

Darlington Borough Council

Medium Term Corporate Plan 2010-14

One Darlington : Perfectly Placed
The Council's delivery and funding proposals



An inclusive approach

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Foreword

Welcome to Darlington Borough Council's Corporate Plan for 2010-14. Darlington is a place of distinctive character with a strong sense of identity, a place that local people cherish. It is also a place that has changed significantly in recent years, with ambitious programmes of investment in the local economy, schools, transport, housing and neighbourhood renewal. And, most significantly for this plan, it is a place with a bold vision for the future rooted in a confident, enterprising past.

That bold new vision, 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed', was adopted by Darlington Partnership 18 months ago. It has proved highly effective in galvanising the partnership working between sectors and agencies needed to continue to deliver quality of life improvements in the borough. This Corporate Plan shows how the Council will contribute to the vision over the next four years.

Our proposals build on the good work of recent years. Since 2003 the local economy has been one of the most improved in the UK; educational achievement is at its highest ever level; crime is falling year-on-year; the revitalised town centre continues to be successful and popular; our community is a cohesive place in which people from different backgrounds get on well together; and overall satisfaction ratings are amongst the top 25% in the country.

This plan marks an important transition towards new ways of working in response to the challenging impact of the economic recession on public sector finances. Our new Business Model aims to transform the role of the Council, to one of leadership and co-ordination across the public sector as a whole, ensuring that high quality services continue to be provided and that quality of life for everybody in the borough continues to improve, whilst living within our means as an organisation.

These new ways of working revolve around four key functions. We will:

- Champion the interests of citizens and business, listening, understanding and acting on the needs and aspirations of everybody in the borough;
- Promote the borough, and secure the best possible outcomes for Darlington within the sub-region, region, nationally and in Europe;
- Ensure the provision of high quality services, acting to ensure that what is provided is right but being more flexible about how it is provided and by whom – the Council's role as a direct service provider will reduce in favour of commissioning and procuring services from the best possible provider
- Supporting strong partnerships to set a vision and direction for the borough and for public services, steering provision across the public, private and voluntary sectors in response to our understanding of local needs and aspirations.

The new business model will drive the next stage of our organisational development, and will be progressively developed and implemented over the next four years (the period covered by this plan). It is described in Section 1 of this document, and is already being developed through a programme of service reviews.

The overall purpose of these changes is to ensure that the Council remains focused on delivering the outcomes set out in One Darlington : Perfectly Placed for the benefit of everybody in Darlington, focusing on the One Darlington priority of narrowing the gaps in prosperity, health, attainment and life chances that exist across the borough. This focus is being sharpened with the introduction of a new planning methodology, Outcome Based Accountability. This is being piloted by the Council in the development of this plan and associated service plans, with the intention of rolling it out fully across Darlington Partnership next year.

We are confident that these changes, set out in this plan, will enable the Council to continue to play its part in creating 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed'.

Councillor John Williams
Leader of the Council

Ada Burns
Chief Executive

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2010-14

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Introducing the Corporate Plan

1. This is Darlington Borough Council's overall delivery and funding plan for the period 2010-2014. It shows how the Council will contribute to the delivery of the long-term vision for the borough, 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed', over the next four years.
2. The plan has been prepared as we respond to the effects of the most severe economic recession in many years. As this plan is being prepared there is a great deal of uncertainty about recovery and future economic prospects, but what is apparent is the long-term and very challenging impact of the recession on public sector finances, with severe restraints on income streams combined with increasing costs as demand for welfare and support services increases.
3. Last year's Corporate Plan anticipated the need for ever greater efficiency to maintain progress on the vision with fewer resources, whilst acknowledging that Darlington Borough Council is already rated as one of the best in the country for delivering value for money. In the intervening year it has become clear that as a small, high performing organisation, the Council has already achieved most of the available efficiency savings. Continuing to attempt to squeeze more out of less whilst seeking to retain the current organisational and service model is unlikely to match up to the financial challenge.
4. That particular challenge is only part of the changing environment to which the Council must respond. The past year has seen further government policy developments that will consolidate the strategic role of local authorities in leading the improvement of their areas, overseeing and co-ordinating all public service organisations and public spending, to address local needs with integrated strategies and services. These changes, outlined in Section 1 of this document, are aimed at securing improved services, tailored to local needs, at less cost. The important emphasis in these changes is in focusing on how public services co-operate to achieve outcomes for the whole local authority area, instead of focusing on how well individual public service organisations, like the Council, police or health service, work in isolation.
5. Darlington Borough Council is responding to these combined strategic and financial challenges with the development of a new Business Model. The model is also outlined in Section 1 of this document. It is designed to provide a comprehensive and proactive answer to the challenging environment over the next decade. It will enable the Council to ensure that Darlington people continue to receive first class services, and that the improvements envisaged in 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' are achieved, whilst operating within the financial constraints anticipated throughout the period covered by this plan.
6. An important development introduced in the preparation of this plan will support the stronger focus on delivering better outcomes for the whole borough. Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) is a planning tool that will focus the attention of the Council and its partners on making sure that detailed actions and improvements contribute to the overall One Darlington : Perfectly Placed outcomes that we want to achieve. OBA will help to eliminate activities that don't make a strong contribution, so that our limited resources can be devoted to those activities that make the greatest contribution to overall outcomes. OBA is outlined in Section 2.

Section 1: Darlington Borough Council

The Council and the Community

7. Like any organisation Darlington Borough Council has its own distinctive character and culture. In Darlington's case these qualities are considerable strengths as it works to fulfil its role in leading and co-ordinating the delivery of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed.
8. The Council was created as a unitary authority on 1st April 1997, but it inherited a culture of service to the community that goes back into the 19th century. The vision of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed recognises the historic legacy of ideas, enterprise, innovation and philanthropy that have created the unique place that is Darlington today, and the Council's own history, culture and ethos are inseparable from that of the place it serves.
9. This long relationship is important today. Whereas many local government units are artificial constructs imposed on the areas they serve, in Darlington the remarkable continuity between the place and its governance arrangements is a strong foundation for the future. The strong sense of community identity, of borough and Council as a cohesive entity, was instrumental in the winning of unitary status in 1997.
10. This heritage is reflected in the closeness of today's Council to the community it serves, strengthened by the development of locality working, working with community partnerships in the most deprived parts of the borough, and in the strong commitment to listening to and learning from local people through effective community engagement. This closeness engenders confidence in policy and decision making, and is also reflected in the passionate commitment and loyalty of Members and staff to the well-being of the borough.
11. Darlington is the third smallest unitary authority in the country in terms of the population it serves and is a compact, lean organisation, but these characteristics seem to reinforce the qualities of cohesion and identity. As a result they become strengths, supporting big ideas, ambitions and achievements, and an enviable record of successful partnership working.
12. These are not just fine words – the record of progress speaks for itself. Some of our recent achievements are headlined in the next section, but they represent just the latest chapter in a story of success going back several years. The local economy has been transformed, with around £450M of private sector investment since 2003, levered in by £54M of public funding; 2000 new jobs have been created and average wage levels increased by 42% from the lowest in the Tees Valley to the highest.
13. Education provides a similar picture of transformational change, with pupil attainment at its highest ever level and huge investment in schools, including £57M secured this year through the Building Schools for the Future programme to invest in Branksome, Longfield and Hurworth Schools. Deprivation has been tackled and reduced despite Darlington not having access to the targeted government funding that similar areas have had. Crime levels have been reduced year-on-year thanks to a partnership with the Police that was acknowledged nationally as a model that others could learn from. And now joint working with the NHS is starting to produce results in tackling obesity and reducing smoking.
14. This plan builds on the close relationship of Council and community. It is inspired and driven by the strong culture of community service running through the organisation. The ethos of 'Team Darlington', a one Council, one team approach, with shared ownership, accountability and a shared desire to do the best possible job for the people of Darlington, is instilled throughout the workforce, and is again a quality that is served by being a small organisation that is close to the community. This is especially important as we face up to difficult economic times and the transition to new ways of working through the new Business Model, described later in this section. The 'can do' mentality, evident in Darlington's history of enterprise and innovation, is at the heart of the Council's commitment to maintain a positive direction of travel and continue to improve quality of life for everyone living and working in Darlington.

Achievements

15. A selection of some of our key achievements and progress since the preparation of the last Corporate Plan is offered below, to provide an overview of what the Council has delivered to contribute to the One Darlington : Perfectly Placed vision. The selection is arranged under the five delivery themes of the vision. The structure of the vision is outlined in Section 2.

Prosperous Darlington

16. Whilst economic circumstances have affected investment plans globally, progress continues on some of the major development projects within the Darlington Gateway Strategy:
- Progress continues on the Central Park project, with £9.8M of One NorthEast funding and £6M from English Partnerships being invested in infrastructure and expected to attract £200M private sector investment in offices, 600 new homes, and conference facilities, in a landmark development alongside the East Coast Mainline.
 - A University campus within Central Park is being progressed with Teesside University, and has now received planning permission, with work planned to begin during the summer of 2010.
 - The first phase (Feethams) of the Town Centre Fringe project has progressed, with an agreement of a development brief and securing of the former bus depot site for incorporation into the project; a contract with DCSF is now in place for development of a new office building as a replacement for DCSF's Mowden Hall premises; a new public square will be delivered as a component of the office development. £117,000 has been secured for the next phase of the Masterplan.
 - Funding of £250,000 has been secured for the final feasibility work for the Tees Valley Metro, and regional funding of £9M has been secured for a new Metro station at Bank Top, and of £5M for a new station at Durham Tees Valley Airport.
 - The Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement project will bring £68M of investment in transport in the Tees Valley, and £11M in Darlington. The project has achieved Programme Entry Status, meaning it is effectively a live project, and approval of the detailed Business Case is expected imminently.
17. Unemployment rates have increased nationally, regionally and locally during the recession. However, Darlington is riding out the recession in much better shape than other parts of the region, and especially other boroughs within the Tees Valley. This may be due to the extent to which the local economy has diversified into a mixed services economy, and is perhaps less dependent on larger and more vulnerable manufacturing industries than some areas. Unemployment has, of course, gone up, but to a significantly lesser extent than elsewhere. On the downside, unemployment has gone up most amongst less skilled workers and in the more deprived neighbourhoods, so that the gap between the wards with the highest and the lowest unemployment rates, which had been halved between 2003 and 2007, has now gone back to its former scale.
- The Job Seekers' Allowance claimant rate was 5.2% in November 2009, compared to 6.3% in the Tees Valley, and 5.6% in Stockton, the borough with which Darlington was most comparable pre-recession.
 - People qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above, at 31.1% in 2007, is above the Tees Valley, regional and national averages, and a 38.8% improvement since 2003 – 50.6% of people have an NVQ3 or 4 qualification, 40.2% more than in 2003.
 - Darlington achieved the largest growth (5.6%) in the region in Gross Value Added per capita between 2006 and 2007 (the latest year for which local data available); Darlington's GVA per capita is 90.6% of the UK average, and second only to Tyneside in the region at 92.0% of UK average.
 - Overall economic activity rates are 78% (2008), the highest in the Tees Valley and above regional and national averages.

- Overall employment rate was 73.9% (2008), the highest in the Tees Valley and above regional and national averages.
- £160,000 has been secured through the Single Programme Worklessness Project to support unemployed people back into work.
- The Council played a significant role in the creation of the Darlington Credit Union, including securing £30,000 of funding; the Credit Union was launched in December 2009 to provide savings and affordable credit facilities for local residents and small businesses.
- £370,500 was secured from the Future Jobs Fund to provide 57 jobs for local young people.
- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment, highlighting 'One Darlington' strengths, acknowledged that new jobs have been brought to the area and that 'Into Work' programmes have been effective in improving employment rates in the most deprived areas.

Aspiring Darlington

- The 2009 GCSE results were the best ever in Darlington, with 51.1% of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths, up from 47.7% in 2008.
- Haughton, a National Challenge School, secured an improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades, including English and Maths, from 18.9% in 2008 to 42% in 2009. Not including English and Maths, the proportion gaining 5+A*-C grades at Haughton rose from 61% to 75%.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the number of children achieving 78 points (the Threshold Attainment level) increased by 2.5% (3.2% in Council establishments) to 50.6%; this is better than regional and national averages. The lowest scoring 20% of children have improved by 6.7%.
- Key Stage 2 results showed a significant improvement in Darlington's ranked position against other local authorities. Overall Darlington is ranked 11th against all English authorities and 5th in Maths.
- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment, highlighting 'One Darlington' strengths, recognised that educational standards are improving with better exam results and fewer exclusions.
- The CAA found that exam results for children at age 11 are better than for those of similar authorities, whilst they are as good as the national average for 16 year olds, marking significant improvements over recent years.
- Partners' success in achieving 'outstanding' assessments for two local colleges are complemented by the increasing number of 16 to 18 year olds who are in employment, education or training, with good rates of exam success and qualifications by the age of 19.
- Ofsted's assessment of Darlington's Children's Services found that they are 'performing well'; there are many good schools and outstanding sixth form provision; there is good provision for Safeguarding Children, and the services for Looked After Children and the Council's Fostering Agency are also good.
- £57M has been secured through the Building Schools for the Future programme to invest in improving Branksome, Longfield and Hurworth Schools. Once this investment is completed all the borough's secondary schools will have been improved, with Haughton Education Village and Eastbourne School (now St. Aidan's Academy) completely rebuilt and with significant remodelling of the others, to provide modern learning environments
- As well as the £57M BSF funding, Darlington was allocated £37.6M for 2008/09 and 2009/10 for capital investment in schools. Darlington was selected as one of 23 regional pathfinders for the Primary Capital Programme, with £6.5M allocated for the replacement of North Road Primary School. A further £12.544M was allocated for the Primary Strategy for Change over the two years, for improvements to 17 primary schools across the borough. All primary schools will then have had significant investment to maintain fitness, with six new primary schools built,

plus North Road and the Phoenix Centre (Pupil Referral Unit), and major refurbishment to five other primaries.

Healthy Darlington

- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment, highlighting 'One Darlington' strengths, highlighted the results being achieved from actions to tackle child obesity, including increasing breastfeeding rates.
- Efforts to increase the number of smoking quitters are making progress, and fewer people are now smoking.
- In terms of 'Perfectly Placed' strengths, the Comprehensive Area Assessment highlights the very high standard of Council housing, good services for homeless people, and improvements to facilities for Gypsies and Travellers.
- The Care Quality Commission has assessed Darlington's Adult Social Care Services as 'performing well', with six out of the seven assessment strands also assessed as 'Performing Well'.

Greener Darlington

- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment, highlighting 'Perfectly Placed' strengths, acknowledges that people are happy with the local area, and particularly with parks and open spaces.
- The Local Motion national sustainable travel demonstration project was completed; it has succeeded in encouraging more people to choose sustainable transport modes, and in reducing car journeys, with fewer children travelling to school by car.
- The Council has succeeded in securing European funding to enable work on increasing sustainable travel to continue, and is sharing its expertise on sustainable travel and social marketing techniques, hosting a national conference in May 2009, and delivering a conference paper in Delhi, India
- A re-tendering exercise for Supported Bus Services secured financial savings whilst extending the range of supported services.
- Over 8,000 local school children were engaged in sustainability issues through two Medal Motion campaigns – 'Tour of Europe' and 'Race to the South Pole'.
- The take over of on-street parking management responsibilities through Civil Parking Enforcement, requiring a local Act of Parliament, has made good progress, and will result in a single, improved regime for managing and enforcing both on-street parking and car parks.
- The Council has successfully used Government funding streams to increase the availability of affordable houses.
- The new Design of Development Supplementary Planning Document, part of the Local Development Framework was adopted in July 2009, and has been recognised by the Woodland Trust as national good practice for its handling of nature conservation issues, and won an award from Durham Wildlife Trust on the same basis.
- £850,000 of Heritage Lottery 'Parks for the People' funding has been secured for restoration and improvement of the Denes.

Safer Darlington

- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment, highlighting 'Perfectly Placed' strengths, highlights the fact that overall crime levels are reducing. Between March 2007 and March 2008, total crime reduced by 17%, and the downward trajectory has continued in 2008/09.
- The number of young people entering the Youth Justice system reduced for the first time in 2008/09.

Organisational Development and Improvement

- In the final round of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, before it made way for the new Comprehensive Area Assessment, the Audit Commission judged the Council to be a 4 Star authority that was Improving Strongly, the best possible combination of judgements.
- A fundamental review of the Local Area Agreement (the short term agreement with Government for delivery of the long term vision of 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed') was undertaken, and refreshed targets were agreed with Government Office; no areas of weakness were identified.
- The first Comprehensive Area Assessment resulted in an organisational assessment of 'Performing Well, with score of 3 out of 4 for both Use of Resources and Managing Performance. The outcomes for both the Council and the wider Partnership were successful.
- The first national Place Survey found that people in Darlington are generally happier with the area they live in than their counterparts across the Tees Valley; 79% of survey respondents said they were satisfied with Darlington as a place to live, the highest rating in the Tees Valley and above the average for the region; The response on 11 out of 18 questions was above average for the Tees Valley.
- The Council opted in to the Sustainable Communities Act, and put forward three bids for powers to pursue innovative approaches to sustainability.
- A new Compact has been developed to facilitate effective partnership working between the public and voluntary sectors, to improve the delivery of 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' outcomes.
- Already one of the two best Councils nationally for Value for Money, further progress has been made in improving efficiency and making progress towards savings targets; the Financial Management and Efficiency Board (FMEB) has been put in place to monitor and drive progress on planned efficiency savings.
- The Xentrall Shared Services Partnership with Stockton Council has been consolidated and is now delivering the planned savings and service improvements; savings are on target whilst services in areas such as ICT have been reviewed, and improvement proposals are being implemented
- Progress is being made in enhancing the customer experience, with a new contract now in place to deliver an effective and value for money service that is increasing the number of customer requests that are completed at the first point of contact.
- The Council has introduced a range of initiatives to broaden democratic engagement and encourage interest, particularly in young people, in democracy. 'I'm a Councillor, get me out of here' has generated more interaction in Darlington than anywhere else in the country, and schools events such as Town Hall Treasure Hunts have been very successful.

The Changing Context for Corporate and Service Planning

18. Three circumstances are of overriding significance in reshaping the context for corporate and service planning at the present time. These are:
- The challenging prospects for public sector finances arising from the recession;
 - The evolving role for local authorities as 'place shaping' leaders of public sector investment and services in their areas, reinforced by recent government policy initiatives; and
 - The local imperative to respond to the changing financial and national policy environment in ways that sharpen the focus on delivering the key outcomes needed to make progress towards the vision of 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed'.

The Economic Context

19. Twelve months ago the Council, like the rest of the country, faced the future with great uncertainty as economic recession reached depths that most of the population had never previously experienced. There is a great deal of uncertainty about future economic prospects, and whilst some commentators suggest that the worst may be over it is unlikely that we will return to pre-recession conditions as people adjust to a much more rigorous, risk-averse credit and mortgage environment.
20. There is rather more certainty that the prospects for public sector finances will remain very challenging for the foreseeable future. The Government has invested heavily in shoring up the national banking system during the recession and this debt has to be repaid. The uncertainty lies in the measures that will be adopted to clear the debt, and local authorities must plan for the future against this background of uncertainty. The Chancellor's December 2009 Pre-Budget Report did little to clarify the detail of how public sector savings will be achieved, whilst substantially increasing local government's costs through the changes to National Insurance. Spending on health, education and policing will be protected, but all other areas of central and local government will face substantial cuts in funding, with commentators speculating that they could amount to 15% over the next four years. What is clear is that the assumption built into our previous Medium Term Financial Plan of a 2% annual increase in grant now appears unrealistic.
21. Greater certainty will come with the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in 2010. In the meantime, our own assessments suggest that the Council may need to reduce its non-schools budgets by 11% (approximately £21.7M) by 2013/14 – this projected reduction includes current cost reduction and efficiency proposals but was postulated before the Pre-Budget Report. The budget proposals summarised in Section 5 of this document represent our staged approach towards achieving this level of spending reduction.

The Strategic Context

22. The evolving national policy context sets a clear direction of travel for the future role of local authorities as strategic leaders, co-ordinating planning and investment across all public sector organisations to achieve agreed outcomes. Recent policy announcements consolidate this future 'place shaping' role as being focused on pursuing the well-being of the whole area. Three key strands of emerging Government policy are of particular significance:
 - Strengthening Local Democracy – the Government recently completed its consultation on draft proposals to strengthen the role of democratically elected Councils, notably in being empowered to scrutinise, challenge, influence and shape other public services, placing Councils and elected Councillors at the centre of decision-making in the community across all public services
 - The Total Place initiative, currently being piloted in 13 local authority areas, dovetails with CAA by promoting a 'whole area' approach to delivering better services at less cost. The economic recession is reinforcing the need for the public sector to work collectively to find radical solutions that will deliver better services tailored to local needs within the constraints of limited public sector funding.
 - Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) assesses the effectiveness of public services in delivering locally determined outcomes, and of the Council in working with its partners to meet the needs of local people. The Council is no longer assessed in isolation, but for its effectiveness in leading the delivery of outcomes across all delivery organisations.
23. These three components – legislative proposals for empowering Councils to be whole area 'place shapers', the piloting of models for performing that 'Total Place' role focused on co-ordinating investment across the public sector, and the whole area assessment framework – give clear pointers to the way that local authorities are expected to work in future.

Local Priorities

24. The ways of working outlined above will be progressed through Darlington Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership) which brings together all the key organisations in the borough, across the public, private and third sectors, to address the outcomes that need to be delivered to continue to improve Darlington as a place and to narrow the gaps in prosperity, health, attainment and general well-being that are evident across the borough.
25. This partnership working is guided by the vision for the borough's long-term future, 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' (the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)). The vision embodies the outcomes that the partners have agreed as necessary for long-term improvement in Darlington.
26. The Council is taking steps in the preparation of this Corporate Plan and its associated service plans to strengthen the focus on delivering the SCS outcomes. A new planning methodology, Outcome Based Accountability (OBA), has been introduced, to support us to embed the outcomes at the heart of our service planning. OBA will be rolled out across the Partnership during 2010, and used to reach agreement amongst partners on the priorities that need to be tackled to make the desired progress. OBA is outlined in more detail in Section 3.
27. The need to strengthen the focus on local outcomes is consolidated by the changes outlined above. The place shaping role can only be fully discharged through such a focus, whilst the squeeze on public sector finance demands that we get the most out of the available resources by investing them on the agreed outcomes. The recession demands that the public sector works collectively to find radical solutions that will deliver better services tailored to local needs within the constraints of limited public sector funding.

Organisational Development Strategy

The Council's New Business Model

28. Darlington Borough Council is acknowledged as one of the best in the country for value for money, and over recent years has achieved most of the efficiency savings available to it within the existing service and organisational structure, through its 'Leading Edge' Organisational Development Strategy (described below). Whilst we will continue to drive forward efficiency savings, the scale of budget savings required over the life time of this Corporate Plan is unlikely to be achieved by this means alone without impacting on the scope and quality of services to the public.
29. The need to achieve more, to maintain delivery against the key local outcomes, with less resource points towards the continuing development of a more strategic leadership role (towards which government policy is anyway leading us), combined with more innovative approaches to service delivery. The future Council is likely to be a very different organisation structured around some key strategic functions. Direct service delivery will be less important than ensuring that what is delivered is of high quality and tailored to local needs, with a flexible approach to how services are commissioned, procured and delivered by the best available providers. The future will undoubtedly see a smaller organisation leading the delivery of outcomes through partnerships. The Council's roll will be to ensure provision and assure quality.
30. A new business model has been adopted to match these demanding times, as illustrated overleaf. The model is built around four key functions (describing what we will deliver) that together address the vision of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed. This new model will be progressively implemented over the life time of this plan to replace the Council's previous business model, 'Leading Edge', which is described in the next section. The four functions are summarised below.
 - **Championing the interests of citizens and business** – this is carried forward from the Leading Edge model as a continuing critical role, but with greater clarity about the need to strengthen our understanding of Darlington and its people, and to specifically refer to business. At the heart of this function is the need for enhanced 'corporate knowledge', up to date information, accessible across the organisation and its partners, about the needs and aspirations of local people and how these are changing, engaging with residents and businesses, ensuring they are heard and they know that their views are taken into account, empowering and enabling them to improve their lives and prospects and to contribute to the

development of resilient communities that can do more to meet their own needs and provide solutions for what can no longer be publicly funded. There is a particular emphasis on the most vulnerable, and on securing equitable outcomes across the borough.

- **Promoting the borough** – also carried forward from Leading Edge, this function continues to be a critical expression of the place shaping role. It centres on pursuing the best possible outcomes for Darlington from external relationships and partnerships, notably within the regional governance structures and within the Tees Valley City Region. The emerging financial context affords even more importance to this function, in terms of securing resources from external support and funding streams, and from private sector inward investment to underpin vital projects and programmes.
- **Ensuring the provision of high quality services to the public** – where Leading Edge emphasised both direct service provision by the Council and influencing the services provided by others, this distinction is no longer considered material as the Council moves towards guiding and shaping ‘what’ is provided irrespective of whether the Council or another organisation is the provider. The approach is now more flexible in recognising the wide range of ways in which services might be delivered in future. It also reflects the intention embodied in ‘Strengthening Local Democracy (outlined under the Strategic Context heading above) that local authorities’ democratic accountability will be extended to oversee public services delivered by non-elected bodies.
- **Supporting strong partnerships to set a vision and direction for the borough and for public services** – this is a new function not previously recognised in Leading Edge, but a vital one for the strategic local authority, working through partnerships to translate our understanding of local needs and aspirations into long-term vision and service specifications that provide a clear direction of travel for the place and its people.



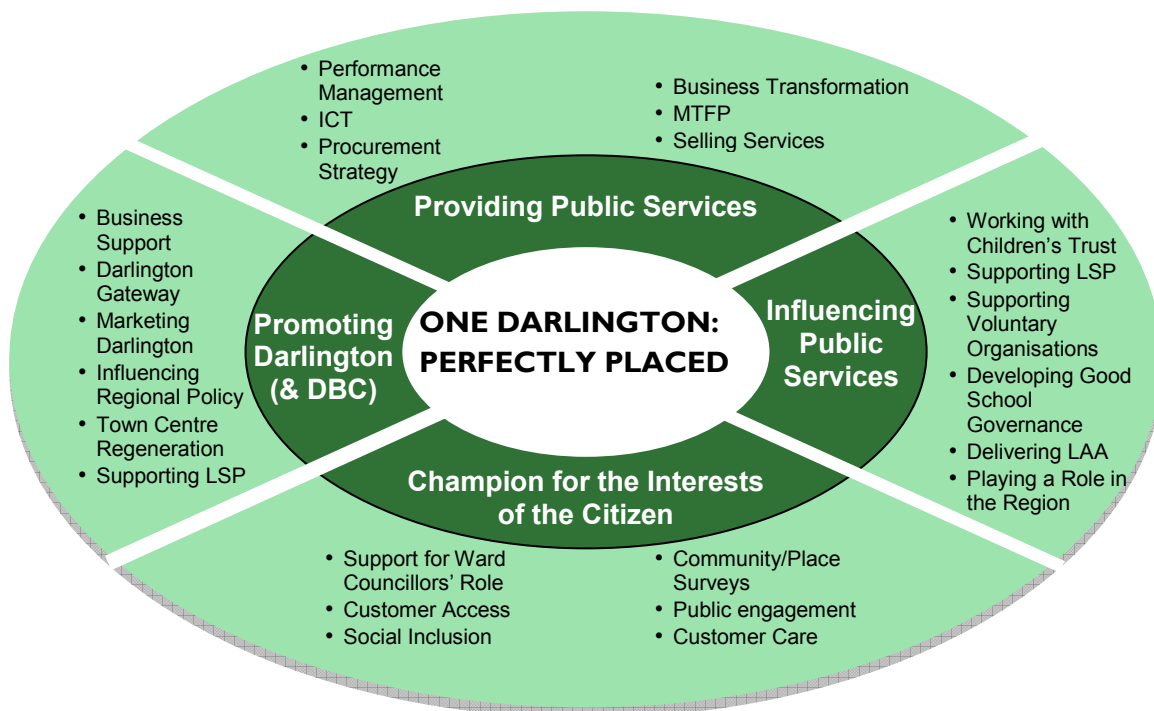
Figure: Darlington Borough Council's Future Business Model

31. As well as describing what we will deliver through the four functions, the Business Model establishes three strategic strands pointing to how we will support delivery. These are:
- Continue to focus on securing efficiency in every aspect of business and activity through business reviews, and process re-engineering.
 - Ensure that service and investment planning and prioritisation is directed at delivering the outcomes set by One Darlington: Perfectly Placed; our planning focus and methodology, co-ordinated with partner agencies, needs to direct resources to where they will be most effective in addressing local issues and needs.

- Develop a more mixed economy in terms of the arrangements for the delivery of services, based upon whatever vehicle - Council, partnership, contractor - can best release savings and secure quality service delivery.
32. Translating the new business model into a fully functioning business organisation involves far more than simply reshaping our structures to focus on the above ways of working. The model demands new skills and capacities, notably in analytical capability to support our understanding of local communities and their needs, and in service commissioning, procurement and contract management. On the other hand, the existing Council has much experience in strategic planning and visioning, and in securing good outcomes for Darlington by promoting the borough to external audiences.
33. The work of migrating to the new business model has already started through a range of service reviews, notably of the Policy, Performance and Partnerships functions across the Council and of our community engagement and community partnerships, and will continue throughout the life of this plan. Section 4 includes relevant proposals.

The ‘Leading Edge’ Organisation Development Strategy (ODS)

34. This plan rightly headlines the new Business Model as the focus for the future, but the current ‘Leading Edge’ ODS is also outlined here because it will continue to provide our organisational development framework through to at least the end of 2010, and will be the strategic framework within which the initial stages of the new Business Model are developed. The new Business Model in its current form, as outlined above, is simply a model of the new ways of working needed to meet the external challenges now coming into focus. The model will be developed into a change programme that will take over from Leading Edge as our organisational development strategy in one to two years.



The ‘Egg’ illustration of the Leading Edge Business Model

35. Leading Edge was developed four years ago following the successful conclusion of the previous development phase of ‘Striving for Excellence’. Leading Edge has taken us forward from the ‘Excellent’ status conferred through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, and provided the vehicle for enabling the Council to position itself at the ‘leading edge’ of local authorities across the country. The programme has focused on business transformation in some key areas of operations whilst driving efficiencies and savings across the whole organisation.

36. Much has been achieved through Leading Edge: for example, the Council has achieved recognition as one of the top two unitary local authorities nationally for value for money; the Xentrall Shared Services Partnership with Stockton Borough Council has been established and is delivering excellent support services whilst planned to achieve savings of £7.4M across both Councils over 10 years; and the foundations of a new approach to community engagement have been laid, incorporating the Talking Together programme.
37. The 'egg' diagram on the previous page illustrates the Leading Edge approach. It appears similar to the structure of the new Business Model, but there are some significant differences. The changing emphasis in service delivery towards strategic leading and quality assurance irrespective of service provider, described above, is the most notable change in the new model. Equally, the Council's leadership of partnerships to set vision and strategic direction is now central to its role, and this will be reinforced by national policy and legislation, but it was not recognised in the Leading Edge Model. The third significant difference is in recognising, in the new model, that the Council needs to specifically champion the interests of business as well as citizens.

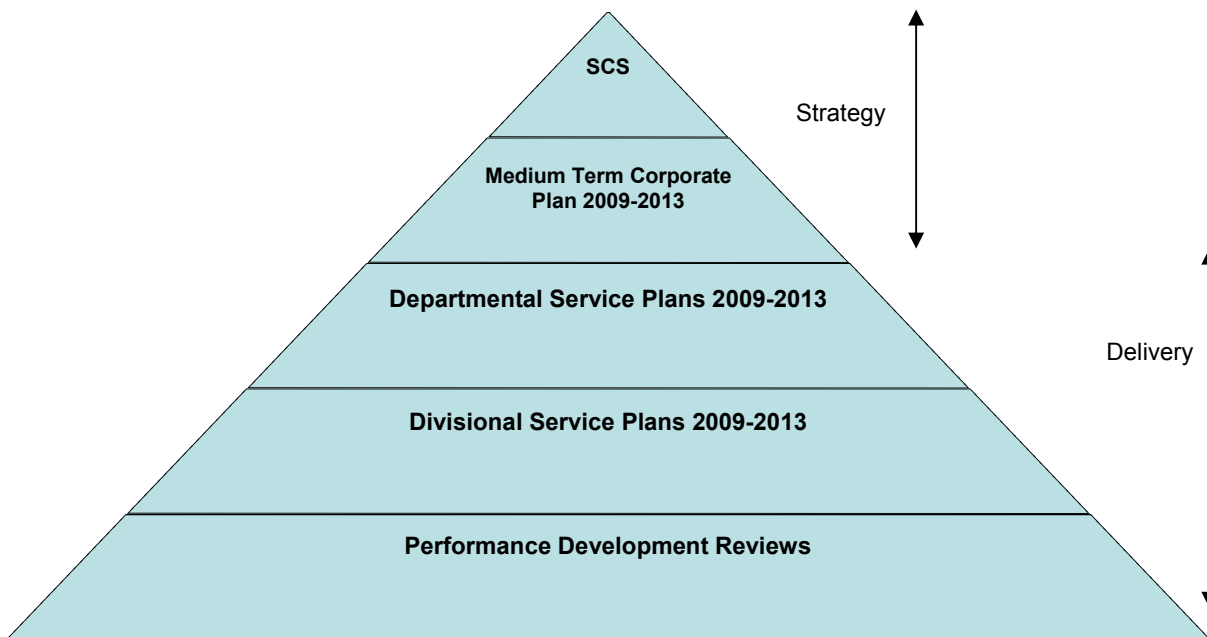
The five Leading Edge ODS strands and their priorities				
Communications	Human Resources	ICT	Community Engagement	Business Transformation
Develop and communicate a shared 'identity' or 'unique selling point' for Darlington	Ensure managers manage and leaders lead	Facilitate first rate intelligence through data and knowledge management	Build capacity in the organisation and communities to translate customer needs into action	Maximise the talents of our staff in the support and delivery of projects and design of services
Foster genuine two-way communication internally, externally and with partners	Empower staff to deliver excellent customer service	Support our staff to help customers through maximising mobile working	Ensure customer services become first class	Eliminate waste, duplication and processes that do not add value or are not necessary for the public
Develop a prioritised, resourced and co-ordinated approach to raise Darlington's and DBC's profile regionally and nationally	Develop relationship management as a core competency	Increase opportunities for self service	Engage staff in the development of plans and services	Transform service areas in priority order of potential to improve value for money

38. The 'Egg' diagram simply illustrates the ways of working promoted by Leading Edge, and is the equivalent of the illustration of the new Business Model on page 10. As an organisational development strategy, Leading Edge has five strands of strategy and project development directed at shaping the Council as a business organisation to enable it to work effectively in the ways illustrated in the 'Egg'. The five strands and the main priorities under each of them are shown in the table on page 12. The equivalent strategy development for the new Business Model will take place over the next year.

39. There is regular progress monitoring by Corporate Management Team of work to deliver these priorities. We will continue to maintain and monitor progress work across the five strands, whilst planning for migration to the new ODS that is being developed around the new Business Model.

Service Planning and Performance Management

40. The Council's approach to service planning aligns our corporate strategy and delivery plans with the outcomes and priorities of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed (the SCS in the diagram below). We have adopted a four year planning cycle combining service and financial planning, monitoring and reporting. Our planning hierarchy, linking the work objectives of individual members of staff to the themes of the vision, is illustrated overleaf.



41. Our performance management framework is aligned to the national set of performance indicators. Services and accountable officers have been linked to the 188 indicators. Local performance indicators provide a suite of customer service measures. Our use of performance indicators is currently being transformed into a clear hierarchy of whole population outcome indicators and more localised measures of service performance by the introduction of Outcome Based Accountability (OBA), as outlined in Section 3. The performance management framework is currently being reviewed as part of the wider review of the corporate policy, performance and partnerships functions, and taking account of the introduction of OBA.
42. The planning hierarchy provides clear linkages from the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy, through corporate, department and service levels, to the work objectives of individual members of staff established through their performance development reviews. This acknowledged strength of our approach will be reinforced by the introduction of OBA.
43. The Audit Commission has judged the Council to be 'Performing Well' in the Managing Performance assessment of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) outlined in Section 2.

Stronger Communities

44. The Council has a maturing approach to developing, strengthening and engaging with the communities it serves. This work is underpinned by a commitment to equality, which means ensuring that everyone has fair access to services and enjoys fair outcomes. This commitment is especially important for those who are most at risk of discrimination and disadvantage.
45. In recent years work has been underpinned by social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal strategies and this has fed into the setting of a new priority: One Darlington. This priority gives an unprecedented focus on the people who make Darlington the place it is.

Community development

46. Currently supporting work across eleven priority wards, Council community development workers have delivered financial, social and educational benefits to the communities they serve. This year these benefits have ranged from:
 - Dozens of volunteers attached to organisations the Council supports people receiving training across a range of competencies.
 - Workers helping the community to draw down £123,000 to provide a play project in Albert Hill.
 - The team working with the police in relation to crime and disorder to secured community cash back funding (Home Office) of £35,500 for lighting and cameras at Skerne Park Community Centre.
 - The supported delivery of locally agreed action plans in eleven priority wards.
 - 65 new members joining GOLD (Growing Older Living in Darlington) in the first six months of the year alone. Almost a third of these were in a target age group of under 65.
 - Supporting and working with the Police to run PACTs (Police and Communities Together) in the 11 priority wards in the borough; PACTs are operational in all parts of the borough
47. Work will refocus more clearly on the One Darlington agenda this year, with the Connecting with Communities review providing an improved structure and more focused priorities.

Community engagement

48. Talking Together programmes have used a range of tools and techniques to engage local people on the issues and decisions that affect them. This year there has been more use of new technology (including on-line forums and instant electronic voting technology) and a renewed emphasis on feeding back the outcomes of engagement to those who were involved. Achievements have included:
 - Several individual programmes securing more than 1,000 views of the on-line forum;
 - 118 people writing to us about the proposed budget for 2009;
 - 106 people responding to proposals about traffic calming in a local village;
 - 89 people attending a Talking Together event about cycling through the town centre;
49. This year a new strategic group will commission Talking Together programmes to ensure that individual programmes are given the correct profile and appropriate amount of corporate support. The group will ensure that the right amount of capacity to be reactive is preserved. Experimental work to reach new audiences in connection with the financial inclusion agenda is planned using regional funding.

Third Sector engagement

50. A draft Compact has been developed to replace the first Darlington Compact that was adopted in 2004.. Led by eVOLution, and supported by Darlington Borough Council, the Compact sets out principles for effective working between the public and third sectors. A review of the Council's funding of the third sector has suggested improvements for the future. LINK has also set up a Facebook site to encourage younger people to have their say about health and social care services. This has been successful with over 140 hits on the site in the first six months.

Welfare Rights

51. Putting money back into residents' pockets is one of the most powerful actions a Council can take in terms of strengthening its communities and working towards equality of outcome. The Welfare Rights Service puts around an extra £1million in welfare benefits in the pockets of Darlington residents every year. Legal advice services in Darlington will be better focused and further expanded in the coming year with the Council's participation in the £0.45m lottery-funded Local Advice Network Darlington project.

Equalities

52. Our equalities framework is designed to identify the likely positive and negative effects of new policies, proposals and programmes on those who are most at risk of discrimination and disadvantage. A multi-strand impact assessment identifies likely impacts across all communities of identity and interest, whilst the disability equality impact assessment involves disabled people in an identification of impacts which affect them.
53. These assessments are only useful insofar as they facilitate improvement. In the last year or so many changes have been made as a result of completed assessments. These include:
- A staged approach to the introduction of fairer charging for adult social services, which seeks to mitigate the negative effects of this change on vulnerable people;
 - Wider and deeper engagement with people who receive housing-related support in order to structure Supporting People contracts more fairly;
 - Many examples of schools making real their commitment to physical and intellectual accessibility;
 - A revised Council budget which changed to take particular account of the needs of some of the diverse communities the Council serves, in particular children and young people and older people.
54. This year the focus will be on the delivery of a new Single Equality Scheme, which will seek to join up some of our approaches to this agenda whilst carefully working through any issues and tensions that may arise. The Scheme anticipates new legislation in this area and will build on the good practice of the Disability Equality Scheme.
55. The Council's approach to the "stronger communities" agenda in all of the above areas will be revised with the completion of the Connecting with Communities review in early 2010.

Workforce Strategy

56. The current HR Strategy was developed in 2007 as an integral element of the organisational development strategy. Like all local authorities the impact of the economic downturn and related impact in respect of Council's budget situation is influencing the organisation's development and related change programme and this is impacting across all departments. The HR strategy is being revisited to ensure it continues to support the new Business Model. Whilst the strategy is subject to review the six strategic priorities below, with an emphasis on effective leadership are unlikely to vary significantly:
- Supporting Business Transformation and Change
 - Leadership and Capacity Building
 - Workforce planning, development and Diversity.

- Employee Communication and Engagement
 - Safe and Healthy Workforce
 - Recruitment retention and reward
57. HR will play a pivotal role in supporting the business transformation and change agenda. Particular emphasis will be given to supporting middle managers through the change process as they will play a critical role with their own teams in effectively managing change and minimising the impact on our people and service delivery..
 58. As a major local employer the council has always sought to establish a reputation as a good employer. We will, wherever possible, work with Job Centre Plus and look to our recruitment processes in support of the local “worklessness” agenda and to increase the number of apprenticeships available within the Council. This will also support actions to address the age profile of the workforce; over 30% of the Council’s employees are aged 50+ and only a small percentage are under 19. The Council also will support other government schemes such as the Future Jobs Fund.
 59. We will seek to maximise the Council’s people resource by supporting managers with effective wellbeing and absence management strategies and at the same time ensuring that the Personal Development Review (PDR) system is used effectively as a key component of the Council’s performance management framework, PDR.
 60. There will be a focus on development of key skills in specialist areas such as Adult and Children’s Social Care and more generally across the organisation in customer care skills. We will also seek to develop more specialist business skills to support the new Business Model in areas such as business transformation, influencing and negotiation, procurement and contract management, and compliance and data analysis.
 61. We are continuing to develop our approach to workforce planning linked to service planning and delivery. Currently each department produces an annual Workforce Plan incorporating workforce needs and effects arising from service improvement action plans, as well as addressing any more strategic issues such as skills shortages within the labour market, succession planning in an ageing workforce and sickness absence. However, we are moving in our current planning round to fully integrating workforce planning within department and service plans, linked to the introduction of Outcome Based Accountability and a new format/template for our plans.
 62. Darlington was one of a small number of unitary Council’s to achieve level 3 of the Local Government Equality Standard. The standard has now been changed and aligned to the CAA assessment process, and the Council is determining its aims in relation to the new standard and preparing key new policies such as the Single Equalities Scheme.

Section 2: The Local Planning Context

63. Whilst Section 1 of the plan outlined the main factors affecting the future role, functions and structure of the Council as a business organisation, Section 2 focuses on the local planning framework and on the key factors shaping the delivery proposals set out in Sections 3 and 4. Department and Service Plans provide more detail on the factors driving our planning. These are led by the refreshed focus, with the introduction of Outcome Based Accountability into our approach to service planning, on delivering the outcomes promised by 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed'.

One Darlington : Perfectly Placed

64. 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' (the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)), was adopted by the Darlington Partnership Board and by the Council in March 2008. It is a vision of Darlington in 2021, and sets the challenge of making progress towards the vision by addressing the two priorities of 'One Darlington' and 'Perfectly Placed'. The vision is 'owned' by Darlington Partnership and all the partner agencies working in the borough have been aligning their plans and delivery programmes to the vision since 1st April 2008.

The Vision

65. The vision was shaped by discussions that took place across the borough throughout the summer of 2007. It is a vision of a community that respects its unique heritage and retains the borough's character and sense of identity, its friendliness and quality of life. At the same time, we want to make the most of our potential to be a place that opens up aspiration and opportunity to everybody. The post-recession prospects for a return to the economic growth of recent years may be uncertain, but the vision is nevertheless one in which everyone is able to share in the borough's prosperity and enjoy its quality of life as citizens in a genuinely sustainable, cohesive and caring borough-wide community.

66. The vision is infused with a sense of pride in Darlington's history and its place within the industrial/technological revolution of the nineteenth century. The vision talks of carrying forward the ethos of innovation and business success combined with social philanthropy that played such a part in shaping the borough, and that spirit is no less relevant today as we face up to the global challenges of social, environmental and economic sustainability at the local level.

The Two Priorities

67. The vision embraces two broad priorities for improving quality of life in Darlington, 'One Darlington' and 'Perfectly Placed'. They set the overall direction for what we are setting out to achieve, as follows:

- One Darlington – embracing our approach to people, and specifically the need to narrow the gaps in prosperity, attainment, health and well-being, making sure that people are not disadvantaged by their income, where they live or by any other potential disadvantage that could cause them to miss out on the opportunities that will be created by realising our vision
- Perfectly Placed – describing Darlington as a place and helping us shape our investment decisions, spatial planning and care for the environment, and to attract inward investment, reinforcing the qualities that make Darlington a place where people want to live and work.

68. 'One Darlington' and 'Perfectly Placed' are the principal drivers or generators of the proposals in this Corporate Plan. It is the overall expression of what the partners want to create for the people of the borough, and therefore everything in this Corporate Plan is concerned either with delivering outcomes that contribute directly to the vision, or with reinforcing the Council's ability to deliver.

The Five Delivery Themes

69. Whilst the two priorities of One Darlington and Perfectly Placed describe what we are setting out to achieve, the SCS is structured around five themes that provide the framework for how we will work together to develop and deliver action plans that address the priorities. The themes, and main strands of work to be pursued within each theme, are illustrated overleaf.

70. The structure of Darlington Partnership matches this framework of delivery themes, with the partners working together in theme groups, under the guidance and co-ordination of the Partnership Executive and Partnership Board. This structure is also illustrated overleaf.

The Council and Darlington Partnership

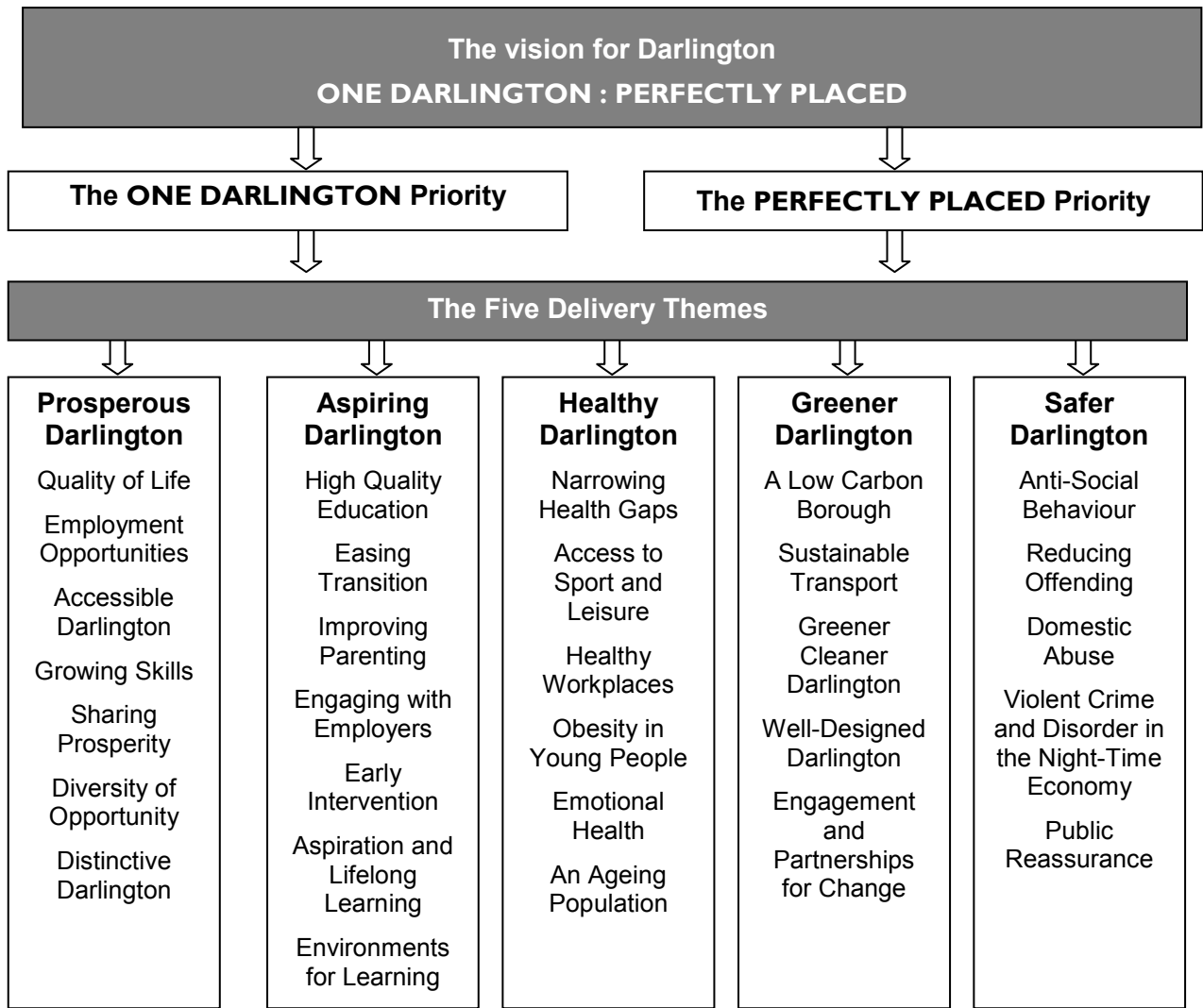
71. Darlington Partnership is recognised and respected as an independent forum of the key public, private and third sector bodies in the borough. A private sector representative chairs the Partnership, and three of the five theme group chairs are not directly connected with the Council - the Director of Public Health, a joint Council/PCT appointment, chairs the Healthy Darlington group whilst the chair of the Children's Trust is a Council Member. The Partnership Director reports both to the Partnership Chair and the Council's Assistant Chief Executive (Policy).
72. It is important, however, that this Corporate Plan recognises the need for the Council to provide both the leadership and support necessary for these arrangements to work effectively. Key to this support are the Theme Group Lead Officers; four out of five are Council staff whilst the fifth is a PCT officer. It is equally important that our delivery proposals align with and help to deliver the theme action plans. Council services particularly need to play their part in achieving the targets set out in the Local Area Agreement (see below); the theme group action plans have been developed around the common focus of securing these targets.

Outcomes

73. The Council has adopted Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) in this year's round of corporate and service planning, with the intention that Darlington Partnership will take-up the methodology during the coming year, so as to establish a common approach across partner agencies to agreeing the outcomes, priorities, targets and organisational responsibilities for delivering the SCS, 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed'.
74. OBA is being introduced to sharpen the focus on achieving progress against agreed outcomes. OBA is gaining widespread recognition as good practice, and the purpose in adopting it is to secure greater certainty that individual actions delivered by services are making a positive contribution to the high-level, long-term outcomes that we want to achieve through the SCS and partnership working. This is desirable both to ensure that we make progress towards the vision, and to get the best possible return from the available investment resources as we face up to a period of severe financial constraint. The future role of the Council, outlined in Section 1, of leading and co-ordinating investment across public services on a 'whole area' basis, reinforces the need for an outcome-focused approach to planning.
75. The SCS incorporates 15 long-term outcomes, spread across the five delivery themes, and action planning across Darlington Partnership to date has sought to achieve these outcomes. However, the adoption of OBA provided the opportunity to reflect on these outcomes, with the result that they have been refreshed and consolidated into five simple statements of well-being, in accordance with the OBA definition of an outcome. These five statements are:

One Darlington : Perfectly Placed Outcomes

- Everybody in Darlington is able to enjoy the borough's prosperity and quality of life
- Everybody in Darlington aspires and is able to achieve their full potential and maximise their life chances
- People in Darlington live long, healthy, active and independent lives
- People in Darlington enjoy an attractive, clean, green and sustainable environment
- All people feel safe and live in a crime free environment.



DARLINGTON ASSEMBLY
Receives progress reports and conducts strategic consultations. Meets at least bi-annually, with representative membership from all sectors

DARLINGTON PARTNERSHIP BOARD (THE LSP)
Ensures this plan is being delivered through the Theme Groups; equal representation across sectors; Chair and Vice-Chair elected every two years.

PROSPEROUS DARLINGTON THEME GROUP

CHILDREN'S TRUST
Aspiring Darlington Theme Group

HEALTHY DARLINGTON THEME GROUP

GREENER DARLINGTON THEME GROUP

CRIME and DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (CDRP)

EXECUTIVE GROUP
Provides challenge, co-ordination and consistency Theme Groups' delivery, under the overall control of the LSP

76. The five outcomes outlined on page 18 describe the states of well being that we want to achieve through all of our planning and delivery work. They are the focus of our corporate proposals, set out in Section 3, for contributing to the delivery of the SCS. This Corporate Plan provides a high level overview of the Council's contribution, as the basis for the more detailed delivery proposals set out in department and service plans.
77. It is important to emphasise that these five outcome statements have been developed to enable the Council to introduce OBA into its service planning as a transitional arrangement in the current planning cycle. They have no currency outside the Council. It is intended that Darlington Partnership will develop a fully refreshed set of outcomes during 2010/11 as the shared basis for service planning across all partners for the 2011/12 planning cycle

Outcome Based Accountability

78. The adoption of OBA accompanies a key shift in focus in our service planning. Improvement priorities have previously been identified and organised around the five delivery themes, but OBA brings a fresh clarity to the way action planning needs to address the SCS. It helps us to focus on the two priorities of One Darlington and Perfectly Placed as expressions of what needs to be delivered, rather than the five themes as the framework for how actions will be delivered.
79. It will be helpful in examining the proposals set out in Section 3 to be acquainted with the principles of OBA, so a simple summary is provided in Appendix 1. It is enough to set out here the seven questions that lie at the heart of the approach, and designed to get us from talk to action and from strategy to delivery. These seven questions are:
- What are the quality of life conditions or outcomes we want for our community? For this plan these are the five outcomes set out above
 - What would these conditions look like if we could see, feel and experience them?
 - How can we measure if these conditions exist or not (the key indicators in the left hand column of the tables in Section 3 have been selected for this round of service planning as the measures of the five outcomes)? Are the measures getting better or worse (establishing the baseline data)? Where are we heading if we just keep doing what we're doing now (the forecast or trajectory)?
 - Why are these conditions getting better or worse (the story behind the baseline)?
 - Who are the partners that have a potential role to play in doing better?
 - What works to do better? What would it take to 'turn the curve' of the indicator forecast (i.e. shift the forecast measure in the desired direction)? What could we do that is low-cost or no-cost in addition to things that cost money?
 - What do we, as an individual organisation and a group of partners, propose to do (the action plan)?
80. As the summary in Appendix 1 describes, OBA recognises two levels of accountability:
- Whole Population Accountability – being about the well-being of whole populations in the community, whether or not they are in receipt of services. Accountability for improving key indicators of whole population outcomes rests with partnerships rather than individual organisations.
 - Service Performance Accountability – being about the effectiveness of services and the well-being of their client populations or service users. Individual services are accountable for what they can control and influence, the quantity and quality of service provided and the quantity and quality of the service outcome.
81. Appendix 1 includes examples to illustrate the application of this hierarchy of planning focus and lines of accountability.

82. The Department Actions listed in Section 3 were generated at Department Service Planning events using OBA. They represent our contribution to improving the key indicators and progressing outcomes at the whole population level. Our department and service plans will set out the detailed actions to be delivered by services to specific client populations or service users (i.e. at the service performance level) that will contribute to the improvements desired at the whole population outcome level. An example is included in Appendix 1 to illustrate this hierarchy of planning focus and lines of accountability.
83. The Department Actions in Section 3 are the product of an initial, and partial, attempt at applying the methodology. Planning to date will be less than complete without the benefit of input from all of the potential external partners. Of course, the council works closely with partners on a routine basis, and experience of this work and of the partners' contributions will have been brought to bear in the department planning sessions. But full roll-out of the OBA approach over the next year will see partners working together to agree outcomes and key outcome indicators, analyse baselines and future trajectories, and formulating the co-ordinated programmes of actions across the partner organisations required to 'turn the curve' of the trajectories.
84. Section 3 organises Department Actions into a series of 'Corporate Themes', shown in the second column of the tables. These provide a simpler picture of the Council's overall contribution to the SCS, and link together complementary and overlapping proposals from different departments. Key measures have been attached to the Corporate Themes so that overall progress against the themes can be monitored and managed.

Organisational Improvement Proposals

85. Sections 4 of this plan sets out essential proposals for improvement and development of the Council as a business organisation. These proposals are not directly linked to the delivery of SCS outcomes and have not been generated through the OBA methodology. This split between outcome-focused proposals and organisational improvement is a reflection of the transitional state of our approach to OBA, and it will be feasible in future years to develop all proposals through an OBA framework. In the meantime the four functions of the Council's New Business Model, outlined in Section 1, have been adopted as the framework for our organisational improvement proposals; the implementation of the business model is, of course, a major component within these proposals.

Local Area Agreement 2008-11

86. Running parallel with the successful completion of the Pilot Local Area Agreement covering the period 2006-2009, focused on the needs of Children and Young People, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) was signed-off between the Council and central government initially in June 2008, with a partial refresh of targets, primarily to take account of the impact of the recession, signed-off in March 2009. The LAA runs until March 2011, and is the first of a rolling series of three year 'contracts' between Darlington and the government to deliver specific targets that will help to make progress towards the 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' vision. The LAA is the principal short-term delivery vehicle for the long-term vision with partner agencies, as well as the Council, playing their part in delivering the actions and targets agreed with government.
87. The LAA consists of 35 targets, spread across the five delivery themes of the vision, negotiated and agreed with government. Additionally, it includes 10 statutory children and early years targets that are included in all LAAs across the country. All LAA targets are set against performance indicators selected from the set of National Indicator (NIs).
88. The Theme Group action plans referred to above are strongly focused on delivering the LAA targets. The Council has a key role in supporting Chairs and Lead Officers with the 'Achievability Planning' process designed to support LAA action planning, and in delivering its own contributions to the targets.

89. Although each of the 35 LAA targets are attached to only one of the five themes, with responsibility for action planning and delivery vested in the 'home' theme group, some of them require action across more than one theme, and by more than one agency, to ensure successful achievement. Examples of such targets include those relating to the participation of the Third Sector in delivering the vision: NI7 – environment for a thriving Third Sector, attached to the Prosperous Darlington theme, and NI6 – participation in regular volunteering, attached to Aspiring Darlington; NI5 – overall satisfaction with the local area, attached to the Greener Darlington theme, will also be achieved only by appropriate action across themes and agencies.
90. These 'cross-cutting' targets are important gauges of overall progress in making the changes Darlington needs. Theme groups have made progress with an 'achievability planning' process, designed to identify cross-cutting links and issues.
91. The Achievability Planning framework for LAA targets will need to dovetail with the roll-out of OBA. They are essentially similar processes and we will work with partners to consolidate them into a co-ordinated approach to delivering progress on SCS outcomes and LAA targets.

External Assessment

Comprehensive Performance Assessment

92. The Corporate Assessment carried out by the Audit Commission was a major inspection of how well the Council engages with and leads its communities, delivers community priorities in partnership and ensures continuous improvement across the full range of Council activities. The assessment was carried out every three years as a key component of the annual Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) The 2008 Corporate Assessment was the last in that form before CPA gave way to CAA.
93. The 2008 assessment conducted by the Audit Commission confirmed that the Council continued to be a top-rated Four Star authority. The report found no significant weaknesses, but identified four areas where performance could be improved. These were:
 - To build on the recent initiatives to improve customer access to services with a more ambitious approach utilising the enhanced ICT capacity available through the Stockton/Darlington Partnership
 - To demonstrate how the Council's current initiatives on sustainability and climate change are reducing its own impact on the environment and influencing others, and contributing to the sustainability objectives of the sustainable community strategy
 - To consider how to increase the pace of change in reducing health inequalities across the borough, including improving the health of the Council's own staff and reducing sickness absence
 - To review and evaluate the Talking Together programme to ensure that benefits are being realised in line with the resources expended.
94. Sections 3 and 4 include appropriate proposals to continue to pursue these improvements.
95. In the final annual round of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), published in February 2009, and to which the 2008 Corporate Assessment contributed, the Audit Commission confirmed the Council to be a Four Star authority (on a scale of 0 to 4 stars), whilst raising the direction of travel judgement from 'Improving Well' to 'Improving Strongly'. The Council was assessed as 'providing excellent value for money'. The Council therefore emerged from the CPA process with the best possible combination of judgements, and with no significant weaknesses, confirming its reputation as one of the best performing unitary authorities in the country.

Comprehensive Area Assessment

96. The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) replaced CPA from 2009, and consists of organisational assessments of the key public service bodies, and an area assessment of how well the public is being served. The Council's first organisational assessment, published by the Audit Commission in December 2009, is summarised below.

97. The Commission stated that the Council is delivering improvements for local people and is performing well, and went on to say that people who live in Darlington are generally happy with the local area, and in particular its parks and open spaces. Crime levels are reducing, and anti social behaviour is being successfully tackled through joint work with the police. The Commission also said that the Council works well with the local Primary Care Trust; that educational standards are improving; and that the standard of council housing is very high. The Commission noted the impact of the recession, but added that the council has been successful in bringing new employers and jobs into Darlington.

Overall Darlington Borough Council performs well		
Managing performance	3 out of 4	Description of scores: 1. An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements, Performs Poorly 2. An organisation that meets only minimum requirements, Performs Adequately 3. An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Well 4. An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Excellently
Use of resources	3 out of 4	
Managing finances	3 out of 4	
Governing the business	3 out of 4	
Managing resources	2 out of 4	

98. The Care Quality Commission has assessed Darlington Borough Council's Adult Social Care Services as performing well. Ofsted's assessment of children's services for Darlington Borough Council is that it performs well and there are many good schools and sixth forms. The Audit Commission further stated that:

'The Council provides good leadership across the borough and partnership working with other organisations is strong. It works well with local people to understand their needs, and reflects these in the plans it makes and the way it delivers services. Performance is well managed and the Council provides good value for money.'

99. The key messages raised by the Audit Commission in the Area Assessment were as follows.
- Positive developments in relation to the 'One Darlington' priority include new employers and new jobs being brought into the area. 'Into Work' programmes have improved employment rates in the most deprived areas. Educational standards are improving with better exam results and fewer exclusions. And more mothers are breastfeeding their babies, with action to tackle child obesity having positive results.
 - Positive messages about the 'Perfectly Placed' priority include the very high standard of Council housing, good services for homeless people and improvements to facilities for Gypsies and Travellers. People are happy with the local area, parks and open spaces and Local Motion has succeeded in encouraging people to choose more environmentally friendly transport and travel. Overall crime levels are reducing.
 - The Commission highlighted areas where the Partnership needs to stay focused. These include rising unemployment due to the recession, whilst acknowledging that action is being taken to make sure local people have the right skills to improve job opportunities. Similarly, it commented that health inequalities are a big challenge, with action being taken to tackle the main causes for the gap in life expectancy. The Commission have stressed a need for Partners to be clear on action to reduce the high number of hospital admissions for under 18s, and maintaining action to tackle alcohol abuse, the high numbers of teenage pregnancy and domestic violence. The Commission state that key challenges in moving forward are focused around improving public health and narrowing the gap in life expectancy, holding on to the economic gains made before the recession and reaping the benefits from Tees-wide joint working.

100. Nationally, of 152 single tier and county councils, only ten authorities received the highest organisational assessment of 'performing excellently', of which six are in London, two in the south east, one from the East Midlands and one from the North West. Ninety one, including Darlington, are 'performing well', 39 are performing adequately, and two are classed as performing poorly. Of the 12 authorities in the north east, one is 'performing adequately', the two new unitaries of Durham and Northumberland were not assessed and the remaining nine are 'performing well'.
101. The CAA area assessment can include the award of green flags, for exceptional performance, improvement or innovation from which others can learn, and attachment of red flags to highlight significant concerns. Of the 74 green flags and sixty two red flags awarded nationally only one and two respectively were in the North East region

Satisfaction Ratings

102. The Council's annual community survey asks a statistically representative sample of residents a range of questions around their quality of life, perceptions on key aspects of the local community, and satisfaction with Council services. The responses and analysis help the Council to shape its short to medium term delivery plans.
103. In 2009, the annual survey was reinforced by the findings of the first Place Survey. This is a new national survey, carried out by local authorities on a biennial cycle and to a common template so that findings across the country are comparable.
104. The key outcomes informing our Corporate and Service Planning include the following:
 - In the Community Survey, 67% of residents are satisfied with the way the Council is running the borough, up from 62% in 2008 and the highest satisfaction rating since 2004.
 - 81% of residents are satisfied with their local neighbourhood, a high level of satisfaction that has been consistent over recent years.
 - People feel safer out and about in Darlington – at night 51.1% feel safe compared to 47.3% in 2007; during daytime 95% of people feel safe when outside, a level that has been consistent for the last 3 years.
 - Highest service priorities for the public are road maintenance and repairs, pavement maintenance, and youth clubs and other facilities for young people, the same priorities as last year.
 - The main services identified as public priorities continue to be supported in the MTFP and all have received additional funding in recent years.
 - Recycling, last year's fourth priority, has dropped significantly in 2009, possibly as a result of the publicity relating to the new waste contract. CCTV measures and street cleaning also reduced in priority, as did car parking in the town centre, although car parking in other areas rose as a priority.
 - 48.5% of people agreed that the Council provides value for money, compared to 34% in the 2008 Place Survey.
 - In the Place Survey, Darlington's results were above average for both the Tees Valley and the region:
 - Residents' overall satisfaction with the local area is, at 79.2%, the highest rating in the Tees Valley
 - 79.7% of residents believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in Darlington
 - Areas where Darlington did less well in the Place Survey include:
 - Low levels of participation in civic life – 9.2% of people participate

- Low levels of participation in regular volunteering – 19.8% of people are volunteers
- Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children were also relatively low at 25.2%

Tees Valley Unlimited and the Multi Area Agreement

105. Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) is the structure created by the five Tees Valley local authorities to drive forward improvements to the economic infrastructure and performance of the Tees Valley as a whole. The country's first Multi Area Agreement (MAA) was signed between TVU and government in July 2008. The MAA is concerned with the delivery of major capital schemes for economic regeneration, housing and transport, giving us greater freedoms and flexibilities, working with our Tees Valley partners, to determine locally how funding streams from central and regional government should be allocated to address key strategic issues and needs across the Tees Valley City Region.
106. Locally the MAA will have a particular impact on the resources available to stimulate further investment through the Darlington Gateway programme, and is also aimed at improving public transport through the development of the Tees Valley Bus Network and the longer-term potential for a rail-based Tees Valley Metro system. The Council is committed to playing its full part in TVU and the MAA, to secure the best possible outcomes for Darlington through this innovative partnership funding mechanism.

Risk Management

107. Managing risks to the Council's operation, to minimise or eliminate their occurrence or their impact on service delivery and the implementation of projects, programmes and partnerships, is an essential part of effective business planning and management. The Council requirement to have robust risk management arrangements in place is also covered under the Use of Resources judgement within the Comprehensive Area Assessment.
108. Risk management is integrated within the Council's service planning framework. Departments and service units identify and assess risks in their annual service planning cycle, and incorporate management actions in their service plans to minimise those risks that are considered to have an unacceptably significant likelihood of occurring or an unacceptably high impact on the service should they occur (i.e. those risks judged to be 'above the line' in our risk management terminology).
109. Corporate risks – those that have a potential impact across all of the organisation, or more than one department – are assessed annually by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). Corporate risks and management actions are 'owned' by a lead officer who is a CMT member, and monitored by the Corporate Risk Manager.
110. All risks, at corporate, departmental and service level, are subject to continuous monitoring and review. Risk registers are used as active management tools to ensure that we identify and respond to risks that emerge during the year as well as those identified in the annual planning cycle.
111. The chart below is our current Corporate 'Risk Map', showing the degree of 'appetite' for the risks posed. The numbers refer to the risks listed in the table below the chart.

LIKELIHOOD	A Very High				
	B High				
	C Significant			1 2 3 4 5 7 8	
	D Low			6	
	E Very Low				
	F Almost Impossible				
		IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic
IMPACT					

112. Those risks within the shaded area are 'above the risk appetite line' and require further action planning to reduce the risk. For those 'below the line' adequate risk management actions are considered to be in place.
113. Half yearly reports are presented to the Council's Audit Committee to monitor that appropriate actions taken to ensure that corporate business risks are actively managed.

Ref	Risk Summary	Description and actions	Score/ Status	Lead Officer
1.	Implementation of recommendations from the Capital Process Review is needed to enable an effective capital project methodology to be in place.	<p>Description: We need to ensure effective project management of this process and full implementation across the authority.</p> <p>Actions: The new Capital Process developed to manage Capital projects has now been in place for several months; this process allows a common approach to managing capital schemes and provides 5 control points. Progression beyond each point requires Assistant Director approval and also provides a common platform on which projects can be monitored, using the Project Position Statement (PPS). The PPS is presented and discussed on a monthly basis by the Asset Management and Capital Programme board (AM&CPRB), and quarterly at the Resources Scrutiny Project Management Task and Finish review group. It is also intended to report the PPS to Cabinet on a quarterly basis in the new year.</p>	C2 Above	Cliff Brown
2.	The Council has insufficient skills and capacity to deliver the transformational change agenda whilst maintaining quality of service delivery throughout the process	<p>Description: <i>Leading Edge</i> transformational projects are delivering change, requiring effective communication. Efficiency targets have been identified; achieving these is crucial to financial planning. The Future Business Model will bring significant changes to the Council's functions and structures whilst strengthening the focus on delivery of the SCS. Implementing the FBM will require significant developments in skills and capacity, both to manage change and to deliver the ways of working required in the model.</p> <p>Actions: <i>Leading Edge</i> is managed and monitored via CMT. A refreshed organisational development strategy will be developed over the next year around the Future Business Model, and this is already in progress through a series of service reviews. These are very much focused on identifying and specifying the operational activities needed to deliver the model, and the consequent skills and capacities required for these activities. A new regime of change delivery, management and monitoring will be developed as part of the refreshed ODS.</p>	C2 Above	Paul Wildsmith
3.	A flu pandemic could affect delivery of key services and affect business continuity planning.	<p>Description: Flu pandemic can result in key employees, suppliers, partners, etc. being unavailable. This can affect key service provision such as Adult and Children's Social Care.</p> <p>Actions: Prioritisation planning, and planning for such emergencies as flu pandemic are in place to ensure the authority and its partners are prepared for any eventualities</p>	C2 Above	Paul Wildsmith

4.	The international economic downturn and subsequent impact upon Local Government Funding may adversely affect the Council's ability to deliver its Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	<p>Description: Recession is likely to continue to affect the Council's revenue and capital resources through reduced income and increased costs; increased demand for welfare and support services; and reduced investment by the private sector in regeneration projects.</p> <p>Actions: A corporate working group has been formed, to seek to minimise the effects of the downturn. Close working with partners will focus on maintaining progress on regeneration projects and maximising resource. The Medium Term Financial Plan has been revised and a new Business Model approved by Cabinet to respond appropriately to potential medium-term challenges.</p>	C2 Above	Paul Wildsmith
5.	Corporate Premises Risks	<p>Description: with over 200 operational premises, there is a need to minimise risks to service delivery arising from the issues relating to the management and maintenance of those risks.</p> <p>Actions: ensuring that every building has a responsible person managing it to agreed corporate protocols and standards, including carrying out all statutory inspections and linked to management of Risk 8 below; establishing a Property Management Working Group and carrying out a property review linked to service delivery needs and Stockton-Darlington Partnership.</p>	C2 Above	Paul Wildsmith
6.	Business Continuity Plans not in place or tested for key critical services	<p>Description: plans are not yet in place for all buildings/services to minimise disruption arising from unforeseen events.</p> <p>Actions: a programme of Business Continuity Planning is being led by Corporate Services with support from the Civil Contingencies Unit.</p>	D2 Below	Paul Wildsmith
7.	Council unable to meet its obligations under the information governance agenda	<p>Description: to ensure that effective strategy, policy, guidance, protocols and processes are in place to ensure that information is managed in an efficient, effective and secure manner within the Council and in its dealings with partnerships.</p> <p>Actions: the Corporate Information Governance Team to oversee delivery of the work programme flowing from the Council's Corporate Information Governance Policy, Strategy and Information Security Policy.</p>	C2 Above	Paul Wildsmith
8.	Potential issues regarding Safeguarding Children arising from difficulties in recruiting Social Workers within Children's Services and in obtaining agreement across Tees Valley for a common approach.	<p>Description: the number of vacancies and consequent case load per social worker could rise above national and regional levels, with knock-on effects into increased staff sickness and consequent deterioration in the timeliness and quality of service, putting children and young people at risk.</p> <p>Actions: this risk is under control at present, with some posts recently filled. The situation is monitored, with regular reports to CMT and Members, and regional and sub-regional working. Working with HR and seeking additional finance, and with Children's Workforce Development Council in relation to the Social Work Task Force on national and regional issues.</p>	C2 Above	Murray Rose

The Economic Recession

114. The most challenging risks to delivery of services and of the Council's contribution to One Darlington : Perfectly Placed are undoubtedly those arising from the current global economic climate. The risk has been assessed alongside other risks, as summarised in the table on the previous page. Whilst at the present time the Council is taking all available steps to seek to minimise the risk it is nevertheless above the 'risk appetite' line in our risk assessment process. Further proposals to address the challenges posed by the downturn are set out in Sections 3 and 4 of the plan, and the financial implications are outlined in Section 5. The impact on the funding of work within each of the five community strategy delivery themes is summarised under the 'Resources' heading for each theme.
115. Sections 1 and 5 outline reality of the financial challenges facing the Council, in common with the public sector throughout the country. We face the prospect of the most difficult economic period, possibly lasting several years, which most of us have lived through, and the Council is anticipating and planning for its effects in three principal areas:
- The impact on the Council's revenue and capital resources through both reduced income and increased costs is outlined in Section 5. This, together with the resource pressures arising in key service areas, has been the dominant factor in the medium-term financial planning cycle.
 - Continuing job losses or even wholesale closures amongst local businesses, whether local companies or multi-national concerns, is leading to increased demand on the resources and capacity of support services such as housing, housing benefits, council tax benefits and welfare advice.
 - Our work to consolidate and continue the transformation of the local economy through the Darlington Gateway Strategy is being affected by the constraints on borrowing facilities, which is limiting the capacity of developers to invest in the major development projects that underpin the long-term regeneration strategy, although there are signs of some recovery in the markets in this regard.
116. As summarised in Section 1, our equalities and social inclusion work is at the heart of the 'One Darlington' perspective. A major concern about the impact of the recession is that, without intervention, it is likely to result in the widening of the gap between the most and least prosperous in the community, with all the concomitant effects on health, well-being and quality of life generally. We will take every available step to seek to avoid the financial climate undermining our 'One Darlington' priority. A Financial Inclusion Strategy has been developed, and is making positive inroads in moderating the impact of recession on our population
117. The overall implications for service planning are two fold:
- We must become even more focused on our key priorities, to direct available resources to where they are most needed to contribute to the vision and our corporate objectives;
 - We must drive forward to achieve even greater efficiencies in our services, despite being acknowledged as being amongst the best nationally for value for money, both to achieve the savings necessary to delivery our budget proposals and to channel additional resources towards our top priorities.

SECTION 3: The Council's contribution to 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' outcomes

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Service Plan
Outcome: Everybody in Darlington is able to enjoy the borough's prosperity and quality of life				
NI 116 – proportion of children in poverty	Pursuing a strategic approach to reducing child poverty	NI 116 – proportion of children in poverty NI 102 – Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at KS 2 and KS4 NI 118 – Take up of formal childcare by low-income working families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Child Poverty Strategy linked to the Economic Regeneration Strategy • Adopt and implement best practice from the Take Up the Challenge Initiative • Further develop and manage the Families Intervention Service • Implement the Think Families Programme including risk profiling and targeting tailored support 	ChS / Planning and Resources ChS / ChS / ChS /
	Tackling barriers to employability and financial inclusion	NI 117 – 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training NI 153 – Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods NI 163 – Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher NI 176 – Working age people with access to employment by public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the capacity to strengthen our data and reinforce our understanding of the barriers to employment • Implement the Financial Inclusion Strategy • Continue to increase the take-up of welfare benefits • Up-skill relevant staff to enable them to carry out basic benefit calculations • Increase Free School Meals take-up and improve links with DWP • Work with partners to develop and deliver employability (Into Work) projects • Promote Social Enterprise and volunteering as routes into employability 	CE / Regeneration CE / Planning, Perf.& P'ships CE / Planning, Perf.& P'ships CommS / Adult Services ChS CE / Regeneration CE / Regeneration

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support people who use adult services in finding or maintaining employment. • Ensure people who use adult services and carers have income to meet living and support costs. • Enhance numbers of people holding basic skills and Level 2 qualifications 	<p>CommS / Adult Services</p> <p>CommS / Adult Services</p> <p>ChS /</p>
	Ensuring that all people receive fair treatment	NI 140 – Fair treatment by local services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all residents are treated equally and fairly in the administration of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. • Enhance signposting skills to services from Children’s Centres, Libraries and other points of contact with families • Develop more flexible childcare provision 	<p>CommS /</p> <p>ChS /</p> <p>ChS /</p>
NI 151 – overall employment rate	Attracting and supporting sustainable investment in economic infrastructure, businesses and high quality jobs	<p>NI 151 – Overall employment rate</p> <p>NI 166 – Median earnings of employees in the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Integrated Economic Strategy (based on robust Local Economic Assessment) to guide investment in people (Economic Inclusion), business (Business Development) and place (Local Development Framework) • Implement Darlington Gateway Strategy to attract business investment and jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain and pursue a clear vision of Darlington as a place with a vibrant business culture and sustainable economy 	CE / Regeneration

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build a culture of economic partnership and collaboration ● Encourage and support businesses to start-up and grow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore the potential for expanding the social and co-operative enterprises sector, with Credit Union support ● Continue to implement the programme of major economic development projects ● Continue to promote Darlington's role as gateway to the Tees Valley and the North East and influence regional/sub-regional funding/investment decisions through Tees Valley Unlimited and other appropriate settings ● Provide and maintain a reliable and efficient transport network, minimising congestion, to support employment and economic activity ● Continue to promote and develop the town centre as a key driver of the local economy ● Prepare to exploit the opportunities that the University will bring, particularly to develop business innovation skills 	<p>CE / Regeneration</p> <p>CE / Regeneration</p> <p>CE / Regeneration</p> <p>CE / Regeneration</p> <p>CE / Regeneration</p>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Encouraging and supporting people to improve their employment prospects	NI 163 – Working age people qualifies to at least Level 2 or higher NI 174 – Skills gap in the current workforce reported by employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement programmes to enhance peoples' employability • Promote and support self employment • Enhance the number of people holding basic skills and Level 2 qualifications • Continue to implement the Aiming High programme • Promote gifted and talented programmes • Extend mentoring programmes • Improve information, advice and guidance 	CE / Regeneration CE / Regeneration ChS / ChS / ChS / ChS / ChS /
NI 166 – Median earnings of employees in the area	Increasing added value and prosperity in the local economy	(New LI required – Gross Value Added – to be considered) NI 166 – Median earnings of employees in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and support investment in high value sectors in the local economy • Increase the range of high quality, well-paid and accessible jobs in the local economy • Encourage employers to up-skill their workforces, and promote skills development to both facilitate the growth of added value in the local economy and to enable people to access higher paid jobs. • Support and encourage the growth of a more resilient local economy that responds to low carbon opportunities 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Addressing issues of affordability in the local economy to ensure people can satisfy their basic needs.	(New LI required – disposable income net of housing costs for; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All households • Households over retirement age) NI 187 – Tackling fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a balanced and sustainable housing market providing multi tenure housing options, accessible and affordable to all local people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure development and implementation of robust planning policies to support housing market improvement • Continue to work collaboratively with residents, private landlords and key stakeholder partners to maximise inward investment for Darlington supporting housing and economic growth. • Ensure all residents are treated equally and fairly in the administration of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. 	<i>To be added</i>
Outcome: Everybody in Darlington aspires and is able to achieve their full potential and maximise their life chances				
NI 075 – Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	Encouraging people to aspire to achieve their potential	NI 106 – Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education NI 50 – Emotional health of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend choice and diversity by examining all curriculum options, including 14-19 diplomas • Improve delivery of information, advice and guidance (IAG) • Reinforce the emphasis on improving reading ages of children and adults • Continue to implement the Aiming High programme 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote gifted and talented programmes • Extend mentoring programmes • Further develop the approach to easing transitions • Support the development of positive connections between schools and their communities through community engagement and development 	<i>To be added</i>
	Ensuring that all children and young people receive the best possible education	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to tackle persistent absence • Continue to focus on reducing exclusions • Complete the Behaviour Review • Improve pupil well-being, and process for referral through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) • Promote sustainable travel to school • Design schools to provide the best possible environments for learning and community use 	<i>To be added</i>
NI 110 – Young people’s participation in positive activities	Providing the widest possible range of opportunities and choices for positive involvement in the community	NI 110 – Young people’s participation in positive activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with children and young people, with particular emphasis on hard to reach groups to identify and target needs • Improve and extend the range of positive activities available 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research barriers to participation including issues of affordability and pricing • Promote and develop opportunities for volunteering • Increase and develop the range of extended services through deployment of the extended services disadvantage subsidy 	<i>To be added</i>
NI 163 – Working age population qualified to at least Level 2	Encouraging and supporting employers to train and up-skill their work-forces	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with employers to develop and progress the skills agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop skills training initiatives across the public sector, as the borough’s largest employers ○ Maximise the funding coming into the borough for training ○ Recognise and promote good practice by businesses 	<i>To be added</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage employers to provide time-off for training • Expand work-based learning opportunities 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Promoting the widest possible range of training and learning opportunities	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the potential for offering skills incentives for people in greatest need, such as free NVQ courses • Ensure programmes are tailored to Darlington's specific needs • Develop more opportunities for apprenticeships • Commission a wider range of adult learning opportunities • Continue to focus on supporting people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) to take up the opportunities available to them 	<i>To be added</i>
Outcome: People in Darlington live long, healthy, active and independent lives				
NI 119 – Self-reported measure of people's overall health and well-being	Supporting and enabling independent living	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to people who are new into work to achieve successful transition to working life • Enable people who use Adult Services to exercise choice and control over the services they receive – they can design what, how and when they are delivered to match their needs 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who have long-term needs and their carers are supported to live as independently as they choose, and have well timed, well-coordinated treatment and support. • Personal care maintains service users' human rights, preserving dignity and respect, helps them to be comfortable in their environment, and supports family and social life. • Support people to live independently through Supporting People services • Ensure that the implementation of regulatory services supports the Health Agenda 	<i>To be added</i>
	Supporting people's well-being by promoting social inclusion and tackling all forms of harassment and abuse	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who use services and their carers have fair access to services. Their entitlements to health and care services are upheld. • People are free from discrimination or harassment in their living environments and neighbourhoods • People who use services and their carers are safeguarded from all forms of abuse. 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Ensuring people have access to health, cultural and leisure facilities and services to support health and well-being	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow the gaps in access to health services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NHS Healthcheck ○ Dental Surgeries • People have good physical and mental health. Healthier and safer lifestyles help them lower their risk of illness, accidents, and long-term conditions • People who use Adult Services are able to have a social life and to use leisure, learning, cultural and other local services • High quality leisure and cultural facilities are accessible to all residents 	<i>To be added</i>
N I 120 – All-age all-cause mortality rate	Increasing life expectancy rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ for men; and ○ for women 	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow the inequalities gaps in life chances and opportunity that lead to ill-health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further develop our understanding of ill-health and mortality profiles by ward, age, employment, etc ○ Draw down data and evidence from Health Determinant Workshops • Reduce smoking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase number of smoking quitters ○ Focus on smokers in routine and manual occupations 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce smoking rates for pregnant women ● Implement the Darlington Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy ● Reducing mortality rates from cancer and from cardiovascular diseases ● Narrow the gap in rates for death from suicide and undetermined injuries between Darlington and England 	<i>To be added</i>
	Reinforcing early interventions to support healthy living, and tackling behaviours that pose a risk to health	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refocus early interventions to strengthen intervention programmes through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further developing antenatal and postnatal services, including breastfeeding, immunisation and vaccination ○ Continuation of the Family Nurse Partnership ○ Healthy Schools and Healthy Early Years settings ○ Extended Schools activities ○ Parenting support ● Continue to tackle risk taking behaviour, including drinking, drug-taking, smoking and high risk actions impacting on sexual health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce hospital admission rates for alcohol related harm 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce under-18s conception rates ● Implement actions from the obesity strategy, including promotion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Healthy Schools programme ○ Take-up of school lunches ○ Extended schools activities ● High quality sport and PE ● Develop Social Marketing techniques related to health and risk taking behaviour ● Encourage more people to choose active sustainable travel to benefit health and well-being ● Improve the health of the Council's workforce by implementing the Workforce Health Improvement Strategy 	<i>To be added</i>
Outcome: People in Darlington enjoy an attractive, clean, green and sustainable environment				
NI 005 – Overall/ general satisfaction with the local area	Developing Darlington as an attractive, accessible, distinctive and sustainable place	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver the Local Development Framework to ensure Darlington develops as a distinctive, attractive and sustainable place ● Minimise the negative impacts of transport such as noise, severance, air pollution and accidents on the natural environment, heritage, landscape and people 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop capacity to identify risks and adapt/respond to potential threats and opportunities presented by future climate change • Develop and implement a Local Food programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliver the allotments strategy ○ Develop the Green Infrastructure Strategy • Develop community engagement, intelligence-led approaches and social marketing techniques to promote environmental care by residents and businesses • Provide and maintain high quality parks and open spaces • Provide a range of inclusive leisure activities in parks • Continue to look for opportunities for biodiversity gain from a range of developments in rural areas • Ensure that all strategies and plans incorporate measures to protect and enhance biodiversity and local spaces • Implement the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme • Encourage schools to keep children in at lunchtime and make more use of extended services 	<p>CommS and CE</p> <p>CommS and CE</p> <p>CommS and CE</p>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Maintaining the local environment to the best possible standards	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with service users to shape environmental services delivery • Continue to increase community capacity through Street Scene 	<i>To be added</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that residents are aware of service delivery improvements • Carry out the environmental enforcement role • Ensure youth work participation in the local environment through PACT meetings • Provide high quality, effective and value for money environmental and waste management services • Increase residents participation in recycling • Incorporate the Happy Bins programme in BSF to improve waste management in schools 	<i>To be added</i>
NI 186 – Per capita reductions in CO ₂ emissions	Pursuing reductions in CO ₂ emissions across all sectors and activities in the borough	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Climate Change Action Plan • Promote awareness and understanding of climate change issues, and develop local programmes to bring about behavioural change 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that planning policy delivers sustainable development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seek to facilitate renewable energy development • Deliver quantified reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from transport to tackle climate change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue Local Motion ○ Promote employers' travel planning • Progress work on Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement and TV Metro • Develop enhanced programmes of affordable energy saving initiatives • Review fuel usage and type of fuel used in Council vehicles • Deliver the Local Transport Plan • Continue to improve highway networks to assist in reducing congestion • Implement the Local Authority Carbon Management Scheme to secure reductions in CO₂ emissions from Council properties and activities • Promote the Carbon Trust's SALIX energy efficiency loan scheme to schools • Promote a greener emphasis in the Local Asset Management Partnership Agreement (LAMPA) 	<p>CommS and CE</p> <p>ChS & CE</p> <p>ChS & CE</p>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation in the Greener Schools programme • Promote Eco-School Committees • Review School Transport policy • Use commissioning and procurement to contribute to CO2 reductions • Promote cycling through school travel planning and provision of facilities • Develop a process for the recycling of cardboard from schools 	<p>ChS & CE</p> <p>ChS & CE</p>
<p>NI 187 – Tackling fuel poverty; percentage of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating</p>	<p>Promoting and supporting partner agencies to deliver energy efficiency programmes and measures</p>	<p><i>To be added</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the carbon footprint on all Housing • Work with partners to implement the HEAT programme to enhance the energy efficiency of dwellings, giving priority to low income households • Ensure that planning policy secures high quality, energy efficient development • Explore ways of working with housing agencies and relevant financial institutions to ensure affordable access to energy efficient housing and adaptations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore opportunities for sustained investment in older housing • Explore the potential for Combined Heat and Power schemes to deliver affordable heating to dwellings 	<p><i>To be added</i></p>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
Outcome: All people feel safe and live in a crime free environment				
People feeling safe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LI 0702 – At night • LI 0703 – During the day 	Improving public reassurance and confidence	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop our understanding of the causes and effects at play in people’s feelings about their safety • Develop targeted educational programmes to address and influence perceptions • Ensure the location and design of development and transport systems contribute to crime reduction and reinforce public reassurance • Continue to develop and strengthen our approach to tackling anti social behaviour • Promote community cohesion through positive engagement activities 	<i>To be added</i>
I 700 – Total crimes committed	Maintaining the focus on reducing priority crimes in Darlington	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce violent crime • Reduce re-offending rate • Reduce the domestic violence repeat victim rate • Deliver the Prevent Strategy to guard against terrorist threats • Support the community safety agenda through regulatory services (Public Protection) • Highways deliver services to reduce road casualties 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
	Tackling the underlying causes of offending and re-offending	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the analytical capacity needed to understand local patterns of crime and their underlying causes • Continue to use pre-reprimand disposal • Continue to tackle persistent absence • Continue to focus on reducing exclusions • Complete the Behaviour Review • Encourage participation in diversionary activities and extended schools • Ensure youth work participation through local PACT meetings • Investigate and consider how we reward crime • Evaluate the Safer Neighbourhoods, Offender Management and other projects to strengthen our understanding of what works 	<i>To be added</i>
NI 017 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	Reducing anti-social behaviour and addressing perceptions of anti-social behaviour	<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve intelligence on sources/ perpetrators of anti-social behaviour and implement specific targeted actions • Promote wider ownership and responses to anti-social behaviour across communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote strengthened partnership working through the CDRP across all settings where anti-social behaviour is an issue 	<i>To be added</i>

Outcome Indicator	Corporate Theme	Key Measure	Department Action	Delivery Dept/ Service Plan
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the framework of incentives and penalties for anti-social behaviour, targeted on categories and hotspots • Continue to develop and strengthen our approach to tackling anti social behaviour • Implement and review the new Archouse Plus Nuisance and Anti-social behaviour module in partnership with Community Safety 	<i>To be added</i>

SECTION 4: Organisation Improvement Actions

Key Indicator	Department Action	Lead Dept	Delivery Measures	Delivery Service Plan
Corporate function 1: Championing the interests of citizens and business based on a solid evidence base and good in-depth engagement				
NI 004 – % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality NI 140 – Fair treatment by Local Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a range of services and programmes to empower communities and ensure that citizen views are heard and represented in decision-making • Enhance social inclusion in Darlington, and narrow the gaps in well-being between different neighbourhoods and different groups in the population • Future business model: lead the development of a corporate framework for capture, analysis and presentation of knowledge about needs and aspirations in Darlington, combined with understanding of future local and national trends and policy developments • Promote strategic engagement at manager level across local and regional partners focused on co-ordinated • Deliver fair and robust Parliamentary and Local Elections • Deliver key aspects of the White Paper on Community Engagement • Deliver the Prevent Strategy 	Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Corporate Services Corporate Services Chief Executive Corporate Services	To be set in Department/ Service Plans	<i>To be added</i>

Key Indicator	Department Action	Lead Dept	Delivery Measures	Delivery Service Plan
Corporate function 2: Promoting the borough as an active player within local, sub-regional, regional and national governance frameworks				
LI 0003 – Darlington’s share of external funding awarded to the Tees Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the continuing development of Tees Valley Unlimited, and the Multi Area Agreement, and represent Darlington’s interests in sub-regional and regional governance • Promote Darlington to local, regional, national and European audiences as a place to live and invest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop effective communications strategies • Lead and co-ordinate the response to external assessments of Darlington and the Council, and provide corporate support to service inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carry forward the Council’s reputation as a high performing organisation in external assessments into the emerging framework of whole area assessments • Ensure the Council and Darlington has a strong and effective presence on the Web • Maintain a clear vision and identity that positions the borough and Council effectively in the region in relation to other areas and Councils 	Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive & Corporate S. Chief Executive	To be set in Department/ Service Plans	<i>To be added</i>

Key Indicator	Department Action	Lead Dept	Delivery Measures	Delivery Service Plan
Corporate function 3: Ensuring the provision of good quality public services				
<p>LI 0400 – Satisfaction with the overall service provided by the Council</p> <p>NI 005 – Overall/ general satisfaction with the local area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to deliver funding into Darlington from external sources to support delivery of services and projects • Facilitate effective dialogue between providers and users to improve services • Lead and co-ordinate the corporate framework for performance monitoring, management and reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop the capacity for effective performance analysis and management ○ Further develop the performance management framework to be responsive to outcomes, with simplified outcome-based reporting • Develop the Single Equalities Scheme and ensure best practice in equalities impact assessments to provide services that are fair and accessible to all • Develop capacity and expertise for service commissioning, including exploring the opportunities for sharing commissioning skills and resources with other public sector service providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop capacity and skills for contract management and programme evaluation to support the Future Business Model direction towards wider procurement of services from external providers 	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>/All</p>	<p>To be set in Department/ Service Plans</p>	<p><i>To be added</i></p>

Key Indicator	Department Action	Lead Dept	Delivery Measures	Delivery Service Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to Address / evidence requirements of new Use of Resources methodology under the Governing the Business Theme for relevant and reliable data; principles and values of good governance; and risk and a sound system of internal control. • Continue to develop the Council's Corporate Information Governance Action Plan arrangements in liaison with Xentrall • Sustain Council Tax collection • MTFP – predictive; flexible - rapid response to changes • Delivery of the HR Strategy-Priorities and Change Management 	<p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Corporate Services</p>	To be set in Department/ Service Plans	<i>To be added</i>
Corporate function 4: Promoting strong partnerships to ensure there is a vision and direction for the borough and for public services				
<i>To be added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership and support, with the LSP, to work with partners on the continuing development of the SCS and LAA, and on delivering high level outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain, refresh, interpret and disseminate the evolving ODPP vision for Darlington in response to changing circumstances ○ Establish a transitional approach to planning for delivery of SCS outcomes leading to full roll-out with partners, utilising Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) 	Chief Executive	To be set in Department/ Service Plans	<i>To be added</i>

Key Indicator	Department Action	Lead Dept	Delivery Measures	Delivery Service Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and respond to opportunities to secure benefits for Darlington from emerging guidance, legislation and innovations • Establish and maintain effective governance and performance arrangements for strategic partnerships • Develop and implement Economic Regeneration strategy and policy • Deliver the programme for the ongoing progress of the Local Development Framework • Develop Local Transport Plan 3 • Continue to lead the development of the CDRP's work to ensure effective delivery at strategic and operational levels • Complete the refresh of the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment, Community Safety Plan and Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan • Support the development of a thriving third sector in Darlington, and promote effective working relationships between the public and third sectors • Future business model: co-ordinate and support the implementation of the model, linked to the delivery of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed • Working with Xentrall Shared Services to deliver Business Case Savings 	<p>Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Corporate Services Corporate Services Corporate Services</p>	<p>To be set in Department/ Service Plans</p>	<p><i>To be added</i></p>

Section 5: Resourcing Our Services

The Medium Term Financial Plan

118. This section of the Plan presents our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2010-14. It sets out the financial resources that might be available to the Council and their planned allocation to support delivery of the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy. The MTFP includes our revenue expenditure allocations and income projections for the many on-going services that the Council provides, and capital funding proposals for programmes and projects such as new schools and improvements to roads and housing.

Revenue Income and Expenditure

119. The draft MTFP is prepared by the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) in consultation with Cabinet. Following consultation, Cabinet makes final recommendations on the MTFP for 2010-14, and on the budget and Council Tax for 2010-11. Final decisions are made by the full Council of 53 Members in February.

120. Councils receive income to fund service provision from three principle sources, all of which are expected to be affected by the changing national economic context:

- Government grants – around £130M each year
- Council Tax – around £40M each year
- Charges for services – around £30M each year

Government Grants

121. The changing economic and strategic circumstances within which the Corporate Plan has been produced, described in Section 1, is the context in which the MTFP has been reviewed and revised. Following the Government's extensive investment to mitigate the impact of the recession, the substantial debt incurred must be reduced. Consequently, there is considerable uncertainty around future funding for local authorities, which rely heavily on Government grants. In November 2009 the Government confirmed the Council's main grants for 2010-11 but beyond 2011 there is currently much speculation regarding the timing and extent of reductions in Government grants to councils.

122. The MTFP for 2010-14 has been prepared using an assumption that Government grants will reduce by 3% each year from 2011-12 to 2013-14. This reduces the resources available to the Council by £8.6M each year by 2014. The level of funding that the Council will actually receive over that period will not be known until November 2010 at the earliest.

Council Tax

123. There is widespread expectation that Council Tax increases in coming years will be lower than those in recent years. The Government has stated that:

- For 2009/10 the average increase in council tax was 3%.
- For 2010/11 the Government expect the average increase to be lower than in 2009/10 and at a 16 year low.
- The capping criteria will be decided later and authorities should not assume the criteria for 2010/11 will be the same as 2009/10.

124. The MTFP for 2010-14 assumes a Council Tax freeze in 2010-11 and increases of 1% in 2011-12 and 2% in 2012-13 and 2013-14. Compared with the previous MTFP, this reduces the resources available by £6M each year by 2014.

Charges for Services

125. Income from service users has already been hit by the economic downturn and is expected to continue below levels previously seen for 2010-11, with some recover thereafter. The Council will continue to review the charges that it makes for services, but it is unlikely that significant extra resource can be made available from charges. Simply increasing charges could in many cases be directly contrary to the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy, particularly with regard to equality and access to services.

Expenditure

126. At the same time that its income is reducing, the Council faces increasing demand for many of its services. The 2010-14 MTFP includes pressures for increased spending, particularly in social care, where an additional £1.4M is allocated.

127. Despite these pressures, the draft budget for 2010-11 is around £0.9M less than the budget for 2009-10. This has been achieved by the continuing focus on improving efficiency across the Council's activities.

128. The corporate and service planning processes described in Sections 1 and 2 inform the allocation of resources in line with priorities and needs.

Response – The Councils New Business Model

129. The new Business Model, described in detail in Section 1, forms the basis of the Council's response to the major challenge of continuing to deliver its priorities for 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' in the context of forecast reductions in funding. There are three key strands to the Business Model:

- A continued focus on service efficiency within the Council – on-going improvements in efficiency, which has saved £3.5M in 2009-10
- Priority based budgeting reviews – reviewing priorities to decide which can be reduced or withdrawn
- Service delivery reviews – considering who should deliver services

130. The Council has a very good track record of providing value-for-money, which has been independently verified by the Audit Commission's regular assessments. It is vital that improvements continue, but it is unlikely that efficiency improvements alone will be sufficient to successfully meet the challenges ahead, which is why the three strands of the new Business Model are necessary. The factors described above produce a draft MTFP for 2010-14:

		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
		£M	£M	£M	£M
1	Draft Budget Net Expenditure	81.045	85.082	87.030	89.001
2	Less Proposed efficiency savings	(2.184)	(3.110)	(3.547)	(3.638)
3	Net Expenditure after efficiencies	78.861	81.972	83.483	85.363
4	Less Proposed Priority Based Budgeting	(0.160)	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)
5	Less Proposed Increased Income	(0.210)	(0.210)	(0.212)	(0.212)
6	Net Expenditure after proposed savings	78.491	81.522	83.032	84.911
7	Proposed Savings		4.300	6.900	10.800
8	Net Expenditure after further savings programme	78.491	77.222	76.132	74.111
9	Assumed reduction in Specific and Area Based Grants		0.889	1.778	2.667
10	Net Expenditure after assumed Specific and ABG reduction	78.491	78.111	77.910	76.778
11	Projected Resources	78.653	77.844	77.432	77.147
12	Contributions to / (from) reserves	0.162	(0.267)	(0.478)	0.369
13	Business Model resources (paragraph 61)	(0.500)			
14	Projected reserves at year end	7.429	7.162	6.684	7.053

Medium Term Financial Plan 2010 To 2014

The allocation of resources to services is as follows:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Net Expenditure	£M	£M	£M	£M
Children's Services	12.203	11.880	12.013	12.068
Community Services	46.571	47.746	49.582	50.326
Chief Executive	5.924	6.209	6.308	6.414
Corporate Services	9.349	8.687	8.169	8.244
Pre Budget Report National Insurance	0.000	0.600	0.600	0.600
Joint bodies and levies	0.650	0.616	0.631	0.646
Financing costs	3.794	4.784	3.979	4.613
Headroom	0.000	1.000	1.750	2.000
Net Expenditure	78.491	81.522	83.032	84.911
Assumed Reduction in Specific Grant		0.889	1.778	2.667
Future efficiency and savings programme		(4.300)	(6.900)	(10.800)
Total Net Expenditure	78.491	78.111	77.910	76.778
Resources - Projected and Assumed				
Formula Grant	39.032	37.813	36.679	35.579
Council Tax	39.621	40.031	40.753	41.568
Total Resources	78.653	77.844	77.432	77.147
Contribution to/(from) revenue balances (Total Resources less Total Net Expenditure)	0.162	(0.267)	(0.478)	0.369
Balances				
Opening balance	7.767	7.429	7.162	6.684
Contribution to/(from) balances	0.162	(0.267)	(0.478)	0.369
Less Change Fund	(0.500)			
Closing balance	7.429	7.162	6.684	7.053

Council Tax				
Planned and Indicative Increases	0%	1%	2%	2%
Weekly Band A Increase	Nil	15p	30p	30p

Capital MTFP

131. This section of the plan sets out our proposals for one-off investment in assets (for example, school buildings or road infrastructure) to enable the Council to deliver its contributions to 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' more effectively.

132. The economic recession, referred to extensively in this plan, has impacted on capital investment at least as severely as on revenue spending because of the constraints on borrowing arising from the credit crunch. There are signs now that credit restraints may ease over the coming year, but there is great uncertainty about if and when private sector investment will return to pre-recession levels. The local impact, in relation to the delivery of our vision for Darlington, is complex and multi-faceted. Particularly serious for our capital investment programme has been the collapse of the property market, and the consequent inability to generate capital receipts from asset sales to reinvest in capital projects.
133. The sale of land and property is also a vital component in our economic regeneration strategy to facilitate major infrastructure development projects. Looking at the bigger picture of capital investment in Darlington over the last five years, beyond the Council's own programme, this has been by far the biggest component. In the current climate there is considerable uncertainty about the extent to which such investment will continue in the short-to-medium term, although the Council is doing all it can to minimise adverse trends.
134. However, despite effects of the recession, and the uncertainties around the overall picture of capital investment in the borough, this Corporate Plan includes a significant Capital MTFP funded by central government. Our recent success in securing £57M Building Schools for the Future funding demonstrates that there continues to be opportunities for significant capital investment in One Darlington : Perfectly Placed. The full details of our plans are set out in the Council's Capital Strategy and in the Departmental Budget Reports incorporated in the MTFP annex/Budget Book
135. Most of the Council's capital funding comes from government for investment in specific assets, mainly in accordance with national priorities such as Transport, Children's Services and Housing. Funding is allocated in line with agreed local programmes and subject to the delivery of outcomes. Our programmes and targets are put forward to government through such planning processes as the Local Transport Plan, Schools Asset Management Plan and the Housing Business Plan.
136. The following table summarises allocation of the capital resources by community strategy theme.

Heading	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
PROSPEROUS DARLINGTON	All figures: £'000s				
Highway maintenance	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,148	4,974
Integrated transport	1,534	1,150	1,150	1,150	4,984
Single Programme schemes:					
Town Centre Fringe Feasibility	96				96
Faverdale Logistics Park (Project)		1,825	1,825		3,650
Town Centre Fringe phase 1 (Feethams)	450				450
Town Centre Fringe phase 2 (Parkgate)		2,500	2,500		5,000
Town Centre Fringe phase 3 (Valley Street)				2,000	2,000
Northern Cross			3,350		3,350
Strategic Acquisitions	1,008				1,008
Business Incubator Space feasibility	100				100
Business Incubator full project	1,720	780			2,500
University of Teesside at Central Park	1,000				1,000
ICT and Telephone Networks Upgrade	400				400
Prosperous Darlington Programme Total	7,838	7,403	9,973	4,298	29,512

Northern Housing Growth Point: Government allocated £5.74M of capital (with £446,000 revenue) for schemes within the Tees Valley Housing Growth Point Programme of Delivery in 2009/10 and 2010/11. Out of this sub-regional allocation, Darlington received 443,000 for 2009/10, and this is being used primarily to support affordable housing development on the former Beaumont School site. The local allocation for 2010/11 is currently uncertain; but it will be used to facilitate housing development at Central Park.

Heading	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
ASPIRING DARLINGTON All figures: £'000s					
Schools devolved schemes	295	1,299	1,299	1,299	4,192
Capital improvements to schools					
Access initiative	187	187	187	187	748
Other school improvements	34	661	694	714	2,103
Major Capital Projects					
North Road Primary	153				153
Children's centres	227				227
Private nursery improvements	240				240
Short breaks - families with disabled children	115				115
14-19 diplomas/SEN & disabilities	6,000				6,000
Clervaux Alternative Provision	485				485
Children's Play Programme	398				398
Primary Strategy for Change	8,366				8,366
Building Schools for the Future	10,200	19,800	19,800	9,600	59,400
Schools Planning Team	293	302	311	320	1,226
AMP Support Costs	7	52	52	52	163
Temporary accommodation	71	71	30		172
Aspiring Darlington Programme Total	27,071	22,372	22,373	12,172	83,988
GREENER DARLINGTON All figures: £'000s					
Environmental Works	849	650	1,650	650	3,799
Energy efficiency		600	600	800	2,000
Greener Darlington Programme Total	849	1,250	2,250	1,450	5,799
HEALTHY DARLINGTON All figures: £'000s					
Housing					
Adaptations	360	371	382	393	1,506
Windsor Court IPM	1,600				1,600
Rockwell House	1,500	1,500			3,000
Thorne Court	116	116			116
Ted Fletcher Court		1,400			1,400
Private sector improvements	805	261	261	261	1,588
Lifeline Services	200	100	80	80	460

Council hsg improvements / planned mtnce	4,009	2,248	3,125	3,020	12,402
Professional fees	250	250	250	250	1,000
Carefirst programme	83	83	83	83	332
Healthy Darlington Programme Total	8,923	6,213	4,181	4,087	23,404
COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME TOTAL	44,680	37,238	38,776	22,007	142,701

137. It is important to emphasise again that the above table shows the Council's planned capital investment, and it is not the complete picture of capital investment in Darlington. Partner agencies have their own investment plans, and these will be particularly significant within the Healthy Darlington and Safer Darlington themes.

138. As has been previously noted, the Council's contributions to the Greener and Safer themes are primarily revenue-based. The limited capital investment proposals included above reflects the nature of the Council's work in these themes rather than a lack of commitment to delivering outcomes.

139. The sources of capital funding for the above programme are summarised in the following table.

Funding Source	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
	All figures are £'000s				
Capital grants	33,128	31,207	33,829	18,529	116,693
Supported borrowing	3,616	2,205	2,205	2,205	10,231
Revenue contributions	1,921	2,013	1,792	873	6,599
Departmental prudential borrowing	4,665	863			5,528
Housing Revenue Account capital receipts	350	350	350	400	1,450
General Fund capital receipts	1,000	600	600		2,200
Total Resources	44,680	37,238	38,776	22,007	142,701

Outcome Based Accountability

Introduction

140. This Corporate Plan refers extensively to Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) as the method adopted to help us to formulate action plans that will be delivered in the short to medium term by public services to specific customer and client groups that we can confidently expect to make a positive contribution to long term outcomes.
141. This Appendix describes OBA, for readers who want to know more about the approach and how it is applied. The content borrows heavily from the web-based material published by David Burnby. David is a consultant working with Outcomes UK and is delivering a programme of training and follow-up work to on OBA to Council staff and staff from partner agencies.

Outcome Based Accountability

142. Outcome Based Accountability was first developed in the early 1990s by Mark Friedman and is now used extensively across the United States and increasingly in eight other countries including the UK. The framework evolved out of Mark's 19 years experience as a state government official. Before establishing the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute in 1996, as a member of a small Washington based think-tank Mark had the opportunity of developing his thinking to draw some fundamental conclusions:
- The starting point for any planning process should be a clear statement of the conditions of well-being desired (the *outcomes*).
 - Progress against achieving outcomes should be measured by the use of appropriate data (*indicators*)
 - Having the data and knowing the historical trends and likely forecast for the chosen indicators is necessary to develop understanding of what is driving them (the '*story behind the baseline*')
 - This in turn is essential to inform what could be done to improve the situation (the *Action Plan*)
 - Any strategy to improve quality of life indicators for people in communities should be simple, based on common sense, written in plain language on the minimum amount of paper and, most importantly of all, be useful.
 - Most public sector plans and programmes don't work this way.
143. Whilst Mark concluded that almost any planning system could be used for straightforward task and finish projects, tackling more complex and pervasive issues such as crime, anti-social behaviour, poverty, health inequalities or poor educational attainment needed a different approach.
144. Much of the emphasis on tackling these issues centres on investment in programmes or service systems of one kind or another. Yet despite billions of pounds of spending on a bewildering array of initiatives and concentration on systems, policies and strategies, in terms of quality of life for poorer communities, little seems to change. Mark recognised that the job of improving quality of life outcomes was bigger than individual programmes, indeed bigger than government itself. The answer lies in partnership working: bringing together *all* the stakeholders with a role to play including the main service providing agencies, service users, voluntary and community organisations and the business community.

Accountability

145. At the heart of this thinking is the understanding that if we hope to make a difference to quality of life outcomes, we must establish the right lines of accountability. The recognition that individual agencies or programmes or even government as a whole cannot by themselves address quality of life outcomes gives rise to two distinct types of accountability:
- **Population Accountability:** Being about the wellbeing of *whole populations*, i.e. all people within a defined community whether they are in receipt of services or not. Accountability for

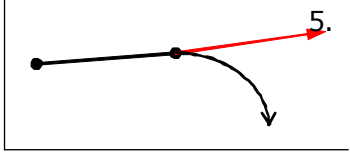
improving indicators of outcomes (e.g. the rate of obesity as an indicator of ‘a healthy community’) should rest with partnerships, not just individual service providing agencies

- **Performance Accountability:** being about the effectiveness of service providing agencies, programmes or projects and the wellbeing of their *client populations* or service users.
146. Whilst the need for partnership working to address outcomes has been recognised by the UK government for some time (demonstrated for example by the core roles given to Local Strategic Partnerships, Community Safety Partnerships or Children’s Trusts), the confusion between the two types of accountability still persists. It is not uncommon to see, for example, the police being held solely accountable for a high crime rate or the NHS being held solely accountable for poor health.
147. The reality is that the police (for example) cannot by themselves eradicate crime: only agencies and individuals working in partnership with the police can make inroads on indicators such as the burglary rate, violent assaults or anti social behaviour. Similarly, the NHS cannot in isolation address poor health indicators such as obesity, low life expectancy or heart disease. To hold individual agencies accountable for these indicators will result in a frustrating process of much talk, many strategies, much blame and little change.
148. This doesn’t mean letting agencies off the hook. An equally robust approach to managing service provision by measuring appropriate *performance measures* is central to OBA thinking. Performance measures are determined by answering three simple questions:
- How much did we do? (how much service did we provide – quantity of effort)
 - How well did we do it? (quality of effort)
 - Is anyone better off? (quality of effect or *client outcome*)
149. To preserve clarity of thinking, it is important to recognise the difference between *means* (the agencies or programmes that deliver services) and *ends* (the outcomes we strive for). We should hold agencies accountable for their performance as the *means* (by using appropriate performance measures) and partnerships accountable for the ends (by measuring progress against appropriate *indicators*). The reality is that we often mix up the two as though the difference didn’t matter. The result is akin to a dog chasing its tail: considerable effort for no appreciable gain.


Getting from talk to Action – whole population level

150. The challenge then is to get from talk to action, from strategy to delivery. The process starts at the *whole population level*, which means starting by looking at the conditions of wellbeing we want for *all* people (or all children, all young people, all older people etc.) in a defined community. Because we are looking to contribute towards *whole population outcomes* then this process cannot be done by a single agency or service provider. We need to bring together *all* the relevant agencies and organisations together with service users, residents and community representatives with a role to play in addressing the desired outcome. We can then start the journey from talk to action by addressing seven questions:
1. What are the quality of life conditions (*outcomes*) we want for our community and the children and families who live here?
 2. What would these conditions look like if we could see, feel and experience them?
 3. How can we measure if these conditions exist or not? (*indicators*) Are the measures getting better or worse? (*baseline*) Where are we headed if we just keep doing what we’re doing now (*forecast*)?
 4. Why are these conditions getting better or worse? (*the story behind the baseline*)
 5. Who are the partners that have a potential role to play in doing better?
 6. What works to do better? What would it take to turn the indicator curve? What can we do that is no-cost or low-cost in addition to things that cost money?
 7. What do we, individually and as a group, propose to do? (*action plan*)

151. This seven step 'journey' is structured around a process that enables participants to contribute their combined skills, knowledge and experiences to inform each step of the way. The process maximises the contribution of all partners and stakeholders and creates shared ownership for the conclusions. The core process (known as "Turning the Curve") has been used extensively to inform strategic plans and actions for a broad range of partnership bodies including Local Strategic Partnerships, Neighbourhood Partnership Boards and Children's Trusts.
152. The Turning the Curve exercise demonstrates the basic process and is structured around the seven questions above. Task groups of (typically) between six and eight partners are briefed to complete a single page report working step by step in a logical sequence from the defined population and outcome to the action plan. The Turning the Curve report which forms the basis for the exercise is illustrated on the following page.

POPULATION	All adults in Darlington
OUTCOME	Skilled, motivated, flexible fulfilled workforce
INDICATORS	Measures of the outcome
BASELINES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NI1- % people who get on well 2. NI4- % who influence decisions 3. NI152 - people on benefits 4. NI163 - % population with Level 2 5. NI174 - Skills Gap  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where we've been • Where we're going • Where we want to be
STORY Behind the baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The causes, the forces at work • What's driving the baselines?
PARTNERS With a role to play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public, Private and Voluntary Sector • Community groups • Residents
WHAT WORKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would it take to turn the curve? • Best practice • Best hunches
ACTION PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we propose to do, how and by when

Data Development Agenda



Performance Accountability

153. With the whole population level process completed as above, the next stage is to ensure that the means we are using to deliver against the desired outcomes are effective. The OBA approach to performance management is characterised by the simple, common sense, minimum paper approach used at the whole population planning stage. Fundamentally, the process revolves around answering three questions about the programme or services being provided:
1. How much did we do? (the quantity of service)
 2. How well did we do it? (the quality of the service)
 3. Is anyone better off? (the quantity and quality of the service outcome)
154. This can be illustrated graphically as four quadrants (see next page):

	Quantity	Quality
Effort	<p>How much did we do? <i>(the quantity of the effort)</i></p>	<p>How well did we do it? <i>(the quality of the effort)</i></p>
Effect	<p>How many customers are better off? <i>(the quantity of the effect)</i></p>	<p>Percentage of customers better off? <i>(the quality of the effect)</i></p>

155. Populating these four quadrants gives us our performance measures. The top left hand quadrant is the easiest to fill (and interestingly, the least important). The performance measures in the top right hand quadrant are more difficult to determine and have a direct bearing on the measures in the bottom quadrants which are of course the most important. There is absolutely no point in delivering services if no one is any better off yet the bottom quadrant performance measures are usually the least defined and are frequently never measured at all. Obviously, if no one is any better off as a result of the service provided then we will make no impact whatsoever on the desired whole population outcomes we want for our communities. Relying on top left quadrant measures as the only means of determining service provision performance is a great recipe for encouraging a large quantity of relatively useless activity. Determining and measuring the bottom quadrant performance measures is seldom straight forwards, but we cannot abdicate responsibility for them if we are serious about wanting to make a positive difference to communities.

Improving Service Delivery

156. Using OBA to improve service delivery is based on the same thinking as the whole population process, but with two important differences. Instead of starting by defining the whole population, because we are looking to performance manage a specific service to a defined group of service users, we start by answering the question “Who are our customers?” By customers, we mean those people whose lives are affected (for better or for worse) by the actions of the service. (Instead of customers, you might want to use the terms service users or clients.) The second important difference is that instead of using population indicators to measure improvement, we are looking to determine performance measures by populating the four quadrants illustrated above to demonstrate the impact of the service with a particular emphasis on the bottom right hand quadrant measures.

157. So the seven performance accountability questions to get from talk to action are:

1. Who are our customers?
2. How can we measure if our customers are better off? *(bottom right hand quadrant measures)*
3. How can we measure if we’re delivering our services well *(upper right quadrant measures)*
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures? *(creating a baseline and a curve to turn in exactly the same way as with population accountability. Understanding the story behind the baseline is crucial to understanding how to improve performance)*

5. Who are our partners who have a role to play in doing better? (*this will inevitably include our customers and suppliers*)
 6. What works to do better? (*What would it take to turn the performance measure curve? What can we do that is no-cost or low-cost in addition to things that cost money?*)
 7. What do we propose to do? (*the action plan*)
158. Using this thinking process to improve the performance of services follows an almost identical “Turning the Curve” approach, only defining customers instead of whole populations and performance measures (How Much, How Well, Better Off?) instead of population indicators. We baseline the data we have for our priority performance measures and forecast the future trend. We draw the curve we want to turn and then consult widely to inform the story behind our baseline and the partners we need to work with to improve our services. This in turn informs the answer to the key question “What would it take to improve our performance?” and the basis for our action plan. The Turning the Curve report which forms the basis for this exercise is illustrated [here](#)

The OBA Journey

159. The journey from Talk to Action is shown graphically below, starting with the whole population design process from the Desired Outcome travelling through the seven steps to the Action Plan. Because of the complexity of the problems faced in communities, it is highly unlikely that significant impact on the outcomes will come from a single intervention. The flow chart therefore goes from the Action Plan through a review process referring back to progress against the indicator baseline. The process then repeats itself, reviewing the story behind the baseline, the choice of partners, what works and the action plan. Addressing challenges around social deprivation is rarely a ‘task and finish’ process. Progress against the indicators needs continuous review as the stories behind the baseline change, requiring adjustments to the Action Plan and the delivery mechanism to keep the curve turning in the right direction and at the right pace.
160. The means is illustrated in the graphic as the commissioning process arising out of the Action Plan and the performance measures which enable us to ensure that our chosen delivery method is effective. The graphic demonstrates how the delivery mechanism contributes towards the desired outcome (the ends) at the whole population level. It is vital that the distinction between ends and means is understood otherwise the lines of accountability become blurred, confusion sets in and little changes. We cannot hold individual service providers accountable for changing outcomes single handed: that requires the efforts of a range of stakeholders working in partnership. We can however hold service providers accountable for managing their services effectively and should rightly expect them to evidence how their customers are better off. The OBA framework enables us to understand this contributory relationship between means and ends through a simple thinking process and in doing so, successfully make the journey from talk to action.