



Service Plan 2019/2020

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

Introduction

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2021 forms an important part of planning for the future and leads the Council's 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 three directorates - Service Delivery, Corporate Resources and the Chief Executive.

Covering the 2019-2020 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 the Council's collective vision of making 'South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'.

The Directorate 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.

The budget setting process can bring constraints and 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 the Council 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:

- Maintain financial health
- Maintain proper corporate governance
- Maintain a skilled workforce
- Maintain customer focus
- Minimise business risks and realise the benefits of technological opportunities

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 Structure

The Directorate was initially established following a Council restructure in May 2013. Following a review of senior management at the Council in December 2017, the Directorate became responsible for the central support services of the Council headed by the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources).

Following a further review of Senior Management and the creation of Head of Service roles, which was implemented on 1 April 2019, the Directorate became responsible for co-ordinating the use all resources (*people, money, property and IT*) to ensure that these resources of the Council are utilised strategically to support service delivery and deliver the priorities of the Council.

In addition, certain functions were centralised and strengthened corporately by transferring resources internally into a central unit to deliver corporate planning and performance management under a new Organisational Development and Performance Unit. In addition, some resources were also transferred centrally to support business transformation at a corporate level.

The current structure and services of the Directorate was implemented on 1 April 2019, as shown in the following table.

Strategic Director Corporate Resources

Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountancy • Financial Management • Accounts Payable and Receivable • Sundry Debt Collection • Treasury Management • Payroll • Administration of Procurement •
Head of Organisational Development and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources • Communications • Policy and Performance • Health and Safety
Head of Business Change and ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Transformation • ICT Operations • ICT Infrastructure Management • Systems and Data Management • Digital Services
Head of Corporate Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Asset Management • Estates Management • Management of Public Buildings
Head of Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services • Revenues Collection and Enforcement • Benefits Processing and Compliance

Shared Services

In addition to the above services, the Directorate also buys-in services through shared service arrangements, in partnership with other authorities and public agencies. These are:

- Internal Audit through the Central Midlands Audit Partnership
- Prevention and Detection of Fraud with Derby City Council
- Procurement through Chesterfield NHS Trust

The Main Functions of the Directorate

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

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

In addition to finance, the Directorate encompasses other resources such as Land, Property, ICT, together with supporting the Council's workforce, to ensure they are actively informed, engaged and suitably developed to deliver services.

As part of the new structure implemented on 1 April 2019, the Directorate became responsible for assessing and prioritising initiatives in business transformation to deliver efficiency in service provision across the Council, where possible, utilising modern technology and working practices.

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 Customer Services and in Revenues and Benefits. Enhancing the experience of people contacting the Council is a key development area in 2019/20.

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 CIPFA 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. 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.

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.

Following the restructure in April 2019, the Unit has become responsible for the management and maintenance of all public buildings, which previously had been spread across different

functions. The long-term aim is to have a comprehensive Facilities Management Service covering the Council's main public buildings.

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 and accounting for the associated transactions.

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. This includes signposting to the appropriate organisation, if not the Council.

In addition, the Unit processes claims for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Discretionary Housing Payments working with landlords, the DWP and other welfare agencies, particularly where Universal Credit claimants are concerned.

The Unit also bills and collects Council Tax and Business Rates liaising with the Magistrates Court, Enforcement Agents, employers and other agencies to help collect arrears, including housing benefit overpayments.

Home and property inspection visits are carried out by the Unit to help customers with mobility issues and to maintain the Council Tax and Business Rates databases respectively. The Unit also provides weekly updates to, and liaises with, the Valuation Office Agency to keep both the Council Tax Banding and the Rateable Value lists accurately compiled by that organisation.

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 1st January 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

This Unit manages and maintains the Council's computer and telecommunications network. It supports all services and provides 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 who the Council utilise for technical back-up and to maintain servers and network connections, etc.

With effect from April 2019, the Unit has become responsible for delivering the Government's Digital Agenda and supporting all services accordingly.

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

Business Change

As part of the wider ICT Unit, a central team was set up on 1 April 2019 to provide dedicated support for all services to improve processes and make greater use of technology in service provision, applying a business case framework consistently across the Council.

In addition, this team maintains the definitive source of address data within the authority. The functions of street naming and numbering, Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Custodian and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) all operate within this team.

Spatial Data and GIS Technology support service delivery and these are key developments in the coming year as part of delivering Digital Services.

Organisational Development

The aim of this Service Unit is to support business change and help to ensure cohesion in policy direction across departmental barriers to support efficient and effective decision making.

The Unit supports the Leadership Team to drive organisational capability and capacity, to help build a culture of service excellence, high performance, innovation, imagination, loyalty and collaboration across all services.

Corporate planning and performance management, together with communications, which includes PR and media relations, are also centralised within this Unit.

Day-to-day Human Resource management is also delivered by this Unit, supporting service managers to manage their workforce. This includes the provision of a Corporate Health and Safety Advisory Service.

Workforce

As at 1st April 2019, 99 employees were directly employed by the Council to work in Corporate Resources. A breakdown is shown in the following table.

Customer Services	39
Business Change and ICT	17
Organisational Development (incl. HR)	12
Finance	11
Corporate Property (<i>see note</i>)	16
Secretarial Support	3
Strategic Director	1
Total	87

Workforce Development

In terms of workforce development, an annual training and development plan is produced as part of individual performance development reviews. Several staff have attained professionally qualified (Chartered) status in accountancy, revenues, property management and HR and in these instances is an essential competency in order to be appointed into and undertake the role. In senior finance roles, a recognised accountancy qualification is a statutory requirement.

Other staff possess appropriate vocational and administrative qualifications, with several staff currently undertaking academic and work based training to attain qualifications in accordance with their job requirement and personal development.

Several staff are designated as homeworkers, particularly in back-office processing for revenues and benefits. This provides flexible working in the modern-era and is considered important towards motivating and engaging high performing staff.

Budgets

The Directorate's Budget for 2019/20, with a comparison to 2018/19, is outlined in the following table. The amounts represent the **net revenue cost** to the Council of delivering these services, including staffing, supplies and services, etc.

Cost Centre / Service	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
Customer Services	315	323
Revenues and Benefits	371	429
ICT	1,001	1,060
Business Change Support	189	153
Print and Document Services	239	241
Financial Services	425	492
Procurement	30	31
Property Services	187	198
Human Resources	329	374
Policy and Communications	175	150
Total	3,261	3,451

The table shows that the total budgeted cost of the Services increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20 from around £3.26 million to £3.45 million, an increase of approximately £190,000.

This is mainly due to an increase in computer licences (ICT) of £60,000 and an increase in resources in Revenues and Benefits of approximately £40,000. The remaining amount of £90,000 is due to a National agreed pay award of 2% for employees, together with incremental salary increases for staff on career development grades.

Capital Expenditure

Property Services manage approved capital budgets for projects associated with the purchase, sale or major refurbishment of public land and buildings. Beyond 2017/18, there are currently no planned projects, although the Unit became responsible on 1 April 2019 for managing the annual planned maintenance budget of £130,000 for public buildings.

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 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 2019/20
Protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges	Average time for processing new Benefit Claims	Less than 18 Days
As above	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	Less than 8 Days

People projects

Aim	Project	Outcomes 2019/20
Protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges	Successful roll out of Universal Credit (UC) in South Derbyshire	Q1 Embed revised working relationships with Citizens Advice South Derbyshire and City on new claim support. Q2 Plan for managed migration of existing Housing Benefit (HB) working age caseload. Review HB processing performance indicators as a result of UC and DWP timescales.

Place measures

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

Place projects

Aim	Project	Outcomes 2019/20
<i>Improving Community Infrastructure</i>	Capital maintenance programme for investment in public buildings	Q1 Draw up proposed programme, consult and match to resources. Q2 Presentation of five year maintenance plan for approval.

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 2019/20
Maintain a skilled workforce	The average working days lost per employee due to sickness and ill health	Less than 8 days per year
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 2019/20
Maintain financial health	Generate on-going revenue budget savings and identify ways to generate income	Q1 No action required. Q2 Review MTFP following budget out-turn for 2018/19 and updated reserves position.

Minimise business risks and realise the benefits of technological opportunities	Build IT infrastructure resilience to support change and minimise business risks.	<p>Q1 Procurement and commission of virtualised servers and network storage.</p> <p>Q1 Commission of secure mobile device management and new smartphones.</p> <p>Q2 Implementation of new end user computing.</p> <p>Q2 Access to Office 365 collaboration tools.</p> <p>Q1 Review of cloud solution for Revenues and Benefits.</p>
As above	Agree and deliver business change programme to support core objectives	<p>Q1 Housing Service modernisation review.</p> <p>Q2 Installation of Planning and Land Charges System.</p> <p>Q2 Maintenance standards data review.</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 previous year’s performance.

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 2019/20
Maintain financial health	Deliver a balanced budget in accordance with the statutory timetable	Council has agreed to have a balanced budget for 2020/21 by the meeting on 26 th February 2020
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% of total expenditure attracting subsidy
Maintain financial health	Identification of Fraud	Value of fraud identified meets budgeted service costs
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 3 months
Good Governance	Produce a draft set of Accounts and Financial Statements for Annual Audit and Inspection	31st May 2019
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 against the Council.
Procurement	To ensure compliance with regulations and to generate savings through increased purchasing power.

There are also arrangements with Enforcement Agents for Council Tax and Business Rates recovery, together with the DWP and Valuation Office Agency.

The Directorate also works 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 its environmental performance. For example, the Directorate takes the lead on the Council's "Paperlite" strategy which aims to reduce the amount of printed material and paper used in service delivery and for operational management.

Managing risks

The process set out in the Council's Risk Management Framework 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.

