Report to Cabinet

Subject   **Shared Services**

Date   **1st June 2006**

Author   **Deputy Chief Executive**

1. Purpose of the Report
To outline the need to address the shared services agenda and develop a way forward for the Council.

2. Background
The Chief Executive has drafted a discussion paper which sets out the need to consider the future vision of the Council, its role and as a consequence of that consideration, its form and function. A copy of this paper has been submitted to Group Leaders and is currently the subject of consultation with staff groups throughout the Council. That paper, a copy of which is attached to this report at appendix 1, also outlines the pressures that necessitate this debate and which are pertinent to the issue of shared services. This paper is intended to take forward the shared services debate in light of the Chief Executive's report.

3. Information
Shared services means different things to different people and this reflects the fact that in reality it represents a range of options, from the small scale sharing of one or more functions within or between organisations through to the large scale transfer of an organisation's corporate and transactional functions to an external provider, be that public or private sector.

This Council already operates a number of shared services, the most recent being the establishment of a joint procurement post with Rushcliffe Borough Council, through to the provision of IT services for the LGEM.

More recently however the shared services agenda has become synonymous with addressing corporate (Finance, Human Resources, Legal, Information Technology etc). and transactional services (primarily Revenues and Benefits). In particular, from the point of view of the Government, this means partnerships with

the private sector. In reality such partnerships can also exist with other public sector bodies but so far they have proved more difficult to establish. The Government is addressing this problem in some areas by legislating for such provision, as such it is anticipated that there will be a single processing centre for Northern Ireland to deal with transactional and some corporate services. The NHS has developed this model in the health sector and many PCTs share corporate services because of the considerable costs savings available.

The basic premise is that a shared service centre, bringing together a range of functions from one or more local authorities can deliver economies of scale that individual services can not. Such centres undertake extensive business process re-engineering (BPR) to ensure standardisation of business processes into the most efficient form. BPR is relatively well understood in the private sector and is gaining ground within the public sector as a means of delivering efficiencies.

Dependent upon Members' wishes shared services can be a purely contractual arrangement, essentially established to achieve savings and efficiencies, or partnership arrangements designed to address wider issues such as regeneration, job creation and safeguarding of jobs. The former will be familiar to Members under CCT legislation along with the attendant problems associated with that approach where the contractual arrangements are inadequately specified, particularly where a service need is not easily measured. The partnership approach requires the establishment of trust, a sharing of business risk, usually associated with open book accounting and a long term commitment by both parties. It is not simply about delivering a service to a specification but about enabling the Council to achieve its priorities using the shared service as another means of delivery.

In determining any approach to shared services it is necessary to establish some overriding objectives that will help guide the Council's approach and enable negotiations with prospective partners to be clear and unambiguous in terms of required outcomes and deliverables.

It is senior management's view that the following objectives should form the basis of any shared services approach:

Ensure the Council has the capacity to secure high quality service delivery, irrespective of the provider (to ensure the aims of the Community Plan are delivered)
Ensure the best possible service for Gedling's residents (building on the Council's Customer Focus Agenda).
Ensure that jobs are protected and that opportunities for employees and residents are maximised (reflecting the Council's Equalities Agenda).
Enable the Council to meet Government efficiency targets (reflecting the national Gershon efficiency Agenda).

In considering a shared services agenda the Council also needs to determine which services it wishes to retain in-house and which would be eligible for consideration. It is senior managements' view that services which effectively determine the policy approach of the Council, its overall form and function should be retained in-house, whereas those of an essentially support or transactional nature can be considered for inclusion within a shared service approach.

It is for each authority to determine what it wishes to include or exclude but typically the following services are usually retained in-house:

Policy advice and development
Local Development Framework
Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Development
Strategic Finance
Strategic legal function and Monitoring Officer role
Members' Services including Elections

The following elements are also typically retained in house:
Strategic regulatory functions such as development control, environmental health and licensing
Community Development
Homelessness

The former reflect the overall impact on the identity of the Council, the latter essentially reflect the lack of any external market but could be accommodated within a public sector shared service approach where members retain a strong democratic accountability for that service.

Essentially everything else that the Council currently undertakes would be eligible for a shared services approach, either in the private or public sector. In essence the Housing Stock Options appraisal and the Leisure Facilities Management Appraisal represent a shared services approach, in the former case with a Registered Social Landlord and the latter has yet to determine the most appropriate vehicle, given that in house retention is still a viable option.

Rushcliffe Borough Council has recently agreed a shared services proposal that seeks the establishment of a partnership with the private sector and development of a centre somewhere within the Rushcliffe locality to protect their employees' job prospects. Gedling has agreed to be included in the expression of interest primarily as a means of maintaining a range of options open to the Council. It should be recognised that there is a capacity issue within our own corporate services that means this agenda is unlikely to be developed at the same pace as it is in Rushcliffe Borough Council, not least because this Council has yet to determine its own approach to this issue. Should the Council decide that the Rushcliffe approach is a viable option then the expression of interest preserves this option without committing the Council to it.

4. Implications

Any shared services approach contains an element of risk and this would need to be managed. Both public and private sector approaches carry risk, the former in terms of change of political views and both in terms of financial difficulties and changing economic environments.

It needs to be recognised however that the 'doing nothing' option also carries risk, primarily unsustainable costs; lack of resilience and poor budget settlements increasing revenue pressures on all services. The potential changes in Housing and Leisure also increase these pressures.

Failure to address this area now also means that protecting jobs and maximising future employment opportunities for residents is also compromised. Once a shared service centre is established within the East Midlands region it will be increasingly difficult to secure a local centre within or nearby Gedling Borough.

As such it is proposed to take forward the shared services agenda with the assistance of a facilitator/consultant to help develop the Council's thinking in this area. There is no 'one size fits all' approach and different models may be proposed for different areas, for example a partnership approach with the private sector for transactional services and a public sector approach for a number of corporate services. In each case it will be necessary to develop the appropriate business case and implementation plan.

The Chief Executive's paper also raises the issue of existing form and function and as such, dependent upon the outcome of the debate generated by that paper, it may be necessary to consider internal reviews of existing corporate services independent of the shared services agenda. This proposal is entirely consistent with that since, in any event, rationalisation of existing service provision would be required before any partnership approach to ensure that the Council itself has benefited from any early wins in terms of efficiency gains, reduced service costs and improved resilience.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet agree in principle to the shared services approach and that senior management be authorised to use consultancy to assist in an option appraisal and in developing the most appropriate solution for Gedling.

Discussion Paper

Date: **21st March 2006**

Author: **Peter Murdock - Chief Executive**

Re: **Development of a Vision for the Council, its Role and Organisation**

Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to start the process of agreeing a vision for the Council as an organisation – where it is going, what it sees as its fundamental purpose and what principles should underpin its work. The paper sets out a range of matters and issues which I believe both require the Council to reflect on what it is about and also which suggest a change of approach is needed. The issues raised are all familiar to some extent and many of the matters identified we are already working on (for instance developing our approach to customer management). The paper pulls these together and attempts to identify and articulate a new way forward.

2. The matters which are discussed here and the conclusions which I offer up are not a sudden reaction to any recent issues but are the result of careful thought over some time. Some readers may recognise elements of the paper from previous discussions over the last year or so, which is not to say that they represent necessarily my firm and settled conclusions, but they are certainly not the product of a mere whim. That said, whether or not the final vision and structure for the future Council is along the lines of this paper, I think that there can be no doubt that it has to be different from whatever is in place now.

3. I would like to have a debate within the Council over the spring and summer period with all internal stakeholders – employees, managers, Members, trade unions – in the hope that we can find a way forward which everybody can understand and with which all will agree.

Background

4.   Gedling Borough Council was adjudged by the Audit Commission in November 2003 to be a "good" Council.   The inspection team found many strengths in traditional service delivery and in the robustness of its financial management, perhaps reflecting the Council's long standing focus on these matters. They found that the Council had a "long history of consistently delivering high quality basic services at reasonable cost….. It has sustained a focus on delivering good front line services but it has lacked an outward focus….. The Council has maintained a strong focus on providing a clean and tidy Borough…..   The Council has maintained its position as a deliverer of high quality front line services" (See the Audit Commission CPA report dated 6 November 2003).

5.   Since then, the Use of Resources judgement for the Council and the Direction of Travel Statement in the Annual Audit Letter suggest continued improvement, as well as a significant development of the Council's community development work (seen as a weakness in the original CPA assessment). The more recent "pilot" CPA assessment appears to confirm that the Council has many more strengths than weaknesses and that its progress since the original CPA assessment has been maintained.

6.   Nevertheless, despite the work done by the Council in the Local Strategic Partnership ("The Gedling Partnership") to develop a longer-term vision for the Borough and the development of a rolling Strategic Corporate Plan for the Council, the CPA pilot team did not feel that the Council had a clear longer-term vision and suggested that it needed to do more work to develop this - its planning tends to be on a medium-term basis, rather than longer-term.

7.   Essentially, the picture which emerges from these Audit Commission assessments (reflecting the view also of the IDeA Peer Review Team) is of a Council which is very good at managing and improving what it has, but which is not necessarily good at looking ahead, thinking what the future holds and what the Borough needs for the future.

8.   Thus, we cannot afford to be complacent about the progress that we have made and our ability to maintain that progress. It is right that we need to take the opportunity to step back from all our plans to do things and just think about what

lies ahead, what kind of Council we need to be in the future and therefore what kind of things we should be looking to do. This then will mean that we are better placed to turn Gedling Borough Council into an excellent Council and ensure that it is a Council that is fit for purpose as the 21st Century develops. And if Gedling Borough Council itself has only a limited life ahead of it, then perhaps our reflections might assist in the design of whatever Council is to be put in its place.

<u>The Dilemma</u>

9.   Hitherto, strategic planning in Gedling has tended to be service based and seen as an aspect of service delivery and improvement – the responsibility accordingly of Service Heads. The Council has not seen strategic planning in the broader context of working out an overall vision and direction for the Council and the Borough, with service planning then being a product of that strategic "direction finding". What the Borough needs is for the Council to add to its service planning and delivery qualities a greater capacity for co-ordinated, imaginative strategic planning so that rather than having a collection of separately developed service improvement plans it has a single, co-ordinated strategic plan whose starting point is a formulation of a long term vision for the Borough and the role of the Council in delivering that vision.

10.   The other problem with regarding this strategic and policy planning as an aspect of other service delivery responsibilities and organising it accordingly, is that its motivation can tend to be the protection and enhancement of those current services. In other words, this approach can mitigate against radical change and tends to encourage a kind of institutional inertia. What the Council needs, however, is to foster a culture of creative energy with a predisposition towards change rather than the status quo. We need to create a capacity and willingness to think about what <u>should</u> be provided rather than merely how we should look after what we are providing.

11.   The Gedling Community Strategy agreed by the Gedling Partnership (of which the Council is part) sets out a vision of the Borough as "a community in which everyone plays their part in bringing about greater security, greater prosperity, improved health and a better environment for all. A Borough where people want to live and do business"- a Borough which is, indeed, "healthy, green, safe and clean". This is complemented by the Local Plan which defines the spatial development proposals

for the Borough for the next few years (in terms of the green belt, for the next 20 years).

12. The Council is also a participant in the Greater Nottingham Partnership which is in the process of developing a vision of the Greater Nottingham Sub-Region as a "Core City" and developing a strategy for the delivery of this vision. This strategy recognises the inter-dependence of the administrative area of the City and the Boroughs around the City, including Gedling, and sets down the particular role which the Boroughs have in delivering a good quality of life across the conurbation - an essential contribution to the economic and social regeneration of Nottingham itself.

13. The Strategic Corporate Plan states that the mission of the Council is to direct its own services and work with its own partners in order to move towards achievement of the vision of the Borough as set out above. The question then is what kind of Council will be best suited to achieve that mission and develop a delivery strategy for that purpose - what kind of organisation will it need to be?

14. In facing the future, the Council also has to face up to many pressures which will bear upon its ability to achieve the vision and ensure that the Borough continues to receive services which are recognised as being of high quality and at reasonable cost:

14.1 The current debate on the whole future of local government and its role, which creates an atmosphere of huge uncertainty for the Council, its partners and its staff, which can be a distraction from day to day responsibilities and which can have a debilitating effect on morale.

14.2 The demand for efficiency savings in public services (coupled with Government demands for reductions in the public sector payroll).

14.3 Increasing public expectations with regard to the quality, responsiveness, reliability and effectiveness, as well as the cost, of public services.

14.4 Increasing competitive pressures - both in terms of the comparative performance of other councils and also that of private sector providers of key services.

14.5 New technology provides many opportunities for service improvement and increased efficiency, but the speed of development in this area makes keeping up

to date both difficult and apparently costly - new technology can appear to be a treadmill.

14.6   Constant detailed scrutiny of everything we undertake – oversight, inspections and inquiries by the Government, the Audit Commission, the Ombudsmen, the Standards Board and the press - not to mention the general public - can make working in local government rather like working in a goldfish bowl.

14.7   The increasing expectation that local government will move from a traditional view of its role as simply being to provide a range of local public services, to a broader (and, on occasion, more abstract) role of leading the community and, in particular, leading a range of other bodies towards the achievement of an overall vision for the Borough (as set out above). This includes pressure for Councils to accept a responsibility to contribute towards the solving of issues which have traditionally been seen as the province and responsibility of other agencies, or, at least, not the responsibility of the Council - issues concerned with crime, health, social exclusion, "diversity" and community regeneration.

14.8   The possible move towards "neighbourhood governance" as is currently being debated nationally.

14.9   The increasing requirement to work in multi agency partnerships and the resources required to manage LSPs, CDRPs, LAAs, SSPs etc. There is also the need to work and liaise with Councils in other parts of the County and conurbation. It is increasingly being recognised that our planning, housing, crime and other strategies cannot be produced in isolation from those of other neighbouring Councils.

14.10 The possible transfer of the housing stock and consideration of the future basis for management of the leisure centres and the Building Control Service. These issues could have profound implications for corporate support services, as well as the departments currently responsible for them.

14.11 Underpinning all this is the need to reflect and promote the role of the Council as a forum for local politics and to promote local engagement with local political issues and the democratic process. It is important that the Council's structures and procedures are designed to help locally elected representatives to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible.

15. These pressures are all challenging and they can appear to conflict with one another. The Council of the future will need to be able to reconcile them if it is going to be able to cope with them.

A Way Forward

16. In considering what the Council of the future should look like, it can be useful to consider what features of Councils in the past would make them ill-suited to deal with the pressures and responsibilities set out above. I would suggest the following has tended to be the underlying approach and philosophy of Councils:

16.1 A presumption that the in-house provision of services is either best or preferable, coupled with the assumption that the Council needs to do this through its own dedicated workforce.

16.2 A belief that if something appears to be working satisfactorily at the moment then there is no need to contemplate change to it - indeed, that change can be positively dangerous.

16.3 A belief that our purpose is to deliver a range of functions as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 and a consequent relegation of any other role to a subordinate position.

16.4 A view that it is our job to design and deliver services in the way that seems to us to be the most efficient - and that it is for the customer to make any necessary adjustments in order to be able to enjoy the services.

16.5 As is indicated above, a view of strategic planning as merely an aspect of service planning and delivery, rather than something more fundamental and wide reaching.

The Vision

17. So if this is the case, what kind of organisation will the Council have to be if it is to be well placed to face up to the pressures and expectations set out above and to help build a Borough which is healthy, green, safe, clean and prosperous? An organisation which has:

17.1 A recognition that the fundamental responsibility of the Council is to identify and deal with the needs of the Borough and to deliver the vision of the Borough as set out in the Community Strategy. An understanding accordingly that the role of the Council with regard to services is co-ordinated strategic planning, policy development and procurement to ensure that they are provided to the right quality and at the right price, rather than necessarily providing them in-house. The test for any service should be what is in the best interests of the Borough rather than what is in the interests of the service.

17.2 A positive and effective approach to community engagement and community development and an understanding of the importance of this to achieving the vision for the Borough.

17.3 A clear customer focus and willingness to design services around the needs of the customer, rather than necessarily the presumed needs of the organisation. An appreciation also of the efficiency, as well as the customer relations, benefits of an effective and co-ordinated approach to customer relationship management.

17.4 A willingness to work in partnership with other organisations - whether in the public or private sector - in order to secure the delivery of services which are of the right quality and at the right price.

18. In other words, an organisation which is:

Forward looking

Community and customer focussed

Value driven.

Guiding Principles

19. As well as having a clear view of its role and its purpose, the Council will also have to work and operate efficiently and effectively as an organisation in order to achieve the vision. What principles should govern the way in which the Council approaches its responsibilities? It will need:

19.1   An awareness of the advantages and availability of new technology and a willingness to use this to the full in order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness. The ability to understand how new technology can be used to transform the way in which the Council works and the drive to act on that.

19.2   A flexibility of approach and a willingness constantly to adapt and develop services and processes - a willingness to look for improvement opportunities rather than wait for some kind of breakdown.

19.3   Vigorous and imaginative managerial and political leadership.

19.4   A pragmatic, rather than dogmatic, approach to service delivery;

19.5   With regard to any services which are provided and run directly, a focus on quality, reliability, efficiency and value – on ensuring the Council's tradition of "high quality at reasonable cost" is maintained.

19.6   An openness to external influence and a willingness to learn and be self-critical.

19.7   A focus on outcomes - the overall achievement - rather than inputs and outputs.

19.8   A belief nevertheless in the traditional imperatives of good governance, propriety and sound stewardship of public resources, all designed to ensure that the maximum possible proportion of the Council's resources is devoted to securing the delivery of the vision and front line services, minimising inefficiency and overheads.

19.9   A recognition in the process of achieving the above of the importance of the Council being a good employer and using its position as a procurer of services to ensure that its own contractors are themselves also good employers, something which is essential if employees are to be persuaded that a move away from a presumption in favour of direct in-house service provision should not be seen as a threat.

19.10   Corporate overheads which are proportionate and which are necessary to support democratic functions and the work of the Council.

19.11 A culture of mutual co-operation and support, of working together to achieve common corporate goals rather than separate departmental ones. A culture of corporatism rather than departmentalism.

19.12 A structure which reflects the above.

A New Definition of the Council's Functions

20. I have mentioned previously that, traditionally, Councils have seen their functions in terms of services – managing council housing, managing leisure services, managing direct services, planning services and tax collection etc. Bearing in mind the modern emphasis on the community leadership and strategic planning and policy formulation role of local authorities, and the emerging recognition of dealing with customers as a significant role in its own right, it is possible and might now be more relevant to define the functions in a different way which reflects this development and which recognises that traditional service delivery may be merely one of the functions which a local authority is here to perform. These functions could be defined as:

20.1 Managing democratic and community matters, including any new neighbourhood governance procedures, the political and Member processes of the Council and electoral issues.

20.2 Managing the customer interface, including visitors to the One Stop Shop, Internet customers and telephone enquiries.

20.3 Strategic policy and planning.

20.4 Service procurement and direct service delivery and operations.

20.5 Regulatory, enforcement and public protection services.

20.6 Central support services and governance.

What Happens Next?

21. It is inevitable that colleagues will read this paper and then immediately start to ask themselves, "So are structural changes going to be proposed, where will I fit into them and what will it all mean to me?". I have deliberately avoided setting out a possible new structure at this stage. This is because at the moment it is far more

important that we see whether we have across the Council a broad understanding of the need for change and agreement with the vision, principles and functions which I suggest in this paper. A recent document about organisational development in local government commissioned by the government and the Local Government Association from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, points out that "organisations do not change unless there is a good reason and if the organisation does not think the impetus for change is worthwhile it will not happen". If we can agree both on the need for change and the direction in which we have to move, then it is much more likely that we will be successful.

22. And in any event, this paper is not just about preparing the ground for a restructuring of the Council. I mentioned at the outset that we are already working on many of the matters I have identified. The fact is that the Council is already involved in a major change programme which is affecting every aspect of what we do and the way in which we do it - we are, if you like, already involved in what can properly be described as "organisational development" in the sense of literally changing the whole organisation. Systems, processes, personnel management arrangements, communications are all being reviewed and transformed. We are working up a leadership development programme for our managers, we are investigating partnership possibilities in a number of areas and challenging traditional methods of service delivery. We are constantly sharpening up our performance management, financial management and service planning processes to make them more effective. Reviewing the structure of the Council and its underlying logic so as to see whether it is still right and whether it needs to be altered to fit the task and circumstances which face the Council now is merely a part of that overall programme, albeit an important one. This paper tries to pull all of this together, show how it fits into a coherent overall framework and then confirm our way forward.

23. The Appendix to this paper attempts to illustrate this change programme, showing how the vision and principles set out above are carried through to a range of developments on which people are working across the Council and into future work plans. It also offers some possible measures which will enable us to see whether we are being successful in achieving the vision. It gives a sense of the scale of the organisational development process in which we are engaged.

24.   So at this stage I would like if possible to talk about the broader issues with which the paper deals to see whether colleagues can agree with my analysis rather than getting embroiled immediately in detailed discussions about structural issues which will distract us from the task of looking at the bigger picture. Working out the detailed implications of this for the Council's structures comes later.

25.   I will start the discussion at the round of briefing sessions which Petar Kanuritch and I will be holding again in April. I will be working with staff, managers, the trade unions, the STEPS group and any other groups which people feel should be involved. I will welcome contributions from anybody, because this affects everybody in some way. And then, perhaps in the Autumn, I will try to see what conclusions we have reached about what I have set out in this paper and work out what structural changes we should look to put in place and in what timescale.

Meeting the needs of the Borough

A recognition that the fundamental responsibility of the Council is to identify and deal with the needs of the Borough and to deliver the vision of the Borough as set out in the Community Strategy. An understanding accordingly that the role of the Council with regard to services is co-ordinated strategic planning, policy development and procurement to ensure that they are provided to the right quality and at the right price, rather than necessarily providing them in-house. The test for any service should be what is in the best interests of the Borough rather than what is in the interests of the service.

Guiding Principles

18.1   ICT
18.4   Pragmatic approach
18.6   Learning organisation
18.9   Good employer
18.10 Proportionate overheads

Why are these important?

- Enable flexible working
- Employees can be more productive
- Enable Gershon efficiency savings to enable resources to be redirected to current and future needs
- Staff able to adapt and meet new demands
- Allow problem solving approach to deal with new demands
- Maintain good working relations

How is this being achieved?

- ICT Strategy
- Remote Working Strategy
- IIP Strategy
- Steps Working Group
- People Management Strategy
- Workforce Development Plan
- Gershon Efficiency targets
- Procurement Strategy

What else needs to be done?

- Define outcomes for the IIP strategy
- Develop profiles to enable better understanding of local needs
- Update Workforce Development Plan annually
- Enhancement of the Council's strategic planning capacity
- Review structure of the Council

How will we know if we have been successful?

Possible corporate measures

CPA judgement
Use of Resources judgement (annual)
Direction of Travel judgement (annual)
Basket of BVPI's to track performance of operational/quality of life issues
Improvement in majority of indicators year on year

Other proxy measures
Number of people working remotely
2005/06   0
2006/07   10
2007/08   20

Gershon Efficiency Savings achieved
2006/07   %

% PDR complete
2006/07   90
2007/08   95

Could be measures in terms of % workforce with certain qualifications

2006/07   ?
2007/08   ?

IIP Strategy updated with defined outcomes etc
Date   ?

Community Engagement and Development

A positive and effective approach to community engagement and community development and an understanding of the importance of this to achieving the vision for the Borough.

Guiding Principles

18.3   Leadership
18.8   Good governance

Why are these important?

- Enables clear strategic direction to be set to meet local needs
- Ensures managerial and political will to deliver difficult decisions
- Enables residents to have a say in the future of the borough
- Enables residents to have a say in the delivery of local services
- Ensures continued good use of resources judgment
- Ensures propriety in the use of resources

How is this being achieved?

- Gedling Community Plan
- Local Strategic Partnership
- The Sports Forum
- Area Based Initiatives
- Financial Strategy

What else needs to be done?

- Enhanced leadership training for managers
- Development of a Community Engagement/Development Strategy
- Development of the Council's scrutiny function
- Review structure of the Council

How will we know if we have been successful?

Number of Area Based Initiatives
2006/07   4
2007/08   6

Positive judgment of Council's scrutiny function
2007/08   ?

Number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes established (as a proxy)
2006/07   ?
2007/08   ?

Percentage satisfaction with degree of involvement in Council business
2006/07   ?
2007/08   ?

Customer Focus

A clear customer focus and willingness to design services around the needs of the customer, rather than necessarily the presumed needs of the organisation. An appreciation also of the efficiency, as well as the customer relations, benefits of an effective and co-ordinated approach to customer relationship management.

Guiding Principles

18.1   ICT
18.2   Flexible
18.5   High quality, reasonable cost
18.7   Outcome orientated
18.11 Corporate approach

Why are these important?

- Use of ICT to improve responsiveness and accuracy
- Multiple access channels to meet customer expectations
- Value for money releasing resources to be spent on meeting customer needs
- Delivering what the customer wants first time every time - efficiency
- Improved customer satisfaction ratings
- Breakdown artificial barriers between front and back office and between departments

How is this being achieved?

- ICT Strategy
- Access Strategy
- Remote Working Strategy
- Customer Focus work

What else needs to be done?

- Enhancement of one stop shop role
- Development of CRM business case
- Development of call centre approach linked to shared services agenda
- Review structure of the Council

How will we know if we have been successful?

Customer Satisfaction rating with Council (also on functional split)
2006/07   %
2007/08   %

80% customer enquiries dealt with at first point of contact
2006/07   %
2007/08   %

Partnership

A willingness to work in partnership with other organisations - whether in the public or private sector - in order to secure the delivery of services which are of the right quality and at the right price.

Guiding Principles

18.4   Pragmatic approach
18.5   High quality, reasonable cost
18.7   Outcome orientated
18.10 Proportionate overheads
18.11 Corporate approach

Why are these important?

- Delivery of service is what matters, not who delivers it
- Integrated service approach across organisations to deliver best quality service
- Enable Gershon efficiency savings to enable resources to be redirected to current and future needs
- Partnership working assessed on the needs of the customer and the council, not individual departments.

How is this being achieved?

- Partnership working with Rushcliffe
- Partnership working with PCT
- Partnership working with Police

What else needs to be done?

- Development of a strategic approach to partnership working
- Development of the shared services agenda

How will we know if we have been successful?

Number of shared services
2006/07   ?
2007/08   ?

Gershon efficiency savings achieved
2006/07   %
2007/08   %

% of corporate overheads to overall service provision (need to define exactly what we mean by this, cost of democracy, cost of central support, cost of employment, cost of asset management etc).

2006/07   %
2007/08   %

Basket of BVPI's to track performance of operational/quality of life issues
Improvement in majority of indicators year on year.

STANDARD BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

CONSULTATION

Finance

Legal

Personnel

PMG

CONSIDERATION

Equal Opportunities/Impact Assessment

Children

Crime and Disorder

Risk Management