of reviews e.g. resources, information, roles & responsibilities at commencement of the review • Work with colleagues to set national, regional and local context for scrutiny reviews • Review arrangements for administration of Joint Health Scrutiny Committee • Work with all colleagues, Officers, Members, Partners to establish new scrutiny co-ordination arrangements • Provide detailed Scrutiny guidance and training. • To raise the profile of scrutiny in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of Scrutiny among officers and Members confirmed by year end survey. • Improved delivery of Scrutiny confirmed by year end survey and monitoring processes. • Improved contribution to Policy development confirmed by Annual Scrutiny Report. • Improved contribution to more efficient and effective service confirmed by Annual Scrutiny Report.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To implement the recommendations of the Elections Review	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review staffing arrangements for elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elections staff register developed by Oct 06. Vacant posts filled Apr 06.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify training needs and develop programme for election staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TNA completed by June. T & D programme developed by Sept 06.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Key business processes identify and implement improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBP reviewed by June. KBP improvements implemented by Dec 06.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and complete inventory of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory completed by Apr 06. Additional equipment procured by Dec 06.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To develop understanding of the Constitution and deliver the decision-making processes in a professional manner	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a suite of “How To” guides to assist understanding of e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ forward planning process ○ CMT work programme ○ key decisions - decision options and routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and distribution of guides to all: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CMT ○ HOS ○ All Members ○ Partner Organisations; • Resulting in reduced queries and information requests as a result of increased understanding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocols for attendance at meetings of Council, Cabinet and other Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and distribution of protocols for attendance by officers and the general public to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CMT ○ HOS ○ All Members ○ Partner Organisations ○ Public • Meetings conducted with all relevant persons present; each aware of their own particular role within the meeting. • Increased public understanding of their rights to attend and speak at public meetings of the Council, Cabinet and its Committees; reflected in increased attendance figures and more effective meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ACE & CMT to develop effective forward programming of CMT linked to the Forward Planning Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of twelve month forward planning document reflecting the priorities of each Service Grouping and approved for consideration by the Corporate Management Team. • Improved 12 month forward planning process, reflected by the content in the Forward Planning Document.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues to embed the forward planning process ensuring appropriate checks and balances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an understanding of the Forward Planning process amongst each Service Grouping

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement E-genda system enabling electronic access to all agendas, minutes etc – Link to NE Connects Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully functioning E-Genda system that contains all democratic information managed by the Democratic Services Unit. Management of the entire committee administration process carried out by E-Genda, resulting in service efficiencies, including the processing of quicker decision making, a greater awareness by all of each element of the Council’s decision making; and a reduction in the amount of paper and time spent printing hard copy. Comprehensive awareness/training programme delivered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively manage agendas - increasing interaction with report writers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher quality of reports received, within the required timescale, leading to more informed decision making and less time spent by Democratic Services on administration of agendas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a supportive coaching role for colleagues assisting them with their work within the Democratic processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of an information ‘toolkit’ of services provided by Democratic Services; resulting in an improved understanding confirmed by an end of year survey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with colleagues, Officers and Members to set the Democracy Diary by the end of December establishing dates and deadlines appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery and publication of the Democracy Diary for 2007/8 to all members of the Council and relevant officers by target end of December 2006 and 2007 in accordance with the agreed criteria for its production.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of the Democracy Diary with all Officers and partners, promoting the on-going use of the diary to avoid events/seminars/meetings clashing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of a ‘How to Guide’ explaining both the location and the management arrangements of the Democracy Diary; Dissemination of this information to reach all members of staff likely to be involved in arranging meetings with elected members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review venues for meetings, ensure attention to detail, access, name plates, reserved seating, heating, lighting etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venue facilities for meetings assessed to establish suitability in terms of disabled access; audio facilities for the hearing impaired and suitability to stage different types of Council meeting; e.g. suitability to accommodate display presentations etc.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to existing facilities considered and implemented to ensure that access/exit arrangements are clearly identified; room layouts are prepared and set out in advance; relevant nameplates are in place and seating arrangements are clearly identified for all attending. Appropriate guide produced regarding attendance at each type of committee meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Services/Members to establish the best way to present information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide produced regarding the most appropriate means of presenting information to committees; including advising on content, length of report and inclusion of background/supporting information; and advising on how best to deliver this information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver an effective programme for democratic engagement and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme to raise awareness and deliver public participation events developed. Co-ordinated work with school councils. Review effectiveness by end of year evaluation.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To enhance Member Development and Information Services	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Member Learning & Development Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Members completing Personal Development Plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult Best Practice for Member Learning and Development - IDeA and NEREO Charter 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align Member Development to support individual Members' roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Good Practice in Stockton.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with Training & Development and associated partners to develop comprehensive development programme for Members in consultation/involvement with all Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of Members Training Days.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with IT to maximise the implementation of E-genda system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house training package for Members developed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide appropriate IT development for all Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated information resource developed, providing relevant and timely information by March 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide appropriate development for all members who sit on outside bodies 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Members' Library - consult Members and work with Officer from Library Service to deliver a revised library service fit for purpose 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Members' Information Bulletin - consult Members on their requirements and deliver revised bulletin that is fit for purpose 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to implementation of the E-genda system continue posting items to the intranet & internet - work with Web Master to examine ease of access 	

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To review all Civic functions	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review quality of these events in consultation with relevant stakeholders• Review event management in consultation with relevant stakeholders• Review marketing strategy in consultation with relevant stakeholders• Review catering arrangements in consultation with relevant stakeholders• Develop options for future civic functions for consideration by the Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshed programme of civic functions developed and agreed by all relevant stakeholders by May 06.• Revised event management, marketing and catering arrangements agreed by June 06.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To raise the profile of Democratic Services	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement annual Showcase of Service linked to annual consultation and service planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful promotion and delivery of the event. Positive feedback gained through evaluation of event.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work corporately to maximise our input to the CPA process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to corporate assessment delivered in an accurate and timely fashion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop robust Service Plans for all Teams including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCP Risk Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of services plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the publication of Democracy News 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular publication of revised edition of Democracy News. Results of evaluation at end of year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish with our colleagues in Communications a Press and PR Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy formulated and implemented. Results of evaluation at end of year survey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with colleagues to impart our knowledge of key players to improve decision-making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colleagues report feeling more aware as evidenced in year end survey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Service Charter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Charter in place and staff working to achieve its aims.

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Theme: Organisational Development	
Objective: To improve corporate and ethical governance	
Action & Milestones	Success Measures & Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the methodology for undertaking the Council's ethical governance audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive/coordinated approach to the audit confirmed by audit outcomes/report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with colleagues, Officers and Members to review the Council's key practices, protocols and procedures. Undertake a survey of Officers, Members, Partners and the public. Report the outcomes of the survey and overall audit process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of the Council's ethical governance arrangements confirmed by outcomes/report. Improved understanding of the practices, protocols and procedures where improvements are required. Confirmed by audit outcomes/report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and implement any action plan to address issues arising from the survey and overall audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved practices, protocols and procedures. Confirmed by follow-up audit of action plan implementation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review the Constitution. Introduce revisions and updates to the Constitution on an ongoing basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Constitutional framework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish appropriate decision-making and governance arrangements for the Council's partnerships Provide training/guidance for Officers in connection with the revised, updated Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved governance arrangements. Improved awareness, understanding of the Constitution. Confirmed by feedback from the training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide induction and further follow-up, ongoing ethical framework training for Members. Assess Town/Parish Councils' ethical framework training needs. Ensure training/guidance is provided for Town/Parish Councils, commensurate with their identified needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved awareness, understanding of the ethical framework. Confirmed by feedback from the training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement a programme of training for the Standards Committee in connection with local investigation and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater awareness and understanding of the Committee's role and responsibilities in the determination process. Confirmed

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determination procedures.	by feedback from the training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and re-establish the joint working arrangements with the Tees Valley Authorities regarding code of conduct matters. <p>Work with colleagues and Officers to establish arrangements for the investigation and determination of misconduct allegations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved capacity and capability to undertake local investigations and to support local hearings. Confirmed by feedback from the training.