

Legal & Democratic Services Improvement Plan service priorities

Relevant Council Aim/s:

A- We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.

Use the following link for details of the Council's strategic aims and approaches: http://insite/admin/documents/retrieve.asp?pk_document=908878

Relevant Council Approach/es:

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Ref.	Improvement or Change Objective	Status	Actions	Completion date	Link to PI	Lead Officers	Other services directly affected in terms of input?	Additional Resources?	Progress Update – Q3
Service Objective:									
LDS1	Update legal case management system (LOCUMS) to make it fit for purpose		Work with ICT to transfer all existing records onto Sharepoint system and to improve search facility and file management	31 March 2013		Fiona McMillan/ David Lord	ICT	No (If 'Yes', please specify)	Still discussing requirements with ICT as Sharepoint will need to be adapted to meet our requirements before files can be transferred to a Legal Sharepoint site.
LDS2	Advise council on implementation of changes flowing from Localism Act, including new Code of Conduct and associated complaint handling procedures		Work with other councils in Cambridgeshire to achieve county-wide consensus on new ethical standards framework and keep district and parish councillors informed of changes.	July 2012		Fiona McMillan		No	One meeting of county Heads of Legal has been held and another planned for 29 th February. Standards Newsletter distributed to all district and parish councillors in January 2012 warning of forthcoming changes which will be followed up with another when more information made available from national government about the detail of new interests regime via regulations.
LDS3	Consolidation of working relationship with planning department to improve effectiveness of planning service		Regular monitoring and progress updates on all planning obligation agreements and other cross-departmental issues with scrutiny by heads of service.	31 st March 2013		Fiona McMillan/ Gary Duthie	Planning & New Communities	No	Relevant officers have meetings diarised every 6 weeks to discuss progress and to raise awareness of any issues affecting both departments. Schedule of all outstanding S106 agreements has been drawn up and updated copies are discussed at these meetings, feeding in to portfolio holder meetings.
LDS4	Improve quality of instructions received from		Create generic instruction templates	31 st December		Fiona McMillan	Planning & New	No	Have had initial discussions with Corporate Manager (Health & Environmental

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	client departments		alongside guidance notes on giving instructions and training to be offered to instruction client departments	2012			Communities , Affordable Housing, Health & Environmental Services		Services) as part of Council-wide enforcement review and he is attending next Lawyers Team meeting to discuss issue further.
LDS5	Increase levels of “self-service” for client departments		Increase amount of information available on Legal Intranet page including the instructions templates referred to in LDS4	31 st December 2012		Fiona McMillan		No	Further information has been added to intranet page and work has commenced on instructions templates.
LDS6	Consider making the Land Charges search system spatial		Work with ICT to explore viability, benefits & costs involved	31 st December 2012		Denise Siwicka	ICT	Possible	ICT have been asked to consider the issue by Land Charges manager and awaiting feedback.
LDS7	Maintain current Land Charges turnaround times for searches		Additional resource (temporary Land Charges Officer for 1 year) obtained to help with inputting which has freed up time so other team members can improve speed of responses to searches.	31 st March 2013		Denise Siwicka	Planning, Environmental Health & Building Control	No	Turnaround times currently at 5/6 working days so a huge improvement on last year when it was 10-13 days due to difficulties obtaining search information from other sections due to staffing levels.
LDS8	Continue to improve and expand the council's member training programme, including giving consideration to working towards the Charter Plus accreditation for Elected Member Development		Assess what more needs to be achieved from the recently awarded Charter status and bring report to Member Development Task and Finish Group	October 2012 for decision on seeking next level		Holly Adams	No	No	Awaiting report from Charter assessors which will form basis of gap analysis and offer a critique of current member development opportunities which will form the basis for improvements
LDS9	Publication of all district and parish councillor register of interests on SCDC website to meet requirements of the		Await further information from central government on what the new rules of interests will be	December 2012		Holly Adams/Fiona McMillan	ICT	No	Preliminary information has been issued via the Standards newsletter to all parish and district councillors warning them of the changes ahead.

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	Localism Act		and inform all district and parish councillors of new requirements before seeking the data to publish						
LDS10	Establishment, promotion and management of SCDC Youth Council		Follow action plan agreed by Cabinet 8 September 2011.	September 2012		Holly Adams/ Tracey Mann	Planning & New Communities	No	Held successful open day for students of local colleges in October 2011 as part of Local Democracy Week which was well attended with very positive feedback from attendees.
LDS11	Expansion of social media opportunities at SCDC for councillors and Democratic Services		Ensure members are aware of options available to them in conjunction with any requisite training and explore service opportunities for Democratic Services with Communications Team.	31 May 2012		Holly Adams	Communications, Scrutiny, Elections	No	Awaiting input from Scrutiny and Overview Committee one-day workshop on Council Communications in early March
LDS12	Improving report management		Working with service areas to introduce on-line report management module of existing modern.gov system.	31 March 2013		Holly Adams		No	Discussing a pilot with New Communities Team