



**South
Derbyshire**
District Council



Service Plan 2018/2019 Corporate Resources

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All information presented in this Service Plan was correct
at the time of publication.

Introduction

The Corporate Plan 2016-2021 forms an important part of planning for the future and leads our performance management. As well as enabling effective monitoring, it links strategic priorities and objectives directly to the activities of service areas.

As part of this, Service Plans are created for our three directorates - Service Delivery, Corporate Resources and the Chief Executive's directorate.

Covering the 2018-2019 financial year, the Service Plans (which are updated annually) align current delivery arrangements with changing patterns of demand, making the most effective use of available and future resources.

Key aims

All priorities and activities undertaken by Corporate Resources complement our collective vision of making 'South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'.

We will:

- positively contribute towards Council policies and procedures
- deliver continuous improvements in performance
- ensure compliance with relevant legislation
- maintain a strong customer focus
- ensure a widespread understanding of core values, key aims and performance measures and encourage participation in their development
- ensure that data quality principles are applied
- encourage a positive health and safety culture

All of these contribute to the main themes running through the Corporate Plan of People, Place, Progress and Outcomes.

The importance of service planning

Delivery of public services occurs in an increasingly dynamic environment, with high community expectations, government priorities and technological advances.

While the budgetary setting is constrained, there are ever increasing pressures and demands to do more with less.

In this context, it is essential that services are well planned, with the capability to evolve in order to meet community needs.

This allows us to identify requirements and associated enabling services such as technology, workforce, funding, capital infrastructure, together with information management.

Scene setting

Overview of the directorate

The Corporate Resources Directorate plays a key role in meeting the Council's strategic objectives for supporting People, Place and Progress. The main focus of the Directorate is to help the Council secure successful Outcomes and manage the core principles which underpin all service delivery.

In particular the aims of the Directorate are to ensure:

- Financial health
- Good governance
- Customer focus

Much of the work undertaken by the Directorate has a statutory base. The non-statutory services also have a fundamental role in ensuring that the Council operates within statutory powers and regulations.

Service operations

The Directorate is now mature following a Council restructure in May 2013, which established the current functions of the Directorate. Following a review of senior management at the Council, Corporate Services was retitled Corporate Resources in December 2017, headed by the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources).

Although the functions of the Directorate remained unchanged, the Directorate took on a more strategic role to ensure that the resources of the Council are utilised to deliver the strategic priorities of the Council.

The Directorate is responsible for:

- Financial Services - accounting, budgets and medium term financial planning
- Internal Audit
- Asset and Estate Management *
- Land Charges
- Revenue collection
- Processing claims for Housing Benefit
- Customer Services and the Contact Centre *
- Detecting and Investigating Fraud *
- Co-ordinating Procurement *
- ICT *
- Business Change *
- Reprographics and Document Services *
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- Co-ordinating the resolution of complaints against the Council
- Secretarial Support *

*Services marked * are non-statutory services*

Within this, the function of 'Business Change' at a corporate level was introduced. A new ICT and Business Change Manager was appointed into the Directorate in January 2018 to develop process change and a greater use of technology in service provision, applying principles consistently across the Council.

Since January 2012, Internal Audit has been delivered through the Central Midlands Audit Partnership, of which the Council was a founding member and remains a constituent partner.

In January 2017, the Council formed a Partnership with Derby City Council to prevent and detect fraudulent activity across its area. In particular this service focuses on fraud and error in Revenues and Housing related services, together with Insurance and Procurement.

And in January 2018, the Council joined a shared service arrangement with other Derbyshire authorities and public agencies for the delivery of its Procurement Service.

The Main Functions of the Directorate

The Directorate is responsible for setting and monitoring budgets, reviewing and advising on the Council's medium term spending plans and its financial strategy.

The Directorate has a key role in securing the Council's outcomes that underpin the Corporate Plan.

This is not just about finance but encompasses other resources such as Land, Property and ICT, together with ensuring that the Council undertakes its activities and responsibilities in a proper manner through good corporate governance.

Although many of the services provide support and advice across all Council functions, many others deal direct with the local community and residents contacting the Council, for example in Revenues and Benefits.

Operational requirements are largely undertaken in accordance with statute - financial management and internal audit for example, are carried out within specific points of law, together with standards contained in Codes of Practice.

The Directorate has a number of smaller, discrete service areas, although joint working and synergy exists between the individual areas. Specific units are as follows:

Secretarial Support and Corporate Administration

The Unit provides a range of administrative functions including secretarial support to the Leadership Team and co-ordinating complaints made against the Council.

It also supports the Data Protection Officer and co-ordinates day to day activity associated with requests for information under Data Protection and Freedom of Information Regulations.

Internal Audit

Through the Central Midlands Audit Partnership (CMAP), internal audit is the primary assurance that the Council maintains a sound system of internal control and this feeds into the priority outcome of 'strong corporate governance'. Working under the terms of reference of the Council's Audit Sub Committee, CMAP undertake audits on the main systems and processes that underpin service delivery.

Land Charges

This unit deals with all enquiries and requests for property and land searches, both commercial and residential. The unit provides both a statutory function and direct service within a commercial market.

The financial aim of the service is to 'break even', including a proportionate share of the Council's overheads. The income generated by the service is currently around £125,000 per year and is an important income stream for the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan to cover the costs of providing the service.

The Unit reports to the Corporate Asset Manager and is part of the Property Services function.

Property Services

This Unit is responsible for the overall strategic management of the Council's operational land and property holdings under the Asset Management Plan. This includes identifying and making recommendations regarding assets deemed 'surplus to requirements'.

The Unit has a key role in major development/regeneration projects, in particular where the Council has a property/land interest in the project. This is to ensure that the Council maximises the use of its assets to enable service provision, generate capital receipts or to improve local community facilities.

The Unit is also responsible for managing the Council's investment (property) portfolio. This includes shops, industrial units and a factory, all of which generate income of approximately £600,000 per year.

Financial Services

This Unit is responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Council and advising on strategic financial issues. The operational aspects of the Unit are:

- **Management Accounting** - provides day to day support to Council services on managing budgets and maintaining accounts. This involves monthly reporting of financial performance.
- **Financial Accounting** - ensuring the Council complies with accounting standards and statutory financial reporting requirements. It also includes Treasury Management, Insurance, Taxation and Banking, together with the payment of invoices and the raising of sundry debtors.
- **Payroll** - payments to Elected Members and the workforce whilst accounting for the associated transactions.

Revenues and Customer Services

The Unit is responsible for acting as the first point of contact for people visiting and contacting the Council, mainly face-to-face, by telephone and email. In addition, the Unit processes claims for Housing Benefit and collects the Council Tax and Business Rates.

It also provides the link with Derby City Council for the Fraud Service and undertakes compliance checks to ensure residents and businesses are claiming the correct discounts and housing benefit entitlement.

Procurement

The Shared Service Arrangement (SSA) that the Council joined on January 1, 2018, co-ordinates all procurement activity at the Council. Through the SSA, the Council gains assurance that the Council's services adhere to procurement regulations when buying and contracting supplies and services.

This service also has a role to ensure that the Council achieves value for money through this process by advising on the best procurement method and market conditions.

ICT and Document Services

This Unit manages and maintains the Council's computer and telecommunications network. They support all services and provide the technological means in order for services to be delivered.

This includes the sourcing and procurement of all hardware and corporate software systems such as email. In addition, the Unit manages third parties which the Council utilise for technical back-up and to maintain servers and network connections.

The Unit also provides the central print and reprographics facility, together with co-ordinating post and document scanning.

Business Change

This is the newest function in the Directorate. It is anticipated that corporate resources for business change will be identified and transferred during 2018/19. This will allow a central unit to be dedicated to support all services to improve processes and make greater use of technology in service provision, applying principles consistently across the Council.

Workforce

As at April 1, 2018, 69 employees were directly employed by the Council and work in Corporate Resources. A breakdown is shown in the following table.

Service Area	Employees
Revenues and Customer Services	39
ICT and Document Services	11
Financial Services (including Payroll)	10
Secretarial Support	3
Property Services	3
Land Charges	2
Strategic Director	1

In terms of workforce development, an annual training and development plan is produced after Performance Development Reviews are held.

Several staff have attained professionally qualified status in accountancy, revenues and property management; other staff possess appropriate vocational and administrative qualifications.

This requires those staff to demonstrate to their professional institute a continuing programme of professional development (CPD). Regular attendance at external training courses takes place throughout the year to maintain standards and to keep pace with changing requirements.

Several staff are designated as homeworkers, in particular in back-office processing for revenues and benefits. This provides flexible working in the modern-era and is considered crucial to motivate and engage high performing staff.

Budgets

The Directorate's Budget for 2018/19 is outlined in the following table. The two previous years are shown for comparison purposes. The amounts represent the **net revenue cost** to the Council of delivering these services, including staffing, supplies and services, etc.

Service Area	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
ICT	656,868	661,571	750,044
Customer Services	592,635	599,566	233,756
Revenues and Benefits	397,813	472,350	499,451
Financial Services	309,186	318,815	298,323
Property Services	242,248	183,713	184,000
Procurement	104,126	105,477	15,207
Internal Audit	103,115	103,115	103,115
Land Charges	88,674	99,517	104,859
Reprographics	78,355	79,188	220,635
Total	2,573,020	2,623,312	2,409,390

The table shows that the total overall cost of the services reduced between 2017/18 and 2018/19 from around £2.62m to £2.41m. This was mainly due to the transfer of several services back to the Council from an outsourcing company following the end of a contract which had run from 2010 to 2017.

Differences in each service area reflect a realignment of budgets between cost centres to reflect the Council's accounting arrangements, together with the allocation of resources which were previously paid via the Contract Fee based on historical spend dating back to 2010.

Additional resources were invested in ICT as part of the savings generated. In addition, the reduction in Procurement is due to the transfer of the service to the Shared Service Arrangement as detailed earlier in the document.

Capital Expenditure

Apart from one-off projects associated with the purchase, sale or planned maintenance of land and buildings, the Directorate is not directly responsible for any on-going capital programmes.

ICT Replacements

The Directorate is responsible for the deployment of the ICT Capital Reserve which is used to upgrade and replace the hardware associated with the computer and telecommunications network.



Service Performance

Key projects are monitored by the Council’s Leadership Team and Service Managers. Projects are broken into quarters to help the Council monitor and manage its performance effectively.

All actions are essential if the Council is going to achieve its ambitions and aspirations. These are complemented by a set of performance measures which help the Council to gauge whether it is meeting outcomes and providing excellent services.

In some instances, proxy measures are be used. These are outside of the Council’s control but provide an indication of the overall health of the District. The number in the Corporate Plan is however small. In addition, some measures are included not as a target, but to gather data as a baseline to assess future targets, for example, the number of visitors using a service.

All projects and measures for Corporate Resources are listed below under the themes of People, Place, Progress and Outcomes and these are shown in the following tables. More detail is provided in the main Corporate Plan.

People measures

Aim	Measure	Annual target 2018/19
Protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges	Average time for processing new Benefit Claims	Less than 18 Days
Protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	Less than 8 Days

People projects

Aim	Project	Outcomes 2018/19
Protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges	Successful roll out of Universal Credit in South Derbyshire	<p>Q1 Infrastructure put in place for shared roll out. Publicise, contact all affected tenants, explore auto payment options and promote transactional bank accounts.</p> <p>Q2 Commence shared postcode roll out in July 2018. Monitor progress and impact.</p> <p>Q3 Publicise and commence roll out on remaining cases. Monitor and maintain tenant engagement in line with initial rollout.</p> <p>Q4 Monitor progress and impact on rent arrears and resources.</p>

Place measures

Aim	Measure	Annual target
<i>Not applicable</i>		

Place projects

Aim	Project	Outcomes
<i>Not applicable</i>		

Progress measures

Aim	Measure	Annual target
<i>Not applicable</i>		

Progress projects

Aim	Project	Outcomes
<i>Not applicable</i>		

Outcomes measures

Aim	Measure	Annual target 2018/19
Maintain Customer Focus	Proportion of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds	At least 80%
Maintain Customer Focus	Call abandonment rate	Lower than 8%

Outcomes projects

Aim	Project 2018/19	Outcomes 2018/19
Maintain financial health	Generate on-going revenue budget savings and identify ways to generate income (<i>overall target is £1m by 2022/23</i>)	<p>Q2 Review Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) following budget out-turn for 2017/18 and updated reserves position.</p> <p>Q3 Analyse actual impact of 100% Business Rates Pilot on MTFP.</p> <p>Q4. Detailed spending review and update projections for New Homes Bonus and Business Rates income following growth analysis.</p>

<p>Minimise business risks and realise the benefits of technological opportunities</p>	<p>Build IT infrastructure resilience to support change and minimise business risks.</p>	<p>Q1 Infrastructure review, including testing for Windows 10 devices.</p> <p>Q1-3 New back-up and disaster recovery process.</p> <p>Q1-2 Refocus ICT structure and operational management.</p> <p>Q2-4 Support channel shift and mobile working projects.</p>
<p>Minimise business risks and realise the benefits of technological opportunities</p>	<p>Agree and deliver business change programme to support core objectives</p>	<p>Q1 Establish Strategic Board for Change Management.</p> <p>Establish Corporate Change Management Group and Project Management Office (PMO).</p> <p>Q2-4 Delivery of digital transformation, business improvement, service reviews and corporate transformation projects.</p> <p>Q4 Establish programme for 2019-2020 to help mitigate £1m estimated Medium Term Financial Plan revenue shortfall.</p>

Service Indicators

In addition to the Corporate Plan, the Directorate also maintain a set of key performance indicators to monitor the progress of its services. These indicators, although more operational, also relate back to the main aims in the Corporate Plan.

For example, the savings target for Procurement is designed to support the key outcome of ‘maintaining financial health’.

The indicators are maintained to ensure that each service area meets its intended outcomes and is a measure of its success. Several of the indicators are governed by statute, whilst others are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The targets are based on current benchmarks and are designed to improve on the performance of previous years.

These indicators are reported to the Finance and Management Committee and are detailed in the following table. On-going performance monitoring includes benchmarking against other local councils where data is available.

Corporate Plan Aim	Measure	Annual target 2018/19
Maintain financial health	Deliver a balanced budget in accordance with the statutory timetable	Balanced budget agreed by the Council on February 27, 2019
Maintain financial health	Produce regular budget monitoring information	Performance against budget reported to the Council on a quarterly basis
Maintain financial health	Through better procurement, generate budget savings directly or through supporting other services	Total cashable savings exceed cost of the Service (£30,000)
Maintain financial health	Collection of Council Tax	In-year Collection Rate of at least 98%
Maintain financial health	Collection of Business Rates	In-year Collection Rate of at least 98%
Maintain financial health	Arrears for Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments	Reduction in the annual Provision for Bad Debts
Maintain financial health	Housing Benefit Subsidy Local Authority Error Rate is below target threshold set by the DWP	Less than 0.48%
Maintain financial health	Identification of Fraud	Value of fraud identified meets service costs of £35,000
Maintain financial health	Lettings of Industrial and Commercial Properties	Achieve 90% occupancy of all units and less than 10% of properties with rent arrears greater than three months
Maintain financial health	Income from Land Searches	Service breaks-even
Good Governance	Produce a draft set of Accounts and Financial Statements for Annual Audit and Inspection	May 31, 2018
Good Governance	Completion of Approved Internal Audit Plan and outcomes reported to the Audit Sub-Committee	At least 90% completed
Customer Focus	Minimise downtime of IT	Downtime is less than 1% over the year
Customer Focus	Prompt payment of invoices for goods and services	97% of undisputed invoices paid within 30-days and within 10-days for local suppliers
Customer Focus	Freedom of Information requests answered within the statutory time limit	98% of requests satisfactorily answered with 20-days

Partnerships and Shared Service Arrangements

The Directorate's significant partnerships are outlined below:

Partnership / Shared Service	Main purpose
Central Midlands Audit Partnership	To deliver the Council's Internal Audit and to share best practice with other partners to strengthen the internal control environment.
Fraud Investigation Service	To prevent and detect fraud and corruption in council services.
Procurement	To ensure compliance with regulations and to generate savings through increased purchasing power.

The Directorate also work in partnership with developers and other stakeholders in order to 'sweat the assets' of the Council where there is mutual benefit in doing so.

Key considerations

Business Change

In order for the Directorate to positively meet opportunities and challenges, it will create and develop innovative solutions which will help to deliver the outcomes communities need and want at a cost the Council can afford. This includes embracing the corporate approach to Business Change and constantly reviewing working practices and use of technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services.

Environmental impact

The Council has attained an internationally recognised environmental standard (ISO 14001) and this is a key aim in the Corporate Plan. Corporate Resources will seek to ensure continual improvement of our environmental performance. For example, the Directorate takes the lead on the Council's Paperlite Strategy, which is reducing the amount of printed material and paper used in service delivery and for operational management.

Managing risks

The process set out in our Risk Management Strategy has been adhered to. The Directorate's risk register is reported to the Finance and Management Committee on a quarterly basis.

Monitoring and review

This Service Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis as part of the Council's Performance Management Framework and will be used throughout the year to manage service delivery.