

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN



2004/2007

November 2004

Quality Services For Local People
"Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities"

FOREWORD

Welcome to Sedgefield Borough Council's first Corporate Plan. This new and important document pulls together the challenges facing Council services in the medium term and sets out for the first time detailed objectives and priorities over a three-year period. The plan also responds to issues raised through last year's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), which formally rated the Council as "Good". In particular it provides a focus for real and meaningful performance management arrangements.

We are committed to working closely with staff and trade unions and to developing modern and user-focused ways of working that will ensure we put our policies into action. By working under the guidance of this plan, every department of the Council will have a clear, corporate approach to the development and implementation of Council policy, using it as a touchstone for day-to-day service delivery. Importantly, it will assist us in our drive towards becoming an "Excellent" Council.

Alongside the Community Strategy, this plan will also encourage greater participation from residents and promote partnerships with other organisations. By continuing to work in a sustained, planned and resourced manner, and with the new senior management and departmental structures in place, we can look forward to providing further improvements in service quality and delivery.

This plan will underpin the Council's commitment to the provision of quality local services. It will guide the way we work and it will challenge us all – elected members, managers, employees and trade unions. However, and perhaps more importantly, it will help us to remain focused and committed in meeting the challenge of achieving our strategic vision of "a healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities".

Preparing this Corporate Plan has been both challenging and exciting and we would like to thank all who contributed to its development. With this plan now in place we believe that the Council can look forward to the future with optimism and confidence.

[Councillor R S Fleming](#)
[Leader of the Council](#)

[Mr N Vaulks](#)
[Chief Executive](#)

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SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH

There are a number of factors that will influence the Council's work over the next three years. Changing demographics, the local economy, government priorities, deprivation levels and local community safety and environmental concerns all contribute to the way in which the Council develops and prioritises its services. As well as providing services for today, it is important that the Council and its partners plan services over the medium to long-term.

a regional perspective

Sedgefield Borough is situated in the South of County Durham in the North East of England. The Borough contrasts modern and developing business and industrial areas, with a mix of rural and former colliery settlements. The Northern Way Growth Strategy (NWGS) identifies two city regions within the North East. Sedgefield Borough has been identified as part of the Tees Valley Region. The NWGS prioritise the city regions for future economic growth and ensuring that the fundamental conditions are in place to support this objective will be a key driver of our plan. Strategically located for good access to both the Tyne and Wear and Teesside areas, Sedgefield is well placed to access many of the facilities in the North East, while also offering great potential for further development. This is evidenced through major projects such as NetPark and Locomotion, the National Railway Museum in Shildon, both of which

demonstrate the Borough's contribution to the region.

a declining and ageing population

With a resident population of 87,271 and covering some 21,700 hectares, the majority of the population (78%) lives within the four towns of Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon and Ferryhill, which provide the main focus for employment, shopping and leisure. These centres contrast with a range of small historic villages and coalfield communities. The Borough is fully parished and among these are some of the largest Town/Parish Councils in the Country.

The Borough's population has declined from around 93,000 in the early 1980s and is generally ageing but at a slower rate than other parts of County Durham. In the last ten years, the Borough's population has fallen by almost 4%, whilst the percentage of those in the population aged over 50 has increased by 7.3%. For the first time the Borough now has more residents over 60 years of age than children aged under 14. This increase in the elderly population shows that people are living longer, which is good news, but this will place significant demands on services for the elderly and presents a key challenge to the Council and its partners.

In terms of ethnicity, 99.4% of residents are "White British", the eighth highest ranking of all authorities and

98.5% of the population was born within the United Kingdom. Moreover, the Borough has relatively high levels of ill health with 24.8% of the population having a long-term limiting illness compared with 18% nationally. The Council recognises the importance of fairness in service provision and is committed to developing its approach to service equality and diversity.

the local community

Within each community there is a strong sense of local identity and spirit with people remaining proud of and loyal to their local areas. This is evident not only in the former coalmining communities but also in centres such as Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Ferryhill and Shildon. This sense of pride is reinforced by the general environmental quality of the Borough's communities with well maintained and cared for public spaces and housing areas.

local housing

There are 39,900 dwellings in the Borough with approximately 25% owned by the Borough Council. These are maintained to a high standard as evidenced by the fact that 52% of the stock currently meets the Government's 'decency' standard and the Council will deliver the decency standard for all its housing by 2010. However, tenants' aspirations exceed this minimum standard and therefore additional investment is required. This is being sought via a proposed Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT).

The Borough has twice the national average of terraced housing. This terraced housing is predominantly pre1919 and concentrated in the former South Durham Coalfield communities. The council has had some success in regenerating the areas of older private sector housing in Shildon but the former coalfield communities of Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton are experiencing market failure. These areas have been prioritised for future regeneration by the Council, focused on providing a more balanced mix of housing set within sustainable neighbourhoods. The Council is working in partnership with other councils, registered social landlords, English Partnerships and GONE to develop schemes to regenerate these areas.

the borough's economy

Sedgefield Borough has a strong and proud history of manufacturing; particularly within engineering and is home to one of the largest employment locations in the region at Aycliffe Industrial Park. However, these strong links to manufacturing have left the Borough's economy vulnerable to the rapid and ongoing changes in the global economy, which in turn has led to a continuing local loss of manufacturing from the mid 1980s onwards. Approximately 40% of local employment is within this sector, compared with regional and national averages of 15.9% and 13.4% respectively. It is expected the Borough's economy will continue to be influenced by the further reduction of its manufacturing base, which has already resulted in the loss of over

4,000 jobs since 1999; 13% of the current employment base.

Many aspects of the Sedgefield economy are still extremely healthy with a number of advantages. The Borough's location, in the central A1(M) corridor presents a major economic opportunity and (as stated above) Aycliffe Industrial Park accommodates one of the region's largest centres of employment. There is a strong tradition of developing business sites to encourage business expansion and inward investment, often with support through European and Regional Programmes. There is an established business support infrastructure in place, which works in partnership to promote the economic and employment regeneration of the Borough. Leading edge developments, such as NetPark provide opportunities to diversify the local economic base and deliver wider benefits across the Borough.

A sustainable and healthy economy is key to the overall wellbeing of Sedgefield Borough.

tackling poverty and health inequality

Although much has been done to address social inclusion in recent years, there are still some significant issues to address, particularly in respect of geographical variations in unemployment, educational achievement and health. People's life circumstances and lifestyle are central to their health and wellbeing and the Council recognises how factors such as poverty, housing, unemployment

and the local environment can have a profound effect on mental and physical health.

The newly revised Index of Deprivation 2004 indicates that two of the Borough's wards contain areas recognised as being amongst the 10% most deprived in England and that further hot spots exist in terms of employment, income and health deprivation. These levels of deprivation are as follows ...

18 of the Borough's 19 wards containing areas amongst the worst 10% in the country for health-related issues

Almost 4% of the workforce is unemployed

Means-tested benefits provide a major source of income to around 21% of the Borough's population

Only 44% of young people achieving 5 A*-C GCSE passes compared with 45% in County Durham and 53% nationally

Only 12% of residents have been educated to degree level or above

Over 28% of the Borough's adult population has poor literacy skills and almost 31% has poor numeracy skills

The Council recognises that it must sustain its efforts to improve the quality of life for all, but particularly for those who reside in disadvantaged communities.

leisure opportunities

An active lifestyle is a key to improved health.

On average Borough residents suffer higher levels of ill health and long-term illness and a lower than average life expectancy. This health deprivation can be addressed in part by providing access to a broad range of leisure opportunities. From the four Borough-owned leisure centres to local golf courses and community centres, there is a range of excellent facilities in the area.

The Council recognises the importance of increased physical activity in promoting good health, and in an effort to secure long-term impacts on local health is amongst the highest spending local authorities in this discretionary area. In recent years, investment has been pegged and private sector partners have taken on some of this burden.

Significant success in recent years in attracting external grants and in entering into partnership arrangements has seen the construction of an athletics track at Shildon and a significant extension to Ferryhill Lesiure Centre – which now boasts the European Centre of Excellence for Taekwondo and an international standard indoor bowls facility.

Further improvements have been achieved through a partnership agreement for the provision of state of the art fitness suites in all four Borough-owned leisure centres. This partnership was recently extended to 2018 and will see £2.7M further

investment in these facilities over several years.

A number of interventions with targeted groups such as those suffering from obesity and significant investment in encouraging youth participation should secure improved health for Borough residents both now and in the future.

community safety

Crime and the fear of crime are important indicators of the overall wellbeing of a community. And although the Borough is one of the safest places to live in the United Kingdom, these issues are consistently high in public views on the quality of life in Sedgefield.

Anti-social behaviour impacts on the lives of residents of the Borough and is a priority for the Council. The Council, with its partners, is starting to address this issue through using a multi-agency approach to tackling this issue.

a sustainable environment

As essential development takes place across the Borough to diversify the local economy and meet the needs of an ageing, declining and (in parts) deprived population, it is important that the Council makes every effort to regenerate and maintain the local area and environment in a sustainable way. The local environment is consistently identified as a key issue for residents of the Borough.

the wider agenda

It is imperative that this Corporate Plan articulates the links between ...

The Government's policy agendas, such as developing sustainable communities, social inclusion, decent housing, community safety, equalities and e-government

The Community Strategy, produced by the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership

how do these factors inform this corporate plan?

This first Corporate Plan has been designed to clearly demonstrate how the Council's activities are tackling the issues that the Borough faces as set out above. It not only sets an overall direction for the Council but also includes specific priorities and related targets that when met, will have a real and lasting impact in improving the quality of life for the people of Sedgefield Borough.

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Local Government Act 2000 requires all local authorities to produce a Community Strategy that will set out a long-term vision for the area based on the aspirations, needs and priorities of local communities.

The Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy (2004–2014) was approved in July 2004 and developed following an extensive community appraisal and consultation process via the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP is a single, non-statutory, non-executive organisation that brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector operational in the Borough as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sector interests and local people so that a series of agreed priorities can be determined and service plans implemented to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Borough.

The Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy (2004–2014) was approved in July 2004 and developed following an extensive community appraisal and consultation process via the Borough's LSP. The Strategy identifies four key priority aims for Sedgefield Borough and is structured around these, setting out a number of supporting priorities and targets to be addressed under which specific service improvements will be developed. These aims are ...

A Healthy Borough
A Prosperous Borough
An Attractive Borough
Strong Communities

The Community Strategy will, with its accompanying medium-term Action Plan, fulfil a key role in the Council's strategic policy framework by clearly articulating a joint community and stakeholder vision for the Borough and linking with this Corporate Plan, Local Development Framework, CPA Action Plan and the roll out of the E-Government Agenda.

The Action Plan is the key document in terms of delivering the Strategy, and will be developed with reference to the LSP's Performance Management Framework, providing details of the key activities to be undertaken, responsible lead agencies and the resources to be committed. In developing activity to achieve this vision, the Strategy identifies four core principles to be addressed, along with three cross cutting themes: -

Principles:

Sustainability
Equality & Diversity
Working in Partnership
Promoting citizenship

Crosscutting Themes:

ICT
Young People
Access

The delivery of the Strategy will also be set out in more detail in a series of Area Framework Documents to be developed in the medium term. These Frameworks will align with the Council's Area Forums and will outline individual areas' contributions to the overall aims and any localised problems/concentrations of deprivation

that may exist. The Area Frameworks will also be developed with regard to the emerging Local Development Frameworks required under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Bill 2004.

a healthy borough

a borough where people can lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities

Improving health and reducing inequalities are two significant issues for Sedgefield Borough. The challenge in achieving this is highlighted by the Indices of Deprivation 2004, which identified 24 areas within the Borough that fell within the worst 10% nationally for health-related issues.

Surveys have shown high levels of smoking, poor diet and low levels of physical activity in the Borough which all contribute to high levels of ill health, high rates of long term illness and a lower than average life expectancy for Sedgefield residents.

Even against this general picture of poor health, there is an obvious link between the various measures of deprivation such as education, employment, housing and health related issues, demonstrated by more acute health difficulties in the areas of highest deprivation.

Local communities have identified that access to high quality health services is also a major concern, particularly in the more rural and outlying parts of the Borough.

Enabling local people to play a key role in improving where they live and in

making decisions about how services are delivered is crucial to improving the Borough and the life opportunities of its residents. It is also a central part of the Government's drive to modernise public services.

Local leadership, greater accountability and closer engagement with communities are at the heart of creating stronger, more vibrant, innovative and responsive governance and service arrangements that meet community needs

Factors affecting quality of life do not occur in isolation but are interrelated and acting on one issue often has an impact on another. Consequently the Council and its partners are working together and sharing resources to maximise their potential impact in this area.

Healthy – key priorities ...

Ensure that local people are proud to be a resident or business of Sedgefield Borough

Work in partnership with our communities in the planning and delivery of local services

Improving Health and Social Care Services

Improving the Health and Well-being of Local Communities

Access to services

a prosperous borough

a borough where high quality businesses can prosper and where local people have the confidence and skills to access the jobs that they offer

Due to the economic circumstances of the Borough it is essential that access to jobs and to learning/training opportunities be improved.

Sedgefield has a strong and proud history of manufacturing, particularly within engineering. However, these links have left the Borough's economy vulnerable to the rapid and ongoing changes in the global economy that have led to a continuing local loss of manufacturing jobs. With over 40% of local employment within this sector, it is expected the Borough's economy will continue to be adversely affected by the further reduction of its manufacturing base, which has already resulted in the loss of over 10,000 jobs in the Borough since the 1980s.

In NetPark (The North East Technology Park), the Borough will have a business site of regional, and indeed, national importance. It will be capable of attracting and growing major global innovators and research organisations involved in new and emerging technologies. The potential positive impact from this in terms of employment, local businesses and the local communities is encouraging but will require careful management to maximise the benefits to residents. This may include ...

Ensuring an available pool of well trained and motivated labour

Encouraging the provision of suitable infrastructure to support the creation of new jobs, such as transport links, choice of housing and access to good quality services

Creating a development setting of the highest environmental quality

One in four people in the Borough have literacy needs and nearly one in three have numeracy needs and there is a real requirement to tackle these low levels of basic skills. The Council and its partners must build on the good work that is already being undertaken by schools, colleges and other training providers to raise attainment levels, support community learning and to widen participation to learning. It is essential that the Council works with our local colleges, universities and businesses to encourage the practice of lifelong learning, supported by a network of community learning access points.

Prosperous – key priorities ...

A Strong and Sustainable Business Base

Development of the Borough's unique cultural and tourism attractions

A Community and Workforce with the Skills required by Business

Aiming High in School

an attractive borough

a borough where the natural and built environments are valued, conserved and enhanced

Sedgefield Borough is an attractive place to live and work. Primarily rural, with a mix of small industrial towns and attractive villages, it is set within plenty of open and accessible countryside. The Borough has a strong reputation for delivering on sustainability and environmental projects, and has committed a lot of resources to enhancing the built environment.

However, some areas do require attention. Parts of some settlements and housing areas are poor, whilst some town and village centres have struggled to maintain their roles in the light of changing shopping patterns.

Litter, dog fouling and fly tipping are consistently at the top of residents' concerns. Furthermore, the Borough faces some major challenges in improving its use of resources and its recycling rates as well as responding to issues of fuel poverty and conservation of its natural habitats.

The Council and its partners must continue to respond to the challenges facing the Borough's built and natural environments, and manage them through partnerships and planning in a way which respects their special qualities and distinctiveness, and recognises their importance to everyone.

Attractive – key priorities ...

Improving the design and environmental quality of our towns and villages

Ensure the efficient use of our resources

Value, conserve and enhance the biological diversity and natural habitats of the Borough

Enhancing Transport provision across the Borough

Develop and maximise the Leisure and Cultural facilities in the Borough

Enhance the quality of strategic routes and corridors

a borough with strong communities

a borough where people can access the housing and services they want in attractive and safe neighbourhoods

Despite the difficulties resulting from the loss of the local industry communities have managed to retain a strength, pride and resilience that offers a solid foundation around which a sustainable future for the Borough can be built.

A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken, often with assistance through external regeneration funding programmes, to help rebuild communities and neighbourhoods across the Borough - but there is still a long way to go. Eighteen of the Borough's nineteen wards contain some areas recognised as being amongst the 30% most disadvantaged nationally. Included within these are three areas that are within the 10% most disadvantaged. Whilst health and employment issues

are prevalent right across the Borough, a key issue must be to reduce the inequalities between those areas suffering from poverty and the rest of the Borough.

The approach to tackling these issues is being developed around the principles of sustainable communities – providing decent homes in clean, safe and attractive environments.

To be successful this needs to be driven from within the communities themselves with the support of statutory agencies that will continue to develop their relationship with the community and the voluntary sector. The Council must work with these agencies to support local people in the planning, design and long-term stewardship of their communities. The capacity of local communities will have to be improved to enable them to engage with service providers and help them shape the future of their neighbourhoods.

Levels of crime are falling across the Borough. Joint initiatives between partners to address particular concerns have delivered results. However, efforts need to be maintained to provide reassurance to residents to prevent a disproportionate fear of crime.

Anti-social behaviour is a key concern for the residents of the Borough. The Council is already working through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to tackle many of the issues of crime and anti-social behaviour across the Borough.

The Council has recently reviewed its Community Force and launched a new Neighbourhood Wardens service. This new service will have a significant role in community reassurance and improving the quality of life in our most deprived neighbourhoods. The Council recognises that there is still significant work to do in this area and will continue to provide strong leadership and direction.

Strong Communities – key priorities ...

Tackling Disadvantage, reducing the current gaps between the Borough's better off and less well off neighbourhoods

Good Choice of Quality Housing

Changing Housing Demands and Needs

Safe Neighbourhoods

Partnership working

Tackling key issues for local people demands concerted and coordinated effort across all sectors and the progress of the LSP to date demonstrates the impact that partnership working can have in improving services across the Borough by ensuring that: -

Sustainable economic, social and physical regeneration happens in disadvantaged communities

Public services work better and are delivered in ways that meet the needs of local people

Ensuring that local people can influence decision-making and participate in improvements

Business and the community and voluntary sectors can play a full and equal part

The development of LSPs in one aspect of the duty of community leadership, which along with the local government modernisation agenda are the two principal drivers that place partnership working at the centre of modern local government. In recent years, the Council has increasingly become engaged in activities across a wide range of service areas that are commonly said to be 'partnerships' or to involve 'partnership working'. These words are often used loosely to describe a number of different types of groupings from informal coalitions of groups committed to working on a particular local issue to top down, statutory and highly-structured bodies with a board and signed agreements on how partners will work together.

It is important that the Council balances effectively the benefits and risks of its partnership working and articulates clearly how it will work in partnership (as well as unilaterally) to achieve the ambitions for Sedgefield Borough set out in the Community Strategy. This is a primary function of the Corporate Plan.

CORPORATE PLANNING

what is the corporate plan?

This document is *the* main plan for the Council, setting out its ambitions and priorities for the future. It helps to determine where and how the Council can best use its limited resources to provide quality services and value for money. It is a “medium-term” plan, which means that it covers a three-year period and it also covers the whole Council. Furthermore, in addition to setting out the way forward, it has been designed in a way that will enable the Council to check the rate of progress it is making towards the achievement of its goals.

Importantly, this plan replaces the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and in doing so represents a significant shift from Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) compliance to customer-focused and needs-based quality service provision.

why is corporate planning important?

The Corporate Plan is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of everything that the Council hopes to achieve over the medium-term. Its purpose is to help elected members, managers and employees focus on corporate ambitions whilst ensuring the delivery of continuously improving frontline services. In short it has been developed to provide clarity about what we are trying to achieve. Specifically,

the plan is important to the Council for two principal reasons ...

It establishes the way forward for service provision and investment over a three-year period and for the first time, pulls together a strategic vision for the full range of Council activities.

It helps to bridge a gap in the Council’s policy and planning framework that was identified by Inspectors following the CPA process.

In striving to become “Excellent”, the Council must be clear about what it wants to achieve. It must have clearly defined priorities and it must recognise that it can never realistically have sufficient resources to deliver increased investment and top quartile performance in all areas.

The recent authority-wide restructure, priority-setting process and the CPA Inspection report have provided the Council with a solid base on which to move forward and deliver service improvement in its key priority areas over the next three years.

how does the corporate plan fit with other plans?

Whilst the Corporate Plan is at the heart of the service improvement agenda, it does not contain every detail of Council plans for service delivery. It is supported by a Medium-Term Financial Plan and a Workforce Plan

as well as a series of related Service Improvement Plans (SIPs), a number of key Strategies and thirteen service-based Service Business Plans. These supporting documents, which are owned and monitored at the portfolio/departmental level, are by definition more detailed than the Corporate Plan, focusing on a specific service and/or aspect of service delivery.

Appendix 1 Corporate Planning Framework

how has the corporate plan been developed?

The Council has listened to what residents and partners have said about current and future services and this has led to a set of new and challenging corporate ambitions, community outcomes and corporate values. However, being clear about service user requirements is only one aspect of Corporate Planning. The Council is committed to achieving its goals and making noticeable improvements to the quality of life for the people of Sedgefield Borough. As such it is essential that the plan's content is relevant, realistic and measurable.

With this in mind, the plan has been developed following a comprehensive exercise to establish (baseline) the contribution of every service to the Council's corporate ambitions, community outcomes and corporate values. This process was particularly informative, revealing some areas where services could not effectively measure their contribution to Council goals

The process of gathering detailed data on current activity has itself provided a basis on which to move forward, both in terms of developing the Corporate Plan that is relevant to those who must deliver its objectives developing awareness and appreciation of the Council's broader strategic objectives.

The Corporate Plan has been developed in an inclusive manner in order to ensure that elected members, managers and employees fully understand how they contribute to the work of the Council. By ensuring that the plan reflects Council goals in a meaningful and measurable way, all contributors will be able to focus on delivering service improvement in the right areas prioritised by the Council.

In February 2004, CPA Inspectors commented that Performance Management had not been fully embedded within the Council. The above process has made significant inroads into fully embedding Performance Management and strategic planning awareness within the Council.

The Council's real commitment to achieving the corporate ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan is demonstrated through the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The MTFP underpins the delivery of corporate ambitions by ensuring that services and the financial resources required to deliver them are aligned over the medium-term. The MTFP sets out how existing and projected resources will be spent and where necessary redistributed to priority service areas. Both plans focus attention and effort on strategic

objectives and demonstrate how the Council's services and actions contribute to the wider Community Strategy.

The Council is also committed to producing a Workforce Plan in 2005, which will assess and set out actions required to address the organisational structure and skills base changes deemed necessary to meet the challenges of the Corporate Plan.

how will the corporate plan be updated?

The Corporate Plan and both supporting annexes will be refreshed and republished in June each year. This will be following an evaluation of progress by Overview & Scrutiny, consideration by Cabinet and final approval by Full Council.

Importantly, the plan is also a key aspect of post CPA improvement planning and will be examined by the Audit Commission as part of the CPA Quality (Self) Assessment scheduled for autumn 2004. The Corporate Plan and Performance Indicators Annexe will be submitted to the Audit Commission for external validation.

CORPORATE VALUES

The Council has also established a series of Corporate Values that underpin Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes. These values embody the spirit in which all Council services are delivered.

being open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive

There is an increasing emphasis on issues surrounding governance and the Council is committed to ensuring that it operates with integrity and in the public's interest. This involves open decision-making processes that extend awareness and understanding of all Council activities. This plan is a key element of this open style, setting out details of what the Council does, how it does it and how well it does it.

Access to services means meeting and responding to customers' needs at times and in ways that are convenient to them – a move that requires a significant culture change for most local authorities. The largely rural nature of much of Sedgefield Borough and relatively low levels of car ownership can result in problems of physical access to services. This type of isolation requires the Council to examine how it engages with customers, whether that be through mobile service provision, outreach sessions or by utilising new technology and delivering the e-government agenda.

The Boroughs population faces significant disadvantage due to issues

of poor literacy and numeracy. Addressing the underlying causes of local academic achievement is a key priority but we must provide services that are easy to access for people facing these issues now. These diversity issues need to be addressed in the development and implementation of all services.

The Council is committed to providing easy access to Council services via its area-based offices and through a recently introduced Customer Services Centre that deals with customers at the first point of contact. It is determined to provide equality of opportunity – both as an employer and as a service provider, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, location or any other categorisation. It is important that every resident and business in Sedgefield Borough has the same access to opportunities, regardless of their individual circumstances. The Council is committed to improving its services for all minority and potentially disadvantaged groups and to providing related training and awareness raising to its employees and partners.

achievements to date

Established a customer services centre, development plan and complaints procedure in order to deal with complaints at the first point of contact and reduce the level of complaints received

Achieved Lexcel award for Legal Services

Implemented the Benefits calculator on the Council website allowing members of the public to check their current entitlement or whether they are entitled to benefits

Introduced a touch tone payments system (24/7)

Carried out improvements to the Sedgefield Borough Council website

Extended the Cyber cafes

Created an online planning portal allowing the online submission and viewing of development control application

Implemented a Customer Relationship Management system in partnership with County Durham e-government partnership

Received approval for its Implementing E-Government (IEG) 3 Strategy and prepared its IEG 4 Strategy

Achieved compliance with the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in Rented Housing

consulting with customers and partners

A key principle underpinning the work of the Council is the need to develop services with customers in mind and in order to do this the Council needs to provide information, consult on existing and proposed services and engage in an active dialogue with local people.

The Council has a range of mechanisms for doing this including a Citizens' Panel and a range of area-based consultative forums. Following a recent review of Services for Children and Young People the Council is now consulting on the most appropriate methods to secure sustainable youth participation.

achievements to date

Developed the knowledge and skills base of the Citizens' Panel and as a result increased its effectiveness in providing views on Council services and priorities

Reviewed corporate consultation processes and guidance

Assumed Responsible Body status for the Sedgefield Borough Community Empowerment Network

Worked with tenants and residents through meetings, tenants' groups and residents' associations and actively sought the views of those who do not wish to attend meetings through a Tenant Readers' Panel.

Provided training and capacity building assistance to those tenants actively involved in the development of their service

Undertaken externally facilitated two-way Council Tax consultation exercises (annually for the past two years) with small interactive focus groups

investing in our employees

One of the main points of contact for the public is through employees of the Council. As such it is essential that employees are equipped with the most up-to-date and appropriate skills and are committed to providing and maintaining quality services. The Council has a range of policies and procedures in place to ensure that it recruits appropriate employees, supports their development through training and learning and protects their health and wellbeing.

The Council achieved the national Investors in People (IiP) award in 2002 – a national benchmark demonstrating best practice in employee management, communication and development.

achievements to date

Retained Investors in People

Adopted a framework setting out a corporate approach to Trade Union and employee consultation and involvement

Made substantial progress in agreeing harmonised terms and conditions of employment specifically in the areas of craft workers, refuse collectors and horticulture

working in partnership with others

Strategic Community Planning (via the Local Strategic Partnership) and working in partnership clearly show that the needs of individuals and

communities must be addressed collectively, not separately. Improving public services and making them more complementary and customer focused is increasingly being undertaken through working in partnership.

Effective partnership working recognises that issues, problems and opportunities do not arise in isolation but are often inter-related and that we will be more effective in tackling local issues if different service providers work with the local community and tackle them together.

By sharing resources, building on the achievements with its partners, the Council will develop innovative joint approaches to service delivery and it should be possible to improve both efficiency and effectiveness whilst ensuring that our communities receive the services they require.

achievements to date

Completed an annual review of the Local Strategic Partnership in association with government office

Affiliate – NEPO (Procurement)- Fitness check IDeA commended SBC for procurement

Completed stage 2 e-government partnership Best Value Review

being responsible with and accountable for public finances

The Council has a duty to residents and businesses in the Borough to ensure that it secures value for money

in all of its operations. Moreover, the recently published Gershon report on public spending has challenged local authorities to secure year-on-year efficiency savings whilst delivering and improving services.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan sets out the Council's medium-term plans for financial management aligned to corporate ambitions, community outcomes and stated priorities for investment – building on a strong track record and reputation for effective financial management.

achievements to date

Increased number of direct debit payments received, leading to an improvement in in-year collections

Achieved a good rating from GONE for our Asset Management Plan

Achieved a satisfaction rating of 98% from right to buy customers, 60% of which rated the service as excellent and 38% rated the service as good

Completed annual statement of accounts early and received recognition from the Audit Commission for financial management

achieving continuous improvement and innovation in service delivery

In local government today it is essential that Councils embrace and fully integrate the principle of continuous improvement. The Council has developed modern performance

management processes and systems that focus on measurable community outcomes, monitor performance against targets and hold to account those responsible for service delivery.

Moreover, the modernisation of services is at the heart of the Council's emerging approach to service delivery. It is important that services are developed and redesigned from a customer perspective – leading to new and innovative ways of delivering traditional Council services. Internet technology provides an opportunity to deliver online services in ever more accessible and convenient ways.

achievements to date

Developed an approach to improvement planning that is based on the Audit Commission's key lines of enquiry

Implemented and innovatively procured Agresso system. Nominated for an LGA award and commended for our approach to procurement

Exceeded targets set as part of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA)

Implemented a staff re-structure

Introduced a new HR system

tackling disadvantage and promoting social inclusion

A caring community is focused on addressing the needs and aspirations of its more vulnerable members – in

other words those who are disadvantaged and/or socially excluded. The Council is committed to recognising and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable people in Sedgefield Borough across all of its services and in ways that respect individuality and a need to be fully included within society.

achievements to date

Established Western area Newton Aycliffe Neighbourhood Management Pilot scheme

Introduced a tenants contents insurance scheme

Implemented Benefits DIP and workflow systems to reduce turnaround times for processing benefits

Completed Capital Works Programme to comply with DDA (Leisure)

Continued the Social Pricing Policy for Leisure Services

taking account of sustainability, risk management and s17 (Crime and Disorder Act) responsibilities

The work of the Council must improve people's lives, both now and in the future. This means ensuring that short-term gains are not placed ahead of medium to long-term impacts. This will be achieved by working towards the principles of sustainable development, which recognises that the quality of people's lives and the

state of communities are affected by a combination of economic, social and environmental factors.

Risk management is a central part of the Council's strategic approach to service delivery. It is the process through which the risks associated with Council service provision are methodically assessed alongside development and improvement activities. The Council will ensure that risk management is fully integrated with its performance management systems and processes to support the achievement of objectives across all services.

The Council in responding to the duty placed on it under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, has ensured that the corporate planning process has crime and disorder reduction embedded in all our work. Consequently the reduction of crime and disorder has been placed at the centre of the Council's values and every department/service must proactively assess its contribution in this important area.

achievements to date

Approved the development of Community Safety Strategy

Approved the development of a Domestic Violence Strategy.

Insert bulleted list here! [Dennis Scarr & Harold Moses]

priority services!

During the development of this plan, the Council has considered recent service performance and progress and assessed the need for additional investment in areas contributing to its Corporate Values. The following medium term priorities for investment/growth over and above standard inflation have been identified and earmarked for accelerated improvement over the next three years ...

customer care all portfolios

Effective customer care requires cultural change, which leads to the development of customer focused services delivered in ways and at times that suit the Council's residents, tenants and visitors.

equality & diversity supporting people portfolio

This is a key priority for the Council and for the Government. However, progress has been relatively slow to date because of a lack of real resources (human and financial) to facilitate the changes/arrangements that all areas of the Council need to make. This work is being co-ordinated

by the corporate Equality & Diversity Group attended by the Supporting People and Welfare & Communications Portfolio Holders.

e-government priority service outcomes performance management portfolio

This is a key priority for both the Council and the Government. The Government has specified a range of Priority Service Outcomes (measurable improvements) that all authorities must achieve during 2005/2006 and work is underway to co-ordinate activities

Please refer to the following documents, which support this Corporate Plan for details of the specific actions and measures that the Council will use to deliver and monitor progress against its Corporate Values ...

Key Issues Annexe Performance Indicators Annexe

CORPORATE AMBITIONS AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Sedgefield Borough Council recognises that it needs to be outward looking and customer focused. Importantly, the Council needs to ensure that the way in which it operates is in line with the ways that people live their lives today. Customer expectations have risen dramatically and people increasingly want services to be delivered at times and in ways and places that suit them.

This means being clear about customer needs, aspirations and about

what the Council is trying to achieve as well as making sure that all parts of the Council are pulling in the same direction.

The Council's is committed to the provision of **Quality Services for Local People** by working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities. This vision is set out in a series of Corporate Ambitions and supporting Community Outcomes as summarised in the table below ...

Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes	
<p>A Healthy Borough</p> <p>Safeguarding public health Promoting independent living Creating leisure opportunities Promoting cultural activities</p>	<p>A Prosperous Borough</p> <p>Promoting business and employment opportunities Maximising learning opportunities</p>
<p>An Attractive Borough</p> <p>Ensuring a cleaner, greener environment Improving towns, villages and the countryside Reducing waste and managing natural resources</p>	<p>A Borough with Strong Communities</p> <p>Securing quality affordable housing Promoting safer neighbourhoods Engaging local communities and promoting local democracy</p>

In preparing this first Corporate Plan and in setting priorities and targets for the medium-term, the Council has considered its achievements to date

against the targets it set itself in its 2004/2005 interim Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP).

This section summarises the Council's recent achievements and ongoing developments against its Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes and shows those areas that have been identified as priorities for investment and accelerated progression.

a healthy borough

safeguarding public health

Prepared and implemented a Food Safety Plan and maintained 100% of high risk food premises inspected

Implemented a Walking the Way to Health Scheme

Re-zoned domestic refuse collection to provide a more efficient service

Achieved improvements in educational performance in Ferryhill and Shildon through the Sure Start programmes

promoting independent living

Implemented the first integrated team for vulnerable adults in Trimdon

Adopted a policy on the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse

Continued to work with the Pioneering Care Partnership to promote independent living

Extended the Carelink service, which will secure the future of this service

Achieved a Quality Mark for the Home Improvement Agency

Continued and expanded the Charter Mark accredited Fit For Life programme including the GP referral scheme, Back Pain rehabilitation and Cardio workshops
Developed and adopted an affordable warmth strategy to eradicate fuel poverty

creating leisure opportunities

Signed investment proposals with Competition Line to further develop four Leisure Centre Fitness Suites until 2020

Opened 'Locomotion' the National Railway Museum in Shildon providing an important Lifelong Learning facility which promotes the economic and social history associated with the area's railway heritage

promoting cultural activities

Delivered a strategic programme of Arts across the Borough via the Arts Hub

Developed a Durham County and Regional Tourism Strategy in partnership

a prosperous borough

promoting business and employment opportunities

Supported the establishment of a Civic Pride Team (Neighbourhood Services)- Number of people employed on Intermediate Labour Market (ILM)

Completed a new partnership agreement with Sedgfield and Shildon Development Agency (SASDA) to provide a business support service to the companies of Sedgfield Borough.

Introduced business brokerage arrangements to provide competitive business advice to local companies

Secured major investment for the Town centre at Spennymoor

Implemented a town centre management initiative to engage local businesses and promote the town centres of Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor

Continued to provide development sites and been successful in attracting economic investment into the Heighington Lane development

Increased the opportunities for young people to stay on at school and gain qualifications through the provision of vocational GCSEs

an attractive borough

ensuring a cleaner, greener environment

Achieved ISO 9000 accreditation for Horticultural Services, recognised by an above target performance in the number of grounds maintenance complaints received per 1,000 population

Introduced area based multi-disciplinary Street Scene teams

Maintained the cleanliness of highways, leading to an increase of 4% of people satisfied with highways cleanliness standards

priority service!

industrial land units regeneration portfolio

The Council is particularly keen to explore the potential benefits (in terms of local business and employment opportunities) of investing in the regeneration of land and units at Aycliffe and Green Lane industrial estates.

maximising learning opportunities

Established a Learning Borough Partnership to bring together learning providers

priority services!

street cleansing environment portfolio

This area has improved during the past year as a result of recent year-on-year increases in investment. However, it continues to be a high priority amongst local residents. Council spending in this area is comparatively low and satisfaction is still only in the third quartile nationally.

horticulture environment portfolio

Horticulture services have become more efficient and cost-effective during

2003/2004 with services now being provided on a needs rather than contractual basis. Revised methods of working, including Neighbourhood Teams, are now in operation. This has led to significant improvements in some parts of the Borough. This level of improvement now needs to be replicated across the whole of the area.

improving towns, villages and the countryside

Implemented the new Planning Act and developed a Local Development Framework that promotes sustainable tomorrows and will help improve performance against application processing times indicators

Prepared and implemented Development Control Service Improvement Plan

Carried out major improvements to Spennymoor Town Centre as part of a town centre development programme

Created five new wildlife areas and Local Nature Reserves

priority service!

regeneration through housing regeneration & housing portfolios

The Council has committed significant resources from the sale of land to support housing based regeneration of its priority communities of Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton. These resources, coupled with other funding,

means the Council now has a real opportunity to work with the communities in these areas to deliver area based regeneration. There is already significant co-ordination in this area of work and current plans would have to be revisited to reflect potential increased levels of funding.

reducing waste and managing natural resources

Maintained provision of recycling facilities to 100% of households and extended green waste recycling scheme

Established a waste transfer station at Chilton Depot, thereby increasing the tonnage of waste recycled and not sent to landfill

Increased the average Standard Assessment Procedure energy efficiency rating of properties owned by SBC to top quartile nationally

Incorporated environmental features into Locomotion, the National Railway Museum at Shildon, including a photovoltaic roof, gabion walls, a wind turbine and rainwater harvesting system

Completed Phase 1 of the Green Travel Plan, including auditing the current travel policy and holding a series of focus groups and surveys

Developed an Energy Management partnership to reduce energy consumption

priority service!

**waste recycling
environment portfolio**

The Government has set a demanding target of 18% of all waste collected to be recycled or composted by 2005/2006. The Council has made considerable progress towards this and has a better infrastructure now in place and current performance is over 12% compared to a level of 7.4% in 2002/2003. Further progress needs to be made in this area if the Government's target is to be met. Specifically, actions needed to increase participation in the Kerbit scheme and extend green waste recycling.

**a borough with strong
communities**

securing quality affordable housing

Completed one housing clearance area in Ferryhill Station

Achieved top quartile performance for the proportion of unfit private dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of local authority action (BVPI 62)

Participated in the production of a Sustainable Residential design guide

Complied with the CRE Code of Practice in rented housing (BVPI 164)

Delivered the Housing Service Improvement Plan (Following Best Value Review)

Using modern procurement methods to drive service improvement – reviewed procurement capacity within the repairs service and agreed a partnering contract for void repairs, disabled persons adaptations and emergency call-out services, reflecting Egan principles in the procurement of maintenance services

Completed a housing option appraisal and agreed a strategic partner to deliver Large Scale Voluntary Transfer, including making a successful application to the governments Large Scale Voluntary Transfer programme for 2004/05

Secured funding from the Region's Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) for some initial renewal works in 'Coalfields areas'.

priority service!

**housing maintenance
housing portfolio**

There has been significant investment and subsequent improvement in this area following two (post Best Value Review) Audit Commission inspections. The Council believes that further improvements will materialise when the new organisation structures settles and then still further following Large Scale Voluntary Transfer.

promoting safer neighbourhoods

Carried out a review of Community Safety service

Transformed Community Force into a Neighbourhood Wardens scheme, in line with national best practice

Implemented a Community Safety Strategy and Domestic Violence Policy

Published (in December 2004) a statement of policies and procedures in relation to anti-social behaviour, in response to the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Introduced the Positive Futures programme, including working with 100 young people who are at risk of offending

CCTV cameras – either static and/or mobile.

domestic violence community safety portfolio

The Council recognises the importance of this service in reducing/tackling the problems of those suffering from the often hidden dangers of domestic violence. The Head of Neighbourhood Services is currently drafting a strategy that includes a broad range of partnership-based measures and the Council will examine the potential impact of increasing financial resources (capital and revenue) in this area.

priority services!

carelink community safety portfolio

The Council is keen to see this service extended as it enables elderly members of the community to remain in their own homes. It is also eager to market this service beyond Council house tenants and further expand into the private sector.

neighbourhood wardens/cctv community safety portfolio

The Council recognises that these two interrelated aspects of Community Safety can provide real and tangible returns on Council investment. Significantly, the Council wants to increase the overall number of Neighbourhood Wardens and target them in key areas of the Borough alongside an increase in the number of

engaging local communities and promoting local democracy

Prepared a statement of community involvement for the Local Development Framework in partnership with Durham Districts

Provided excellent customer focused structures for involvement in decision making with has led to achievement of the Charter Mark award for Tenant Participation

Increased member engagement and understanding through a Member Development Programme

Increasing accessibility of Councillors through the Connecting Councillors programme, including providing e-mail access and web pages

Increased community involvement through the implementation of the Consultation strategy

Raised civic awareness and charity funds through the Mayors attendance at events

Implemented the committee minutes system, making Council agendas and minutes available from the Council website

Introduced a postal voting scheme, to be used for the Regional Government referendum in order to increase voter turnout

Maintained Town Twinning initiative

Carried out a scrutiny committee review and reported to Cabinet

Developed a Young peoples website for information and consultation including Young People's data base for communication, consultation and market research

Please refer to the following documents, which support this Corporate Plan for details of the specific actions and measures that the Council will use to deliver and monitor progress against its Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes ...

Key Issues Annexe
Performance Indicators Annexe

crosscutting priority service!

youth development supporting people portfolio

The Council has recently undertaken a Best Value Review (BVR) of its Children and Young People's Services, which has now been inspected by the Audit Commission. This review followed a poor CPA score in this area and rated the current crosscutting service as fair with promising prospects for improvement. Through these processes a detailed action plan has been developed and several key actions need to be progressed in the short to medium-term.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance Management is at the heart of Corporate Planning and is crucial in the drive towards continuous improvement.

Sedgefield Borough Council is a progressive local authority committed to delivering on its Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes. The Council has changed significantly in recent years and now has in place the Performance Management systems to ensure the delivery of our Corporate Plan.

a corporate framework

strategic corporate planning

The aim of the Government's modernising agenda is to introduce more open and accountable Local Government. By establishing a framework through which local Councils are required to publish performance data on an annual basis and set targets for future improvements, the Government hopes to increase the accountability of Councils towards local people and businesses.

Sitting at the top of the Council's Performance Management Framework, the Corporate Plan sets out what the Council wants to achieve in order to meet community needs and aspirations. Performance Management is the how or the structured way in which the Council's in-house employees work to achieve the standards, targets and pledges set out in the Corporate Plan.

service business planning

To maintain and improve performance, it is essential that all Council services have a clear understanding of where they fit into the overall framework, and of how their performance impacts on the Council as a whole. Service Business Plans are developed and monitored by Heads of Service and are the practical tools by which the overall aims and objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan are implemented.

employee development planning

Without effective employees the Council would be unable to achieve its goals. Employees who are well trained, motivated and have a sense of belonging to the organisation are more effective in the execution of their tasks with the consequence that their performance and the services we provide will improve.

Appendix 2 The Performance Management Framework

In order to modernise its approach to service delivery and complement its Performance Management arrangements the Council has introduced a number of changes in recent years ...

a modern political management structure

The Council consists of a full complement of 50 Councillors who are democratically elected by and accountable to residents of their ward. The role of all elected members is to develop strong ward links and maintain regular contact with the people and communities they serve and represent.

full council

As well as being responsible for determining the composition, membership and terms of reference of the Cabinet, committees and other bodies, Full Council determines schemes of delegation and has responsibility for approving the overall policy framework and for setting Council Tax and related Council budgets. The Ceremonial Mayor chairs meetings of Full Council.

cabinet

Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that the Council achieves its policies within budgets and is comprised of the Leader of the Council, who chairs the meetings, the Deputy Leader of the Council and seven other Cabinet Members. Each member of the Cabinet is responsible for a specific portfolio of services/functions that they lead at the political level.

overview & scrutiny committees

Those Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet sit on one of three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, with the exception of the Mayor who must remain impartial to

chair Council meetings. These committees support the work of the Cabinet and the Council as a whole and monitor the decisions of Cabinet.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees can 'call-in' a key decision that has been made by the Cabinet before it is implemented. This enables them to consider whether the decision is appropriate and they can recommend that the Cabinet reconsider the decision if they think it inappropriate. They can also establish review groups to examine issues in detail in order to improve services or to tackle a problem being experienced by communities within Sedgefield Borough.

Appendix 3 Political Management Structure

strategic working groups

Corporate strategic working arrangements are anchored around the Council's corporate policy arrangements and performance management framework and are designed to assist in the delivery of stated priorities. They ...

Are aligned to the Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes

Have a clear sense of purpose with each Group having a defined function and terms of reference

Operate at a strategic policy level (not operational level)

Secure political engagement and support

Provide clear policy advice and guidance and output/outcome performance management information

Are supported by a limited number of Task Groups with a more operational focus

There are five groups that are reflective of the Council's service functions. Importantly, they provide a real focus for discussion around strategic and key service issues as well as an opportunity to review policy and service improvement options.

They secure the input of relevant Cabinet Members and senior officers and help to ensure that service proposals and issues presented to Cabinet have been carefully considered from a number of (often crosscutting) perspectives. These relatively formal groups complement less formal groups, discussions and briefings that take place between individual Cabinet Members and respective Directors and Heads of Service.

Appendix 4 Strategic Working Group Profiles

a reorganised senior management and departmental structure

The Council has recently reorganised its senior management and departmental structures in line with the challenges facing a modern local authority. It is now divided into five departments – Chief Executive's, Resources, Neighbourhood Services,

Housing and Leisure Services. A Director (or the Chief Executive Officer) leads each department, which is supported by a number of Heads of Service.

The new structure was designed to deliver customer-focused joined-up service delivery. However, accountability is also an important feature of this new structure with each department being responsible for a specified range of services/functions.

Appendix 5 Departmental Management Structures

monitoring progress

It is essential that the Corporate Plan is an integral part of the effective delivery of local services and that progress against it is monitored and updated on a regular basis. The key actions detailed in the supporting Key Actions Annexe will be monitored at the departmental and section level on a monthly basis. The indicators and targets contained in the supporting Performance Indicators Annexe will be monitored quarterly via Strategic Working Groups.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
BVPP	Best Value Performance Plan
BVR	Best Value Review
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1995
DIP	Document Image Processing
GONE	Government Office for the North East
HR	Human Resources
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
IEG	Implementing E-Government
iiP	Investors in People
ILM	Intermediate Labour Market
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
LGA	Local Government Association
LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan
NEPO	North Eastern Procurement Opportunities
NWGS	Northern Way Growth Strategy
SASDA	Sedgefield and Shildon Development Agency
SBC	Sedgefield Borough Council
SHIP	Strategic Housing Investment Programme
SIP	Service Improvement Plan
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Time-Related
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget

CONTACTS

Cabinet Members



Councillor Agnes Armstrong
Supporting People Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5279
e-mail: aarmstrong@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Alan Hodgson
Environment Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5265
e-mail: ahodgson@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Bob Fleming
Resources Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5228
e-mail: bfleming@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Barbara Graham
Welfare and Communications Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5243
e-mail : bgraham@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Malcolm Iveson
Community Safety Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5294
e-mail: miveson@Sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor David Newell
Performance Management Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5259
e-mail: dnewell@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Kester Noble
Regeneration Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5251
e-mail: knoble@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor John Robinson
Culture and Recreation Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5297
e-mail: jrobinson@sedgefield.gov.uk



Councillor Bill Waters
Housing Portfolio
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 5284
e-mail: waters@sedgefield.gov.uk

Chief Executive & Directors



Norman Vaulks
Chief Executive
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 4305
e-mail: nvaulks@sedgefield.gov.uk



Colin Steel
Director of Housing
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 4203
e-mail: csteel@sedgefield.gov.uk



Phil Ball
Director of Leisure Services
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 4386
e-mail: pball@sedgefield.gov.uk

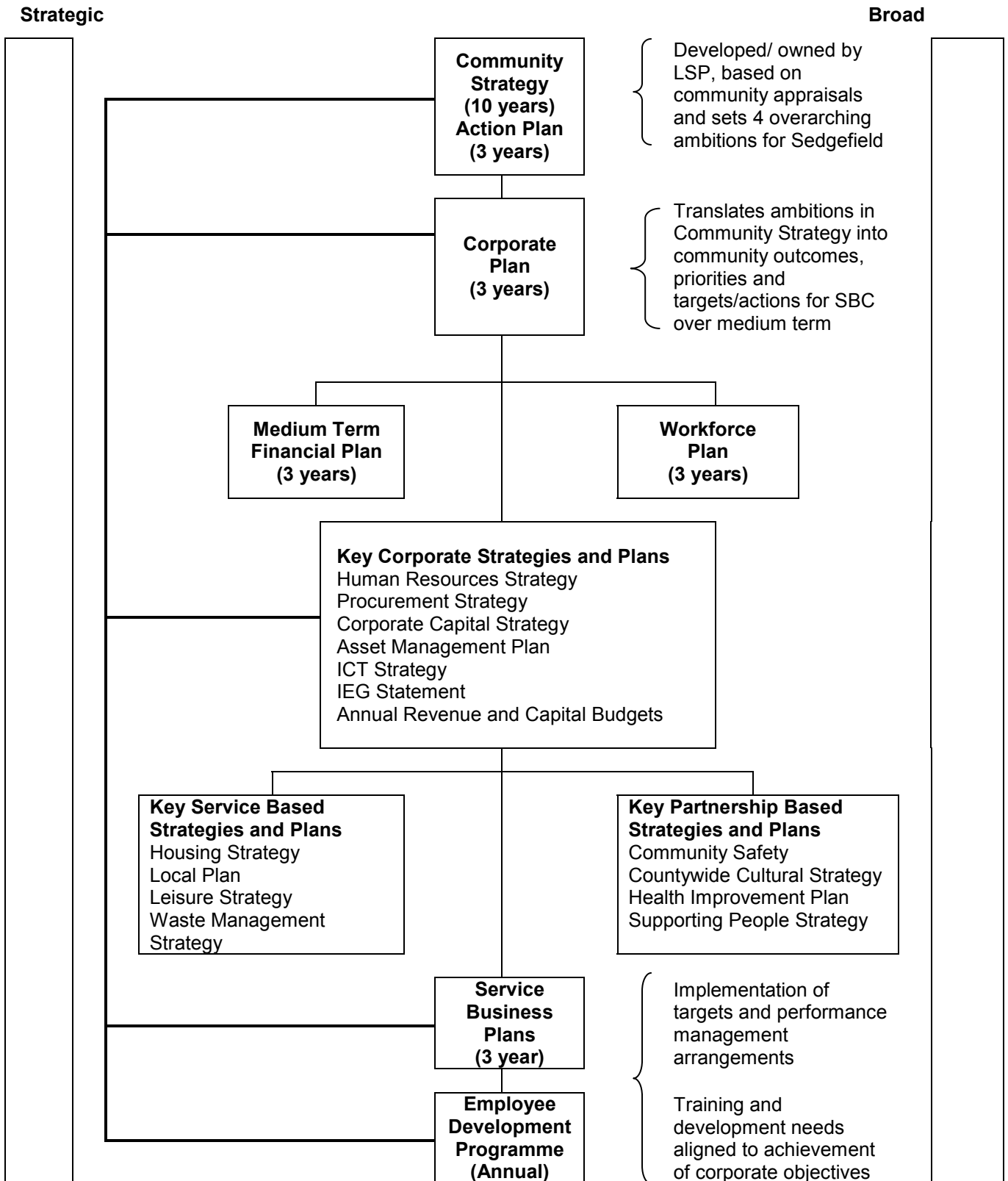


Glyn Hall
Director of Neighbourhood Services
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 4308
e-mail: ghall@sedgefield.gov.uk



Brian Allen
Director of Resources
Tel. 01388 816166 ext. 4003
e-mail: ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk

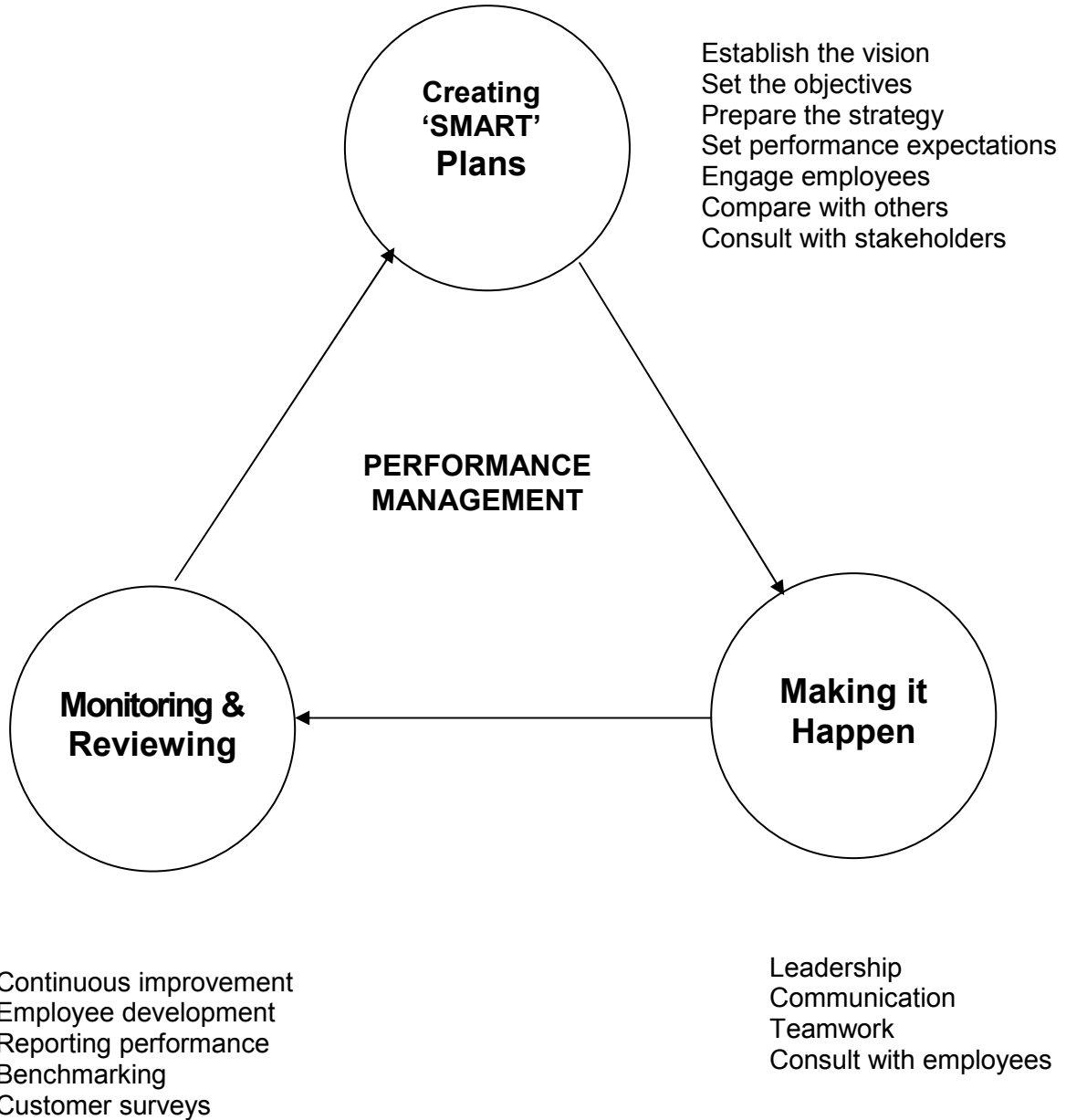
Appendix 1 – Corporate Planning Framework



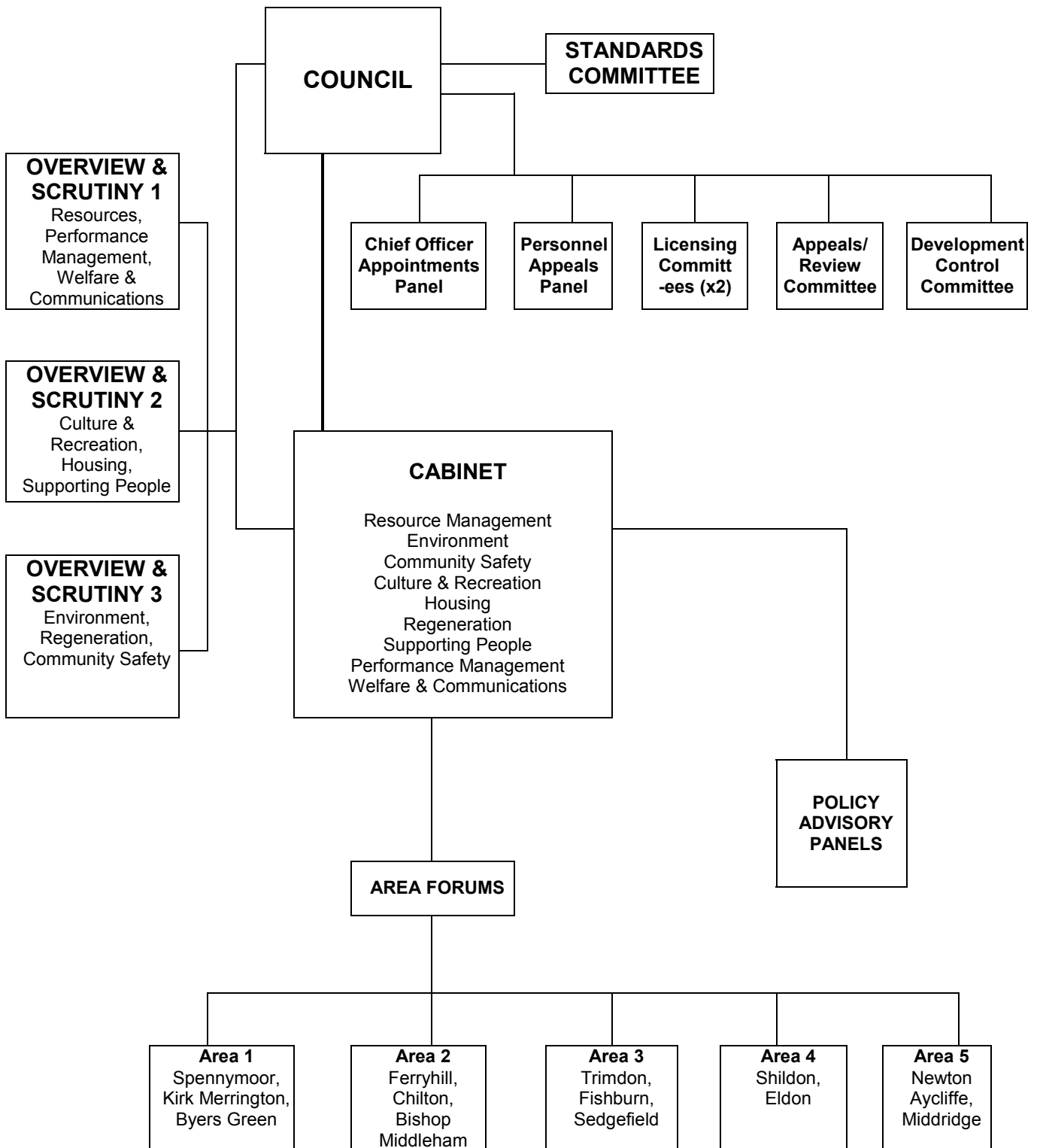
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Appendix 2 – The Performance Planning Framework



Appendix 3 – Political Management Structure



Appendix 4 – Strategic Working Group Profiles

Corporate Strategy Group	
Aims	<p>To maintain a focus on corporate priorities within a strong governance framework</p> <p>To provide strategic direction and guidance to the running of the Council's affairs</p>
Areas of Responsibility	<p>Community Strategy Spatial Strategy Corporate Plan Resource Management Strategic Corporate Initiatives Strategic Partnership Working Corporate Governance</p>
Lead Portfolio Member(s)	<p>Resources Regeneration</p>
Management Team Lead	<p>Chief Executive Officer Director of Resources</p>
Standing Members	<p>Head of Strategy & Regeneration Solicitor to the Council Head of Financial Services Head of Service Improvement</p>
Standing Officer Sub Groups	<p>Risk Management Constitution & Standards Human Resources</p>
Informal Officer Groups	<p>Land & Property Management</p>

Performance Improvement Group	
Aims	<p>To promote continuous performance improvement in Council Services</p> <p>To promote effective internal and external communication of the Council's services and priorities.</p> <p>To oversee Member and Officer development and welfare.</p>
Areas of Responsibility	<p>Consultation & community engagement</p> <p>Customer Relations & Communications</p> <p>Staff/Member welfare, training & development</p> <p>Performance Management</p> <p>Audit Commission Review Progress</p> <p>E-Government and use of Information</p> <p>Communication Technologies</p> <p>Corporate Procurement.</p>
Lead Portfolio Member(s)	<p>Welfare & Communications</p> <p>Performance Management</p>
Management Team Lead	<p>Director of Resources</p> <p>Head of Democratic Services</p>
Standing Members	<p>Head of Service Improvement</p> <p>Head of ICT</p> <p>Head of Strategy and Regeneration</p>
Informal Officer Groups	<p>Best Value and Consultation</p> <p>Information Communication Technology</p> <p>Procurement</p> <p>Human Resources</p>

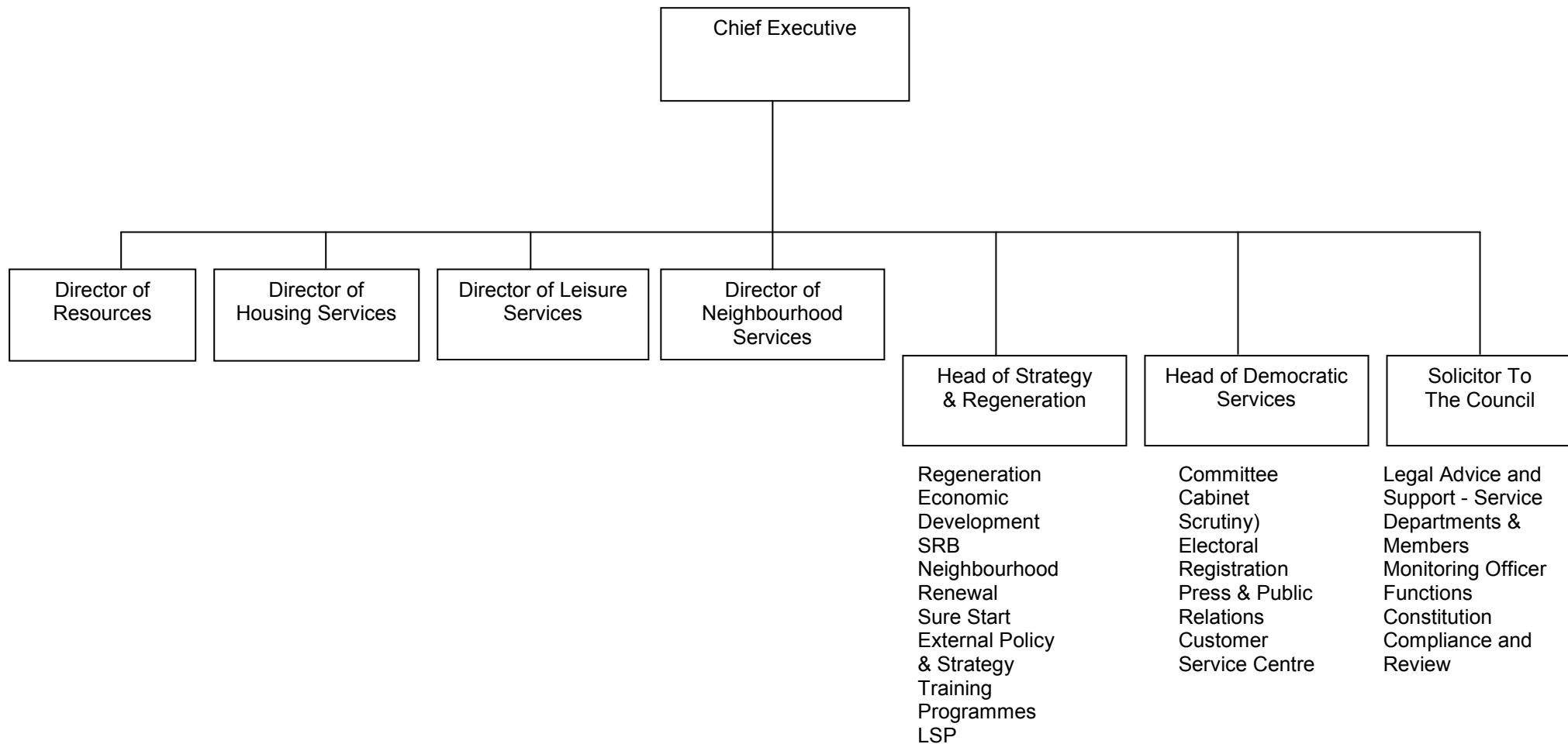
Community Services Group	
Aims	<p>To secure a more sustainable environment</p> <p>To protect and improve the health and safety of people who live, work or visit the Borough</p> <p>To oversee the delivery of community safety</p> <p>To provide a range of leisure and cultural opportunities</p>
Areas of Responsibility	<p>Environmental Management & Sustainability</p> <p>Environmental Health Services</p> <p>Community Safety</p> <p>Tourism</p> <p>Sports, Culture & Arts</p>
Lead Portfolio Member(s)	<p>Environment</p> <p>Community Safety</p> <p>Culture & Recreation</p>
Management Team Lead	<p>Director of Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Director of Leisure Services</p>
Standing Members	<p>Head of Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Head of Environmental Services</p> <p>Head of Planning Services</p> <p>Head of (Leisure) Policy and Development</p>

Social Inclusion Group	
Aims	<p>To enhance the economic, environmental, physical and social well being of the Borough</p> <p>To address economic and social disadvantage</p> <p>To provide promote sustainable communities</p> <p>To promote the welfare and health of people living in the Borough</p>
Areas of Responsibility	<p>Economic Development & Business Support</p> <p>Neighbourhood Renewal & Sustainable Communities</p> <p>Housing Strategy & Support Services including Commissioning Specialist Housing Services for Vulnerable People</p> <p>Community Alarms</p> <p>Conservation of the Natural and Built Environment</p> <p>Education & Lifelong Learning.</p> <p>Health Inequalities</p> <p>Children & Young People Services</p> <p>Community & Voluntary Sector Support</p>
Lead Portfolio Member(s)	<p>Regeneration</p> <p>Housing (Non Landlord Functions)</p> <p>Supporting People</p>
Management Team Lead	<p>Director of Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Head of Strategy & Regeneration</p>
Standing Members	<p>Director of Leisure Services</p> <p>Head of Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>Head of Planning Services</p>
Informal Officer Groups	<p>Cobblers Hall</p>

Council Housing Services Group	
Aims	To provide an effective social housing service
Areas of Responsibility	Council Housing Management & Maintenance Tenancy Enforcement Providing Specialist Housing Services for Vulnerable People
Lead Portfolio Member(s)	Housing (Landlord Function)
Management Team Lead	Director of Housing
Standing Members	Head of Housing Business Development Head of Property Services Head of Housing Management Head of Neighbourhood Services
Standing Officer Sub Groups	Housing Capital & Revenue Programme

Chief Executive's Department

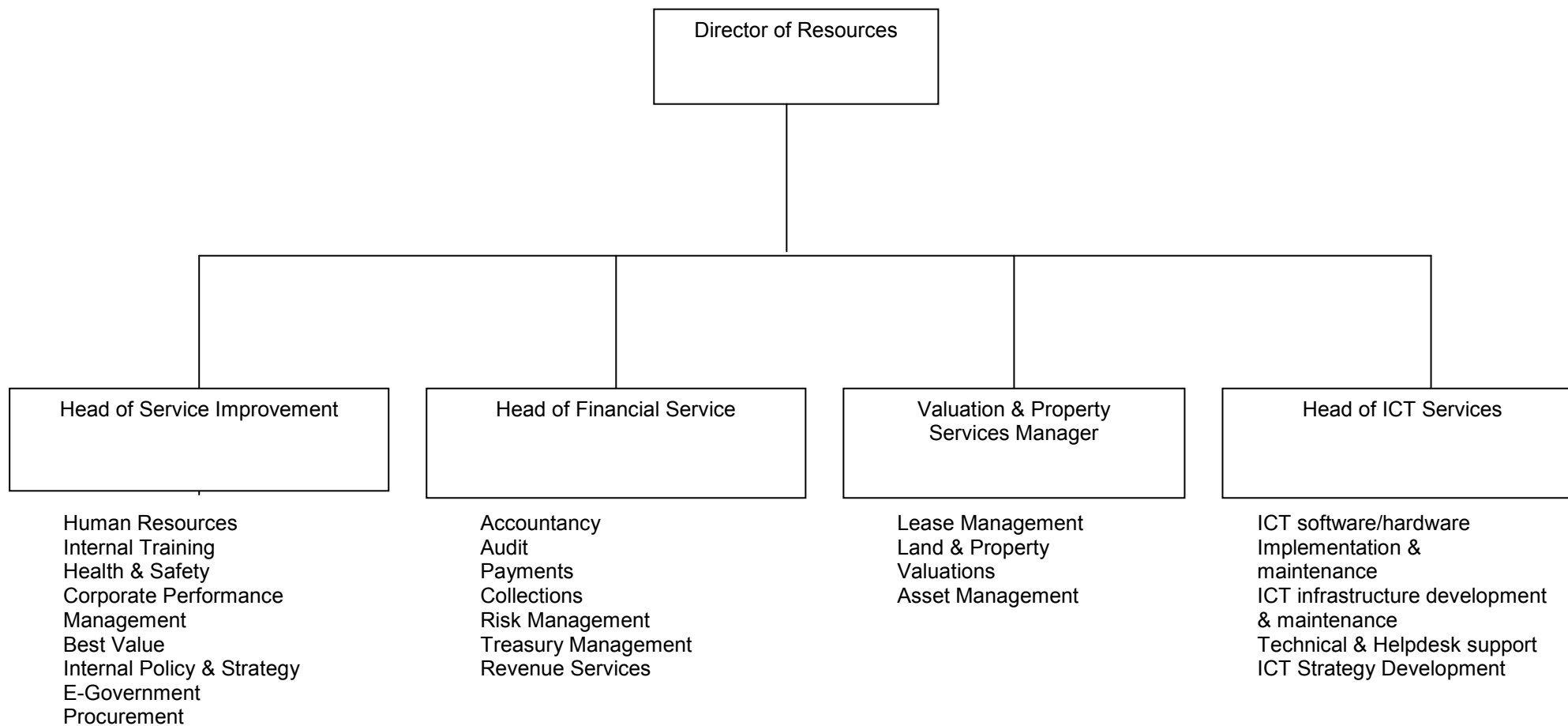
Appendix 5 – Departmental Management Structures



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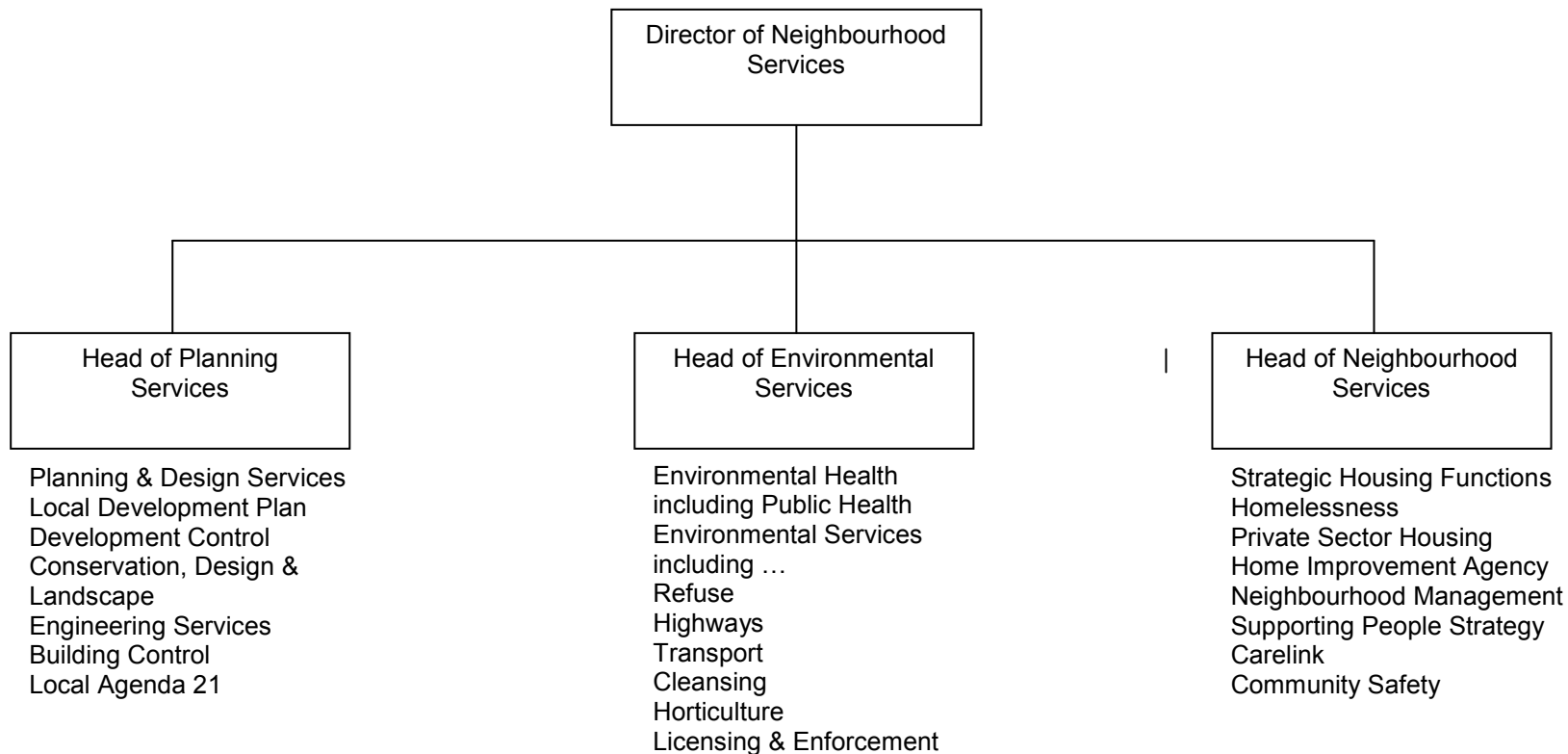
Resources Department



Quality Services For Local People

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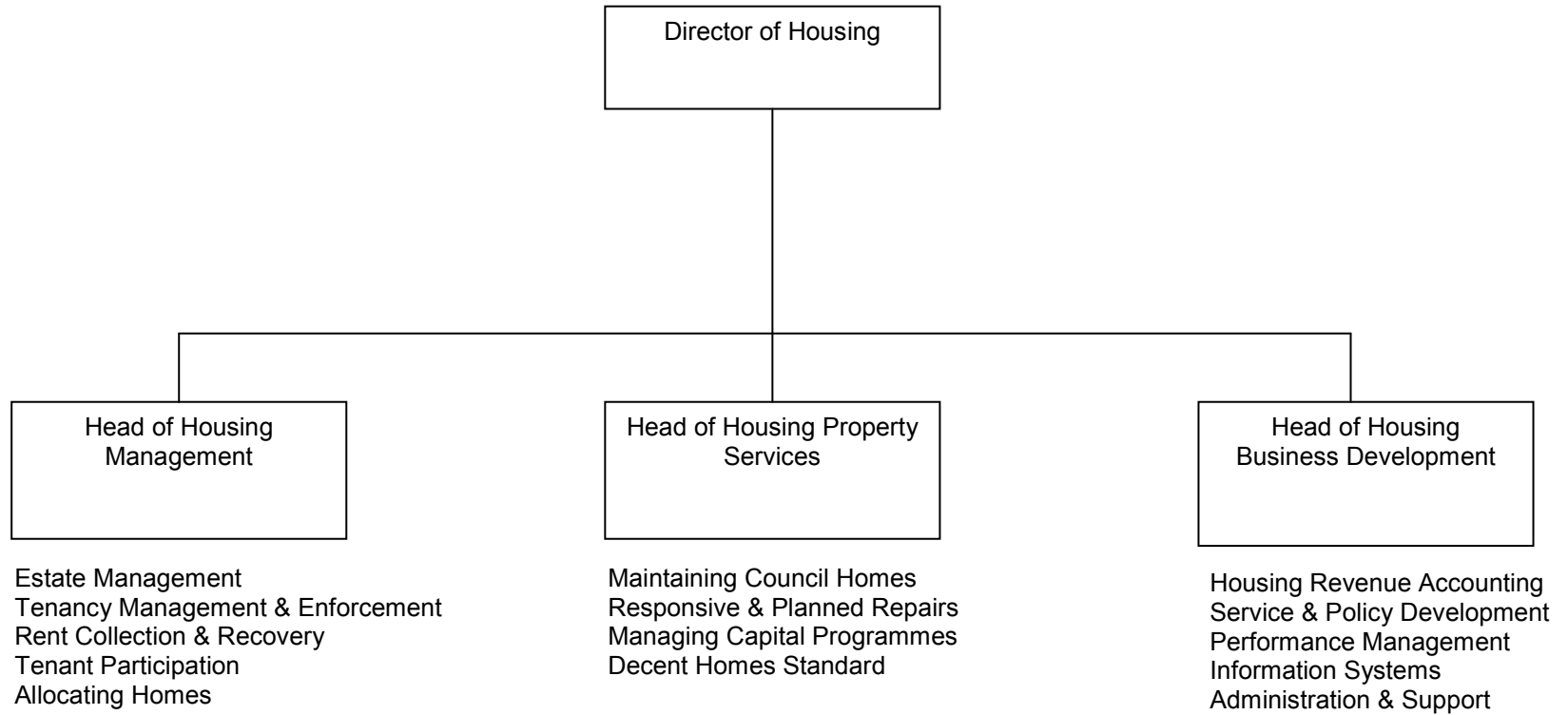
Neighbourhood Services Department



Quality Services For Local People

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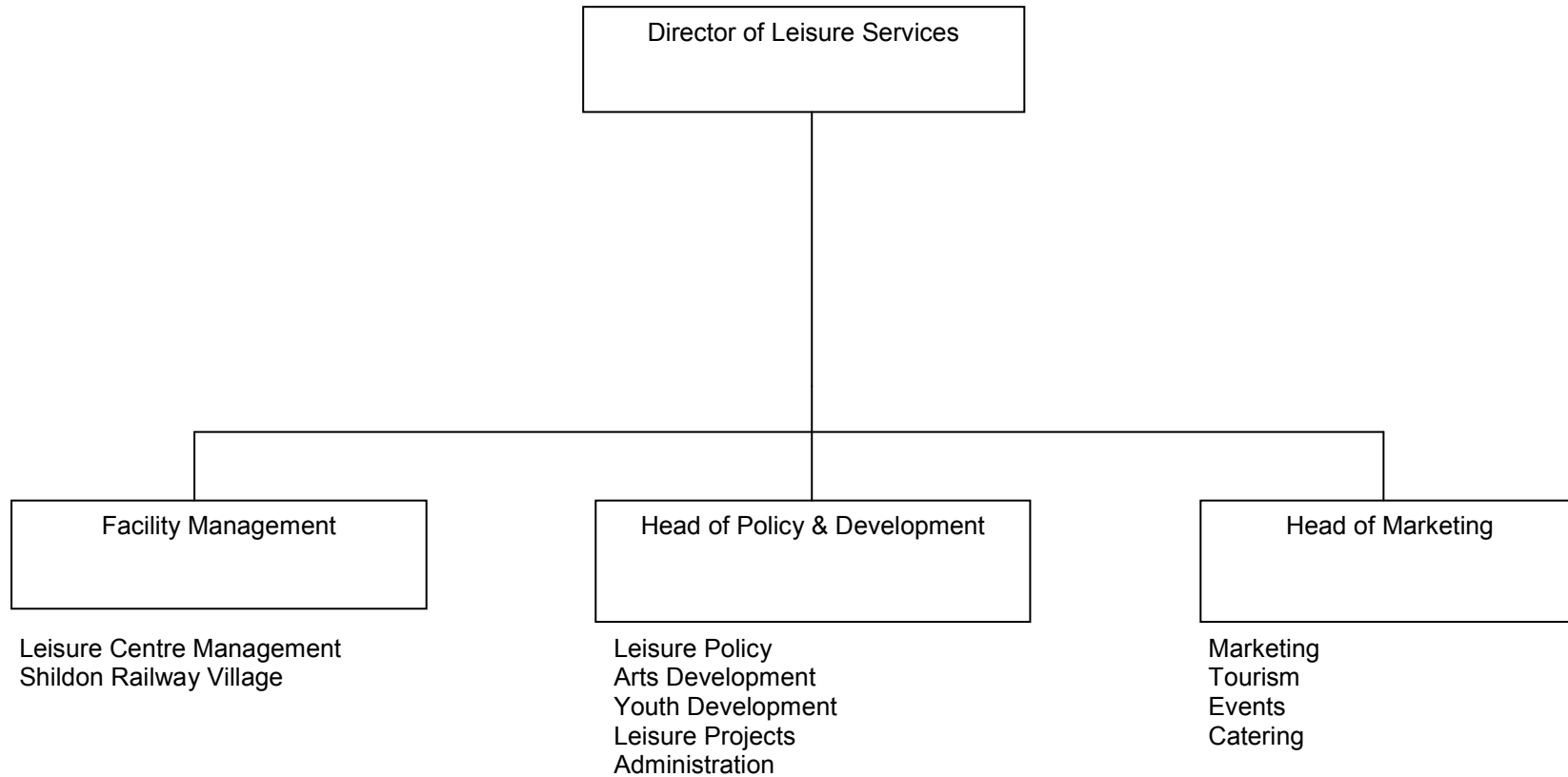
Housing Department



Quality Services For Local People

“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities”

Leisure Services Department



Quality Services For Local People

“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities”