

Service Improvement Plan *(abridged)*

Development and Neighbourhood Services

Performance and Business Services

2008/09 – 2010/11

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Performance and Business Services 2008/09 – 2010/11

Theme: Organisational Development - Resource Management		
Development Priority: P&BS1: further develop performance management systems that support the provision of excellent services		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Support services to maximise the Council's CPA ratings on the relevant service sub-blocks	June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain or improve all ratings for the D&NS related CPA service blocks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits (4/4); - Culture (3/4); - Environment (3/4); - Housing (4/4). • Positive CPA direction of travel rating (improving well/improving strongly) • 80% of Council Plan targets achieved • 80% of Corporate Basket of Indicator targets achieved
Ensure all D&NS improvement actions from the Corporate Assessment report are effectively implemented	March 2009	
Undertake service assessments of all key performance systems within D&NS to ensure high levels of data quality	December 2008	
Ensure the effective monitoring of progress on key and high risk projects within D&NS	June 2008	
Effectively manage the transition from Best Value Performance Indicators to the new suite of National Indicators	June 2008	
Effectively manage the transition from Comprehensive Performance Assessment to Comprehensive Area Assessment	June 2009	
Strategic review of structures to ensure they are appropriate to meet future service demands	September 2008	

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Performance and Business Services 2008/09 – 2010/11

Theme: Environment and Housing		
Development Priority: P&BS2: provide a dignified, efficient and professional Registration and Bereavement Service		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Strategic and structural review of the Registration Service in line with legislative changes relating to the Civil Registration Service	September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive service delivery inspection from General Register Office
Review and develop policies and guidance for the borough's cemeteries in line with the recommendations of the Environment and Regeneration Select Committee	April 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success measures from Good Practice Guide • Extended choice for customers and improvement in customer service and satisfaction levels • Improved safety within Council cemeteries

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Performance and Business Services 2008/09 – 2010/11

Theme: Environment and Housing		
Development Priority: P&BS3: make Stockton a cleaner, greener place to live, work and visit		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
In line with the Council's strategic direction for waste and carbon management, develop and deliver a three-year Environmental Communications Plan	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase local membership of Freda the Frog's Fantastic Fan Club by 5% in 2008/09
Seek alternative grant funding for recycling promotions, canvassing and campaigns	June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing recycling and composting activity to achieve the national combined target of over 40% by 2010 (NI 192)
Review functionality and operation of the Environment Centre and develop a two-year improvement plan	August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve break-even financial position

Service Improvement Plan (*abridged*) – Performance and Business Services 2008/09 – 2010/11

Theme: Health and Wellbeing		
Development Priority: P&BS4: provide a programme of events which allows access to all at nil or low cost		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Review procurement methods for technical supplies, including fencing, marquee hire and fireworks services	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% reduction generating £1,700 savings
Reduce managed commitment carried forward from 2007/08 and address any outstanding MC into 2009/10 event plans	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed commitment reduced by £14,000

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Theme: Organisational Development		
Development Priority: P&BS5: provide an effective Geographical Information Service		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Provide digital and paper-based mapping to client specification	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and develop ISO accreditation • Increase exposure to Maps@Stockton intranet application • Increase client satisfaction levels
Provide management and analysis of spatial data	March 2009	
Provide GIS training, support and consultancy	March 2009	
Undertake development of applications to serve or manage geographic information	March 2009	

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Theme: Organisational Development		
Development Priority: P&BS6: undertake all relevant actions within the Council’s Equality Plans and other cross-cutting strategic plans		
Key actions	By when	Outcomes and Success Criteria
Ensure all staff have undergone relevant training on race, faith, belief and diversity	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes relating to the improved accessibility of services to all people and improved community cohesion
Provide events information in appropriate formats and promote the use of the Internet for events listings	March 2009	
Implement the Customer First Stage II Standard throughout Performance and Business Services	September 2008	
Undertake relevant actions within the Climate Change Action Plan	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5 day reduction in sickness absence from 2007/08 outturn • 100% of invoices paid within 30 days • 100% of staff receive annual appraisal
Reduce sickness absence	March 2009	
Improve performance on payment of invoices	March 2009	
Ensure all staff receive annual appraisal	August 2008	

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THEME: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – ALL THEMES

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – CORPORATE HEALTH

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-BVPI12 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.

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.

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-BVPI8 and all services contribute to the corporate target of at least 85% of invoices paid within 30 days, by Q4.

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.

GERSHON EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

The Council is subject to an annual 3% cashable 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.

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

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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 II 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 five key components. All services should aim reach the Stage II 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 2008/9 and 50% in 2009/10.
- 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 action plans.

Procurement

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