



South  
Staffordshire  
Council

Portfolio Plan

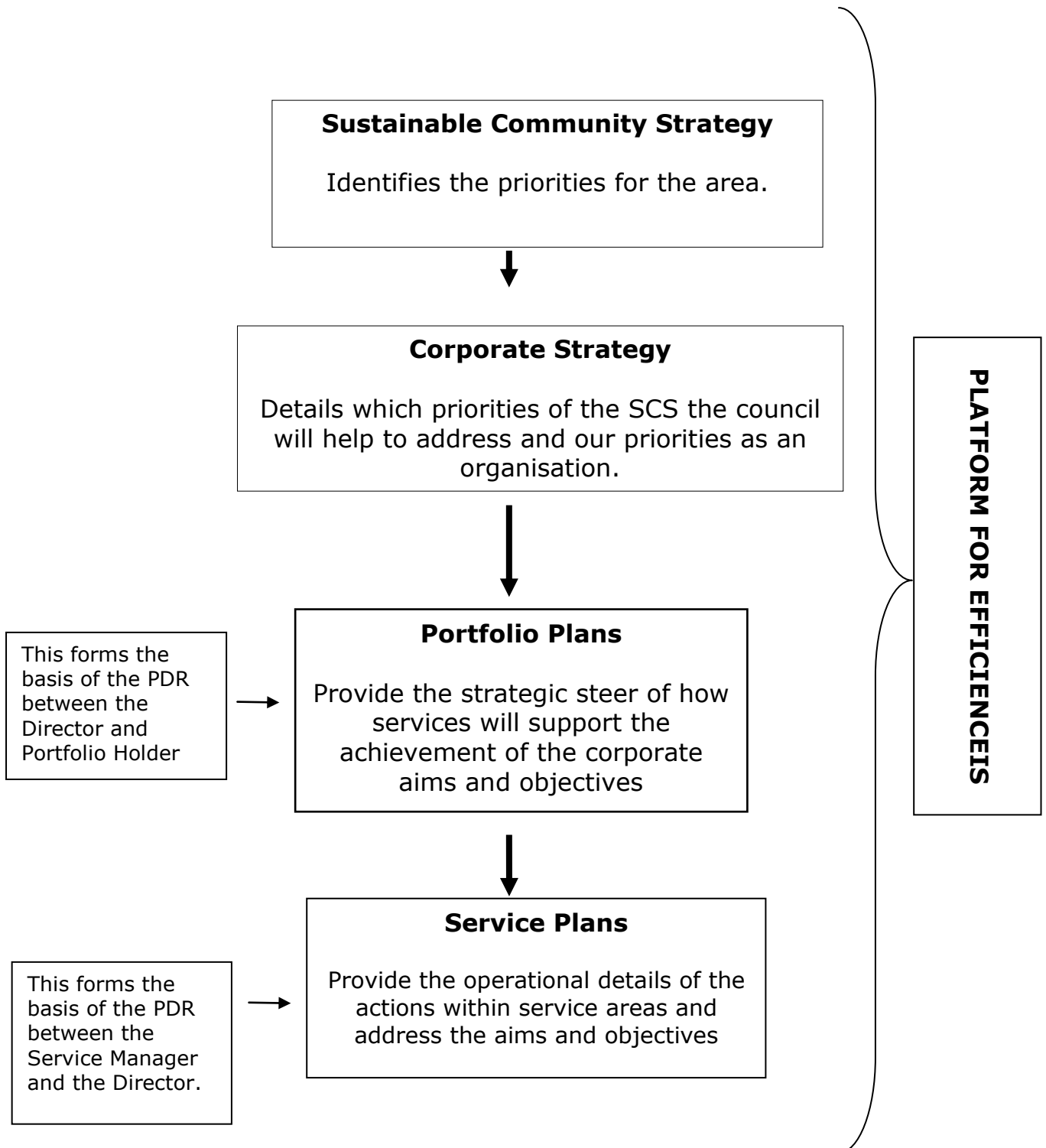
# Public Health Protection Services

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 - March 31<sup>st</sup> 2012



## BACKGROUND:

This plan forms an important part of the golden thread (the link between the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities right through to the actions within individual service plans).



## **Make-Up of Portfolio:**

The Public Health Protection Portfolio was created in August 2010. It covers the following areas of responsibilities:

- Food Hygiene
- Health and Safety (including corporate health and safety)
- Pest Control
- Fly tipping/Dog Fouling
- Nuisances e.g. noise
- Pollution control
- Civil parking Enforcement
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Housing Enforcement
- Legal Services
- Procurement

The Director in charge is David Pattison. Much of the Portfolio's work relates to enforcement. Indeed one strength is that the vast majority of the Council's enforcement functions are now concentrated in one team. The Portfolio whilst including statutory duties in relation to public health protection is very keen to support health promotion and to provide relevant advice to businesses and residents.

### **Focus of the portfolio.**

The Directorate's intended approach is:

- **Focused enforcement - Our enforcement resources will be targeted primarily on activities giving rise to the most serious risks to the environment, health and safety or the public. This will work towards Corporate aims 1 and 2.** Having one team allows resources to be focussed onto priority areas of concern when the need arises including for example protection of the character of the green belt in terms of breach of planning control and reduction of pollution and fly tipping.
- **Any enforcement will be fair, accountable, consistent, proportionate and transparent. This will work towards aims 2, 3, 4 and 5** - The public and businesses should know what approach is likely to be taken in advance and should be kept informed of the steps to be taken. Any step taken should be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm or potential harm caused. Having enforcement concentrated in

one team will allow enforcement approaches to be consistent and standardised, where appropriate.

- **Reduction of burden on business through improved partnership working and more consistent working as a Council - The Directorate should reduce as much as possible the regulatory burden on businesses. This will work towards aims 3, 4 and 5.** Improved working with partners and within the Council is critical and a priority for the Directorate. For example where visits are necessary they are, where possible, jointly carried out or by only one authority and information sharing is improved.
- **Involvement of the public and businesses in the Directorate's approach and policies. This will work towards aims 2, 3 and 5** – the public and those businesses affected by the Directorate's work should be given an opportunity to be involved in the development and implementation of the policies adopted by the Directorate
- **Improved communication. This will work towards aim 5** – Members should be kept informed about the status of any enforcement in their area through regular updates. Members should also be provided with information as to the levels and types of enforcement action taking place. The Directorate will also work on taking a proactive approach so that the public and businesses are educated on areas of concern to try and avoid problems arising such as the current examples of health and safety training for care homes.

## **Priorities for 2011-12**

### **Politics:**

- Communication with elected Members is critical. The portfolio will ensure that Members are regularly updated on developments within the Directorate and kept particularly informed on matters taking place within their ward.
- Members will have training provided on areas where there is a need.

### **Pounds:**

- Reduction in expenditure whilst still ensuring that effective services are provided to businesses and residents
- Exploration of other ways of delivering services at reduced cost to the Authority whilst still ensuring effective services are provided including shared arrangements with other authorities
- Progressing the Council's approach to procurement in order to reduce expenditure on contracts and to secure improved value for money

### **People:**

- Communication and involvement of residents and businesses is critical. Improving on this is a clear priority for the portfolio. One of the key ways of doing this is proactive education.
- Production and Implementation of corporate enforcement policy to ensure consistent effective and proportionate enforcement and reduction of burden on business through reduced level of visits
- Development of locality based enforcement statistics to explore trends or issues specific to each locality to inform more focused delivery of services. This will also allow members, local people and businesses to be kept fully informed on what is happening in their areas
- To engage with businesses and the public regarding satisfaction with the type and delivery of services.

### **Consultation.**

The Portfolio was only created in August 2010 and as such little consultation has taken place to date. A large consultation is taking place shortly on the Council's proposed enforcement policy.

The Council will launch a business section on the Council's [www.myplacemysay.com](http://www.myplacemysay.com) engagement website to give businesses an opportunity to converse remotely with officers and each others on matters affecting them.

## **Planned Efficiencies.**

- Reduction in cost of pest control services by £80,000 in year 11/12 – this is intended to be through two main changes:
  - i) introduction of increased charging for pest control services
  - ii) testing the market for potential outsourcing of pest control services

These two measures will ensure that the Council provides an efficient and cost effective pest control service but at a greatly reduced cost to the taxpayer. In 2009-10 the net cost of providing pest control was £174,000. The costs are expected to reduce by a total of at least £107,000 by 2012/13 (that is an additional £37,000 to that saved in 2011/12).

- Improvement in flexible working across the portfolio to address the likely reduction in level of staff in 2011/12. Since the creation of the portfolio in August 2010 a number of measures have been put in place to improve flexible working across the enforcement teams. The steps have included
  - i) joint authorisations – so that officers are able to assist in all enforcement within the portfolio (save those requiring specialist training)
  - ii) improved training and education of what each responsibility covers including joint visits
  - iii) production of an easy guide to officers to what to look for and who does what
  - iv) cross working on cases for example environmental protection officers assisting planning enforcement in carrying out some site inspections
  - v) mobile working – we have obtained a number of spare IT equipment that allows officers to produce reports in the field. The software to allow this to be saved on the system directly is being updated and should be fully operational by April 2011

This improved flexible working now needs to progress to more visits by one officer addressing several different issues. This will include a joint food/health and safety inspection regime. The two inspections will be combined so that less separate visits are required. There will also be more focused inspection and enforcement action with an emphasis on education and prevention. Steps will be taken to ensure even more close

working with other partners such as trading standards including an evaluation of the recent pilot with Staffordshire County Council of single inspections on certain food establishments by this Council's food officers or trading standards. We are also working on how we can more effectively share information with these partners.

All of these actions will be assisted by work on systems thinking namely ensuring that the services are provided as effectively as possible.

This improved working will ensure that an excellent focused enforcement service will continue to be provided but at a reduced cost to the authority.

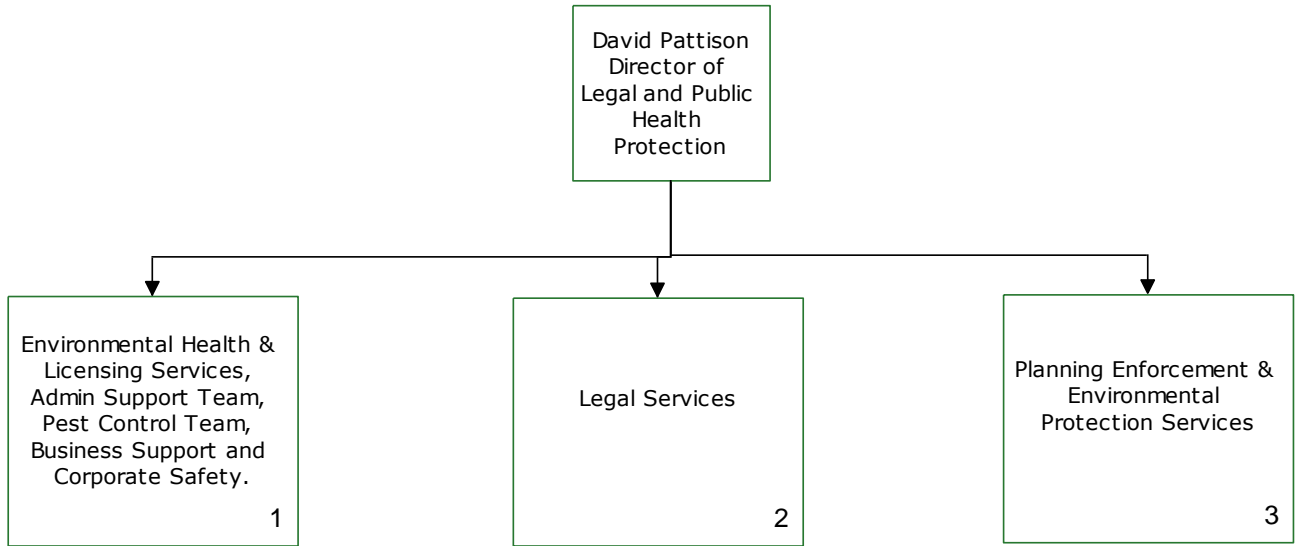
- Shared services – we will continue to explore and consider any appropriate possibilities for shared services and improved working with other partner authorities.

We have already entered into shared services agreements in 2010 in relation to procurement and planning legal services with Staffordshire County Council. We will continue to explore and review the scope for other such agreements.

### **Applicable Portfolio Measures for 2011-12:**

• Percentage of high risk food business (category A and B) inspections undertaken within 28 days of the date programmed for inspection.	95%
• Percentage of businesses programmed for a visit during the year to receive an occupational health and safety intervention in accordance with HSE guidance.	85%
• Number of businesses approaching the Portfolio for advice and attending advisory events with regard to occupational health and safety, food safety and environmental protection issues.	250
• Percentage of requests for service completed within 40 working days.	85%
• NI 182 – Satisfaction of businesses with Regulatory services.	80%
• NI 184 – Number of food businesses broadly compliant.	80%

**Organisation Chart for Public Health Protection Portfolio as at January 2011.**



<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Additional Action Required</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Monitoring Mechanism</b>	<b>Corporate Priority</b>
<b>Reduction in cost of Pest Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instigation of new charging policy</li> <li>• Testing market re provision of service</li> </ul>	Jenny Rhodes	Senior EH officer to assist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging policy in place by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011</li> <li>• Procurement exercise completed by July 2011</li> </ul>	Checking that: a) timescales met b) cost savings realised	5
<b>Reduction in cost of staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in staff numbers preferably through voluntary redundancy and resignations</li> </ul>	David Pattison	Jenny Rhodes	Changes made by January 2012	Checking that: a) timescales met b) cost savings realised	5
<b>Introduction of corporate enforcement policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on draft policy</li> <li>• Consideration of responses</li> <li>• Adoption of policy if appropriate</li> </ul>	David Pattison	Jenny Rhodes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation by April 2011</li> <li>• Adoption by December 2011</li> </ul>	Checking that timescale met	2,5
<b>Improved efficiencies through systems thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the way services carried out to see if they can be carried out in a more customer focused, effective and efficient manner to include exploring how services can be provided on a locality basis</li> </ul>	David Pattison	Whole portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed systems thinking review by December 2011</li> <li>• Full implementation by April 2012</li> </ul>	Checking that timescale met and improvements in working achieved  Ensuring that the burden on business is reduced where possible	5
<b>Explore shared regulatory services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with other authorities within Staffordshire to explore whether regulatory services such as food and health and safety can be provided on a shared basis</li> </ul>	David Pattison	Jenny Rhodes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete investigation of feasibility and benefits by December 2011</li> </ul>	Checking that timescale met	5

## High Level Portfolio Action Plan:

### Risk Update:

Risk No	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Gross Risk	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent Risk	Responsible Officer	Opportunities presented
1	Policies and procedures no longer comply with legal requirements and good practice	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All policies and procedures are currently being reviewed</li> </ul>	4	1	4	Jenny Rhodes Team Leaders	Council is seen as a promoter of good practice
2	Low establishment levels, long term sick leave, or involvement in emergency or long legal cases are difficult to cover	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of training and programme of work to encourage cross working being developed and working with other authorities in Staffordshire to ensure joint warranting</li> </ul>	3	3	9	Jenny Rhodes Team Leaders	Staffing levels are designed to be responsive to new initiatives and to have greater input into service design
3	Major incident at large business within the district having national impact with negative publicity for the authority	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualified competent officers inspect businesses in accordance with scheduled programme</li> <li>Advice offered to businesses where possible.</li> <li>Good working relationship established with local businesses</li> </ul>	1	4	4	Jenny Rhodes Team Leaders	Raise profile of service
4	Businesses struggling economically may fail to meet obligations resulting in increased investigations and enforcement action	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses are encouraged to contact the Service for free advice.</li> <li>Events organized to assist businesses</li> <li>Business newsletter</li> </ul>	2	4	8	Jenny Rhodes Team Leaders	Raise profile of service

5	Failure to meet statutory inspection targets due to reduced staff	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted inspection programme focusing on high risk businesses</li> </ul>	2	3	6	Jenny Rhodes Team Leaders	
6	Failure to meet cost savings for pest control service, eg no provider is able to meet the expected reduced cost levels	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst it is thought that this is unlikely we will need to ensure that we listen carefully to other authorities experience in outsourcing pest control and learn the lessons they have experienced. If this were to be the case then we would need to make a further decision on what to do with the service.</li> </ul>	1	4	4	Jenny Rhodes	Improved efficiency and realisation of savings
7	Potential reduction in people accessing the service and as such increase in rodent activity, and increase in enforcement	3	4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are intending to reduce costs and retain (and even potentially improve) services. The increase in charges will be unpopular, however concessions will be available for some services. Fees will be benchmarked with other authorities.</li> </ul>	2	4	8	Jenny Rhodes	Realisation of savings
8	Failure to successfully implement systems thinking	2	3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement of all staff through working group to ensure ownership of the process</li> </ul>	1	3	3	All	Improved and more effective service delivery

9	Technology failure	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back up procedures and IT support</li> </ul>	1	3	3	IT	
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