
Meeting of the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services and Advisory Panel

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services

Neighbourhood Services Directorate Plan

Summary

1. This report asks the Executive Member to approve a draft Neighbourhood Services directorate plan for 2007-2011. The document proposes a set of priorities for Neighbourhood Services, and for each priority sets out a small number of key actions and performance indicators.

Background

2. Services are now starting to undertake detailed service planning, linked to the annual budget process. In the past year, this meant bringing an initial set of service plans to EMAP in December, with final plans brought back in March. This year we are expecting to bring a final set of service plans to the January EMAP, along with the budget proposals. The service plans are likely to be slightly simpler and shorter than last year. The directorate plan, as proposed, will support managers in undertaking service planning, and will ensure greater consistency in service plans.

Purpose of Directorate Plan

3. There are a number of reasons to develop a Directorate Plan at this time. The first aim is to provide a clear set of priorities for Neighbourhood Services, each backed up by a small number of key actions and measures. This will make up a clear and simple statement of the key things the directorate has set itself to deliver in the next year to 18 months. The plan will provide less detail on 2009/10 and 2010/11 – we expect to revise and update it annually.
4. A key aim is to make a strong link between the corporate direction set out in the corporate strategy, and the eight service plans that will act as the foundation for operational performance management in the directorate. As such it should help managers and staff to undertake service planning by providing them with a clear and consistent message about what the key issues are – at both corporate and directorate levels. This should ensure that within the directorate we can demonstrate a strong link from the city vision and corporate strategy down through the directorate plan to our service plans, team workplans and appraisals.

5. The plan recognises a number of priorities that cover a range of front line services. It also sets out priorities that recognise the importance of organisational development issues, particularly around staff issues.
6. The final aim is for the Directorate Plan to be a key part in a more structured (but flexible and appropriate) approach to the directorate's planning and performance management framework. Together the directorate plan and service plans will set out the key things we are aiming to achieve, the key challenges we face and the key measures, targets and actions to be delivered. This will lead onto performance management and monitoring at an appropriate level. EMAP will performance monitor the directorate plan through the quarterly timetable that matches the corporate cycle. The more consistent and structured set of service plans to be delivered early next year will form the basis of operational performance management inside the directorate.
7. In summary, the document has a number of purposes:
 - 'translate' the corporate strategy by showing its relevance to Neighbourhood Services.
 - set out a clear set of priorities – both services and organisational development.
 - for each priority, set out the key actions and measures. .
 - act as a support for managers and staff in the service planning process.
 - provide a short clear description of and guide to the directorate.

Content of Plan

8. We have tried to make the Directorate Plan as short, clear and simple as possible, so as not to detract from the main purposes set out above. The proposal is to structure the Plan as follows. The draft plan is at Annex 1.

Content	
Foreword from Director.	
Short explanation of corporate planning system	To show how the Directorate Plan and service plans fit into the corporate planning system.
Description of the directorate.	To provide a brief introduction, including a structure chart and budget overview.
Directorate major challenges.	To set out the major challenges facing the directorate, from a range of sources.
Directorate major risks.	To set out the major directorate level risks facing the directorate.
Statement of directorate priorities.	To set out how Neighbourhood Services contributes to delivering the corporate strategy.
Organisational development priorities.	To include actions and measures.
Directorate service priorities	(arranged under 3 Asst Director headings). To include actions and measures.

Non-priority services and issues.	To clarify status of other services and organisational development issues not identified as priorities.
Monitoring and reporting arrangements.	To set out how performance will be managed, monitored and reported.

Directorate Priorities

9. The proposed directorate priorities have come out of a robust planning process that considered a range of information around performance, risk, external challenges, customer satisfaction, staff research, and the political prospectus. They are a mix of service and organisational development issues.
10. The directorate takes a lead on three of the corporate priorities. We have prioritised four other service areas for review and improvement. Ten of the twelve priorities support delivery of our corporate strategy.

Service Priorities	Organisational Development Priorities
Waste Management (Corporate Priority lead). Street Environment (Corporate Priority lead). Tackling violent, aggressive and nuisance behaviour (Corporate Priority lead). Neighbourhood management service review and improvement. Building maintenance service review and improvement. Waste services service review and improvement. Building and school cleaning service review and improvement.	Improving sickness absence. Improving staff development. Improving health & safety culture. Implementing job evaluation / pay & grading. Improving financial management.

11. Some areas of the directorate are not being seen as priorities at this point. However all areas of the directorate, whether priorities or not, will develop service plans that fit within the corporate guidance and policy, and those service plans will show how improvement is being driven in all services as part of the normal development of the service.

Consultation

12. Consultation in preparation of the draft plan was limited to senior officers in the directorate. The corporate strategy, policy prospectus, staff survey, customer satisfaction surveys were also used in developing the proposal.

Options

13. The options for members to consider are:

Option 1: To agree the draft plan, taking into account specific comments raised at this meeting. For the plan to form the basis for forthcoming service planning, and for it to form the basis for EMAP performance reporting.

Option 2: To not agree the draft plan.

Analysis

14. Option 1 would immediately provide a firmer foundation on which to undertake service planning. It would also allow us to provide a more formal structure for future performance monitoring reports to EMAP. It would help the directorate meet a number of the requirements of the forthcoming CPA inspection through showing a strong level of support for the corporate strategy.
15. Under option 2 we would work to address members' concerns with the proposed plan in order to support our forthcoming service planning. We would seek to bring forward a revised directorate plan in March, following the completion of the budget process.

Corporate Priorities

16. One of the aims of the directorate plan is to strengthen and clarify how Neighbourhood Services will support delivery of the Corporate Strategy, including the corporate priorities.

Implications:

- **Financial.** There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- **Human Resources.** There are no direct implications for staff, although a number of the proposed priorities are aimed at developing our approach to staff management.
- **Equalities.** There are no equalities implications in this report.
- **Legal.** There are no legal implications in this report.
- **Crime and Disorder.** One of the proposed priorities is around delivering on a key part of the community safety agenda.

- **IT.** There are no IT implications associated with this report.
- **Property.** There are no property implication in this report.

Risk Management

17. As part of the planning process, the directorate's management team undertook a review of directorate level risk, with the support of the corporate risk management team. Major risks were a key part of the planning process which resulted in the proposed plan.

Recommendations

18. That the Advisory Panel advice the Executive Member to:
- a) approve option 1.
 - b) agree to receive an updated version of the plan, following the outcome of the budget process, at the EMAP meeting in March.

Reason: to put in place an important element in improving the directorate's performance management and monitoring arrangements.

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Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex 1 – Draft Directorate Plan