
**SERVICE PLANNING 2010-2014:
DEPARTMENTAL PLANS**

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams,
Leader and all Cabinet Members**

Responsible Director – Ada Burns, Chief Executive & Corporate Management Team

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Council's four departmental plans in accordance with the corporate and service planning timetable for 2010 - 2014.

Summary

2. The Council's Medium Term Corporate Plan was approved by Cabinet on the 16 February 2010 and Council on the 25 February 2010. That plan is underpinned by department plans, which translate the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and the Medium Term Corporate Plan into a plan of action for each department. Relevant plans for the four departments have now been prepared for approval.
3. Departmental Plans are necessarily detailed as they form the work programmes with measures and priorities for whole departments and as such are sizeable documents. In order to reduce paperwork, full copies of the four departmental plans have been posted onto the Intranet for reference, <http://intranet/ACEPolicy/ServicePlans2010-14.htm>. Hard copies can however also readily be made available upon request from Democratic Services or the Policy Unit.
4. The four departmental plans are as follows:
 - (a) Community Services Department;
 - (b) Children's Services Department;
 - (c) Chief Executive's Department; and
 - (d) Corporate Services Department.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Cabinet adopt the four new departmental plans.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-

- (a) to contribute to the implementation of the Medium Term Corporate Plan;
- (b) to complete a key part of the Council's performance management arrangements, leading to further service improvement.

Chris Sivers
Assistant Chief Executive

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

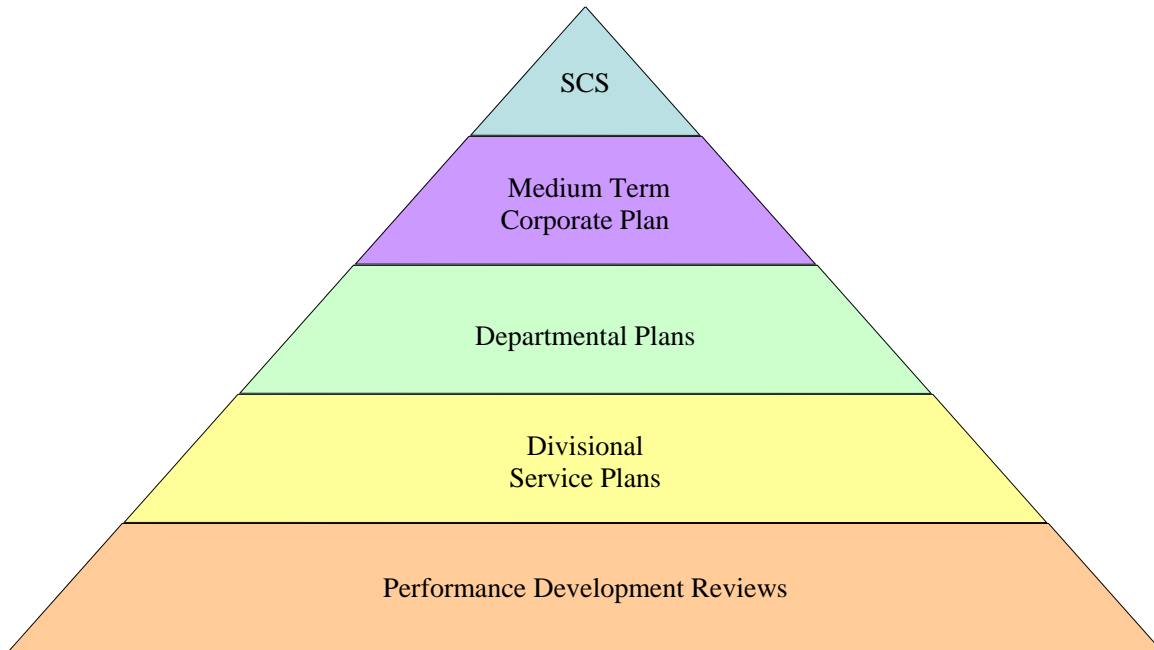
John Bosson: Extension 2016
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S17 Crime and Disorder	The attached plans have been drafted in recognition of this requirement and are complementary to meeting the general duty
Health and Well Being	Certain elements of the attached plans have a direct impact upon the health and well being of the community
Sustainability	The proposals arising from this process will be implemented in accordance with agreed sustainability principles
Diversity	The proposals arising from this process will be implemented in accordance with our diversity duties and objectives
Wards Affected	Departmental Service Plans affect all wards
Groups Affected	All people are affected by our service planning with an emphasis on delivering the One Darlington priority
Budget and Policy Framework	The issues contained within this report do not represent a change in the Council's policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The delivery of our Departmental Service Plans will contribute directly to the implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy
Efficiency	Co-ordination of departmental and inter-agency working in delivery of our service priorities will ensure the most efficient use of resources

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

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



7. **Figure 1** above 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 (SCS) sets out the high level, long-term vision for the borough for all partners, including the borough council;
 - (b) The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the high-level delivery plan for the SCS. It is a multi-agency 3 year plan that requires all agencies to align and pool resources in order to deliver stretching improvements to outcomes;
 - (c) The Medium Term 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 divisional groups of services. This is a vital stage to ensure that there is widespread ownership of the high level direction;
 - (f) Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) translate priorities and targets to each individual employee's objectives.

8. The Council's Medium Term Corporate Plan is underpinned by Department Plans, which translate the top-down direction of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and the approved budget into a plan of action for each department. A full set of departmental plans for 2010-2014 is appended to this report for reference and approval.
9. The Sustainable Community Strategy (One Darlington: Perfectly Placed) and Local Area Agreement were formally adopted in 2008 and provide the framework for all subsequent planning documents including the above.
10. With effect from this year Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) methodology has been introduced as the principal tool for developing our business planning documents. The Corporate Plan 2010-14, approved by Cabinet as a component of the MTFP, and the Department Plans have been formulated on the basis of a transitional introduction of OBA. Full roll-out during the next year will include LSP partners in setting whole area outcomes and priorities to be translated into detailed action plans within partner organisations.
11. OBA has been adopted in response to a series of factors that require a sharper focus on delivering the outcomes of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed, and on ensuring that our short term service planning actions are making a positive contribution to long-term outcomes. These factors include:
 - (a) The restraint on public sector spending, and the need to obtain the best possible value from available resources by addressing the local priorities agreed with partners.
 - (b) The Total Place initiative – pilot schemes in 13 local authority areas have just been completed, promoting a whole area approach to public sector planning and spending, with a co-ordinating role for councils across public sector organisations, working together to find new ways of delivering better services tailored to local needs within the constraints of limited funding.
 - (c) Comprehensive Area Assessment, complementing the whole area approach of Total Place with an annual judgement of how well all the public services are working in an area to deliver locally determined outcomes, and of how effective the council is in leading outcome delivery across all delivery organisations.
 - (d) Proposals have also been aired for strengthening the role of councils in scrutinising and challenging other non-elected public services, empowering and placing elected councillors at the centre of decision-making across all public services.
12. These factors add up to the emergence of a new role for the council, and the new Business Model is being designed around this role. The adoption of OBA, embedding it as the core service planning tool, and applying it to the agreement of outcomes and priorities across the LSP, will be a significant step in the roll-out of the Business Model.
13. All 188 national performance indicators have been incorporated into our performance management framework. The key outcome indicators included in the Corporate Plan will form a basket of our priority indicators, with performance reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis in accordance with established practice.

14. Risk management forms an integral part of the service planning process at departmental level to guide the work of subordinate plans and to maintain an overview of new and emerging risks at a strategic level.
15. Individual 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 to allow teams to plan their work. An important step in moving towards an outcome based service planning framework has been taken this year, by consolidating our service planning at divisional level. This has reduced the number of service plans from 24 to 14, with each plan having a comparable scope and weight. This will help in co-ordinating proposals across service plans.
16. Scrutiny Committees fulfil a valuable role in the process by regularly reviewing those service plans relevant to their areas of work. Arrangements will continue whereby Scrutiny Committees monitor relevant plans on an ongoing quarterly basis.

Conclusions

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

Outcome of Consultation

18. 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 Sustainable Community Strategy and Medium Term Corporate Plan, themselves having been the subject of extensive and inclusive consultation.