
CORPORATE AND DEPARTMENTAL PLANNING

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Leader and all Cabinet Members
Responsible Director – Lorraine O’Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Council’s four departmental plans in accordance with the corporate and service planning timetable for 2008/09.

Summary

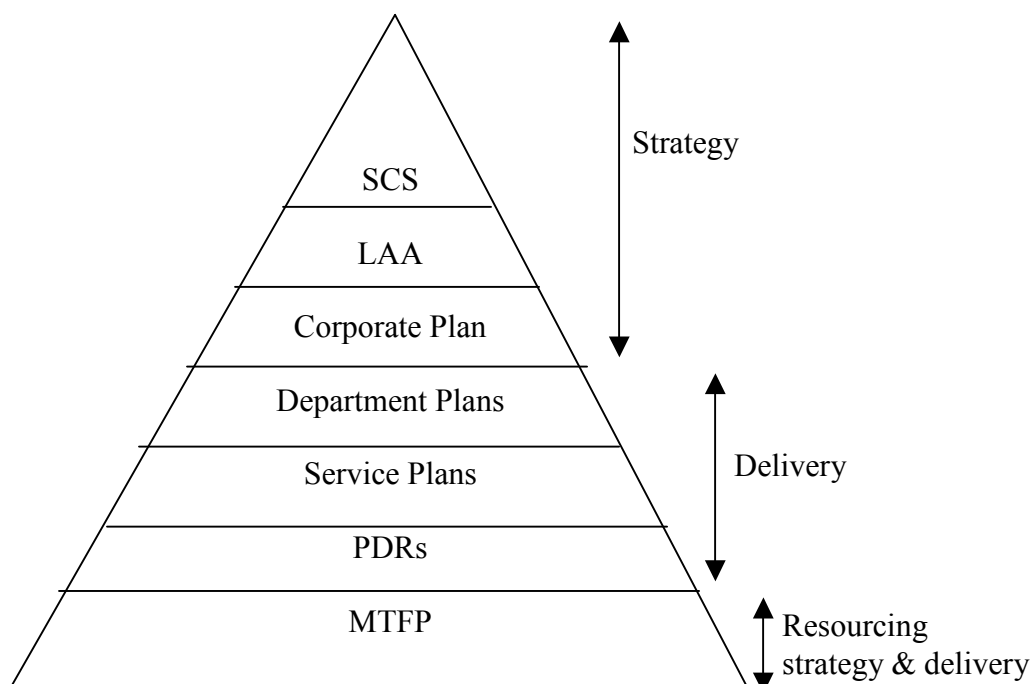
2. The Council’s combined Medium Term Financial Plan and Corporate Plan was approved by Cabinet on the 19th February 2008. This plan is underpinned by department plans, which translate the top-down direction of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and the Corporate Plan into a plan of action for each department. Following council restructuring in 2007/08, relevant plans for the four new departments are appended to this report for approval. These are necessarily detailed as they form the work programmes with milestones, measures and priorities for whole departments.

Information and Analysis

3. Department plans are appended as follows:
 - (a) Chief Executive’s Department (**Appendix 1**);
 - (b) Children’s Services Department (**Appendix 2**);
 - (c) Community Services Department (**Appendix 3**);
 - (d) Corporate Services Department (**Appendix 4**).
4. **Figure 1** below highlights the relationship between the high level vision for the borough and the Council’s strategic and delivery plans. It shows the significance of departmental plans in the wider planning context:
 - (a) The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the high level, long-term vision for the borough for all partners, including the borough council;
 - (b) The LAA is the high-level delivery plan for the SCS. It is a multi-agency 3 year plan that will require all agencies to align and pool resources in order to deliver stretching improvements to outcomes;
 - (c) The Corporate Plan is the council’s overarching plan that translates the issues arising from community planning i.e. the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement; and corporate planning, which is the process through which the authority identifies and addresses those things that help to deliver better services and balance budgets;

- (d) Departmental plans translate the top-down direction of the SCS and LAA into a plan of action for each department. They also address those issues which departments need to deliver better services and balance budgets;
- (e) Service plans in turn translate departmental plans into those relating to services or groups of services. This is a vital stage to ensure that there is widespread ownership of the high level direction;
- (f) PDRs translate priorities and targets to each individual employee's objectives; and
- (g) The MTFP is the means by which all of the above can be brought to reality since it resources the high level vision, the council's part of the LAA and all departmental, service and PDR plans.

Figure 1: Diagram showing the planning Hierarchy of Darlington Borough Council



5. Details on the new Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement for Darlington are the subject of separate Cabinet reports.
6. Government has released details of the new national indicator set of 198 performance measures for consultation. The indicator set is still draft, and as the Local Area Agreement needs to include up to 35 indicators from the national set, target setting is still ongoing. A fully SMART¹ Corporate Plan will be presented to Cabinet on 29th April 2008.
7. Service plans underpin the departmental plans and from these, service planning posters will be produced. All posters will be carefully drafted and will show performance information. Arrangements will continue whereby Scrutiny Committees monitor relevant plans on an ongoing quarterly basis.

¹ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound

Outcome of Consultation

8. Results from residents' surveys and other engagement forums feed directly into the Council's service planning arrangements, informing the development of service priorities. Departmental Plans are based upon the new Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan, themselves having been the subject of extensive and inclusive consultation.

Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

10. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is considered that the attached plans have been drafted in recognition of those requirements and are complementary to meeting the general duty. Each plan has been drafted in consultation with the anti-social behaviour co-ordinator and relevant actions included as appropriate.

Council Policy Framework

11. The issues contained within this report represent a change in the Council's policy framework with the adoption of a new suite of departmental service plans. In particular, they link into the key priorities at a high level with the authority's next stage of organisational development.

Decision Deadline

12. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Conclusion

13. A successful corporate approach to service planning continues to be a vital component of the performance management framework. Departmental and service plans underpin the Corporate Plan in a clear hierarchy of service planning.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that Members adopt the four new departmental plans as outlined in **Appendices 1-4**.

Reasons

15. The recommendation will ensure implementation of the Corporate and Medium Term Financial Plan and comprises part of the Council's performance management arrangements, leading to further service improvement.

Lorraine O'Donnell
Assistant Chief Executive

Background Papers

There are no background papers.

John Bosson: Ext. 2016