



South  
Staffordshire  
Council

Portfolio Plan

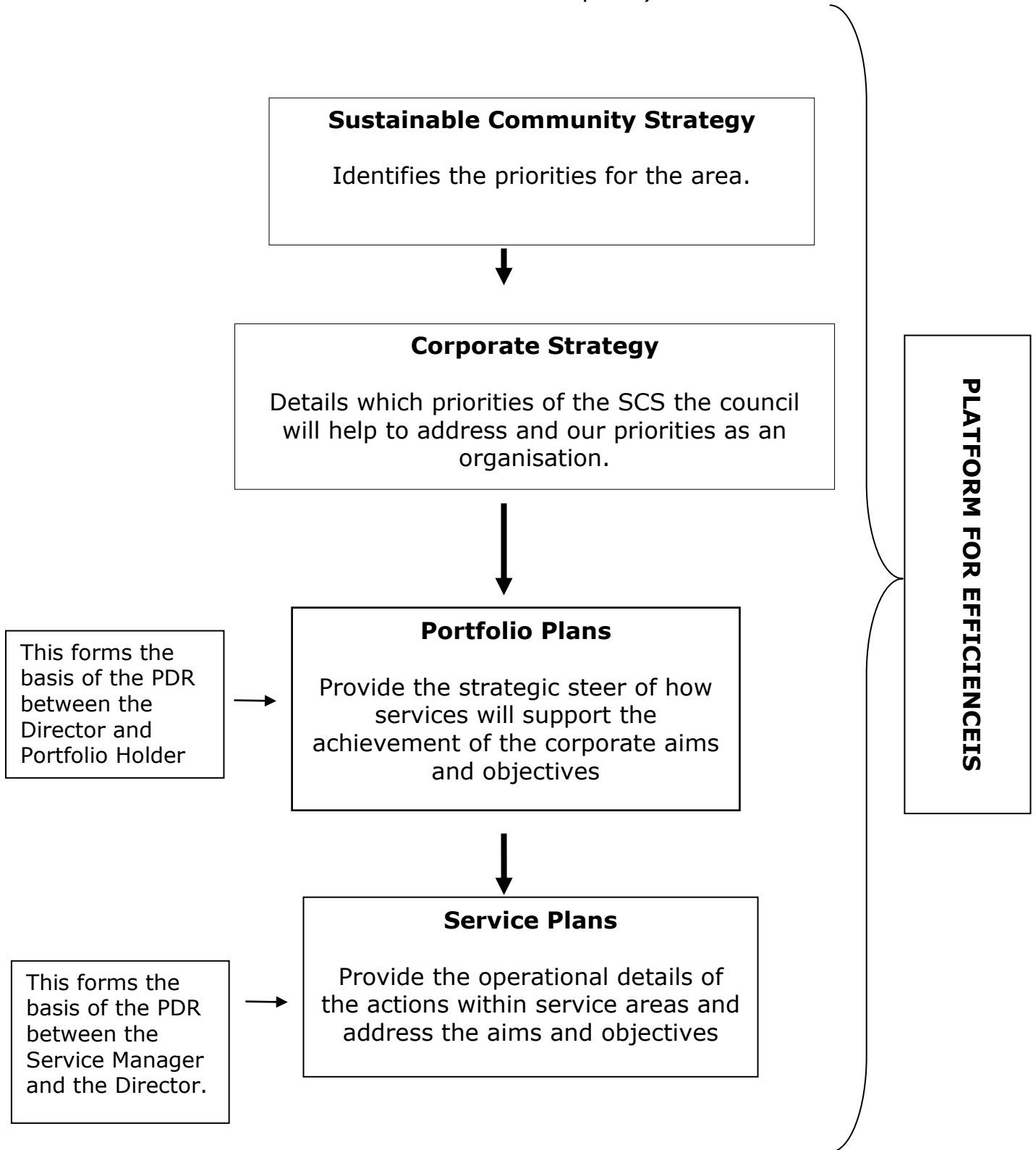
# Support Services

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:**

Support Services provides a range of primarily back-office services in support of the front facing and customer orientated services provided by the other portfolios to the residents of South Staffordshire. These include financial, information technology, telephony and printing services and also encompass members' expenses and certain corporate management activities.

A detailed list is set out below:

### **Accountancy and Financial Services**

- ***Accountancy***
  - Financial Accounting
  - Statutory Reporting
  - Budgets Preparation
  - Budget Monitoring
  - Financial Strategy and Planning
  - Financial Advice including VAT
  - Technical Research and Projects
  - Systems Support
  - Bank Reconciliation
  - Insurance
  - Risk Management
- ***Creditor Payments***
  - The administration and maintenance of the eProcurement system
  - The payment of suppliers
  - The monitoring and maintenance of the purchase ledger
  - The reconciliation of the purchase ledger to the general ledger
  - Administration concerning the Contractor Tax scheme
- ***Payroll***
  - Pay the Council's staff on a monthly payroll
  - Pay the Council's elected members
  - Process and pay all travel and subsistence claims
  - Update the general ledger with payroll information
  - Pay over all deductions to relevant bodies
  - Make statutory returns to relevant bodies
- ***Debtors and Debt Recovery***
  - Processing invoice requests
  - Printing and despatching invoices
  - Monitoring the payment of invoices and recovering debt
  - Liaising with legal section when necessary
  - Monitoring and maintenance of the debtors ledger
  - Reconciliation of the debtors ledger to the general ledger
  - Maintenance of all necessary filing systems

- ***Post and Scanning Room Supervision***
  - All incoming post for the Authority is received and sorted in the central post and scanning room. Admin staff seconded from the various Portfolios undertake the duties. Supervision of the operation is provided by A&FS. Incoming post for Local Taxation, Benefit Services and Financial Services is opened and sorted.
  - The corporate scanning facility is situated in the Post and Scanning room. All of the supervision and the majority of the operation is provided by the service unit.
- ***Income and Cash Collection***
  - This activity encompasses the back-of-house Cash Office operation
  - Postal payments are input into the cash receipting system
  - Credit and debit card payments are taken over the phone
  - The details of banked cash, payments via the Allpay swipe cards and bank statements are received electronically and receive their initial processing
  - All income and expenditure is analysed on a daily basis
  - Detailed analysis of leisure centre income is prepared for posting
- ***Treasury Management***
  - This activity is concerned with the management of the Council's investments portfolio. This is concerned with ensuring the Council's cash flow, monitoring the financial markets and balancing advice, to safeguard capital and maximise the return on investments and preparing budgetary, outturn and other information in respect of the service

### **Information Technology Services**

- Undertaking the management of ICT service provision.
- Ensuring that all employees of the Council who work within the ICT Services are suitably qualified, trained and managed, to allow for the delivery of the service.
- To provide the network management in line with BS7799.
- To advise and control on data and information transfers both internally and externally.
- To provide an I.C.T. helpdesk support facility ensuring that response and maintenance are given in a timely manner in line with ISO/IEC 20000-1.
- Maintenance and controlling the Council's email system.
- Web site development, support and hosting.
- ICT procurement.
- Configuration and installation of all hardware and software.
- Research, advice, support and training for Members and staff.
- Technical enablement of the Transformational government agenda.
- The ICT Services Manager is the Council's Officer E-Champion.
- ICT Services provides the Council's ICT Service, network and website.
- Technical assistance in the Council's corporate technology projects.

- Ensuring that all relevant documentation and information is included on the Council's Intranet, the Council's website and in other electronic formats.
- Administration and support of printing throughout the building including the corporate print room.
- Support and Maintenance of all the Council's telephony requirements including the Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system in the Contact Centre.
- Management and development of GIS service provision, including continuing implementation of Local Land Charges Automation (TLC Closure).
- Manage the Council's approach to PAI (Positional Accuracy Improvement).
- Ensuring that the Council's electronic data integrity and security is maintained and that adequate disaster recovery provision is made.
- Printing services by way of the corporate print unit and photocopiers for the building.
- Management and control of the Government Connects Secure Gateway and the associated Code of Connection.
- Technically enabling remote, mobile and flexible working solutions to allow alternative working options.
- To ensure that the data information management is maintained in a secure and efficient manner throughout the building.
- To ensure that the information and network infrastructure security is maintained to an acceptable level in line with ISO/IEC 27001.

### **Electoral and Concessionary Services**

- Concessionary travel services
- Emergency planning preparedness and business continuity planning
- Non-finance related postal services including DX
- Corporate procurement functions

### **Description of other services provided within the Portfolio**

In addition to the services identified above, the Portfolio Holder for Support Services has responsibility for certain legal and personnel functions which are delegated to the Director of Legal & Licensing Services and the Head of Human Resources respectively. These services are not managed by the Director of Finance and are not covered in this Service Plan. The Internal Audit and Communications services also fall within this portfolio but are managed by the Deputy Chief Executive and are not covered in this Service Plan.

## **Focus of the portfolio.**

To provide quality support services that represent excellent value for money in support of the corporate objectives of the Council and its front-line services.

### **Accountancy and Financial Services**

To provide a quality service that represents excellent value for money and that can respond to the changing needs of the organisation in order to support the corporate objectives of the Council and its front-line services.

We aim:

- To produce accurate and reliable financial information in a format that is accessible to all managers.
- To operate financial systems in a control environment that constitutes minimal risk to the Council.
- To deliver budget and outturn information to our external service users in accordance with best practice and in line with statutory time scales.
- To provide professional advice, guidance and assistance that meets the standards set by CIPFA.

### **Information Technology Services**

The Information Technology Service Unit shall endeavour to support all Council I.C.T. users in whatever means are practical to the best of the unit's abilities. The unit will also promote the development of I.C.T. applications and equipment as well as educate and assist users where possible. The unit is committed to continual improvement and development.

We aim:

- To ensure that Information and Communication Technology assists South Staffordshire Council to undertake its functions in an efficient and effective manner.
- To assist in the delivery of the corporate objectives of South Staffordshire Council whilst working within the framework of the Transformational Government agenda.
- To work with partners and other associates to provide appropriate and effective solutions to technical problems.
- To deliver a consistent and reliable Information and Communication Technology Service to all Service Units and residents.
- To ensure that all systems and information are held securely and adequate handling procedures and access controls are in place.
- To ensure that the ICT systems enhance and improve service delivery and business processes where possible.

- To provide advice, guidance and adopt professional standards in line with the British Computer Societies Code of Conduct and Code of Good Practice.
- To provide innovative technical solutions to meet the Councils business requirements.

### **Electoral and Concessionary Services**

To meet the needs of all internal and external customers and stakeholders whilst striving to provide excellent services.

We aim:

- To support the workings of the Council in providing postal and corporate procurement support and advice.

### **Priorities for 2011-12**

#### **Politics:**

- Keeping elected members informed of developments within the portfolio.
- Supporting elected members with ICT in order to ensure that they can carry out their responsibilities effectively.

#### **Pounds:**

- Reducing expenditure where possible as opportunities arise whilst still ensuring that effective services are provided to internal and external customers.
- 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.

#### **People:**

- Reducing staffing where possible as opportunities arise whilst still ensuring that effective services are provided to internal and external customers.
- Ensuring that staffing reductions do not result in individuals becoming overloaded and unable to cope.

## **Consultation.**

This mainly takes the form of feedback on individual pages on the Council website. The views collected are passed to the individuals responsible for the information.

Much support is provided to the MyPlaceMySay project including analysis of registered users across the five localities, the threads and posts, which can be used to further develop the project.

A web-based budget consultation tool was used for the first time in preparation for the 2011/12 budget. It was framed around the question "How would you save £1million?" and allowed those interested to use sliders to mimic the effects of reducing service budgets by various percentages. The calculations were totalled to enable users to see if they had saved a £million or not. The service analysis provided was quite comprehensive and explanatory details were included on all services. This approach elicited 73 responses of which two-thirds were from members of the public. This compared with the previous experience of asking for responses and suggestions via the South Staffs Review which regularly produced no results at all.

## **Planned Efficiencies.**

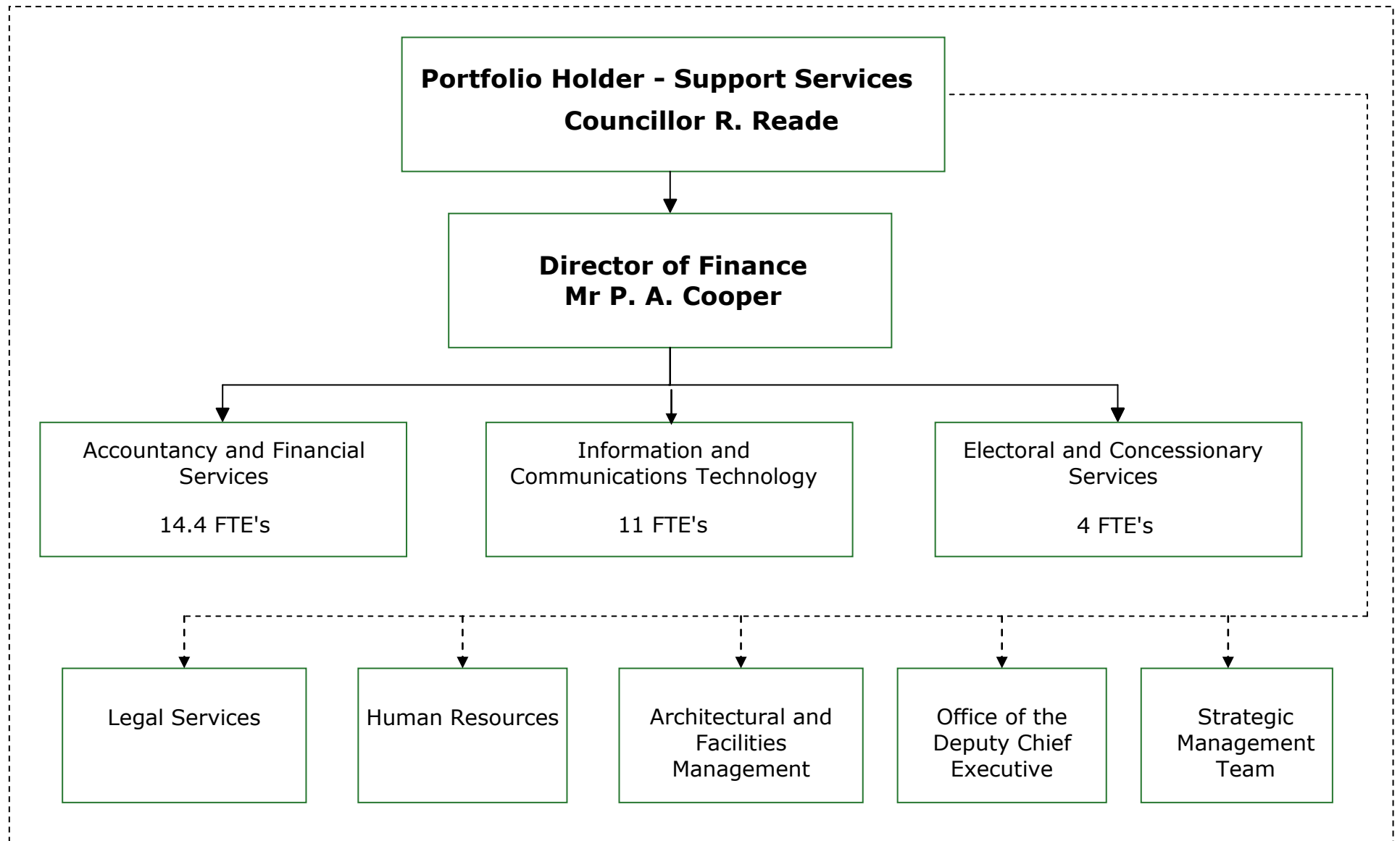
Staff leaving under the VR scheme will not be replaced nor will cover be sought for maternity absence.

The server virtualisation project continues. As individual system servers fall due for replacement the systems will be moved to the virtual environment bringing cost savings and increased system resilience.

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

There are detailed measures included in the individual service plans that support this portfolio plan but none is of a strategic nature.

**Organisation Chart for Support Services Portfolio as at October 2010.**



## High Level Portfolio Action Plan:

<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 staffing</b>	Reduction in staff numbers preferably through voluntary redundancy and resignations	Phil Cooper	Helen Ogram Leigh Brookes	By April 2012	Checking that costs have been reduced.	5
<b>Break down back office functions and costs</b>	Budget analysis	Phil Cooper	Helen Ogram	By April 2012	Checking that analysis is in place.	5
<b>Develop a menu of service costs for outsourcing provision</b>	Produce hourly rates and office rental figures for possible tenants	Phil Cooper	Helen Ogram	By April 2012	Checking that figures have been produced.	5
<b>Utilise and develop cost and quality analysis</b>	WMRIEP/Cipfa benchmarking exercise	Phil Cooper	Helen Ogram	By April 2012	Checking that figures have been produced.	5
<b>ICT Transformational Government Strategy</b>	Research and preparation of strategy	Phil Cooper	Leigh Brookes	By April 2012	Preparation of strategy	5

## Risk Update:

Risk No	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Gross Risk	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent Risk	Responsible Officer	Opportunities presented
1	Low establishment levels, long term sick leave, or maternity leave are difficult to cover	4	3	12	Provision of training and programme of work to encourage multi-skilling will continue	3	3	9	Helen Ogram Leigh Brookes	Staffing levels are designed to be responsive to new initiatives and to have greater input into service design