

Corporate and Democratic Services Plan 2010/2011

SECTION

1

Description of Service

This service is concerned with:

Democratic Services
Human Resources
Communications
Elections and Electoral Registration
Legal Services (shared service with Harborough District Council.)

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Recent Achievements

During 2009/2010 the service achieved the following:

The service has been restructured to be more efficient and as a result vacant posts have not been filled in Democratic Services.

The service has implemented a shared legal service with Harborough District Council. Staff have transferred to HDC contracts of employment and a service level agreement is in place.

The service has run four Elections in 2009/10. A By Election for the Long Clawson and Stathern Borough Ward, the European Election in June 2009 and the County Council elections on the same day. The Parliamentary Election was held on the 6th May 2010 where Melton Borough Council was the lead authority for the Rutland and Melton Constituency. For this election we took in all of Rutland County Council and part of Harborough District Council.

The Council received confirmation of its Investors in People recognition in 2009 against a new more challenging standard. This was led and co-ordinated through Human Resources.

Specifically the sections have:

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Constitution – Review

Corporate and Democratic Services

Significant review of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 6 carried out in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

Electronic Working for Members

The Electronic Committees project is led by the section. There have been trials with data stick/cd delivery in addition to paper agendas. There has been a reduction in copying due to the circulation of agendas to committee membership only. Other meetings are supplied electronically wherever possible to save on postage and hard copies are available on request at the meetings. Overhead projection of agendas has been used at the Efficiency Task Group.

There have been various surveys seeking Member requirements and based on responses a programme of training was arranged. However due to the government connect security required, this route did not suit Members' needs and there has been a recent review of the way forward and a further survey of Members is being arranged.

Induction of New Members

There were no new Members in 2009/10 however the section together with the Member Development Steering Group are working on the induction arrangements for the induction following the Borough Elections in 2011.

Local Democracy Week – October 2009

Young Mayor Election held in LDW 2009

Youth Question Time held at the Youth Conference in LDW 2009

Member Development

- New Member Development Steering Group formed in July 2009 with new Terms of Reference which were approved by PFA in March 2010
- Charter Action Plan developed and monitored via the group
- The training budget for 2009/10 was fully utilised on a wide variety of individual and group Member Development initiatives such as conferences, committee training and specific needs training ie. media, ICT
- 20 Member Development Reviews completed – the needs from which fed into the LLR to develop the training programme for 2010/11
- Working in partnership with the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (LLR) Member Development Network on best practice and to develop a training programme for 2010/11 with RIEP funding
- Financial Assistance from the LLR RIEP bid received to assist capacity in carrying out Member Development Reviews in-house

Members' Bulletin

The Members' Bulletin has been developed to include updates from key Members and officers as well as changes to meeting arrangements and other topical information for Members.

Mayor's Award of Merit Scheme including Melton Borough Award

A new award has been added to the Mayor's Award of Merit Scheme – the Melton Borough Award – this resulted in 3 additional awardees in December

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2009. 2 Awards of Merit were presented in April 2010 as well as 5 Young Citizen Awards.

Overview & Scrutiny Review : Forums, Partnerships and Working Groups

Research and presentation of above to Workshop Team and Committee – the resulting changes came into force after Council approval in July 2009.

Photocopying Service to Voluntary Sector

A photocopying scheme for the voluntary sector has been developed and following consultation will come into force in 2010/11.

Young Mayor Election, Induction, Support

A Young Mayor and Deputy Mayor were elected in 2009 and they work with others on the Melton Youth Council. The Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor have been attending Civic events and activities with the Mayor as well as providing a voice for young people of the Borough via the Youth Council and a Youth Conference that was held in Local Democracy Week. Induction of Young Mayor and diary support when attending, liaising with the Mayor and attending civic events.

Youth Question Time

Held in October 2009 at the Youth Conference. Wide range of youth leaders on the panel responded to the concerns/issues of young people.

Human Resources

This section has continued to provide professional HR support to the Council and services. It has worked with managers in advertising 21 posts over the year and appointing 27 successful candidates. The Standby register for bank staff has continued to be popular with over 17 people being appointed on a flexible basis for a variety of different work placements.

The recruitment of apprentices has continued to be an area of development with 3 new apprentices taking up positions in both horticulture and business administration, these have been facilitated by the local Brooksby Melton College.

The Skills Pledge was signed in June following the authorities commitment to develop the workforce. A variety of NVQ's have been offered to employees with government funding in partnership with Loughborough College and Brooksby Melton College. NVQ's have covered areas such as Customer Services, Team Leading, IT skills, Horticulture and Business Administration. To date 15 employees have completed and passed a level 2 qualification with more due to finish soon.

The green travel plan is being produced and staff consultation is underway.

The section completed the annual staff survey which overall showed a positive response from staff. Sickness absence continues to be monitored and remains at a low level.

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HR have provided support and guidance through 5 disciplinary cases which have resulted in 1 dismissal, 1 final warning and 3 first warnings.

A workforce strategy is in place and being built upon to ensure the council has the right staff in the right places, doing the right things to ensure the performance of the Council to meet priorities.

The service facilitated and led on the IIP re accreditation in April 2009 where the Council were judged against a newer more challenging standard and were found to meet that standard. The IIP accreditation will be in place for three years from the date of assessment.

Various policies and procedures have been updated to ensure compliance with legislation (e.g. discipline and grievance procedures) and to support new ways of working (e.g. home working, flexible working policies).

A workforce development plan is produced every year and management development, IT training, lean training have taken place corporately to support the Council objectives.

Communications has also been added to this sections remit since the efficiency savings last year resulted in the disinvestment of the Communications Officer post. This section produces the monthly corporate messenger and has explored communication via social networking this has resulted in setting up a face book page on the new build and tweeting news stories and current issues via a twitter account. It maintains a good relationship with the local press.

The service is taking a proactive role in various shared services projects in the County. These have included procuring a reduced fee for professional HR support, reviewing learning and development across the public sector and options for a shared occupational health provider. This work will be continuing into the new year.

Communications

The service provides a Corporate Communications service being a media contact on corporate issues and advice resource for other services. A council newsletter, the Melton Mail, is published and distributed to all households in the Borough three times per year.

Legal Services

Legal services have supported the Council by providing legal advice across the Authority including work to support the sale of Nottingham Road and legal issues arising from the new build on Burton Street.

The Council has undertaken successful Health and Safety prosecutions.

Elections

Corporate and Democratic Services

In addition to those listed above, the section has also undertaken the following:

The Annual canvass for the Register of Electors took place between August and November 2009. The new register of Electors was published on the 1st December 2009. A further mini postal canvass of all empty properties was undertaken in March 2010 with a view to registering electors in view of a possible Parliamentary Election.

There has been numerous Parish Council resignations throughout the year.

SECTION

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The Next Steps

During 2010/11 the following short-term actions are to be completed:

| Action | Link to Strategic Priorities/ LAA outcomes | Outcome targets |
|--|--|--|
| Democratic Services Administration of Committees, Sub Committees, working groups and task Groups | All | Robust decision-making process |
| Production of Member's Bulletin, Ward Newsletter | All | Increase Members' knowledge |
| Support to Mayoralty including event organisation as required by the Mayor | All | Civic pride |
| Support to the Young Mayor relating to civic engagements | All | Civic pride Promote Youth as leaders and role model |
| Promotion and Administration of Mayor's Award of Merit Scheme and Melton Borough Award | All | Civic pride Recognition of community involvement |
| Promote Arrange Petitions Scheme approval and roll out and E-Petitions Scheme by December 2010 | All | Have your say in services results in higher satisfaction in Council Improved quality of life Improved participation in voting at Borough Elections |
| Lead E-Ctees project including seeking Members preferred ways of electronic working | All | Links to Green Agenda Setting example of New Ways of Working Efficiencies |
| Arrange best value catering and photocopier contracts for Council | All | Efficiencies |
| Produce Communications Plan for Elections | All | Efficiency workflow process |

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| Action | Link to Strategic Priorities/ LAA outcomes | Outcome targets |
|---|--|---|
| Transfer Committee information from Melton Online to Council site | All | Improved customer access |
| Develop action plan to promote democracy to encourage participation | All | Encourage young people to understand the Council and how it works Have your say in services results in higher satisfaction in Council Improved quality of life Improved participation in voting at Borough Elections |
| Encourage wide range of candidates to stand for Borough Elections | All | Strong leadership Robust decision-making Good reputation Community trust |
| Design Induction Programme for New Members in 2011 | All | Strong leadership Robust decision-making Good reputation Community trust |
| Arrange Member Development opportunities relating to Committee/Member needs | All | Strong leadership Robust decision-making Good reputation Community trust |
| Communications | All | Corporate Communications support. Increased consultation and involvement role. Melton Mail publications. |
| Explore technology in Communications including the take up of Social Networking | All | Improved communication to a wider community. |
| Elections | | |
| Prepare and Plan for the forthcoming Borough and Parish Elections in May 2011 | All | Provide Elected Members for the Borough and Parish Councils |
| Electoral Registration | | |
| Carry out Annual Canvass | All | Everyone who is entitled to be registered is |
| HR | All | .Support new ways of working. |
| Work in partnership with other public sector partners on relevant projects | All | Improving services and producing efficiencies where possible through the economies of scale. |
| Implement green travel plan. | All | Green travel plan in place. |
| Provide professional HR advice on key issues. | ALL | Staff trained, skilled to required levels. New ways of working in place and fit for purpose. |
| Support move to new offices | ALL | Successful move to new offices. Appropriate policies in place for new ways of working. |

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| Action | Link to Strategic Priorities/ LAA outcomes | Outcome targets |
|--|--|---|
| Work with Snr management and unions on the proposals for a revised establishment | ALL | A structure that is fit for the future Efficiencies |
| Review recruitment process to ensure more electronic and efficient | All | A paperlight and efficient recruitment and selection process. An improved service to both manager and candidates. |
| | | |
| | | |

The service contributes to the Council's efficiency savings targets through A number of medium term actions have also been identified over the following two years. The plans for the improvement/change in service levels over the years 2011/12 and 2012/13 are shown below:

| Proposal | Link to Strategic Priorities | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | Outcome targets |
|---|------------------------------|---------|---------|--|
| Implement Promoting Democracy Programme | All | √ | √ | Have your say in services results in higher satisfaction in Council Improved quality of life Improved participation in voting at Borough Elections |
| Implement Induction Programme for New Members | All | √ | √ | Strong leadership Robust decision-making Good reputation Community trust |
| Progress Electronic Committees | All | √ | √ | Links to Green Agenda Setting example of New Ways of Working Efficiencies |
| Implement the use of Internet and SMS Texting for the returning of Electoral Registration Canvass forms | All | √ | √ | Efficiencies New Ways of working |
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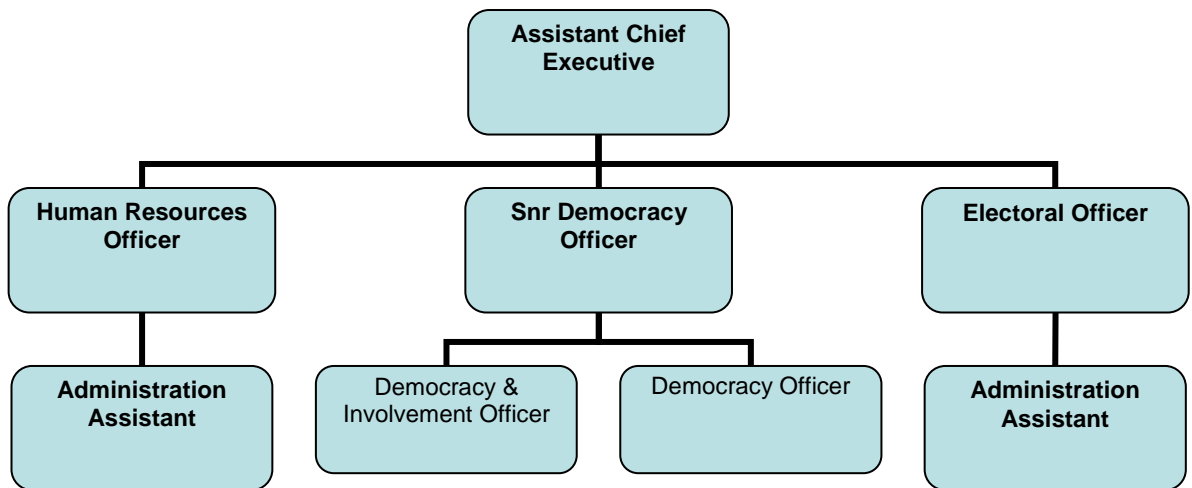
SECTION

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Resource Utilisation

Staff

Corporate and Democratic Services



The HR (840) budget is detailed below:

| | 2010/11 Estimate |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | £ |
| Employees | 337,470 |
| Premises | 11,660 |
| Transport | 2,020 |
| Supplies | 14,260 |
| Support Services | 60,190 |
| <i>Total Expenditure</i> | <i>425,600</i> |
| Recharges to Services | (452,880) |
| <i>Net Expenditure</i> | <i>(27,280)</i> |

The Public Relations budget is detailed below:

| | 2010/11 Estimate |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | £ |
| Employees | 0 |
| Premises | 0 |
| Transport | 0 |
| Supplies | 27,830 |
| Support Services | 26,440 |
| <i>Total Expenditure</i> | <i>54,270</i> |
| Income | 0 |
| Recharges to Services | 0 |
| <i>Net Expenditure</i> | <i>54,270</i> |

The Corporate & Democratic Core budget is detailed below:

Corporate and Democratic Services

| | 2010/11 Estimate |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| | £ |
| Employees | 187,360 |
| Premises | 47,330 |
| Transport | 18,700 |
| Supplies | 111,330 |
| Support Services | 664,150 |
| <i>Total Expenditure</i> | <i>1,028,870</i> |
| Income | (213,220) |
| Recharges to Services | |
| Net Expenditure | 815,650 |

Buildings Plant & Equipment

The Service is administered from Phoenix House and MMBS

Computer Software

The Service manages the following systems:
STRAND, CHRIS

SECTION

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Risks

| | | | | | |
|------------|---|---------------|-------------|-------------|----|
| Likelihood | A | | | | |
| | B | | | | |
| | C | | | | |
| | D | | | | |
| | E | | 1,2,3 ,4 | 5, 6,7,8 | |
| | F | | | | |
| | | | IV | III | II |
| | | Impact | | | |

| Risk No. | Description |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Failure to publish ne Register of Electors on the 1 st December |
| 2 | Failure of external contractor to print annual canvass forms |
| 3 | Failure of IT provisions for Elections |
| 4 | Recruitment and retention of key staff Failure to retain and recruit suitably skilled staff. |
| 5 | Reputation management following review of Communications and deletion of Comms Officer post.. Failure to maintain positive media coverage |
| 6 | Failure to implement new shared legal service effectively. |
| 7 | Staff capacity,morale, skills to undertake new ways of working e.g. EETG projects |
| 8 | Corporate risk 52 Lack of corporate resources to fulfil the corporate vision over next 3 years Significant/critical |
| 9 | |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |

SECTION

6

Performance Management

To measure the progress that is being made in providing better quality services and real value for money a number of performance indicators have been established and targets set for the service:

| INDICATOR | Frequency | Type | Average for all District Councils 2008/09 | Performance 2008/09 | Target 2009/10 |
|---|-----------|------|---|---------------------|----------------|
| The service has no national indicators. | | | | | |
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