



Report to: Cabinet

Subject: Draft Budget and Service Plan Proposals to be Subject to Scrutiny Committee Consultation

Date : 15 January 2009

Author : Senior Management Team on behalf of Leader of the Council

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report details the likely General Fund base budget for 2009/10 based on provisional settlement figures, the likely position in respect of capital financing, and assumed changes to the base budget in respect of inflation, pay award etc.

The severe economic pressures that the authority is facing make this a challenging budget round. There is no potential for growth in the revenue budget, and only a few new schemes for capital expenditure are identified.

The specific aims of the report are to identify Members' expectations in respect of new revenue and capital schemes and to seek comment on performance related matters for the year 2009/10 for forwarding on to Policy Review Scrutiny Committee for comment.

2. BACKGROUND

The Constitution of the Council details the Budget and Policy Framework Procedural rules. Section 2 1(c) concerns budget and performance plans. The specific requirement in part (i) is as follows:

“In early September of each financial year the Executive shall invite the Policy Review Scrutiny Committee to give views on priorities and suggestions for growth”.

In addition there is a requirement that “in each financial year, the Executive shall present a draft Budget and Performance Plan to the Scrutiny Committee for comment”.

This report ensures these requirements have been met for the 2009/10 budget process.

3. GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2009/10

The Council's overarching Financial Strategy sets out the framework for overall financial control and administration for the Council. It also details how individual items such as Central Government Funding, Taxation levels, Resource Development Bids Scoring Methodology etc. impact on the annual budget and this has been taken into account in presenting this annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Summary.

In respect of Central Government Funding, Cabinet received a report on 3 December 2008, showing that the Council's Local Government Finance Settlement for 2009/10 will be £9,106,886.

3.1 Base Budget 2009/10

In developing a budget proposal, assumptions on the core budget have to be made and the various assumptions in respect of inflation and technical changes are shown at Appendix 1. These have been included in both the annual base budget and MTFP calculations.

The latest available estimate of the base budget for 2009/10 is £16,482,800, see table below. **Central support adjustments have yet to be calculated so Portfolio totals are subject to change.**

<u>Portfolio</u>	Original Budget 2008/09 £	Base Budget 2009/10 £	Variance £	Major Reason for Variance
Leader	1,861,700	1,828,800	(32,900)	LSVT reductions
Safe & Sustainable Neighbourhoods	1,373,400	1,333,500	(39,900)	Reduced expenditure on Contaminated Land & Dog Kennelling
Customer Services and Efficiency	0	(81,000)	(81,000)	LSVT reductions
Development & Economic Regeneration	669,900	1,103,800	433,900	Reduced Income and Arnold Town Master Plan
Direct Services & Property	5,739,300	5,768,300	29,000	Energy Prices
Housing & Health	1,792,100	1,780,600	(11,500)	Hostel Rents
Leisure & Youth	2,681,500	3,349,800	668,300	Reduced Income and Energy Prices
Finance	1,022,000	1,624,000	602,000	Reduced Investment Income & LSVT reductions
Sub-total	15,139,900	16,707,800	1,567,900	
Payroll Reductions	0	(200,000)	(200,000)	
Energy Efficiency Initiatives	0	(25,000)	(25,000)	
Base Budget 2009/10 excluding income inflation	15,139,900	16,482,800	1,342,900	

3.2 **Budget Pressures and Efficiency Savings**

As Members are aware the economic downturn is placing significant pressure on the Council's financial position in terms of increased running costs, including £330,000 energy costs, and reduced income levels from fees and charges of £700,000. Significantly reduced investment income of £500,000 is also anticipated due to the rapidly reducing bank base rate. The impacts of these budget pressures are reflected in the base budget. It is difficult to predict when the situation will improve but the MTFP assumes a gradual recovery beginning in 2012/13.

In order to mitigate increasing costs the base budget and MTFP includes efficiency savings in terms of cash limited supplies and services budgets of £180,000 per annum, Gedling Transformation Programme efficiencies rising to £300,000 by 2013/14, energy efficiency initiatives £25,000 and improved business/system processes £68,500. In addition, payroll reductions of £200,000 have been assumed in the 2009/10 base, rising to £300,000 in 2010/11 and returning to normal levels by 2014/15.

The base budget includes the Summer Refuse Collection Service £150,000 (reduced by £10,000 from 2008/09 due to efficiency in vehicle usage), Arnold Town Master Plan £292,000, and LSVT residual costs of £478,000 based on the final negotiations, compared to an original estimate of £530,800.

3.3 **Income Inflation**

The base budget at paragraph 3.1 excludes income inflation. The MTFP includes income inflation at 3% on discretionary income (excluding leisure DNA), which equates to £89,900, and the increase per Portfolio is shown in the table below. Each additional 1% increase will raise a further £30,000 and increases at 4% and 5% are also shown.

It is suggested that the Portfolio Holder agrees individual charges with the relevant Head of Service, with discretion to vary the % increase, as long as the overall cash amount for that Portfolio is raised.

Portfolio	Discretionary Income £	3% increase £	4% increase £	5% increase £
Leader	(35,800)	(1,100)	(1,400)	(1,800)
Safe & Sustainable Neighbourhoods	(500)	0	0	0
Development & Economic Regen.	(89,600)	(2,700)	(3,600)	(4,500)
Direct Services & Property	(719,700)	(21,600)	(28,800)	(36,000)
Housing & Health	(135,900)	(4,100)	(5,400)	(6,800)
Leisure & Youth (excl DNA)	(2,013,700)	(60,400)	(80,700)	(100,800)
Finance and IT	0	0	0	0
Total	(2,995,200)	(89,900)	(119,900)	(149,900)

3.4 Resource Developments 2009/10

Following discussions with the Leader the Resource Developments for Capital detailed below are recommended to Cabinet for approval. These represent schemes scoring 25 points and above using the Council's approved methodology. In light of the overall financial position and the need to reduce net revenue expenditure significantly in order to achieve a balanced budget over time, there are no Revenue Resource Developments included in the budget proposal for 2009/10 and the MTFP, at paragraph 4 below, also assumes no future ongoing revenue development bids.

Capital Resource Developments 2009/10 (25 points and above)

Ref	DESCRIPTION	2009/10 Net Capital Bid	2010/11 Net Capital Bid	2011/12 Net Capital Bid	TOTAL SCORE
		£	£	£	
LC10	Midland Wood Site Improvements	50,000	0	0	43
LC17	Richard Herrod LC Roof	100,000	0	0	34
	TOTAL BIDS 25 POINTS AND ABOVE	150,000	0	0	

The full summary of Capital development bid scores is attached at Appendix 2 for information.

3.5 Capital Programme Financing 2009/10 – 2013/14

The MTFP, at paragraph 4 below, incorporates the revenue effects of a significantly reduced capital programme, assuming only £150,000 of resource development bids per annum. The restricted capital programme results from lower capital receipts being available, due to the uncertainty of the Teal Close land disposal, which in turn has resulted in additional prudential borrowing being required to fund the basic programme, the revenue effects of which are incorporated in the MTFP.

The proposed General Fund Capital Programme, attached at Appendix 3, includes the development bids scoring 25 points and over for 2009/10 and identifies the potential borrowing and capital receipt generation which will be required to balance the financing of the future programme.

The level of borrowing for both base and anticipated growth requirements included in the estimates is an average of £1.3 million per annum over the 5 year planning cycle of the MTFP. This level of borrowing has been assessed in accordance with the Prudential Code and is judged to be within prudent limits and affordable in terms of revenue consequences of the borrowing, i.e. interest and set aside of principal, subject to a balanced revenue budget being achieved as detailed in paragraph 4 below. A report on the Prudential Code Indicators will be submitted to Council in February 2009.

4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN SUMMARY 2009/10 – 2013/14

4.1 The table below presents the latest MTFP and incorporates income inflation (excluding DNA) assumed at 3%, Council Tax increase assumed at 3% per annum, and the impact of budget pressures, efficiency savings and the impact of resource developments as detailed in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4 and 3.5 above.

4.2 The projected level of General Fund balances is also given, together with the minimum “desirable” balance based on 7.5% of total expenditure. It can be seen that on the current assumptions, balances are likely to be below the minimum level from 2010/11 and further ongoing cashable efficiency savings will be needed if service cuts are to be avoided.

	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £
Budget assuming 3% income inflation	16,617,900	16,629,400	16,838,800	17,135,600	17,471,000
Assumed revenue development bids	0	0	0	0	0
Energy Efficiency Initiatives	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
Payroll Reductions	(200,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(200,000)	(50,000)
Projected Budget	16,392,900	16,304,400	16,513,800	16,910,600	17,396,000
Use of Balances in above	(1,876,918)	(1,454,985)	(1,273,077)	(1,268,044)	(1,340,562)
Projected year-end GF Balances	*1,493,391	160,905	(1,089,671)	(2,335,215)	(3,653,277)
Minimum Balance	1,229,500	1,222,800	1,238,500	1,268,500	1,304,700
(Surplus)/Deficit	(263,891)	1,061,895	2,328,171	3,603,515	4,957,977

* Assumes transfer of the final HRA balance to the General Fund, in the order of £1.5m.

4.3 The table above shows that, unless corrective action is taken, there would be a general trend of using General Fund balances to support ongoing expenditure. This is not a sustainable position, and would be the result of an imbalance between day-to-day income and expenditure. This imbalance can only be resolved by one or more of the following actions:

- Increasing fees and charges above 3%
- Introducing new fees and charges
- Increasing Council Tax by more than 3%
- Adjustment to Service Provision
- Generating significant efficiency savings which result in actual budget reductions

Some specific ideas for resolving the budget imbalance are detailed at paragraph 4.5 below for consideration.

4.4 **Budget Consultation**

The Council undertook a budget consultation exercise in November 2008.

The consultation took the form of a questionnaire circulated to all Borough households with the winter edition of "Contacts" magazine. Residents were also given the option of completing the questionnaire on line.

The questionnaire explained the Council's budgetary position in the light of the difficult national and international financial climate. It asked residents to express a preference from three options on how the Council might best close its budget gap. Those options were: -

- Make substantial cuts to services
- Substantially increase our share of Council Tax over and above inflation
- Introduce charging at shoppers' car parks.

3,042 replies were received by the response date of 12 December 2008. This is a response rate of just over 6%. The margin of error on response of this size is +/- 1.8% (most government surveys require a response size of 1,100, on which the margin of error is around +/- 3%). The results therefore have a high degree of statistical reliability.

Results have been analysed and overall results are shown below. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number (hence do not total 100%).

To fill the budget gap, the Council should: -	Raw data	Weighted data*
Make substantial cuts to services	23%	24%
Substantially increase our share of Council Tax over and above inflation	5%	4%
Introduce charging at shoppers car parks	64%	63%

* Responses received were skewed towards older residents. Weighting the data allows for the views of different age groups to be considered on a like-for-like basis. The fact that there is so little difference between weighted and unweighted results suggests that the overall result gives a fair picture of views across all age ranges.

More detailed analysis of results by age group, gender, location and ethnicity has also been carried out.

It shows very little difference in views between age group, though older people (aged 65+) are slightly less likely to support substantial service cuts and more likely to support introduction of car park charging. By gender, there is a significant difference between the views of men and women – men are more likely to support service cuts (29%, compared to 23% for the whole sample), and less likely to support car park charging (56% compared to 64% overall). Women are more likely to support car park charging (74% compared to 64% overall) and less likely to support service cuts (15% compared to 23% overall).

By area, support for car park charging is highest in Bestwood Village (80%) and lowest in Burton Joyce/Calverton and Woodborough (59%) but is typically between 61% and 68% in urban parts of the Borough.

By ethnicity, Black and Minority ethnic respondents are noticeably less supportive of car park charging (49%) and more supportive of service cuts (36%) but the sample size is much smaller, so the margin of error is much greater (+/- 14%).

Opportunity was taken to assess the views of car owners and non-car owners. Amongst car owners, 63% supported car park charging and 23% supported service cuts – amongst non-car owners, these figures were 74% and 14% respectively. This shows that, while non-car owners were more supportive of car park charging than car owners, support for charging amongst car owners was broadly similar to levels of support for this measure amongst the sample as a whole.

Residents were also given the option of suggesting which services might be cut back, and of making other suggestions to fill the gap. 871 respondents took the opportunity to make suggestions for savings/service cuts. The three highest responses by some margin were: -

- Leisure Centres – 146 responses
- Look at staff expenditure – 108 responses
- Weekly summer waste collection – 100 responses

4.5 Budget Reduction Proposals

In order to achieve a sustainable budget position in the future it will be necessary to secure further budget reductions/efficiencies in the region of £800,000-£900,000 per annum, over and above those already included in the base budget, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 above.

A list of possibilities for budget reductions, which includes new/increased fees and charges and other potential areas of adjustment, is detailed in Appendix 4 for Members' consideration.

5. Performance Indicators and Wider Performance Matters

The Council is in the middle of a fundamental review of its performance management arrangements, to include the introduction of a new performance management system. This is a key improvement task for 2008/09, given added impetus by CPA findings, where aspects of performance management were identified as an area for improvement.

Part of that review includes introduction of an amended service planning process, aligned more closely to Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. As the new Sustainable Community Strategy was only adopted by Council in December 2008, work on the new service planning process is still in progress.

Vision and Service Priorities for each department have been developed and targets for many national and local performance indicators for 2009/10 were agreed by Council in June 2008 (for other performance indicators, baselines are being set during 2008/09 to inform target setting later in 2009). These will form the basis of performance management for the year ahead, though targets may be subject of further review in June 2009 once current year outturn results are gathered.

Vision and Service priorities and performance indicator targets for all departments are attached at Appendix 5.

Further work to complete departmental Service Plans will be progressed over the next few weeks with a view to their inclusion in the Budget/Service Plan report for Cabinet consideration in February 2009.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet approve the above budget information for forwarding to Policy Review Scrutiny Committee for consultation.

That Cabinet approve a 3% income inflation increase for the individual portfolios as shown in the table at paragraph 3.3.

Comments on other aspects of the budget and performance management are also welcomed.

BASE BUDGET 2009/10

1. Central Government Funding

The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2009/10 shows an additional cash allocation of £173,100 or 1.94%. In addition to this specific government departments have announced other revenue monies that are to be made available. In all cases these amounts are provisional and/or represent Officers best assessments of likely resource to be allocated to this Council.

2. Major Budget Indices

i. Pay

An estimated pay award of 2.5% has been included in the 2009/10 base budget which equates to £338,900. In the medium term financial plan, 2% has been included for 2010/11 and subsequent years.

ii. Pensions

During 2007/08 the pension fund Actuary completed a tri-annual review of the pension fund, resulting in the employer's contribution rate of 17.6%, which applies for the 3 years 2008/09-2010/11.

iii. Inflation

In the majority of cases budgets have been capped to the previous year's level. Inflation has only been applied to supplies and services budgets where there is a contractual obligation to do so.

iv. Fees and charges

Discretionary fees and charges have been increased by 3% in the MTFP although specific charges will be at the discretion of individual portfolio holders provided that the overall level of increase is achieved. Changes in expected volumes of customers, both upwards and downward have also been anticipated, again in line with market expectations

CAPITAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT BIDS 2009/10

Ref	DESCRIPTION	2009/10 Net Capital Bid	2010/11 Net Capital Bid	2011/12 Net Capital Bid	TOTAL SCORE
		£	£	£	
LC10	Midland Wood Site Improvements	50,000	0	0	43
LC17	Richard Herrod LC Roof	100,000	0	0	34
	TOTAL BIDS 25 POINTS AND ABOVE	150,000	0	0	
LC14	Teal Close Improvements	15,000	0	0	21
LC1	Reinstate King George V, Arnold	152,000	200,000	25,000	16
LC4	Colwick Recreation Ground Play Area Refurb.	100,000	0	0	16
LC8	Albert Avenue Play Area	5,000	75,000	0	16
LC12	Arno Vale Play Area Refurbishment	5,000	95,000	30,000	16
LC13	Burton Road Provision of Facilities	5,000	136,700	100,000	16
LC21	ALC - Replace pipework under the pool	19,700	0	0	15
LC27	Redhill - Changing Rooms	39,000	0	0	15
DC2	Renew Play Equipment	15,000	15,000	15,000	14
DC5	Appletree Lane Reinstatement Works	20,000	0	0	14
P&EC1	DFG to make up shortfall from LSVT	108,000	80,000	50,000	9
LC9	Hobbocks Improvements	25,000	25,000	0	8
LC28	Community Centre UPVC Windows	40,000	0	0	8
LC25	Carlton Forum Steam & Sauna	35,000	0	0	6
LC15	Japanese Garden at Bestwood Country Park (Investigation/Renovation)	35,000	0	0	4
LC16	Haywood Rd Community Centre Refurbishment	60,000	45,000	0	4
LC26	Redhill - Car Park Extension	15,000	0	0	1
LC24	CF Full External Upgrade/redecorate	27,500	0	0	0
	TOTAL BIDS 25 POINTS AND BELOW	721,200	671,700	220,000	
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL BIDS	871,200	671,700	220,000	

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY CAPITAL ESTIMATE 2009/10-2013/14

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	£	£	£	£	£
<u>ESTIMATED PROGRAMME</u>					
Schemes Deferred from 2007/08 & 2008/09	858,900	-	-	-	-
Ongoing Schemes	763,100	763,100	763,100	763,000	763,000
Replacement Vehicles	586,000	648,000	898,000	765,000	765,000
Replacement Equipment	12,000	150,000	145,000	145,000	150,000
Asset Management Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Ongoing Schemes 2007/08 & 2008/09 Bids	506,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	5,000
Recommended Resource Developments 09/10	150,000	-	-	-	-
Future Resource Development Bids	-	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Acquisition of Cemetery Land	-	-	-	350,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,076,000	1,921,100	2,166,100	2,383,000	2,033,000
<u>ESTIMATED FINANCING AVAILABLE</u>					
Usable Capital Receipts B/fwd	(1,026,000)	-	-	-	-
In Year Usable Receipts	(355,000)	(355,100)	(355,100)	(355,000)	(355,000)
Borrowing/Leasing	(1,216,000)	(1,127,000)	(1,372,000)	(1,589,000)	(1,239,000)
<u>Grants & Contributions</u>					
SCG for Disabled Facilities Grants	(240,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)
Regional Housing Board - Renewal Grants	(199,000)	(199,000)	(199,000)	(199,000)	(199,000)
NCC Contribution	(40,000)				
TOTAL AVAILABLE FINANCING	(3,076,000)	(1,921,100)	(2,166,100)	(2,383,000)	(2,033,000)

DRAFT DETAILED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10-2011/12

SCHEME DESCRIPTION	Ref	CAPITAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
		£	£	£
<u>DIRECT SERVICES</u>				
DDA Compliance Works	2005/06	31,000	0	0
Safety Surface Renewal	Ongoing	26,000	26,000	26,000
Trade Recycling Bins	2008/09	10,000	5,000	5,000
Replacement Vehicles	Ongoing	586,000	648,000	898,000
Total Direct Services		653,000	679,000	929,000
<u>LEISURE SERVICES</u>				
Bigwood School Community Sports Facility	2007/08	300,000	0	0
Replacement of Artificial Cricket Wickets	2007/08	10,000	0	0
Monument Repairs	2007/08	10,000	5,000	5,000
Redhill Leisure Centre All Weather Pitch Replacement	2008/09	145,000	0	0
Queensbower ball Court and Play Area	Slip 08/09	225,000	0	0
Community Centre Boiler Replacement Programme	Replace Equip	12,000	0	0
Midland Wood Site Improvements	LC10	50,000	0	0
Richard Herrod Leisure Centre Roof	LC17	100,000	0	0
Total Leisure Services		852,000	5,000	5,000
<u>PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT</u>				
Relocation of Shopmobility	Slip 07/08	50,000	0	0
Total Planning and Environment		50,000	0	0
<u>CORPORATE SERVICES</u>				
Aid to Parishes	2004/05	57,100	57,100	57,100
Customer Relationships Management System	05/06/Slip 07/08	300,000	0	0
Document Management	Slip 07/08	269,400	0	0
Citizen Access Facilities	Slip 07/08	14,500	0	0
Asset Management Fund	2008/09	200,000	200,000	200,000
Total Corporate Services		841,000	257,100	257,100
<u>HOUSING GENERAL FUND</u>				
Private Sector Improvement Grants	2004/05	680,000	680,000	680,000
Total Housing General Fund		680,000	680,000	680,000
Future Equipment Replacement			150,000	145,000
Future Service Development Bids			150,000	150,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME		3,076,000	1,921,100	2,166,100

Potential Areas for Budget Reduction

	£
<u>Proposals for Additional Fees and Charges:</u>	
Car Park Charging (<i>actual amount generated dependant upon charging levels introduced</i>)	(300,000)-(900,000)
Pre Planning Advice	(14,000)
Increase Garden Waste 6.6% above inflation	(12,000)
Increase Bulky Waste fee 25% above inflation	(7,000)
	(333,000)-(933,000)
<u>Proposals of Potential Areas for Adjustment:</u>	
Reduced expenditure on Contacts Magazine	(8,000)
Reduce Revenue Parish Aid by 10%	(20,000)
Reduce Grant Aid to Voluntary Sector by 10%	(35,000)
Close Calverton Leisure Centre	(180,000)
Close Arnold Leisure Centre	(365,000)
Reduce Base Maintenance by 10%	(25,000)
Reduce Summer Refuse Collection to 2 months	(50,000)
Reduce Number of Neighbourhood Wardens	(25,000)
Reduce Funds/Pots:	
Members Pot (£50,000)	(25,000)
Crime and Community (37,900)	(15,000)
Youth Development (£50,000)	(10,000)
Close Cemetery Lodge Office	(27,000)
Discontinue Twinning Visits	(12,000)
Discontinue Xmas Lights Switch On Events	(10,000)
Reduce Gedling Show	(10,000)
Increase GTP efficiency savings	(15,000)
Discontinue NCC Agency Work re Grass Cutting	(40,000)
Various Parks and Street Care Reductions	(0)-(100,000)
Increase Payroll Reductions per annum	(50,000)
	(922,000)-(1,022,000)
<u>Potential Medium Term Adjustments:</u>	
Remove Creche Facilities at Leisure Centres	(40,000)
Reduce Opening Hours at Leisure Centres	(20,000)
	(60,000)

Vision and Service Priorities

Corporate Services

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

The Corporate Services vision is for a department that: -

- Has a comprehensive, over-arching understanding of the use of the Borough's resources and how these may best be used within the national, regional and sub-regional agendas.
- Uses these resources in the most effective way to enhance performance and increase productivity while fulfilling the national and local efficiency requirements.
- Manages the deployment of those resources to provide robust and resilient support for all departments to enable the Council to fulfil its transformational programme in line with the Council's vision.
- Constantly strives for technical and professional excellence in the delivery of crosscutting core services.
- Delivers viable and all-embracing financial strategies for the short, medium and long term that will support any future plans of the Council.
- Understands how best to employ partnership and shared working with both the public and private sectors in order to provide the required efficiencies.
- Provides innovative procurement to secure better use of the Council's resources.
- Demonstrates the ability to exploit information technology to the best advantage of the Council.

Service Purpose

- To provide the best use of resources in delivering the following key services that will underpin and support the Council's future plans:
 - Accountancy
 - Exchequer
 - Revenues and Benefits
 - Information Technology
 - Telephony
 - Reprographics

- Procurement
 - Health and Safety
 - Estates and Asset Management
 - Audit
- To promote and deliver the council's principal functions of financial management, efficiency gains and performance management.
 - To support the transformation of the Council's services by ensuring that the services to the customer are delivered in the most cost-effective way and are supported by properly engineered processes, procedures and working practices that successfully integrate the front and back offices.

Service Objectives

- To guide and inform the Council and its partners' decision making by: -
 - The provision of timely, accurate and reliable financial information, guidance and advice, both operational and strategic, that informs the best resource prioritisation, allocation and service delivery.
 - The development of short, medium and long-term financial plans that are timely, fit for purpose and reflective of council and partner priorities.
 - Supporting all core corporate services to the best effect providing a robust base from which members and management are better able to define their expression of vision and priorities.
- To ensure the Council and its partners are able to assess the effectiveness of their actions to address priorities through the development and management of corporate performance management approaches and by supporting members and managers with their implementation.
- To ensure that the Council and its partners' aspirations, achievements and activities are recognised and understood by stakeholders through the provision of effective corporate services.
- To facilitate corporate and partnership improvement by: -
 - Supporting all activity associated with corporate external inspection programmes
 - Developing and monitoring performance against the National and local performance indicators.

Vision and Service Priorities

Customer Services and Organisational Development

Service Vision and Objectives

Our vision is for a Department that...

- Provides excellent services to our customers (whether internal or external), that meet their needs, that are efficient and easy to use and are appreciated
- Seeks feedback and listens to customers so we can improve what we do, change services to meet what customers want and treat people as individuals
- Is flexible in the way we work, supporting each other in our teams, how we work across teams, being open to challenge, and taking a creative approach to problem solving
- Encourages individual responsibility for high quality service delivery, performance and meeting customer needs
- Understands the vision for the Council and provides people management strategies and operational support to deliver this
- Understands the priority for excellent customer service for the council and provides strategies to promote this and operational support to achieve this

Service Purpose

- To provide the first point of contact for customers either face to face through the One Stop or by telephone through the Contact Centre or for cashiering services
- To deliver the most comprehensive customer advice, information and services
- To develop and maintain the website as an effective channel for delivering services
- To assess need and provide temporary accommodation for people who are homeless, and to subsequently move them to suitable social housing provision
- To develop a Housing Allocations Policy which reflects the Council's role in ensuring adequate social housing for people in housing need, to make determinations of need against this policy and work with Social Landlords to successfully nominate people to rented accommodation
- To provide operational people management services in recruitment, selection, terms of employment and all employment relationship matters, including responding to legislative requirements to provide the best people resources to deliver our services

- To provide an employee welfare support service, advising on sickness and absence management, proactively working with managers to secure effective attendance
- To provide a learning and development service which responds to organisational and individual development needs
- To lead on, and co-ordinate the Council's commitment to ensure equality in employment and service delivery
- To lead on and co-ordinate on-going liP accreditation and improvement

Service Objectives

- To improve the customer experience by developing all access channels, eg telephony, website, face to face
- To understand our customers, ensure there is equality in service provision, track satisfaction, to identify and implement programmes of improvement
- To develop the Council's website to maximise the services available electronically, and to implement a strategy to encourage customers to use this
- To resolve cases of homelessness in a timely way
- To manage the Council's retained housing provision, including the Hostel, ensuring rent and service charge payments are collected in full, properties are maintained and liaising with Housing Benefits to maximise income
- To nominate people on the Housing Register to accommodation with Social Landlords to meet their needs, developing positive relationships with RSLs and working with Housing Strategy to ensure provision of suitable housing throughout the Borough.
- To develop employment policies and strategies to reflect good practice, changes in legislation and organisational requirements
- To provide a recruitment and selection service, advertising posts, administering the process and providing advice on selection
- To provide advice on the full range of people management activities to both managers and employees to aid their decision making
- To carry out consultation and negotiation with Trade Unions on all relevant matters
- To deliver and source training and learning events, to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate training activities in meeting the Council's priorities

Vision and Service Priorities

Democratic and Community Services

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

Our vision is for a department that:

- Has a positive and innovative approach to engagement with communities within the Borough.
- Is integrated into the processes between our partners, the members of the Council, our communities and service providers to meet the needs of residents within the Borough.
- Supports the Council's principled approach to its civic and corporate responsibilities whilst applying a pragmatic and value driven attitude to problem solving.

Service Purpose

- To be a focus for the aspirations of local communities and to work with them and our partners to deliver them.
- To encourage and promote democratic and participative decision making .
- To support members of the Council in their role as community advocate and representative.
- To ensure probity and high standards in the conduct of the Council's business.
- To ensure access to the democratic process and its supporting structures.

Service Objectives

- To build on existing area based initiatives and other community engagement work.
- To facilitate the Council's activity in:
 - building and shaping local identity
 - representing the community
 - regulating harmful and disruptive behaviour
 - maintaining the cohesiveness of the community
 - understanding local needs and preferences
 - making sure that the right services are provided to local people
 - working with partners to respond to complex challenges.
- To provide effective and efficiently delivered legal advice to officers and members of the Council.
- To provide accessible and efficient processes for electoral registration and for voting.
- To provide capacity building opportunities for members and to support the democratic decision-making process.

Vision and Service Priorities

Direct Services

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

A department that:-

- Has the capability for consistently producing best in class in terms of time, cost and quality outcomes. Is second to none in responsiveness and efficiency and takes pride in achieving the highest possible standard of street cleanliness and parks maintenance.
- Has an enviable reputation for efficiency and use of resources, which continues to devise, and use innovative techniques to further improve services.
- Is flexible in service delivery by developing tailored services and creates value added services for specific communities and customer groupings.
- Enables changes that result in individual development as well as a higher quality service delivery. Through the development of people our aspiration is to provide excellent standards of service.
- Takes appropriate action to enhance the environment for future generations by making best use of available resources in maintaining, conserving and developing built and natural features.
- Will strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones in other service areas by concentrating on activities, which are of real benefit to the community and customer groupings.
- Is passionate about delivering services in a safe manner that does not put the public or our own staff at risk from serious injury.
- Promotes creativity, pride and self-satisfaction within the workforce that ultimately improves quality of service and therefore, results in the department being recognised as one of the best in the country.

Service Purpose

- To make a significant contribution to the health and well being of the borough residents by collecting waste and fly tipped materials in a responsive and efficient manner.

- To listen, understand and encourage views and respond to any suggestions. Through communication links with our customers and our own staff, we will be creative in adapting flexible services to meet their expectations.
- To make a significant contribution to the appearance of the borough including open spaces that can be used, clean roads and footpaths that attract shoppers to the shopping areas and well-maintained parks.
- To tackle all graffiti in a timely manner and remove offensive or racist graffiti as soon as practicable.
- To provide facilities that are safe for users with regular inspections including children's play areas and regular maintenance of public buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- To work with our partners to ensure public safety in our parks and shopping areas through CCTV, also ensuring car parking is readily available to the users (both on street and off street parking).
- To work with the community on waste and other environmental issues including school children, focus groups and charity organisations, promoting and encouraging a strong and prosperous community developed through the neighbourhood officer programme.
- To promote waste minimisation and provide facilities to recycle materials, promote energy efficiency and all other green initiatives including those that help to reduce the carbon footprint.

Service Objectives

- To be highly regarded by the residents of the borough for its actions and performance through regular customer satisfaction surveys and to also be regarded as one of the best service providers nationally when measured in accordance with national indicators.
- To achieve another national award for one or more of the services undertaken by the department.
- To contribute to the Council's overall performance by ensuring high standards of work, above customer expectation and thus maintaining the Council's good reputation.
- To provide other departments with advice on new developments, and to respond to consultations with regard to new dwellings, land drainage, waste management and highway related issues.
- To regularly inform residents of waste reduction initiatives and alternative facilities for disposing of recycling materials. To advise householders of what they should expect

from there refuse collection service with no complicated rules or strict enforcement, rubbish collected when the Council says it will be collected and schemes that suit every type of dwelling. The service should not provide any risk to the health of the public.

- Provide other waste collection services at very affordable prices and where possible, divert these waste streams from landfill working in partnership with the Waste Disposal Authority and other key partners. Through publicity and promotional activities raise the awareness of waste minimisation and increase the participation on other waste collection services.
- To ensure the area is attractive for residents and visitors by; -
 1. Maintaining a high level of street cleansing and street washing in the shopping areas.
 2. Maintaining street furniture in the shopping areas to a high standard with regular painting and an annual replacement programme.
 3. Providing quality plants in shrub beds, raised planters, hanging baskets, and flower towers.
 4. Removing graffiti and fly tipping as soon as practicable
 5. Ensuring litter bins and dog bins are emptied regularly
 6. Providing well-maintained parks and open spaces increasing the number of parks receiving the green flag award by at least 1 per annum in partnership with Leisure Services.
 7. Removing abandoned vehicles as soon as practicable
- To ensure the area is safe for residents and visitors by: -
 1. Regular inspections of children's play areas to inspect equipment and carry out any remedial works in a timely manner.
 2. Removal of hazardous fly tipped materials as soon as practicable
 3. Removal of needles and other sharps as soon as practicable
 4. Regular inspections of the Council's land and buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose by taking appropriate and timely actions to rectify any problems
 5. Regular inspections of trees, walls and fences to identify, rectify and therefore reduce any potential dangers to the public
 6. Immediate response to any civil emergency within the borough.
- To work with neighbouring Councils to maximise efficiency savings, enhance service provision, meet statutory and other local targets by delivering low cost, very efficient and effective frontline services that meet customer expectations. Value for money and continuous improvement are the key drivers within the department.
- To work with our local businesses on; -
 1. Reducing the amount of commercial waste sent to landfill
 2. Ensuring sufficient car parking is available for customers in both our car parks and on street parking.
 3. Improving the appearance of the borough

- To develop the workforce to ensure they are capable of performing to the required standard including training in new skills as appropriate and regular refresher training on health and safety awareness and other safety issues. To ensure that all employees are treated fairly and that all policies on workforce relations and equalities are adhered too.
- To provide the workforce with the latest equipment and technology in order to carry out each task efficiently, effectively and safely. Regularly reviewing procedures, working methods and risk assessments.
- To develop the department to meet the future needs of the residents by developing close working relationships with neighbourhood officers and the customer services department.

Vision and Service Priorities

Leisure Services

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

Our vision is for a department that: -

- Has a comprehensive understanding of the Borough's Vision and Priorities and how these fit with the National, regional and sub-regional agendas.
- Reflects this information in strategy and policy planning.
- Works closely in partnerships to deliver accessible services and facilities.
- Increases community participation in sport and physical activity.
- Contributes to making Gedling safer.
- Contributes to improvement in the health of our residents.

Service Purpose

- To deliver Gedling's Cultural Strategy.
- To deliver, with our partners, the Making Play Matter and Gedling Sports and Physical Activity Strategies.
- To provide indoor and outdoor leisure/community and recreational facilities.
- To support and enable the voluntary sector in the delivery of sport and cultural activities.

Service Objectives

- To provide a range of facilities that deliver innovative activities and programmes to meet the needs of the community.
- To provide, annually, events that bring together the community.
- To develop links between voluntary groups and the Boroughs twin towns.

- To support tourism development.
- To increase participation in the Arts, Play, Sports and Physical Activity.
- To ensure that quality leisure and community facilities are managed in the most cost-effective manner whilst providing the best possible standards of customer care.
- To provide the best possible information on leisure activities.
- To provide land for burial and quiet areas for remembrance.
- To provide a safe and secure environment within which to enjoy leisure activities.
- To deliver a range of activities and facilities through partnership working that has a positive effect on: -
 - Healthy living
 - Community safety and activity
 - Lifelong learning
 - The local Environment
 - Social inclusion

Topic areas currently within the remit of the department

Leisure Centres	Urban Parks and Open Spaces
Community Centres	Allotments
Sports Development	Cemeteries
Town twinning	Arts
Country Parks	Tourism
Health & Wellbeing	Events
Play	

Vision and Service Priorities

Planning & Environment

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

The Planning & Environment vision is for a department that:-

- Has a comprehensive, over-arching understanding of the promotion and control of development, the environment and public health within the Borough.
- Uses this to achieve high quality development resulting in a sustainable environment in accordance with national and local policies.
- Acts pro-actively, across all its services, to protect and improve the environment and the health, safety and welfare of the people of the Borough.
- Works actively to reduce anti-social behaviour and environmental crime within the Borough.
- Manages its resources to provide robust and resilient services for all users.
- Constantly strives for technical and professional excellence in the delivery of core services.
- Promotes the understanding and appreciation of high quality sustainable development.
- Delivers consistent and viable financial management.
- Responds in a timely and appropriate manner to all service requests.
- Introduces innovative performance initiatives to improve service performance and produce better use of the Council's resources.
- Seeks to secure the most efficient and effective use of information and communication technology to the best advantage of the Council's services.
- Promotes the consideration of sustainability implications in all Council decision making and promotes the Council's role as an exemplary sustainable organisation.

Service Purpose

To provide the following key services that constitute the regulatory and environment services, which implement the Council's corporate vision and adopted policies:-

- Development Control
- Building Control
- Environmental Protection
- Food and Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare
- Licensing
- Private Sector Housing
- Local Land Charges
- Strategic Climate Change Management
- Community Protection

To efficiently and effectively promote and deliver the Council's statutory regulatory functions.

To provide an investigative and visible presence within the community to help combat anti-social behaviour, environmental crime and fear of crime.

To promote and deliver development in a sustainable manner.

To promote good quality development and design throughout the borough

To support the transformation of the Council's services by ensuring that the services to the customer are delivered in the most cost-effective way.

To protect and enhance the health, safety and welfare of the people of the Borough.

To ensure compliance with regulatory objectives.

To provide corporate GIS and spatial data services.

Service Objectives

To achieve good quality sustainable development throughout the Borough through integrated service delivery, the effective allocation of resources and achieving performance targets.

To provide timely and consistent advice on development and environment issues to promote the informed decision making and the quality of outcome achieved.

To promote awareness of sustainability issues through the development process.

To achieve performance consistent with all national and local performance indicators.

To enhance the quality of public health, and reduce inequalities in public health throughout the Borough through the co-ordination of services.

To ensure the Council is able to understand the implications of the implementation of its decision making in the light of national and local policy.

To ensure that the Council's vision and objectives are understood and achieved through the provision of effective services.

To facilitate corporate and partnership improvement by:-

Seeking opportunities for joint working and improvement in partnership
Monitoring performance against the national and local performance indicators.

Vision and Service Priorities

Strategy and Performance

Vision and Service Objectives

Vision

Our vision is for a department that: -

- Has a comprehensive, over-arching understanding of the “State of the Borough”, of the issues it faces and how these fit with the national, regional and sub-regional agendas.
- Deploys this information to inform strategy and policy planning; translating it into coherent, overarching and consistent interrelated strategies that steer the future of the Borough in its widest sense.
- Understands the effectiveness of council and partner activity and the factors that influence this.
- Identifies and delivers key messages that matter to the public, members, employees, the media and stakeholders, articulating those messages confidently, pro-actively and in styles and media appropriate to the audience.
- Demonstrates absolute integrity and political sensitivity in fulfilling its roles.

Service Purpose

- To promote and deliver the Council’s principal functions of strategic policy, communications and performance.
- To bring about the greatest possible co-ordination between community planning, spatial planning and strategic housing planning, through which the department will inform decision-making of the Council and its partners and facilitate assessment of the effectiveness of council and partner actions.
- To promote, facilitate and deliver effective communication of the Council’s and its partner’s priorities and actions.

Service Objectives

- To guide and inform the Council and its partners' strategic decision making by: -
 - Provision of timely, accurate and reliable strategic guidance and advice that informs prioritisation, resource allocation and delivery.
 - Development of key strategic plans (including, but not exclusively, the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Strategic Corporate Plan, the Housing Strategy and component parts of the Local Development Framework) that are timely, fit for purpose and reflective of council and partner priorities.
 - Supporting members and management with the definition and expression of vision and priorities and with the management of their delivery.
 - Commissioning and/or delivering research, and gathering and analysing data to guide strategic development.

- To ensure the Council and its partners are able to assess the effectiveness of their actions to address priorities through the development and delivery of corporate performance management approaches and by supporting members and managers with their implementation.

- To ensure that the Council and its partners' aspirations, achievements and activities are recognised and understood by local residents, and by stakeholders through the provision of an effective corporate communications service.

- To ensure that the views, perceptions and needs of local residents and stakeholders are obtained and understood through the development and delivery of corporate consultation programmes.

- To facilitate corporate and partnership improvement by: -
 - Supporting all activity associated with corporate external inspection programmes.
 - Developing and monitoring delivery of Improvement Programmes.

- To promote and enable sustainable and inclusive mixed communities by: -
 - Enabling and securing 'Decent Homes' across all tenures.
 - Enabling the development of 'Affordable Housing' that meets the needs and aspirations of the community, is cost effective and incorporates added value.