

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Leader's Portfolio Meeting	20 January 2011
AUTHOR/S:	Corporate Manager (Community and Customer Services)	

COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2011/12

Purpose

1. To provide the Leader with an update on the revised Community and Customer Services Service Plan for 2011/12.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

3. That the Leader endorses the service plan actions identified in this report and suggests additions to or amendments to these service plan actions if required.

Background

4. The existing Community and Customer Services Service Plan covers the period 2010/11 - 2012/13 and includes a number of service plan projects intended to run over a 2 or 3 year timeframe. This is therefore a refresh of the service plan designed mainly to introduce new service plan actions to address external challenges.
5. The service plan template has been updated during 2010 and the final draft of the service plan will be presented in the new format.

Considerations

6. The service plan refresh takes account of a number of significant changes arising from the new agenda of the Coalition Government elected in 2010. These include:
 - The introduction of the localism and 'Big Society' agenda.
 - The abolition of elements of the national performance management framework, e.g. National Indicators, and of the government inspection regime (CAA).
 - Changes to the partnership landscape, e.g. the abolition of Local Area Agreements and changes to partnership structures across Cambridgeshire.

Options

7. The service plan includes a number of service improvement actions designed to address the challenges posed by these various changes. Those service plan actions designed to address the main drivers noted above are as follows:

1. Use of Performance Information

An improvement in the way performance information is managed and reported across the authority including the development of a new, comprehensive corporate performance 'score-card', containing an agreed 'basket' of key indicators.

2. Corporate Planning Cycle

The development of the corporate planning cycle to ensure that consultation on the 3 A's throughout the process is a key element, leading to the development of an overarching 3 year Corporate Plan setting both the strategic direction of the authority and high level priorities.

3. Customer Contact and Customer Service

Complete the customer contact review, ensuring that it comprehensively assesses all available options and leads to the implementation of a sustainable, holistic and integrated customer contact framework for the authority, linking into the corporate actions for 2011/12 around channel shift and improvement to the website. Also to further embed the work undertaken towards Customer Service Excellence to maximise the benefit of the accreditation to the authority and its customers, ensuring that a focus is maintained.

4. Development of Community and Customer Services

Further develop and promote the idea of CCS as a corporate 'hub' to service areas to ensure that the authority is aware of the services that the unit can (and can't) provide. Following the abolition of elements of the national performance management framework and of the government inspection regime, to move CCS from an inspection/control function to a role of 'support and challenge'.

5. Consistent branding of the Council and seek to improve public perception

There is a need to develop a new, vibrant and 'modern' identity for the authority, raising its profile and regenerating its reputation. 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.

6. Develop an authority wide approach to the Localism and the 'Big Society' agenda

To enable the authority to gain an understanding of the above agenda and put in place a framework to promote an integrated, district wide approach and strengthen how the authority works with parishes.

7. Reposition partnership working

We will refresh partnership working across the district and with Cambridge City to add value to existing work, deliver real outcomes that matter that we cannot deliver on our own and support the localism agenda.

Implications

8.	Financial	All proposed actions can be delivered within existing budgets.
	Legal	None.
	Staffing	All proposed actions can be delivered within existing resources.
	Risk Management	Risk logs will be developed for each project as and when appropriate.
	Equality and Diversity	Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out on each policy change as and when appropriate.
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	No
		NA
	Climate Change	None.

Consultations

9. The draft service plan has been produced with regard to on-going policy announcements by central government, in consultation with staff in Community and Customer Services and with regard to the on-going corporate consultation being undertaken on the draft corporate actions for 2011/12.

Effect on Strategic Aims

10. Community and Customer Services support the delivery of all 5 council aims.

Conclusions / Summary

11. This report sets out in summary form the key drivers that need to be addressed by the 2011/12 service plan. The 'top 7' draft service plan actions listed above will be incorporated within the final Service plan to be taken to the March Portfolio Holder meeting for approval.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None

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