

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Community & Customer Services



SERVICE PLAN (DRAFT)

2010/11 to 2012/13



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Approved by:

Portfolio Holder (Partnerships)	Corporate Manager
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Signed:	Signed:
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Portfolio Holder (Policy & Performance)	Corporate Manager
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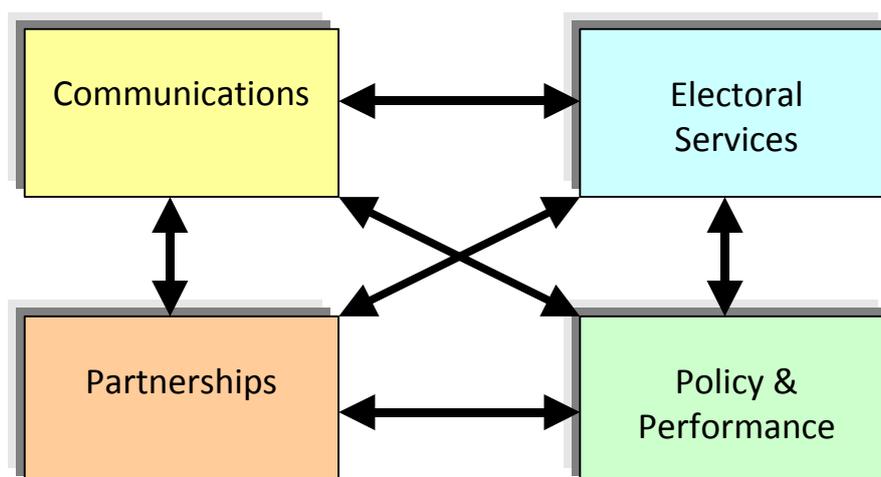
Portfolio Holder (Elections)	Corporate Manager
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1. About our service

The key functions of the Community and Customer Service area are:

- ❑ To communicate the Council's vision, priorities, objectives and processes effectively both to staff, through an effective internal communication and consultation process, and externally to partners, agencies and the public.
- ❑ To develop and actively contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate communications strategy by maintaining positive relationships with stakeholders including the media and protecting and improving the reputation of the Council.
- ❑ To actively foster and develop positive relationships with local organisations and partners, including the voluntary sector and local business as well as other statutory bodies at county, regional and national levels.
- ❑ To ensure that the Council meets all statutory requirements regarding electoral registration and the conduct of elections.
- ❑ To support the Council's policy-making and service planning processes ensuring their links with the Corporate Plan and the needs of customers and local communities.
- ❑ To support the monitoring and benchmarking of service delivery against national and local indicators and to empower managers across the Council to take action to improve performance where necessary.
- ❑ To champion the examination of policy and services from the perspective of customers, Partners and communities across all services.
- ❑ To make an active and positive contribution to the Council's process of implementing cultural change and organisational development and help to embed a shared vision and values across the organisation.

Community and Customer Services comprises of four teams - Communications, Electoral Services, Partnerships, and Policy & Performance.



It should be recognised that there are synergies between functions and a number of shared responsibilities that necessitate close working between the teams and with other service areas across the Council.

Communications

The Communications Team is responsible for the following activities:

- Supporting the Council in meeting its statutory duty to inform, consult and engage residents and communities
- Ensuring that Council communications comply with legislation
- Supporting services in their duty to “warn and inform” under the Civil Contingencies Act
- media relations – press office, media releases, media briefings / conferences, coordinating broadcast and print interviews, working with reporters / editors, promoting and pursuing positive opportunities
- publications – including residents’ quarterly *South Cambs magazine*
- corporate branding – reviewing and monitoring use of the corporate brand and guidelines for its use
- promotional work – posters, displays, leaflets to support services and corporate initiatives
- internal communication – including staff magazine, Corporate Brief and intranet ‘Pinks’ and ‘Hot Topics’
- reputation management – including strategic communications planning for management or corporate initiatives such as service changes, budget savings and growth areas

Electoral Services

The Electoral and Support Services Team is responsible for the following activities:

- compilation and maintenance of the electoral register
- management of elections
- promoting democratic engagement

Partnerships

The Partnerships Team is responsible for the following activities:

- Taking the lead role in preparation and delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- Supporting the development and implementation of the Cambridgeshire Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- Taking the lead role in the preparation and delivery of the Community Safety Rolling Plan for the CDRP
- Managing projects to enable the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, the LAA and the Community Safety Rolling Plan
- Supporting Parish Councils and the voluntary and community sector to influence Council, LAA and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) decision-making and promoting an environment for a thriving third sector
- Coordinating the delivery of the Council’s Community Engagement Strategy, including neighbourhood panels, parish planning, parish charter and information events

Policy & Performance

The Policy and Performance Team is responsible for the following activities:

- Promoting equality and diversity and ensuring that the Council complies with all related statutory requirements
- Supporting the Scrutiny and Overview function and ensuring that it meets relevant statutory requirements such as annual Crime and Disorder scrutiny
- Publishing performance information for National Indicators to statutory timescales
- Supporting the development of corporate priorities and policies
- Developing and supporting corporate consultation
- Co-ordinating the Council's response to, and helping the Council to perform as well as possible in relation to, audit and inspection regimes
- Promoting and supporting performance improvement throughout the organisation
- Supporting the Service First group to improve customer service and leading the project to achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation by March 2011
- Managing the Council reception service at Cambourne
- Managing customer service processes such as complaints management.
- The monitoring & review of the Council's contract, financial payments and performance of the Contact Centre.



2. The Context for Our Plan

a) External Drivers

The following external drivers will influence the service

<p style="text-align: center;">Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Members in the LAA and partnerships • Involvement of Members in the improvement agenda, including values and scrutiny • Local and general elections • Recognition of the role of the Communications team in reputation management • Expectation of partners in joint communication projects • Making Cambridgeshire Count 	<p style="text-align: center;">Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council budgets and financial position • Recession resulting in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more demand on voluntary advice and support organisations • potential increase in crime levels • potential loss of advertising revenue for <i>South Cambs magazine</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic changes • Housing costs and availability • Transport issues • Growth areas e.g. social housing, age, cultures, religion – differing communication needs and implications for equality, diversity and community cohesion • ‘Them’ and ‘Us’ danger – need to manage communications with new and existing communities • Increasing customer expectations 	<p style="text-align: center;">Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further developing performance management ICT and sharing data with partners • Potential for new technology to open communication channels, especially for new home areas • Need for provision of basics such as broadband across the district, including new communities. • Increasing impact of ‘social’ networking sites
<p style="text-align: center;">Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAA regime with its emphasis on performance improvement • Further legislation aimed at strengthening local democracy • Increased scrutiny powers and duties through Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2008 and Police & Justice Act 2007 • Single Equality Bill’s new duty to reduce socio-economic inequality • Individual Registration from July 2010 	<p style="text-align: center;">Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural areas with differing communication needs • Increasing necessity to look at environmentally-friendly, yet effective methods of communication

b) Key Partners

- Members of Cambridgeshire Together
- Members of South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership and its theme groups, such as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Cambridgeshire consultation partnership
- Cambridgeshire Direct
- Cambridgeshire scrutiny network

- Contact Centre
- East of England scrutiny network
- Equalities Consultative Forum
- IDeA and Improvement East
- Local and industry media
- Parish councils
- Performance management partnership with the County Council and other district councils using CorVu
- Stonewall (The UK's leading charity campaigning to promote lesbian, gay and bisexual equality in the workplace and wider community)
- Voluntary and community sector organisations funded by the Council

c) Strengths and Weaknesses

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism, skills and experience • Multi-disciplinary teams • Enthusiasm and commitment • Externally funded posts based at SCDC equals links and resource gain • Working directly with communities to find out their needs • Excellent officer relations with partners from all sectors • Award-winning magazine recognised and valued by staff, councillors, partners and residents • Strengthening relationship with Parish Councils 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is stretched over a range of complex corporate projects with limited resources: for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy development - communications projects beyond South Cambs magazine • Management changes with long spells of management vacancies • Lack of technical systems expertise to enable better use, support and development of Resourcelink • Insufficient research expertise • Small teams reliant on individuals' knowledge and skills
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Corvu system • Equalities agenda/EqIAs allow more evidence based decision making • More working in partnership to increase outcomes • Build on excellent place survey results for civic participation, volunteering and perceptions of ASB • Possible LSP merger with Cambridge City • Scope for greater co-operation and joint work between our teams • New Corporate Manager will improve capacity • Work with graphics and website officers to achieve consistency of communication • Growing use / importance of social media (blogs etc) • Increased importance of communications recognised by Place Survey and performance indicators • Need to promote the Council's achievements and value for money • Need to develop political support for the role of scrutiny 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New National Indicator set and performance management framework • Funding coming to an end – Equalities secondment • Lack of understanding of impact of growth areas • Lack of buy-in to strategic communications • Increased social media v traditional channels • Greater scrutiny responsibilities not matched by greater resources • No additional funding to meet additional legislative changes relating to electoral services and scrutiny • Lack of capacity and corporate buy-in elsewhere in organisation to support key corporate projects e.g. Customer Service Excellence. • Cuts to grant schemes such as Mobile Wardens Scheme from 2011/12 resulting in greater need for public agencies to intervene in the future.

3. Council Objectives

The Council set Aims, Approaches and Actions for 2010/11, which helps us to achieve the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council's vision and the county-wide Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Community and Customer Services plays a crucial role in the centre of the organisation, helping all services work towards achieving the Council's strategic aims.

Five aims have been set for 2010/11, namely;

Aim A - We Are Committed To Being A Listening Council, Providing First Class Services Accessible To All

Aim B - We Are Committed to Ensuring that South Cambridgeshire Continues to be a Safe And Healthy Place for You and Your Family

Aim C - We are Committed to Making South Cambridgeshire a Place in which Residents can Feel Proud to Live

Aim D - We are Committed to Assisting Provision of Local Jobs for You and Your Family

Aim E - We are Committed to Providing a Voice for Rural Life

The communications, elections, policy and performance and partnerships teams support the delivery of all five Aims.

DRAFT COUNCIL ACTIONS FOR 2010/11

Community and Customer Services provides corporate support for the delivery of all of the 12 Council Actions agreed in draft form by the Cabinet on 10 September 2009.

We have direct or shared responsibility for carrying out specific actions ourselves related to five of them:

We will achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation by 31 March 2011 – project-managing Council-wide work towards implementing this action.
We will increase the number of teenagers taking part in positive activities by ? (figure to be added) in 2010/11
We will achieve ? % (target to be added) reductions in the emission of CO ₂ from the Council's operations and publicise the outcome in order to set an example to other organisations
We will work with parish councils to complete at least 6 local projects (or other quantified targets to be developed) supported by LPSA funding to contribute to the county target for the reduction of CO ₂ emissions
We will implement key actions (yet to be determined) from the Community Transport Plan

VALUES

The Council has also adopted a set of Values, which will be embedded in the service in 2010/11 through behaviours agreed across the Council:

- Customer service;
- Mutual Respect;
- Trust;
- Commitment to Improving Services

The Policy and Performance team leads on ongoing work to embed these Values within the organisation, co-ordinating the work of Council-wide steering group.



4. Service Objectives

Service objectives have been developed to take account of the Council's aims, approaches and actions, which assist the Council in delivering the Cambridgeshire Local Area Agreement and the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Community Strategy.

1. To work towards the following communications objectives - that
 - the council is held in high repute by all stakeholders for its services and the leadership it gives to all South Cambridgeshire communities
 - members and staff feel well informed and act as advocates for the council with all stakeholder groups
 - the council is valued by residents and all stakeholders for the quality of the services it delivers and its successes in championing the needs of South Cambridgeshire at the local, regional and national level.
2. To support the democratic process by striving to make voting and voter registration easier, secure and more accessible to all, using the most up to date methods.
3. To build strong and sustainable communities through the continuing development and delivery of activities, resources and support to strengthen the skills and confidence of people and community groups to enable them to take effective action and leading roles:
 - Support partnership action aimed at creating sustainable communities, through ensuring robust governance, council engagement and appropriate leadership
 - Co-ordinate the delivery of the district council's Community Engagement Strategy
 - Empower and engage the third sector
 - Empower and engage Parish Councils
4. To work with local people and partners to co-produce strong, safe and sustainable communities
 - Promote and support effective partnership action through ensuring robust governance, council engagement and appropriate leadership
 - Promote and support effective community engagement, providing opportunities for individuals and organisations to influence decision-making
 - Support, engage and empower the third sector
 - Support, engage and empower parish councils
 - Work together with partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and the impact it has on local communities
 - Work together with partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime
5. To promote equality and diversity, targeting resources to those in greatest need.
6. To work with the Service First Group to promote a culture and commitment to excellent customer service across the Council, with the whole Council achieving the national Customer Service Excellence award by 31 March 2011.

7. To provide a reception service which is an outstanding first point of contact at which customers can easily access services and information.
8. To keep under review the Council's contract with the Contact Centre and the resulting level of service provided, resolving issues with the Contact Centre management or through other agreed mechanisms, as appropriate.
9. To support the development and achievement of the Council's strategic objectives through policy planning, corporate consultation, Councillor scrutiny and performance improvement.



5. Our Customers

We have a range of customers including;

- **Internal** customers –
 - staff and Members – who receive support regarding communications; partnership advice; customer service (for example through Reception and the complaints system); performance management (CorVu); policy advice, service planning; equality and diversity; and scrutiny.

- **External** customers –
 - members of the local community,
 - partner organisations,
 - grant recipients,
 - parish councils,
 - businesses,
 - the voluntary sector and community groups,
 - visitors to reception,
 - all electors.

and including;

- Internal audit, external audit, Audit Commission and other inspection bodies.

What do customers think of our services?

The completion of the Place Survey is managed by Community & Customer Services and gives an important insight into satisfaction within the district area.

The vast majority of residents (90%) were satisfied with their local area as a place to live (NI5) with a third (35%) stating they were very satisfied. Just 3% said they were dissatisfied. This is a 6% increase in satisfaction compared with 2006/07 BVPI results (84%).

South Cambridgeshire scored exceptionally high for most National Indicators, performing amongst the top 50 district councils nationally (1st quartile) for twelve out of the eighteen National Indicators. More notably, South Cambridgeshire District Council occupies a position amongst the top 10 highest performing district councils on 5 indicators as described below (N.B. All comparisons are made among other district councils and not all local authorities).

South Cambridgeshire occupies the 1st position out of all 201 district councils, nationally, for NI41 - People being drunk/rowdy being a problem (9%). Furthermore, the percentage of people who consider drunk and rowdy behaviour to be a problem in their area has dropped by 3% from the 2006/07 BVPI survey (12%).

South Cambridgeshire also occupies the 3rd position out of all 201 district councils for NI42 (using/dealing drugs), nationally, and 2nd place amongst its 13 CDRP

(Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) statistical neighbours, scoring exceptionally well. Most importantly, the percentage of people who consider people dealing or using drugs to be a problem in their area has decreased significantly by 12% from the 2006/07 BVPI survey (25%).

Findings for the remaining 3 NIs where South Cambridgeshire occupies one of the top 10 positions include:

Overall, very few people thought anti-social behaviour to be a problem in South Cambridgeshire, putting the District Council in the 5th highest position among other district councils (7.5%).

An exceptionally high percentage of one in five (20%) South Cambridgeshire residents have been involved in Civic Participation in the last 12 months, placing the District in the 7th position nationally.

Finally, a third of all residents (33%) have participated in regular volunteering in the past 12 months, placing South Cambridgeshire in the 8th position nationally.

The general picture that forms from this analysis is that South Cambridgeshire is performing exceptionally well in regards to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, although this is not reflected in residents' perceptions of the work public providers are doing, with South Cambridgeshire occupying the 100th position nationally among district councils in regards to NI21 - the percentage of people who agree the police and other local services are successfully dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues. This gap between perceptions of incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour, and perceptions of the public service providers' role in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, is an issue for further research.

Fewer than one in two residents (44%) were satisfied with the way South Cambridgeshire District Council runs things. This is lower than the average satisfaction for all district councils in Cambridgeshire at 48% and the national average (all authorities) of 46%. In 2006/07 BVPI 57% of residents were satisfied with the way the Council runs things, signifying a major 13% decrease in satisfaction. This is a significant drop, even in the light of satisfaction decreasing nationally, albeit to a lesser degree of 7% (from 53% in the 2006/07 BVPI survey to 46% in 2009).

A third of all residents (33%) agreed that South Cambridgeshire District Council provides value for money while 28% disagreed. This is lower than the County average of 36% but on par with the national average of 33% (all authorities). This is a major decrease of 16%, compared with 2006/07 BVPI results when 49% of residents thought the Council provides value for money. National trends show a similar drop in value for money across all authorities, although to a lesser degree of 12% (from 45% in the 2006/07 BVPI survey to 33% in 2009).

Both of these areas will be addressed in the Community & Customer Services improvement plan (Appendix B).

In terms of communication, 46% of residents feel well informed about the Council, more than all other residents in the county (2008 Place Survey). The readership survey of Spring 2009 shows a high satisfaction rate with *South Cambs magazine*. Around three quarters found the magazine easy to read, well designed and informative.

Internal communications are improving - two thirds of staff feel well informed and 78% have regular team meetings. 97% of managers have attended corporate brief and 100% agree that they get the information they need to brief their team. 90% prefer the new style of delivery. Any issues arising from the 2009 staff survey will be built into the refreshed communication strategy and action plan.

As part of the internet registration process, electors have provided feedback on the registration service. All the feedback has been positive and demonstrates the growing demand of the electorate to use electronic methods of communicating with the Council.

The Policy and Performance Team asked for feedback from internal customers on its roles and responsibilities and this led to a restructuring of the team, and a refocusing of priorities being implemented from Autumn 2009.

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee conducted an annual survey, which showed Cabinet's and officers' growing confidence in its abilities. Feedback following the Orchard Park review was very positive. One minor reservation was expressed regarding the task and finish group's need for less formality; this will inform our approach at future reviews.

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee also provides a feedback form for people who attend their meetings. Last year these showed that people always feel welcome, that they can generally understand what is going on and they feel that the committee works efficiently and effectively. Some would have liked more time for residents' questions.

Regular externally run surveys indicate good levels of satisfaction among visitors to the Cambourne office, with the majority rating our reception service as excellent and no visitors rating it as poor.



6. Are we meeting the needs of all our community?

South Cambridgeshire is very rural in nature, with 101 villages, no urban centres and an area of approximately 90,000 hectares. The population is approximately 140,000 and population density is low at 1.6 persons per hectare.

There is little deprivation in South Cambridgeshire with the area ranked 5th least deprived in England using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Approximately 60% of recipients are of pensionable age.

The population of South Cambridgeshire is predominantly white British (89.5%). The largest individual ethnic minority population in the district is the fluctuating Traveller population, estimated at 1,330 people (1 per cent of the population of the district) in the sub-regional Travellers Need Assessment survey published in 2006.

The Council's offices are located in Cambourne, which is towards the geographical the centre of the District, and are fully accessible to persons with a disability. Cambourne is easily accessible by road and is well served by public transport by bus from Cambridge. However, unless residents live on the Cambridge – Cambourne – St Neots bus route they will need to take two bus journeys to reach the offices. There is little call for residents to visit the village of Cambourne other than to attend to business with the Council and consequently most residents prefer to transact their business by telephone. The Contact Centre is open for calls 72 hours per week from 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday providing a high level of accessibility. Callers may use type-talk, language line or text-phone to contact the Centre.

The Policy and Performance team is supporting all services within the Council to understand customers' changing needs and is providing a corporate project lead to achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation by March 2011. Customers' equalities data is starting to be effectively mapped in some service areas and this is being further developed alongside the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process.

A key message is that the percentage of residents aged 65 or above is forecast to rise from 14.8% in 2001 to 23.5% by 2021. Conversely, the percentage of under 20-year olds is forecast to decrease from 25% in 2001 to 22.6% by 2021. The Gypsy and Traveller population is also growing and the District is reported to have one of the highest populations of migrant workers in the country.

We supported managers in completing a total of 46 High and Medium risk Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) by 31 March 2010. In 2010/11 we will focus on Low risk EqIAs and help managers to improve monitoring of customers' equalities data. We strengthened the reporting process to ensure that all reports to Cabinet or Council now have an EqIA.

In 2009 we enrolled the Council as a Stonewall Diversity Champion, demonstrating the Council's commitment to promoting lesbian, gay and bisexual equality in the workplace. We will support national and international equality and diversity events during 2010/11, within the resources available.

From April 2011 we will look at developing a Single Equality Scheme to cover age, disability, gender, race, religion/faith and sexual orientation - and perhaps a 7th strand of equalities, called 'rurality.'

We have revised the voluntary sector grants process to benefit more residents.

7. Our Performance and Plans to Improve

Achievements in 2009/10

The revised corporate brief style was well received by staff and is helping to strengthen relationships between EMT and their managers.

Communication of the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document was very successful with well-attended exhibitions, balanced and informed media coverage and informed representations. This has led to South Cambridgeshire being hailed as a leader in this field.

Positive engagement with local media and news agencies continues, with improving relationships on all side. This has been supported by informal feedback.

All Electoral Commission performance standards were met or exceeded.

With funding from central government a flyer was included with 2009 canvass form to encourage households to respond. South Cambridgeshire had the highest turnout in the county for the combined local and European elections in June 2009. The elections were conducted smoothly; the count was completed and results announced well within target times.

We were able to disband the Improvement Board created following the Corporate Governance Inspection of 2008. The assessment was that the Council has some way to go but there has been significant improvement in our governance arrangements.

In June 2009 we achieved Level 2 of the Local Government Equalities Standard. An IDeA review showed that we were in fact well on the way to the 'Achieving' level of the Equalities Framework, which we aim to reach by June 2010. As a member of Stonewall we will have access to a national benchmarking framework on equalities.

We won a national award from the Centre for Public Scrutiny for the best use of scrutiny resources. We had completed a wide ranging review of Orchard Park, supported by one full-time scrutiny support officer, which equates to the average level of support amongst district councils.

The new Performance Management system (CorVu) was successfully launched on the Council's intranet (In-Site), providing easy access to all staff and Members to timely, clear and accurate performance information.

Customer Services achievements? NI14 monitoring, Complaints and complements policy, Improved Ombudsman response times?

Where we plan to improve

With the appointment of a new full-time corporate manager, Community and Customer Services will aim to provide a more coherently understood and better-coordinated service for internal and external customers.

The intention is to provide a clear focus for all services falling under Community & Customer Services and re-establish their position within the authority as a whole. The vision is for Community & Customer Services to become a central 'hub' for data and information within the authority in areas such as community intelligence,

consultations, service planning and project management. This vision is supported by the improvement plan attached as Appendix B, which sets out a comprehensive, ambitious and far reaching set of actions for 2010/11. These will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the improvements are being delivered and outcomes are evidenced throughout the authority.

Improvements in all aspects of customer service are expected as a result of working towards the Customer Service Excellence Standard, specifically regarding customer insight and consultation. To enable the Council to put the customer at the heart of its service delivery, Service First Steering Group will be seeking to improve consultation and data collection across the Council, with the Policy and Performance Team, as outlined above, aspiring to establish itself as the central point for consultation responses to be used as a corporate resource.

We will work to improve public perception about the value for money provided by SCDC. In the 2008 Place Survey, only 33% of residents agreed that SCDC provides value for money - on a par with the national average but 3% lower than the Cambridgeshire average. A sizeable 39% neither agreed nor disagreed which suggests low awareness of the value for money they are receiving, given that SCDC has the 12th lowest council tax of all district councils.

We also plan to set up a staff forum if resources allow.

Recruitment of a new, more senior electoral services assistant will enable us to provide more consistent service delivery.

Implementation of the new legislation regarding individual registration will enable the electorate to have more faith in the integrity of the electoral system.

We will continue to build relationships with parish councils and work with them to deliver on their community-led plans.

We will support the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to clearly identify its priorities, make even better use of its resources and publicise the effectiveness of the partnership working that is occurring across the district.

The appointment of a new policy and performance manager and senior policy officer will increase capacity to provide a 'horizon-scanning' policy service and to assume responsibility for establishing a consistent approach to project management across the Council.

Following a restructure of the policy and performance team, its members will aim to provide a tailored and more effective link with individual service areas.

8. Our Financial Resources

To be added into final service plan in March with info supplied by Finance.

9. Value for Money

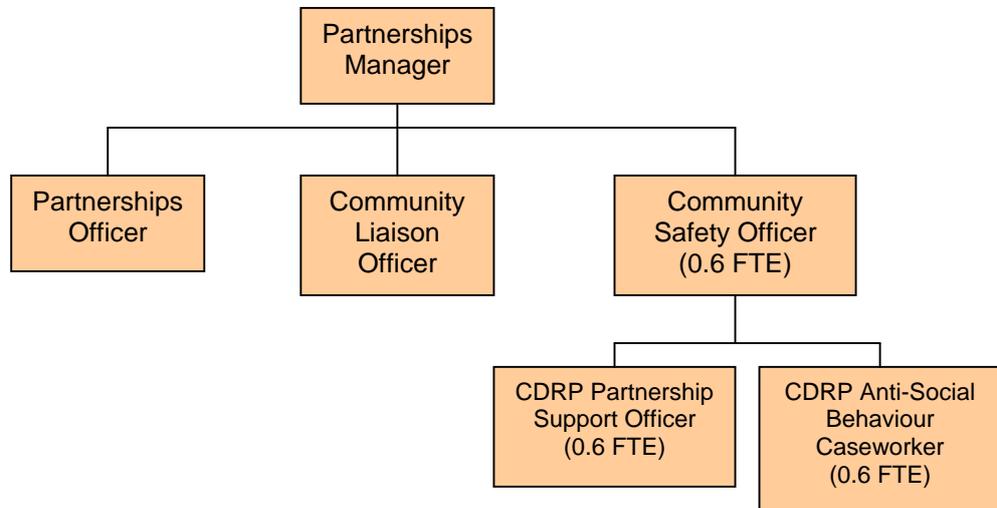
The Communications, Electoral Services, Partnerships, and Policy & Performance teams are all small, lean teams. Value for money comparison with other councils is difficult because all have different structures and ways of providing these services. However, there are some benchmarking figures.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny's 2008 annual survey shows that in district councils the average number of scrutiny officers was 1.4. SCDC has 1. The average scrutiny budget for district councils in 2008 was £3,735 (down £1,588 on 2007). The figure at SCDC is £5,000 but this also covers venue hire and scrutiny training.

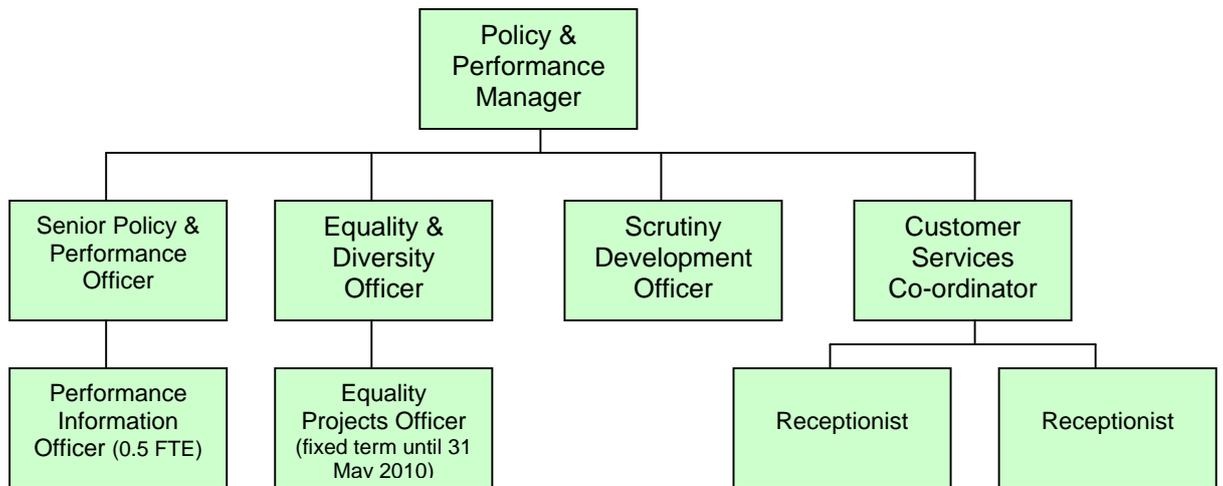
Communications staffing costs at SCDC are £92,000. Across the local authority benchmarking group, the median for staffing costs is £147,000. Communications spend per resident is £1.51. Across the benchmarking group, the median is £2.36.

10. Workforce Overview 2010/11

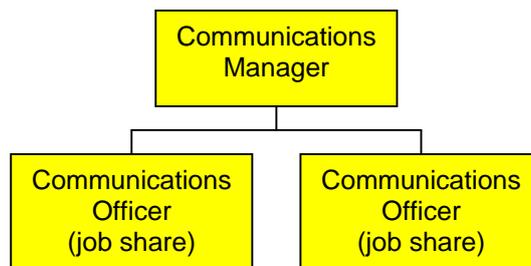
Partnerships Team – 4.8 FTE



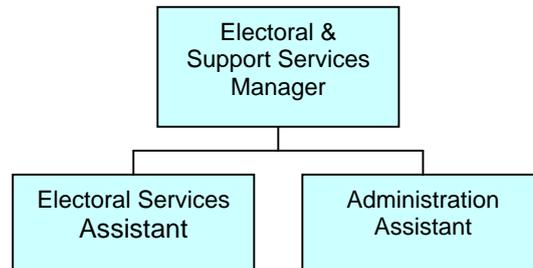
Policy and Performance Team – 8.5 FTE



Communications Team – 2 FTE



Electoral and Support Services Team – 3 FTE



Both the Partnerships and Policy and Performance teams are of a multi-disciplinary nature and address issues where there is a great deal of ongoing change. Staff development and keeping up with current issues will continue to be an important workforce consideration.

Another major issue for these teams is that there is very little cover when posts are vacant through turnover or sickness. This was particularly evident last year with vacancies in the Equality and Diversity Officer and Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworker posts. The problem should be partly addressed, however, through the development of generic policy skills by members of the Policy and Performance Team (see below)

Capacity within the Policy and Performance team grew in response to issues raised in the Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI) of 2007. Nevertheless, there were still under resourced areas such as policy development, research and benchmarking. Following a review of the team structure in June 2009, it was agreed to create a new Senior Policy & Performance Officer position to fill these gaps. This was funded by creating a 0.5FTE performance information officer post in place of the FT performance improvement officer post, and not filling the vacant Policy Officer post.

In the restructure of the policy and performance team, its members have expanded the generic element of their roles so that each provides a link with an individual service area. This will necessitate some training and increased communication within the team.

The Communications team lost a fixed term post in March 2009, which has reduced capacity for corporate and cross-council projects. Changes to the Council's firewall, means that staff will need training to make use of social networking sites for more efficient communication.

The main workforce issue for the Electoral and Support Services team is that the service pressures fall unevenly throughout the year.

11. Risk Overview

- a) Failure to deliver community safety targets leading to dissatisfaction by partners and residents and poor CAA score in Cambridgeshire resulting in poor reputation
- b) Failure to meet duty of community engagement leading to disengaged communities and poor CAA score resulting in frustration by partner agencies and loss of reputation
- c) LSP not being fit for purpose judged by Audit Commission assessment leading to poor reputation and further assessment resulting in additional workload
- d) Lack of progress in equalities leading to compliance risks and non achievement of Council objectives
- e) Delayed progress in the implementation of Corvu leading to possible delays in achieving the Council's performance management objectives, resulting in Corvu becoming discredited in the eyes of users and serious gaps in performance management which will hinder effective performance improvement now and in the future.
- f) Lack of progress on the embedding of Council values, leading to the values being ignored, resulting in the organisation not achieving the cultural changes needed to move forward.
- g) Poor perception of local services/ Council, leading to low NI scores on satisfaction ratings, resulting in lowered CAA performance and poor reputation.
- h) Limited capacity within small teams to deliver on increasing range of projects and responsibilities (Communications Strategy, Equalities, Values, Growth) leading to ill-informed residents and partners resulting in poor reputation and lowered performance
- i) Poor perception of organisation internally leading to staff dissatisfaction, lower external perception of council, resulting in poor reputation
- j) Limited capacity within a small Communications team leading to issues in delivering in sustained emergencies or major incidents, leading to inefficient response to emergencies, resulting in poor reputation, failure to meet terms of the Civil Contingencies Act
- k) Snap general election leading to election team being unable to cope due to lack of staff and very tight timetables, resulting in one or more election petitions
- l) Illness of Electoral Services Manager before election would mean employing a consultant (they would be able to administer the election, but would struggle with local arrangements) resulting in the Returning Officer having to take control; potentially an election petition could be lodged if there was any question regarding the conduct of the poll
- m) Aggressive customer leading to assault on reception staff resulting in potential need to employ temporary staff to cover absence if injured staff; visitors' perception or experience of reception capability is reduced; criticism over contingency arrangements
- n) Delay or failure to achieve the Customer Service Excellence Standard due to insufficient budget, corporate capacity or buy in from officers and members
- o) Failure to operate an effective complaints handling system could lead to low levels of customer satisfaction and damage the Council's reputation
- p) Failure to maintain an effective working relationship with the Contact Centre resulting in poor performance leading to low levels of customer satisfaction and value for money.

