

LEGAL & SUPPORT SERVICES

Service Unit Manager:

Ian Marshall

Portfolio:

Robert Banks

Prepared By:

Carol Roberts and Sheena Jones

Overview Of Service:

Legal and Support Services provide legal advice, services and direction for the Council, support all 45 Councillors and their meetings, provide office services at the Civic Centre and manages the town centres' CCTV system.

1a. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2007/08

Achievement	Outcome
Inducted 15 new Councillors following the Council elections in May	All members of DC Committee attended training before their first meeting so they were equipped to act in the earliest stages of their Council membership. A range of training and support was provided to help members settle quickly into the Council and their new roles in the community.
Opened Café Relish at the Civic Centre.	Providing an on-site catering facility for staff, Members and the public. Reduced time spent on catering across the organisation saving at least 300 hours in 6 months.
Chartermark	All the team were involved in this achievement – it helped clarify our customer focus and to improve performance
Pershore Hospital and Health Centre opened - Contribution by the Legal team to the documentation for and Support Services in organising the Royal Visit	Hospital and health centre on the one site has improved facilities for the people of South Worcestershire
Planning Delivery Grant	This reward for continued high performance reflects the legal team's contribution to the planning process.

1b. KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2008/9

Objective	Outcome
To produce a business case for introducing digital recording for CCTV.	If business case approved, digital recording will be introduced in 2009-10. This would enable quicker response to events.
To introduce procedures for local determination of Standards cases and support Members of Standards Committee in dealing with these effectively.	We anticipate an increased workload as a result of the changes in Standards Board requirements to determine cases locally. Effective introduction of the procedures should mean that cases are heard according to legal requirements and minimise the risk of challenge.
To review the 2007-08 Member Development programme and prepare priorities for 2008-09.	Members will have access to appropriate support and development to perform their roles effectively, both in their ward work and on the Council.
To successfully complete our Chartermark review.	Preparations for Chartermark reinforces our customer service ethos across the Team and encourages us to review our performance and approach. Our customers will see continuing improvements.
To enter into a new Insurances contract working jointly with at least one other authority.	By working with others we aim to achieve efficiencies in the contract as well as provide maximum necessary cover for the Council
To complete the office cleaning and CCTV contracts.	Service levels and quality reviewed and implemented through the contracts, leading to improvements. Aiming to achieve efficiencies too.

2. ISSUES – Service objectives that we did not meet last year

Action	Date Due	Responsible Officer	Explanation and Proposals
An excellently run Council			
CCTV Joint maintenance contract	1 April 2008	Sheena Jones	Review the contract as part of proposals to change to digital recording in 2009/10
Office cleaning contract	30 September 2007	Sheena Jones and Nigel Jancey	Advert placed in February 2008 – due to combine with Pershore Health Centre.

3. DELIVERING OUR GOALS & SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

What	How	When	Resource implication	Success measure	Why	Who
Safer: Communities that are safe and feel safe						
To reduce crime and the fear of crime	Review CCTV system as part of preparing for changing to digital recording of CCTV images.	April 2009	Capital programme option for 2009-10 of £100k subject to business case	-	Preparing for further service improvement	Sheena Jones
To reduce crime and the fear of crime	Review and relocate static and mobile CCTV cameras in response to reported anti-social behaviour and crime	April 2009	Unknown.	-	2008/09 promise	Sheena Jones and David Hemming

What	How	When	Resource implication	Success measure	Why	Who
Stronger: Vibrant and Inclusive Communities with a Strong Economy						
To support local businesses and village services	Legal support to use our land at Vale Park to deliver 60 small business units and attract lorry generating food companies out of the villages such as in the Vale of Evesham	Ongoing	Existing resources	Accurate conveyances/leases produced on time	2008/09 promise	John Lofthouse
To support local businesses and village services	Continue to have a prominent role on delivery of the Droitwich Canal Restoration Project.	Ongoing			Service improvement	Heather Peachey
To support local businesses and village services	Campaign to maintain Post Office services in key locations.	August 2008	Existing resources	Avenues for maintaining services have been explored openly (via the Overview and Scrutiny process)	2008/09 promise	Sheena Jones and Chris Brooks from Community Services
To support local businesses and village services	Continue to support the Planning section in meeting Central Government target dates for issuing planning permissions where s106 Agreements are involved.	On-going	" "		To maintain high level of performance in order to meet the requirements of the Planning and Housing Delivery Grant	Carol Roberts

To increase leisure and cultural activities	Support Droitwich Canal and other major projects, and letting of major contracts.	2007-2012 depending on timescales of each project	Existing resources		Five Year Horizon	Heather Peachey
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What	How	When	Resource implication	Success measure	Why	Who
Successful: Delivery of excellent and value for money services						
To keep members and staff developed and motivated	Deliver a "beyond excellence" programme for all staff and members to develop skills of our people and drive further improvements	April 2009	£9k budget for member development	LIX	2008/09 promise	Sheena Jones and Kim Stallard
To keep members and staff developed and motivated	Developing the capacity and roles of Members.	Overview and Scrutiny Team developing a framework for Councillor Call for Action Member development steering group involved in setting priorities for development and support for Councillors	Existing resources	Impact of training and development measured according to type of activity	Corporate goal	Sheena Jones

What	How	When	Resource implication	Success measure	Why	Who
To keep members and staff developed and motivated	Review Standards Procedures to ensure compliance with national requirements.	Work with Standards Committee	Existing resources		Five Year Horizon	Ian Marshall
To keep members and staff developed and motivated	Implement changes in Overview and Scrutiny and governance generally arising from Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.	2008-09 depending on timetable of Act. May need further reviews of our governance arrangements, working with Councillors	Existing resources	Changes introduced with minimum disruption and used by councillors and the public as appropriate	Five Year Horizon	Ian Marshall and Sheena Jones
To keep members and staff developed and motivated	Supporting governance arrangements for South Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee.	Continue to develop governance arrangements	Existing resources	Effective working of the joint committee	Five Year Horizon	Sheena Jones
To increase efficiency and access to services	Supporting the Independent Remuneration Panel.	2010/11 involving meeting support and research	Existing resources		Five Year Horizon	Sheena Jones

What	How	When	Resource implication	Success measure	Why	Who
To increase efficiency and access to services	Check that all relevant reports and entries in the Forward Plan contain reference to an Equalities Impact Assessment.	Using screening process on board papers and use of impact assessment toolkit - ongoing as part of Member Support Team role	Existing resources	Number of reports from total number received referred back to originators as incomplete	Equality & Diversity Action Plan	All Service Units
To provide high performing services that meet customers' needs	Complete impact assessments on services, policies and projects	2008-09	Existing resources	Number of impact assessments completed	Equality & Diversity Action Plan	Legal and Support Services

4. COMMUNICATIONS

What	Reason	Method	Who	When	Lead Officer
Introduction of Councillor Call for Action	Establish a clear framework for handling issues raised with Councillors and assisting members of the public in raising issues of concern effectively	Magazine and website, press release, Parish Matters	Councillors – Wychavon, County and Parish and members of the public	Early 2009	Sheena Jones
Results of court hearings	Increase awareness of Council's enforcement role and that it will take action.	Press releases Website	Members of the public	All year	Meesha Patel
Highlight reports with potential press interest	Enables clear communication about the issues.	E-mails/ conversations following agenda meetings; prompting SUMs about press releases	Media contacts	All year	Sheena Jones and all SUMs
Media releases are expected about the following issues: Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel; Members allowances; Introduction of call for action	Keeping members of the public informed – some publicity is a statutory requirement. For the IRP we will aim to attract potential candidates.	Press releases TWM articles	Members of the public	IRP – summer 2008 Allowances – Feb/March 2009 Call for action – early 2009	Sheena Jones And Alison Williams for members allowances

5. CONSULTATION

What	Reason	Method	Who	When	Lead Officer
Location of static CCTV cameras	<p>If the review of current locations reveals some cameras could be more effectively deployed elsewhere we are required under the data protection act to consult with residents about any potential new locations for cameras.</p> <p>We would also involve the police as the primary users of the CCTV system</p>	Via local press and ward councillor/s	<p>West Mercia Police</p> <p>Members of the public</p>	2009	Sheena Jones
Member development	Effectiveness of support for member development – results used by Member development steering group to plan future priorities for member training and development	One-to-one interviews, feedback forms and surveys	All Councillors	Annually with short reviews every 6 months	Sheena Jones and Kim Stallard
Office Services	To check that the services we provide are what our customers want, to identify any issues to develop or address and to help set priorities for large scale maintenance work in the building.	Questionnaires, feedback forms	All users of the Civic Centre	Ongoing	Nigel Jancey

Legal Services – Chartermark review	To ensure that legal support work is as effective as it can be	Liaison meetings with client departments	Client departments	Ongoing	Carol Roberts
Internal consultation	To drive improvements in our internal services	Liaison with service units via MMT, feedback forms, questionnaires	Client departments and councillors	Varying times during the year	Ian Marshall, Carol Roberts, Sheena Jones

6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Development required	Who for	Resources needed	When	Predicted cost	Expected outcome
Project management	2	External training course	2008	400	Capital projects delivered on time
PDR training	3	Internal course	2008		Team leaders are able to conduct pdrs and address issues correctly
Introduction to financial management	3	Internal buddying	2008	None – time required rather than finance	Team leaders are able to manage small budgets effectively and reduce senior management time spent on monitoring these.
Foundation degree in LG Admin	1	Course delivered at Worcester College of Technology	2008-10	£800 pa	Team member equipped to take on more demanding role as gain experience and qualification – builds capacity into the team

Development required	Who for	Resources needed	When	Predicted cost	Expected outcome
Continue to develop the Legal Secretary and Temporary Legal Assistant to enable them to contribute more fully to pure legal work and to build up flexibility within the Legal Section.	2	Internal support	2008-10	Time	Builds capacity within the team
CPD	12	External courses and seminars, some shared sessions with other authorities	2008-13	£4500	Maintain up to date professional knowledge to enable the team to carry out their roles effectively and with minimum time spent researching topics
Legal training courses	2	Worcester College of Technology Birmingham Law School Training Contract		£3200	Develop the team and build capacity as they are able to take on more diverse tasks.

7. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Ref	Description	2006/7 Top Quartile	2006/7 Result	2006/7 Position	Frequency	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target	Officer
LI	Civic Centre energy consumption by type	N/A	N/A	N/A	Quarterly	Baseline data to be established			Nigel Jancey
LI	Amount of waste generated and % recycled: Paper Cardboard Plastics Cans Furniture Batteries	N/A	N/A	N/A	Quarterly	Baseline data to be established			Dana Coulson

8. SERVICE RISKS

Risk	Current Impact	Current Likelihood	How managed	Responsible officer
Malvern Hills DC withdraw from CCTV monitoring partnership arrangement	Medium	Medium	Continuing dialogue with MHDC about requirements and working with them to achieve best effectiveness from the system. Alternative sources of income sought.	Sheena Jones
Councillors do not engage with the training and development offered	Low	Low	Member development liaison group manages development needs and priorities for individual members and corporately.	Sheena Jones Kim Stallard
Sickness levels among the team means that we are unable to deliver the service	Low	Low	Application of the policy on managing sickness absence and supporting generic working within the team to manage peaks in workload.	Ian Marshall
Major equipment breakdown – CCTV images not recorded or Civic Centre unable to open.	Medium	Low	Appropriate maintenance undertaken and back up procedures in place.	Sheena Jones

9. RESOURCES

Full Time Equivalent Staff

31 posts inc Managing Director and his secretary (who we support directly for office services, health and safety etc)

Current Assets

CCTV cameras and control room equipment.

Future Asset Requirements

Upgrade of CCTV equipment to digital recording. Additional cameras in Lido Park.

Expenditure	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
	Original Estimate £000's	Expected £000's	Expected £000's	Expected £000's	Expected £000's
Front Line Services					
CCTV	240	244	248	252	256
Footpath Diversion Orders	12	12	12	12	12
Gypsy Enforcement	14	14	14	14	14
Public Offices - External Use	-42	-42	-42	-42	-42
Civic Centre - Fabric	867	867	867	867	867
Civic Centre - Civic Suite	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Civic Centre - Recharges	-818	-818	-818	-818	-818
Establishment costs - pay awards, pension costs etc.	883	932	964	996	1,028
	1,148	1,201	1,237	1,273	1,310
Variance from previous year		52	36	37	36
Analysed as follows					
Temporary posts falling out					
Pay Award					
Increments					
Contactual Inflation		5	5	5	6
Income Inflation		-1	-1	-1	-1
Other					
Establishment costs - pay awards, pension costs etc.		48	32	32	32
	0	52	36	37	36

Budget Pressures

- 1 CCTV – MHDC's potential withdrawal from shared monitoring of CCTV would place pressure on the revenue budget.
- 2 Energy – prices have increased by 50% during 2007-08 and may increase further, placing additional pressure on our gas and electricity budgets.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY

What	Method	Saving	When	Lead Officer
Reduce the amount of paper produced as part of the support for meetings and the amount of paper sent through the post	Increase number of electronic notifications of meetings to Councillors and others; increase use of Councillors' area of website. Measured by the reduction in the number of pieces of paper produced, printed and posted and consequential savings in postage, envelopes etc	£10-20k	2008-09	Sheena Jones
Continue working with other authorities on CCTV to maximise efficiencies through joint procurement, for example maintenance contract.	Joint contract for maintenance being prepared pending clarification of future MHDC approach.		2009-10	Sheena Jones
Absorbing the ever increasing number of requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.	Continuing to respond to these in accordance with the statutory deadlines without increasing staff to cope with it.			Ian Marshall
Increasing the capacity of the Legal team without increasing establishment	<p>Training the Legal Secretary and Temporary Legal Assistant to enable them to contribute more fully to pure legal work and to build up flexibility within the Legal Section.</p> <p>Dealing with the requirement for local filtering of complaints against members under the Standards regime which will increase the number of cases dealt with by the team</p>		2008-09 and ongoing	Ian Marshall and Carol Roberts
We are aiming to achieve efficiencies when we re-tender the office cleaning contract.	Potentially working with other bodies		2008-09	Sheena Jones

