

Service Improvement Plan *(abridged)*

Policy, Performance and Communications

2008/09 – 2010/11

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Policy, Performance and Communications 2008/09- 20010/11

Theme: Supports all Sustainable Community Strategy themes		
Development Priority: PPC 1 - Improve communication, consultation and engagement with local people		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Increase 'Stockton News' to six editions per year	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in satisfaction rating with the council keeping residents informed.
Investigate Stockton News distribution options	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved and wider distribution network. Improvement in satisfaction rating with the council keeping residents informed.
Re-procure design and print for Stockton News	May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New contract awarded by May 2008
Deliver two phases of corporate campaign to raise awareness of the activities of the Council and its partners	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate campaign delivered by autumn 2008 Maintained or increased satisfaction ratings measured through place survey results.
Publish pocket A-Z guide to Borough services and an update version 24 months later.	June 2008 June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pocket A -Z guides published by June 2008 and revised version by 2010.
Develop internal communications strategy	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good communications with staff so they become advocates for the Council Monitored through improved satisfaction results in employee survey
Review of signage of Council property	May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council brand consistently linked to services
Publish revised full A-Z	Summer 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published version by 2009
Develop communications training toolkit on SBC Intranet	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool developed and operational

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Theme: Safer Communities, Stronger Communities.		
Development Priority: PPC 2 - Strengthen the Community Leadership role of the Council and the role of Stockton Renaissance		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Review of the Stockton Renaissance Area Partnerships & support arrangements		
Develop and implement a partnership evaluation model with the Area Partnerships	September 2008	
Design a questionnaire to assess Area Partnerships/Resident Groups views on the effectiveness of the Area Partnerships and support arrangements for the future	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of a revised LSP Improvement Plan and supporting Action Plan (as necessary)
Develop community leadership role further, through both the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) and Area Partnerships by reviewing the links and feedback mechanisms with the Area Partnership constituent groups	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of a revised LSP Improvement Plan and supporting Action Plan (as necessary)
Analyse the feedback and develop improvement options for the future taking into account any implications from national policy documents	November 08 – January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of a revised LSP Improvement Plan and supporting Action Plan (as necessary)
Take a report to Stockton Renaissance and Cabinet for consideration	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful rating/ direction of travel at LAA Annual Review • Fully representative Area Partnerships
Develop a refreshed Engagement and Communication strategy and action plan for each Area Partnership	June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully representative Area Partnerships

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Theme: Safer Communities, Stronger Communities.		
Development Priority: PPC 3 - Developing the Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Element Initiative		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Develop a longer term rolling delivery plan for 2008-10		
Evaluate the 2007/08 interventions	June 2008	
Hold a visioning exercise with the Board to explore the partnership's development and sustainability options	June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the percentage of residents satisfied with their area (resident satisfaction questionnaire)
Develop the longer term delivery plan and exit strategy	May - July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a longer term rolling Delivery Plan for 2008-2010
Explore new methods and models for delivering services/ initiatives in the NE area		
Research initiatives and neighbourhood working models nationally	July 2008	
Explore opportunities to pilot new initiatives and exploit external funding opportunities	July 2008	
Develop a publicity campaign to raise the profile of the NE initiative		
Investigate branding for the partnership	May 2008	
Audit the current publicity arrangements	June 2008	
Develop a publicity campaign	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a publicity campaign to raise the profile of the NE initiative
Strengthen engagement in the St Ann's Partnership Board		
Review the partnership structure and election processes	January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully representative Neighbourhood Element Partnership
Review the links and feedback mechanisms of the St Ann's Partnership Board with its constituent resident groups	February 2009	
Develop an engagement strategy and action plan for the partnership	March 2009	

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Theme: Stronger Communities		
Development Priority: PPC 4 – Neighbourhood Renewal Fund exit strategy		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Develop an Evaluation Timetable to incorporate all Thematic Packages and Area Board Projects (subject to Council agreeing budget which includes WNF/NRF transitional year)	April 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed Evaluations for all packages
Agree and implement NRF Transitional year governance arrangements (subject to Council's budget setting process)	March - April 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend on target for 2007/08
Combine final six month review meetings and evaluation process where applicable for 2007/08 NRF Round	April 2008	
Produce Evaluation Report	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Evaluation report on impact of NRF programme (Rounds 1-4) including case studies, headline narrowing of the gap information and service delivery improvements
Produce an evaluation DVD with the community to showcase the project work undertaken. To include any appropriate extracts from existing project DVD's	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The % of successfully evaluated interventions mainstreamed in 2008/9 and 2009/10
Report findings to Stockton Renaissance and Cabinet	September 2008	

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Policy, Performance and Communications 2008/09- 2010/11

Theme: All Sustainable community Strategy themes		
Development Priority: PPC 5 - Strengthen the Council's Performance Management Framework		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Improve data quality through the implementation of actions within the Data Quality Strategy.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data quality arrangements – unqualified audit opinion
Undertake analysis of the new National Indicator set to inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new performance framework across the council and its partners. A revised Corporate Basket for the Authority. Review reporting procedures 	June 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New performance framework across the Council and its partners
Improve the Council and partners' planning frameworks through the integration of the LAA into planning and monitoring process.	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New performance framework across the Council and its partners
Improve the performance management approach for the Local Strategic partnership to support the enhanced role of the LSP and the LPSB.	By March 2009	
Ensure collection methodologies and systems are in place to collect new 198 indicators set. Including working with partner organisations to ensure data collection and quality	By June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective collection methodologies and systems in place to collect data from the new National Indicator set of 198 PIs and all local measures
Continue to develop the Stats@Stockton project	April 08 – March 2009	

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Theme: All Sustainable community Strategy themes		
Development Priority: PPC 6 - Respond to National and Regional Policy initiatives		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Development and approval of the Local Area Agreement. 2008 – 11 including local targets	June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Executive arrangements in place and working
Development and integration of the Multi Area Agreement.	April 2008 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful integration of new policy and performance initiatives e.g. Multi Area Agreement
Contribute to the development of national and regional policy frameworks with a Stockton perspective including developing city-region, improvement and inspection regimes. Lead on implementation for Stockton	ongoing	
Implement new policy and improvement initiatives as required by Cabinet and Corporate Management Team.	ongoing	

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Theme: : All Sustainable community Strategy themes		
Development Priority: PPC 7 - Maintain the Council's CPA/ CAA Rating		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Respond to CAA Consultation	In line with national deadlines	
Work with LSP Partners and officers to develop framework and understanding of CAA requirements	By Autumn 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework developed across partners to deliver CAA outcomes for 2009
Incorporate CAA framework requirements into new or existing Performance Management Arrangements including monitoring of new 198 Indicator set	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional arrangements from CPA to CAA incorporated into the performance management framework
Deliver the Direction of Travel and Use of Resources Statements.	Summer 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Audit Commission deadlines for use of Resources and Direction of Travel statements
Improve or maintain service block scores and direction of travel rating in CPA 2008	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service block scores maintained or improved on CPA 2007 • Service inspections achieve 'promising' or 'excellent' prospects

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Policy, Performance and Communications 2008/09- 2010/11

Theme: Stronger Communities” theme of the Sustainable Community Strategy.		
Development Priority: PPC 8 - Continue to lead the Council’s approach to equality and diversity		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Use diversity profiles to consider any diversity issues within the workforce and support HR to implement the diversity agenda	April 2008 Onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single Equality Scheme (3rd Edition) published by statutory deadline of 30th April 2008
Review and Improve the Council’s approach to Equality Impact Assessments	May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of year one of backward looking service impact assessment programme completed by May 2009 95% of appropriate Cabinet reports subject to Equality Impact Assessments
Achieve level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 3 of Local Government Equality Standard achieved by 2009 and verified by external assessment
Support and develop approaches to embedding equality and diversity in procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at regional level across all SBC procurement activities across Stockton LPSB 	March 2009 March 2010 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and local procurement processes to fully embed diversity by March 2011
Deliver PPC Actions within Single Equality Scheme version 3	March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% actions in Disability, Race, gender equality action plans delivered within specified deadlines
Roll out corporate diversity training programme across the Council	March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity training delivered to 30% of staff by March 2009

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Theme: Stronger Communities” theme of the Sustainable Community Strategy		
Development Priority: PPC 9 - Implement the Community Cohesion Strategy		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Develop and deliver a communications strategy to promote equality and community cohesion	March 2009	
Implement all PPC actions in Community Cohesion Strategy	March 2011 with annual review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions outlined in Community Cohesion Strategy successfully delivered
Support partners across LSP to implement the Community Cohesion Strategy – monitoring its delivery	Begins April 2008 with biannual monitoring	
Develop community reference arrangements for the LSP around community cohesion issues	December 2008	

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Theme: All sustainable community Strategy themes		
Development Priority: PPC 10 - Lead organisational development initiatives to improve the culture and leadership of the Council		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Run the Extended Management Team programme for the Council.	April 08 – March 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegated management arrangements continue to be effective
Run Setting the Standard organisational development events for the top 3 tiers of the Council	April 08 – March 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegated management arrangements continue to be effective

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Theme: All Sustainable community Strategy themes.		
Development Priority: PPC 11 - Develop and implement a Workforce Information Strategy		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Conduct a detailed workforce census of all SBC employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design content and methodology • Design and implement a communication campaign to support census • Implement employee census • Analyse census data • Report census data • Review census process 	April 2008 April 2008 June 2008 July 2008 July 2008 August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a comprehensive picture of the composition of the workforce (employee census) to support the People Strategy and the diversity agenda • Implement robust and effective records management systems for workforce data
Consultation and Engagement Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research other LA approaches to consultation and engagement (including potential benchmarking exercises) • Establish working group • Develop strategy and action plan • Implement action plan 	April 2008 April 2008 March 2009 May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce consultation and engagement strategy
Conduct an Employee Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a consultation methodology • Design and implement a communications campaign to support employee survey • Implement employee survey • Analyse employee survey • Report employee survey • Review consultation process 	June 2008 August 2008 October 2008 November 2009 December 2009 January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality of employee survey data
Employee Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If need identified from employee survey, develop approach to establishing and implementing systems for facilitating employee engagement 	January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved performance against Local Government Equality Standard • Improvement in employee satisfaction

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Theme: Stronger communities ,Organisational Development – Service Delivery		
Development Priority: PPC 12 - Develop and implement a multi-agency Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Conduct a multi-agency audit of all consultation and engagement activity to identify what is currently done and its purpose. Detailed in this audit would be methodology and cost implications, along with details of any statutory duties	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed multi-agency audit of current consultation and engagement activity
Conduct a multi-agency consultation and engagement needs assessment and mapping exercise to identify what activity is needed / required and in what time periods	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed multi-agency consultation and engagement needs assessment
Use details of audit and needs assessment to develop proposals for future consultation and engagement delivery methodologies	November 2008	
Develop a revised Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy and supporting Action Plan	December 2008	
Implement the revised Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy and supporting Action Plan	January 2009 – March 2010	
Improve the range of tools available to support the effective delivery of the Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed future visioning exercise for future consultation and engagement needs Development and implementation of a revised Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy and supporting Action Plan
Develop and improve consultation resources/ data on the Council's website	September 2008	

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Theme: Organisational Development – All themes		
Development Priority: PPC 13 - Organisational Development - Corporate Health		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
<p>Outcomes and success criteria All services are subjected to a number of Organisational Development objectives. These demonstrate how the service contributes to the achievement of the organisation’s ‘corporate health’.</p> <p>SICKNESS ABSENCE Sickness absence remains high across the Council compared to other local authorities and therefore it is imperative that sickness is targeted for reduction. Sickness absence is measured via ex-BVPI 12 and all services need to contribute to the corporate target of a reduction of at least 0.5 days lost per FTE due to sickness.</p> <p>ON CONTRACT SPEND All services contribute to making savings via better procurement. Value for money contracts have been arranged for areas of corporate spend such as mobile phones and stationery. In order to maximise savings, services have been set a target of 97% for ‘on contract’ spend for these contracts.</p> <p>PAYMENT OF INVOICES The Council is measured for the time taken to pay invoices. Prompt payment is important to our supply base and helps improve their cash flow which in turn keeps them profitable and helps economic development of the locality. Payment of invoices is measured by ex- BVPI 8 and all services contribute to the corporate target of at least 85% of invoices paid within 30 days.</p> <p>APPRAISALS Highly trained and motivated employees are necessary for the delivery of modern, effective and efficient services. Consequently the employee appraisal scheme has been revised and improved to ensure staff have the relevant skills and development opportunities. All services have been set a target of undertaking appraisals for at least 90% of employees.</p> <p>GERSHON EFFICIENCY SAVINGS The Council is subject to an annual 3% cashable savings efficiency target and many services contribute in one way or another. Services will set their targets via the forward looking Annual Efficiency Statement (April) which includes both the financial targets and any associated quality cross checks.</p>		

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VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEWS

Council services are subject to the requirement to demonstrate value for money in order to show the public that money is spent effectively. The process also feeds into the Use of Resources service block in CPA. Services subject to reviews are those with apparent high costs compared to other local authorities and the initial focus of reviews is to determine why this is the case.

PARTNERSHIP HEALTHCHECKS

New government policies and legislation frequently involve partnership working. The major policy initiatives for local government all depend for their success on effective joint working. There is a growing policy focus on area governance and service delivery at regional, sub-regional and the neighborhood level; this may involve local authorities and a variety of partners at each level. Consequently, well developed and effective partnerships are becoming an essential feature for Stockton Borough Council's success.

DATA QUALITY

The council is assessed against its corporate management arrangements for Data Quality. Good quality data is essential in supporting effective decision making at all levels across the organisation. All services are working towards improving data quality further by responding to the recommendations made following the Data Quality Audit 2007 and implementing the actions highlighted within the Data Quality Strategy.

CUSTOMER FIRST

Customer First Stage 2 launched in June 2007 aims to encourage services to strive for excellence in customer service. The programme requires every service to adopt the latest service standards and compare how it measures up against 5 key components. All services should aim reach the Stage 2 standard by March 2009.

DIVERSITY

Equality Impact Assessment

- Ensure all appropriate reports submitted to Cabinet have been subject to Equality Impact assessment.
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments of existing services. 50% in 2008/09 and 50% in 2009/10, including Impact Assessments of contracted services where appropriate.
- Include actions developed as a result of Equality Impact Assessments in SIP or BUP as appropriate.

Training

- Ensure all employees attend corporate diversity training in line with Council Plan targets.

Single Equality Scheme

- Achieve all relevant targets within the race, gender and disability equality action plans

Procurement

- Utilise new procurement procedures to ensure equality is embedded in procurement activities.