



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICE
SERVICE PLAN 2008 - 2011

Chief Executive's Service Plan 2008-11

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1. Introduction

1.1 Each of the eight services within Aberdeenshire Council prepares an annual service plan. This is the 2008-11 Service Plan for the Chief Executive's Service.

1.2 The Chief Executive's Service is one of four support services and includes:

Chief Executive and Area Managers

- Lead and support the effective working of the Council's corporate management structures.

Policy Team

- Liaise with Councillors on corporate and area matters.
- Supports the Chief Executive in his role leading corporate policy and initiatives.

Corporate Communications

- Oversees corporate continuous improvement activity.
- Manages the reputation of the Council through effective management of internal and external communications, public affairs, consultations, graphic design services and photography.

1.3 The plan shows how the service contributes to, and implements the aims and priorities of the Council and its partners, as set out in the Community Plan, the Council Vision and the Council's Strategic Priorities. It details what the service intends to achieve over the next three years.

1.4 The service plan follows an agreed corporate format and includes:

- The context for the plan – information about the service and how the plan was developed.
- Details of the Service's significant achievements during 2007/08.
- Information about external issues that have informed the development of the plan, or may impact on its delivery.
- Details of how the plan fits within the broader Aberdeenshire Council performance management framework.
- Details of the resources required to deliver the plan.
- A detailed action plan that sets out the main activities planned over the next three years, the outcomes sought from these activities, the resources required to implement the actions, and the performance measures that will be used to assess progress towards achieving the agreed outcomes.

2. Service Vision

- 2.1 Service vision statements communicate the values, purpose and direction of the service. The following service vision was agreed by staff across the service in March 2007. The vision reflects and supports the aims and aspirations of the Council's corporate vision.

Chief Executive's Service Vision

Leading the Council's services, supporting Councillors, working in partnership to make Aberdeenshire the best council and the best area in Scotland.

3. Core Activities

- 3.1 Core activities are defined as the main activities that a service is uniquely responsible for, and which result in a service being delivered either to an internal customer (another service) or to external customers (Aberdeenshire residents and communities).
- 3.2 The principal tasks of the Chief Executive's Service are summarised under five core activity headings:

Core activity CE1 – Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.

The Policy Team guides and supports other council services in relation to corporate policy issues, such as equalities, health improvement and customer service. The team has corporate responsibility for the corporate performance management framework, and manages the corporate development of the Aberdeenshire Improvement Model (AIM) and the Kaizen approach to continuous improvement. In addition, the team provides officer support for the Council's Scrutiny & Audit Committee.

Core activity CE2 – Providing a corporate communications service.

The Corporate Communications Team is responsible for all internal and external communications, public affairs, consultation, graphic design services and photography. It safeguards the Council's image and reputation and ensures the people of Aberdeenshire, and Aberdeenshire employees, are kept fully informed and involved in the Council's main policies and decisions.

Core activity CE3 – Administering and advising area committees and local councillors.

The six Area Managers serve the local councillors in their administrative area, and support and advise the six area committees.

Core activity CE4 – Producing and implementing local community plans.

The Area Managers were previously responsible for preparing and publishing the annual area plans, which identified and prioritised the needs, aims and objectives of the Council's six areas.

Following a comprehensive review of the council and partner plans a new format for two yearly local community plans has been agreed. These will contain locally driven responses to the community planning themes and the revised timescales will allow for full and proper consideration by public partners and the Council's services to ensure the fit of activity to community needs. The first local community plans will be published in April 2008.

Core activity CE5 – Developing and maintaining relations with the community in each of the council's six areas.

The Area Managers are the main points of contact in the Council for the people, communities and elected members in their areas.

- 3.3 The Service Action Plan (section 13) details the intended actions of the service under the five core activity headings described above.

4. Key Partnerships

- 4.1 Partnership working is central to the delivery of services across the Council. The Chief Executive's Service leads, or has direct involvement in a number of key partnerships including:

- Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership

Main Partners: Aberdeenshire Council, Grampian Fire & Rescue Service, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Service Network, Grampian Police, NHS Grampian, NESTRANS, Local Rural Partnerships, Community Councils.

Aims: To work together with Aberdeenshire communities to deliver better public services and improve the quality of life in the area.

- North East Joint Public Sector Group

Main Partners: Chief Executives or equivalent of Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Moray Council, NHS Grampian, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Grampian Police, Grampian Fire & Rescue Service.

Aims: To consider high level matters of great strategic significance to the geographical area for which they have joint responsibility.

- Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership

Main Partners: Aberdeenshire Council, Grampian Fire & Rescue Service, Grampian Police, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Grampian Racial

Equality Council, NHS Grampian, Procurator Fiscal Service, British Transport Police, Crimestoppers UK, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, Scottish Ambulance Service.

Aims: To work together to make Aberdeenshire a safer place for all those living in, working in or visiting the area.

- Aberdeenshire Health Improvement Group

Main Partners: Aberdeenshire Community Planning partners.

Aims: To work together to improve the health of Aberdeenshire's population and reduce health inequalities.

- Local Community Planning Groups

Main Partners: Local representatives of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partners.

Aims: To ensure local services are designed to meet the needs of the local community.

- Contacts with local agencies and groups, including the Aberdeenshire Youth Forum, Residents and Business Associations, Councils for Voluntary Services, Community Councils, Local Community Safety Groups and Education Forums.

- 4.2 The Chief Executive's Service has also taken the lead in agreeing a Framework Agreement with Aberdeen City Council that commits the two Councils to working together to improve the services we provide to our communities and residents, while increasing our efficiency in doing so.

5. Strategic Themes

- 5.1 The strategic objectives of the Council and its community planning partners are grouped together under key themes.

The Community Plan has five key themes:

- Community Wellbeing
- Jobs and the Economy
- Lifelong Learning
- Sustainable Environment
- Developing our Partnership

The Council's Strategic Priorities includes the same themes, with an additional theme of 'Corporate Improvement'.

- 5.2 The work undertaken by the service primarily contributes to the 'Corporate Improvement' theme in the Strategic Priorities, which focuses on improving the way the Council is managed ensuring that we continue to develop as a modern effective organisation. However, the service contributes in varying

degrees to the delivery of objectives under all of the themes in both the Community Plan and the Strategic Priorities.

- 5.3 The links between the Services' Core Activities, the Community Plan and Strategic Priority themes, and the performance indicators are set out in section 12 of this plan.
- 5.4 The individual action plans at section 13 include a reference to the strategic themes the plans are contributing to.

6. Development of the Plan

- 6.1 Detailed analysis of the following information and documentation informed the development of the plan:
- Progress with implementation of the 2007-10 Chief Executive's Service Plan.
 - Next steps arising from previous Chief Executive's Service action plans.
 - Guidance from Councillors at Area and Policy Committees regarding service objectives.
 - Aberdeenshire Improvement Model (AIM) self-assessments.
 - Consultation with employees across the service.
 - New national policy initiatives.
 - New national legislation.

7. Significant Achievements in the Past Year

- 7.1 The service has made progress in a number of areas during the past year. This section focuses on the most significant achievements of 2006-07.
- 7.2 The service was responsible for coordinating the development of the Council's Strategic Priorities 2007-11, which set the strategic direction for the Council for the next three years.
- 7.3 The service oversaw the introduction of multi-member wards, successfully implementing a number of recommendations from the 2007 Working Group.
- 7.4 The service ensured the Council was thoroughly prepared for the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning.
- 7.5 The service oversaw a radical improvement to the style of service performance Indicators, ensuring that councillors have the information they require to successfully monitor service performance.
- 7.6 The service developed the Council's first statutory disability and gender equality schemes. The scheme action plans will help the Council to improve its services to disabled people, and help to ensure it treats men, women, boys and girls equally.

- 7.7 The service was responsible for updating the Council's consultation strategy so that it incorporates the best practice of the National Standards for Community Engagement.
- 7.8 The service launched the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships own identity, logo and website (www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk), dramatically improving its communication with communities, partners and staff.
- 7.9 The Corporate Communications team produced the Council A-Z which was distributed with the Council Tax bills to every household in February 2008. This document will help residents to access local authority services.
- 7.10 The service lead on the delivery of the INTERREG SUSSET project in partnership with towns in Poland, Greece and Sweden ended in December 2007. The project involved three towns from each of the countries involved (Ellon, Inverurie and Stonehaven in Aberdeenshire) and looked at sustainable strategies for the future wellbeing of small towns, A CD based toolkit has been completed and will be widely distributed highlighting the outcomes from the project.
- 7.11 The Area Top up Budgets have been used to support a number of community projects, including the purchase by the South Marr Community Safety Group of Nintendo Wiis, TVs and games to engage young people on the effects of alcohol while driving. The project launch was featured on national television.

8 External Factors impacting on the Plan

- 8.1 Aberdeenshire Council operates in an environment that is constantly changing and evolving. The following actual or anticipated external changes and developments have influenced the development of this plan, or may impact on its delivery in the future.
- 8.2 Changing demographics is one of the biggest external issues facing Aberdeenshire Council. It is projected that within Aberdeenshire there will be a 58% increase in the number of over 60s in the next 20 years. The number of school age children is decreasing rapidly, however the cultural and linguistic diversity of the schools population is increasing rapidly. This is impacting directly on the ability of schools and the Council to deliver culturally sensitive and accessible services. The service has a responsibility to raise awareness about demographic changes, and to ensure that appropriate plans are in place to meet the changing needs of Aberdeenshire residents.
- 8.3 As part of the implementation of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 each Council in Scotland is being audited on its performance in carrying out its duty to achieve Best Value and its commitment to community planning. Aberdeenshire Council was audited in autumn 2007. The Accounts Commission report on the audit, due to be published in June 2008, will require agreed improvements to be implemented across the Council.
- 8.4 Following the 2007 elections a concordat was agreed between the Scottish Government and COSLA which set out the terms of a new relationship

between national and local government and underpins the funding for local councils until 2011. As part of the concordat all local councils are required in 2008 to agree a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government based on an agreed set of national outcomes. In subsequent years the SOA will be agreed between the Community Planning Partnerships and the national government. The concordat will change the way the Council monitors and reports on performance. It will also enable the Council to better target funds towards local issues, within the context of the national objectives.

- 8.5 Since the election of the new Scottish Government a number of the Council's partner organisations have been abolished (e.g. Communities Scotland), or are undergoing dramatic change (Scottish Enterprise, Sport Scotland). This will have an impact on our partnership working arrangements, and on the way we deliver services to our communities.

9 Performance Management

The Chief Executive's Service Plan sits within the broader Aberdeenshire Council Performance Management Framework. The main elements of the Performance Management Framework are outlined in more detail below.

9.1 Service Plan Monitoring

- 9.1.1 The eight service plans are a critical element in the Performance Management Framework as they set out each of the service's main objectives and priorities, and give service management teams and councillors the opportunity to monitor progress against these objectives on a regular basis.
- 9.1.2 Councillors have the chance to review progress in delivering service plan outcomes on two occasions during the annual service plan cycle. Progress monitoring reports for this service plan will be presented to Policy & Resources Committee on the following dates:
- Thursday 18 September 2008
 - Thursday 15 January 2009

9.2 Performance Indicators

- 9.2.1 As detailed above, the service plans give councillors the opportunity to hold service management teams to account on major service developments and initiatives, and the higher-level operational activities of the service.
- 9.2.2 Services also gather management information relating to performance indicators, which allow service management teams and councillors to monitor the lower level, ongoing tasks that support the service's core activities.
- 9.2.3 The Chief Executive's Service currently monitors, and measures improvement against five performance indicators relating to the management of the six Aberdeenshire Council areas. Further performance indicators relating to the policy and corporate communications functions will be developed in 2008.

9.2.4 Performance Indicator information is normally measured monthly, unless the data gathered is available less frequently. Progress is currently reported to service management teams and the relevant committee on a quarterly basis.

9.2.5 Where appropriate, the Chief Executive's Service Performance Indicators are also included in the Service Action Plan (section 13) as performance measures.

9.3 Self-assessments

9.3.1 The Aberdeenshire Improvement Model (AIM) is a quality assurance framework that is used to drive forward continuous improvement across the Council.

9.3.2 AIM involves the use of self-assessment tools to assess the position of the Council, or services within the Council, against approved quality assurance standards, as set out by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). The self-assessments are designed to identify specific quality-related areas for improvement that can be incorporated into future corporate and service plans.

9.3.3 Within the Performance Management Framework services are required to complete self-assessments each year. The Chief Executive's Service undertook its first AIM self-assessment in 2005. The outcomes of the Service's 2007/08 AIM self-assessment will be reported to the service management team on 14 April 2008. A further self-assessment exercise will be completed towards the end of 2008.

9.4 Kaizen

9.4.1 Kaizen is the key tool within the Council for bringing about sustainable improvements as quickly and as effectively as possible. It brings together the key people in a process for a set period of time and gives them the means and the management support to make things better.

9.4.2 Kaizen deals with critical business issues, where significant improvements are required within relatively short timescales. Services identify issues by analysing self-assessment outcomes, by reviewing performance indicator information, and by assessing inspection and audit outcomes.

9.4.3 The post of part-time Continuous Improvement Service Champion (Kaizen specialist) within the service is currently vacant, but will be filled again in the near future.

9.5 EDRS

9.5.1 In July 2006 the decision was taken to align the Employee Development and Review Scheme (EDRS) with the Performance Management Framework. During the EDRS process chief officers and third tier managers are now

asked to outline how they contribute to the strategic objectives outlined in the Community Plan, and the Strategic Priorities. They are also asked to identify the performance indicators they are responsible for.

- 9.5.2 Chief Officers and Managers in the Chief Executive's have all now received 'enhanced' EDRS'.

10 Risk Management

10.1 'Risk' can be defined as something that might have a detrimental impact on the Council's objectives or service delivery. The active management of risk is therefore integral to the management of each service within the Council.

10.2 The Chief Executive's Service updates its assessment of risks on an annual basis. At its most recent appraisal of the service 'risks', the service management team judged the following risks to be the most significant:

Risk

1. Ability of Area Offices to function in the event of a flu pandemic.
2. Failure to drive continuous improvement across the Council to release the Council's full potential.
3. Inability to measure service performance.
4. Lack of local responsiveness to issues raised by the community.
5. Failure to engage the community in the democratic process.
6. Failure to maintain effective public relations, particularly with the media.

11 Resources Required to Fulfil the Plan

11.1 Staff

11.1.1 The Chief Executive's Service currently has 73.7 FTE employees as follows:

- Chief Executive and 3 admin/clerical staff
- 6 Area Managers
- Area Manager's Support Staff – 6 FTE Committee Officers, 23.3 FTE admin/clerical staff and 3 FTE local community planning staff.
- The Head of Policy
- The Policy Team has 10.9 FTE staff
- The Head of Corporate Communications
- The Corporate Communications Team has 19.5 FTE staff

11.2 Property and Assets

11.2.1 The Chief Executive's Service uses office space at Woodhill House, Aberdeen; St Leonard's, Banff; Arbuthnot House, Peterhead; Gordon House, Inverurie; Bridge Street, Ellon; School Road, Alford; Gordon Street, Huntly; Viewmount, Stonehaven.

11.2.2 The Chief Executive's Service assets include office furniture and ICT equipment.

11.3 Budget

11.3.1 The budgeted net cost of the Chief Executive's Service in 2008-09 is £4,386,000.

11.3.2 The costs associated with delivering each of the five Chief Executive's Service core activities are detailed below.

	Core Activity	Resources £(000)		
		08/09	09/10	10/11
CE1	Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues	1,969	1,991	2,013
CE2	Providing a corporate communications and graphic design service	506	515	524
CE3	Administering and advising area committees and local councillors.	1,911	1,951	1,992
CE4	Producing and implementing local community plans.			
CE5	Developing and maintaining relations with the community in each of the council's six areas.			

12 Community Plan/Strategic Priorities/Performance Links

12.1 This table demonstrates the links between the service's core activities, the community/strategic priority themes and the service's performance indicators

	Core Activity	Plan Theme (see key below)	Performance Indicators
CE1	Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues	CWB, DoP, CI	TBD
CE2	Providing a corporate communications service	CWB, CI	TBD
CE3	Administering and advising area committees and local councillors.	CI	CE 2.1 – 2.4
CE4	Producing and implementing local community plans.	CWB, CI	CE 3.1
CE5	Developing and maintaining relations with the community in each of the council's six areas.	CWB, JE, LL, SE, DoP, CI	TBD

Key:

CWB – Community Wellbeing

JE – Jobs and the Economy

LL – Lifelong Learning

SE – Sustainable Environment

DoP – Developing our Partnership

CI – Corporate Improvement

13 Service Action Plan

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Developing our Partnerships, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Define, lead and manage the implementation of corporate policy.
Action Plan	CE 1.1
Outcome sought	Corporate policies are systematically developed, implemented, reviewed and communicated within appropriate timescales.
Current Position	<p>The key policy documents requiring action for this year are the new Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), the Partnership and Joint Working Policy, and the Voluntary Sector Policy.</p> <p>1. Guidelines for SOAs were issued in February 2008 and a draft is due to be agreed by Policy & Resources Committee on 17 April 2008.</p> <p>2. The Partnership and Joint Working policy was approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 11 January 2007. Implementation has been delayed pending completion of a register of partnerships and guidance.</p> <p>3. The existing voluntary sector policy is significantly out of date and requires review.</p>
Risk if action is not taken	Key corporate policies and plans are not properly implemented and/or fall out of date. Statutory Requirements are not met. Council funding from the Scottish Government may be threatened.
Actions 08/09	<p>1. Ensure agreement to final SOA by June 2008.</p> <p>2. Seek Policy & Resources Committee agreement to a three year programme of review of existing partnerships by June 2008.</p> <p>3. Working with voluntary sector partners, review the Voluntary Sector Policy by end March 2009.</p>
Actions 09/10	<p>1. Develop the Council SOA into a Community Planning Partnership SOA with the Scottish Government, probably by end June 2009.</p> <p>2. Other actions tbd.</p>
Actions 10/11	1. Report on the success of the Partnership and Joint Working Policy and progress with the three year programme of partnership reviews, by June 2010.
Responsible person(s)	Roger White, Head of Policy
Resource Implications	Staff time – CE Policy Team Budget
Performance Measures	1. Policies developed, implemented and communicated to agreed timetables.

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Ensure the council's performance management (PM) framework continues to be implemented, reviewed and improved.
Action Plan	CE 1.2
Outcome sought	The framework drives improvement in service outcomes throughout the council.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A performance management framework has been in place since January 2006. A simplified 'popular' version has also been published. 2. Improvements to the reporting of performance indicators to Councillors were implemented in autumn 2007. 3. The report on the Council's audit of best value and community planning is awaited. It is likely to confirm a number of areas where improvements are required, including more effective performance management.
Risk if action is not taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor performance 2. Adverse publicity and diminished reputation.
Actions 08/9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A comprehensive improvement plan arising from the audit of best value and community planning to be developed and approved by September 2008. 2. Review the Performance Management Framework, and improve as appropriate, by September 2008. 3. Performance management software purchased and implemented by March 2009.
Actions 09/10	Tbd
Actions 10/11	Tbd
Responsible person(s)	Roger White, Head of Policy
Resource Implications	<p>Staff time – CE Policy Team Budget</p> <p>Performance management software – 2008/09 growth budget approved.</p>
Performance Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. % of PM framework actions occurring to agreed timetable 2. % of in-house PIs showing improvement over previous year 3. % improvement in key measures of public perception of council as measured in residents' survey

Theme	Developing our Partnerships, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Coordinate the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Council's strategic planning framework.
Action Plan	CE 1.3
Outcome sought	All strategic plans are approved and monitored as per the agreed timetable. The strategic planning framework is coherent, streamlined, and clearly documented.
Current Position	<p>1. In March 2007 a cross-service Kaizen team reviewed the Council's Strategic Planning framework and developed a new approach to strategic planning within the Council. The implementation of the new framework is ongoing.</p> <p>2. The first step towards the implementation of the new framework was the agreement of the Council's Strategic Priorities (agreed by full Council on 22 November 2007).</p> <p>3. A new format for two yearly Local Community Plans has also been agreed. The first Local Community Plans will be published in April 2008.</p>
Risk if action is not taken	Strategic planning is inconsistent and unconnected, attracting adverse comment from the external auditor.
Actions 08/09	<p>1. Continue to implement the new strategic planning framework, focussing on:</p> <p>a. the development of a new 'performance reporting' model, to replace current service plans.</p> <p>b. the configuration and rollout of the Initiatives System (TIS) to allow electronic recording and monitoring of agreed actions.</p> <p>c. the rollout of the Local Community Plans</p>
Actions 09/10	TBD
Actions 10/11	TBD
Responsible person(s)	Joanna Shirriffs/Vivienne Tegg, Policy Manager
Resource Implications	Staff Time – CE Policy Team Budget
Performance Measures	1. % of strategic plans delivered and monitored to agreed timetable.

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Support the work of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee in monitoring the Council's performance, and holding management to account on service delivery.
Action Plan	CE 1.4
Outcome sought	The Scrutiny & Audit Committee receives the support it requires to carry out its scrutiny role in a timely and effective manner.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Scrutiny & Audit Committee currently undertakes on average three formal investigations per annum and receives detailed reports on issues not selected for investigation. 2. A handbook on the operational practices and procedures for the Committee has been created and is available on the Council's website. 3. A review of the 14 investigations previously undertaken has been completed and a process agreed to follow up on the agreed actions. 4. The post-investigation participant evaluation form has been reviewed and a new Member feedback form created, ensuring regular self-assessment of operational practices. 5. All new Committee members have received full induction training. 6. The Committee's pages on the Council Website have been updated and are regularly reviewed.
Risk if action is not taken	The Council will fail to meet CIPFA good practice principles for Audit Committees, and will be unable to provide effective scrutiny of its functions.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Scrutiny & Audit Committee work, assisting with the choice of investigation topics for 2008/09. 2. Continue to raise awareness of the work of the Scrutiny & Audit Committee internally and externally, including the sharing of information with other Councils. 3. Assist with the continuing training and development of Committee members. 4. Develop guidance for external experts on providing evidence to the Committee.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Scrutiny & Audit Committee work, assisting with the choice of investigation topics for 2009/10.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Scrutiny & Audit Committee work, assisting with the choice of investigation topics for 2010/11.
Responsible person(s)	Jan McRobbie, Scrutiny & Audit Lead Officer
Resource Implications	Staff Time – CE Policy Team Budget
Performance Measures	The impact of Scrutiny & Audit Committee investigations is evident in improved service delivery.

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Oversee the corporate and service specific implementation of the Aberdeenshire Improvement Model (AIM).
Action Plan	CE 1.5
Outcome sought	Management Team and all Council Services undertake self-assessment exercises within the agreed performance management framework timetable, and improvement plans with SMART actions are agreed and implemented.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's Management Team self-assessment 2007/08 has slipped but will be completed by end April 2008. 2. The CE Service 2007/08 self-assessment has been completed and will be reported to the Chief Executive's Service Management Team on 14 April 2008. 3. With the exception of the Law & Admin Service, all service self-assessments have been completed. Service action plans have been agreed, or are in progress.
Risk if action is not taken	The link between improvement planning and budget preparation will be broken. Failure to adhere to the performance management timetable, and demonstrate continuous improvement will attract negative comments from the external auditor.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate Management Team and Chief Executive Service Management Team AIM self-assessments by November 2008. 2. Ongoing quarterly monitoring of resulting improvement plans. 3. Assist other council services to complete AIM self-assessment exercises between August and November 2008, with improvement plans developed and agreed by end December 2008. 4. Up to date improvement plans published in Arcadia by end December 2008. 5. Enter Quality Scotland Business Excellence Awards by November 2008.
Actions 09/10	1. Oversee the annual AIM self-assessment cycle (08/09 actions repeated)
Actions 10/11	2. Oversee the annual AIM self-assessment cycle (08/09 actions repeated)
Responsible person(s)	Graham Hobson, Policy Officer (Quality and Improvement)
Resource Implications	Staff Time – CE Policy Team Budget Quality Scotland Award entrance fee - estimated £1400 per annum
Performance Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. % of self-assessments undertaken between Aug and Nov each year. 2. % of improvement plans agreed by end January each year.

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Manage the commissioning and undertaking of the annual residents and employee surveys, using the results to identify corporate and service improvements.
Action Plan	CE 1.6
Outcome sought	Residents and employee satisfaction surveys commissioned and undertaken to agreed timetables, utilising appropriate research methods and ensuring trend data are gathered over successive years. The research will continue to contribute to and measure our customer focused approach to service delivery.
Current Position	1. The 2007 residents' in-depth survey was completed and the outcomes reported to Management Team on 14 November 2007 and to Council on 22 November 2007. The action plan was agreed by Management Team on 13 February 2008. 2. The outcomes of the employee survey 2007 were reported to Management Team on 19 March 2008. An action plan is being developed.
Risk if action is not taken	Loss of a vital component of our resident and employee consultation programme. Loss of customer service delivery trend data would impact negatively on our ability to conduct AIM self-assessments (for AIM trend data of 3 or more years is essential).
Actions 08/09	1. Residents and employee surveys completed, and the outcomes reported within the timescales detailed in the performance measures below. 2. Quarterly monitoring of action plan progress.
Actions 09/10	1. Residents and employee surveys completed, and the outcomes reported within the timescales detailed in the performance measures below. 2. Quarterly monitoring of action plan progress.
Actions 10/11	1. Resident and employee surveys completed, and the outcomes reported within the timescales detailed in the performance measures below. 2. Quarterly monitoring of action plan progress.
Responsible person(s)	Graham Hobson, Policy Officer (Quality and Improvement), in conjunction with Kate Connor, Head of Development and Training.
Resource Implications	Staff Time – CE Policy Team Budget Survey costs - Chief Executive's residents/employee survey budget £30,000 per annum (2008/09)
Performance Measures	1. Residents research reported to Management Team in September/October of each year, and to full Council in October/November of each year. (Dates depend on meeting cycles) 2. Employee research reported to Management Team in October/November of each year. (Dates depend on meeting cycles).

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Embed Kaizen as a tool to bring about results and develop an ethos of continuous improvement within the organisation.
Action Plan	CE 1.7

Outcome sought	The Kaizen approach is developed to become a sustainable model of improvement that supports and compliments other continuous improvement activities within the Council, and continues to operate as a first class exemplar of the Lean approach within the public sector. There are competent Kaizen experts within each Service, supporting a clear forward programme of Kaizen events.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5 Services have full time Kaizen facilitators now acting as Continuous Improvement Champions. 2. 6 facilitators trained, 4 of them have also have had some EFQM Assessor training. 3. 54 Kaizen events undertaken, plus 2 Team Kaizens and 6 5S activities. 4. Support material available for Managers, Teams and Facilitators. 5. New LEAN techniques being experimented with under the Kaizen banner.
Risk if action is not taken	Demand outstrips capacity. Key improvements are not made. Kaizen loses credibility and operates in a silo of the type it seeks to break down.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure there is a fully trained facilitator in each Service, with competencies to deliver different Kaizen models depending on the scope of the project e.g. mini Kaizen. 2. Develop a forward programme of Kaizen events for each service (min. 3 per service). 3. 100% of Kaizen project managers reporting that planning, execution and follow up met their needs. 4. 90% of outcomes implemented within the agreed timescale. 5. 100% of managers reporting that Kaizen resolves their critical business issue. 6. External recognition for Kaizen model and project outcomes.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Min of one fully trained facilitator in each Service, with competencies to deliver different Kaizen models depending on the scope of the project. 2. 100% of Kaizen project managers reporting that planning, execution and follow up met their needs. 3. 100% of outcomes implemented within the agreed timescale. 4. 100% of managers reporting that Kaizen resolves their critical business issue.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth in the number of experts service by service, with full competencies to deliver different Kaizen models.
Responsible person(s)	Pat Browne, Kaizen Champion
Resource Implications	Staff Time – CE Policy Team Budget
Performance Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. % of Kaizen Team Leaders reporting that planning, execution and follow up met their needs. 2. % of outcomes seen to be implemented within the agreed timescale. 3. % of Managers reporting that Kaizen resolved their critical business issue.

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Manage the development and implementation of the Council's corporate equalities agenda.
Action Plan	CE 1.8

Outcome sought	Equality principles are embedded in all policy, planning and service delivery processes across the Council.
Current Position	<p>1. The second annual review of the Race Equality Scheme (RES) 2005-08 Action Plan was reported to P&R Committee on 21 February 2008. Community consultation and review of the current scheme will start in May, resulting in the development of a new RES for 2008-11.</p> <p>3. The first annual progress report on the Council's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) 2006-09 Action Plan was presented to P&R Committee in January 2008. An Employee Disability Forum was launched in February 2008 and a DES Implementation Monitoring Group established to ensure regular (4-monthly) reporting on the DES Action Plan.</p> <p>4. Arrangements are in place to carry out the first annual review of the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) Action Plan by the end of June 2008.</p> <p>5. Approximately 95 officers have been trained to assess the equality impact of Council policies.</p> <p>6. Consideration is being given to merging the different equality schemes in the near future.</p>
Risk if action is not taken	The Council provides non-responsive services to a majority of Aberdeenshire citizens and Council employees. The Council faces enforcement action by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) for non-compliance, and is subjected to adverse publicity and public criticism.
Actions 08/09	<p>1. Review the current RES and publish the 2008-11 Scheme by 30 November 2008.</p> <p>2. Four-monthly monitoring of the DES Action plan.</p> <p>3. Undertake the first annual review of the GES Action Plan by end June 2008.</p> <p>4. Progress equality impact assessments, including the Council's Strategic Priorities document.</p> <p>5. Develop relations with relevant communities and organisations, including agreeing a Service Level Agreement with the Grampian Racial Equality Council.</p>
Actions 09/10	<p>1. Undertake 3-year review of DES.</p> <p>2. Continue to monitor the action plans for the RES and GES.</p> <p>3. Continue to prioritise and undertake equality impact assessment of policies.</p> <p>4. Continue to develop links with relevant bodies and organisations.</p>
Actions 10/11	<p>1. Continue to monitor implementation of the equality action plans.</p> <p>2. Undertake projects in other areas of equality (age, religion, belief).</p>
Responsible person(s)	Mercy Yaor, Policy Officer - Equalities
Resource Implications	Staff time – CE Policy Team Budget
Performance Measures	<p>1. Equality Schemes developed to statutory deadlines.</p> <p>2. Actions in equality schemes delivered to agreed timescales.</p> <p>3. Improved links and working relations with the relevant local communities and external bodies/organisations.</p>

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Developing our Partnerships, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Lead, support and coordinate the community planning process.
Action Plan	CE 1.9
Outcome sought	The community planning process is carried out effectively, efficiently and inclusively.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Community Plan 2006-10 was launched in March 2006. 2. The Community Planning Partnership is working towards establishing an effective performance monitoring and reporting framework. 3. The citizens' panel has been running for four years and completed 12 surveys. 4. The Joint Health Improvement Plan (JHIP) 2007-2010 was published in late 2007.
Risk if action is not taken	The Community Planning Partnership fails to deliver its objectives, and is unable to report progress to the Scottish Government.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual review and report on 2007/08 partnership activity and achievements published by June 2008. 2. New 3 year joint partnership budget agreed. 3. Community planning priorities agreed and implemented to timetable. 4. Review Single Outcome Agreement with partners and submit CPP SOA to Scottish Government. 5. Consultation with residents and partners using 4 Citizen's Panel surveys and other consultation methods as required. 6. Organise seminars for elected members on community planning. 7. Complete annual update of the JHIP action plan.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual review and report on partnership activity for 2008/09 and achievements published by June 2009. 2. Preparatory work for Community Plan 2010-14. 3. Review the Single Outcome Agreement with partners and submit the CPP SOA to Scottish Government. 4. Re-tender the Citizen's Panel contract (alongside resident's survey contract). 5. Consultation with residents and partners as per 2008/09. 6. Complete annual update of JHIP action plan.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual review and report on partnership activity for 2009/10 and achievements published by June 2009. 2. Community Planning priorities reviewed, revised, agreed and implemented to timetable. 3. Review Single Outcome Agreement with partners and submit CPP SOA to Scottish Government. 4. Consultation with residents and partners as per 2008/09 5. Complete annual update of JHIP action plan
Responsible person(s)	Roger White, Head of Policy; Erin Wood, Policy Officer (Community Planning), Jennifer Hall, Public Health Lead, Aberdeenshire (JHIP)
Resource Implications	Staff time –CE Policy Team budget, Community Planning Partners budgets, NHS budget (JHIP) Citizens' panel costs – Community Planning Partners budgets
Performance Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Planning priorities action plans implemented to timetable. 2. Theme forum objectives and indicators completed to timetable. 3. Annual reports published by agreed deadlines. 4. Citizens' panel survey work completed within planned timescales.

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE1 Providing advice, guidance and support on corporate policy and improvement issues.
Objective	Lead, support and coordinate the implementation and review of the Aberdeenshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy 2006-2008 and Outcome Agreement.
Action Plan	CE 1.10
Outcome sought	The strategy is implemented effectively, efficiently and inclusively. The targets set out in the Outcome Agreement agreed with the Scottish Executive are met.
Current Position	The Concordat between local and central government has led to some significant changes with regard to the way antisocial behaviour and community safety issues are addressed locally. Ring-fenced Antisocial behaviour funding ceased on 31 March 2008. The final annual progress report to the Scottish Government is to be submitted by 30 April 2008. In the future funding will be provided by Aberdeenshire Council at a level to be agreed.
Risk if action is not taken	Failure to identify long-term funding could lead to the withdrawal of antisocial behaviour and community safety services and consequently to reduced wellbeing within the community. The Strategic Assessment process is hindered and the development of future strategies is delayed.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Aberdeenshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy (2006-2008) and amend as appropriate. 2. Consult with members of the public using the Citizens Panel surveys to assess the perception of the level of antisocial behaviour in Aberdeenshire. 3. Carry out a robust review of all services provided through the antisocial behaviour and community safety budgets. 4. Consider whether a joint Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy should be produced. 5. Publish the Aberdeenshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy (2008 onwards), or the combined Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for 2008 onwards as appropriate.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Aberdeenshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy (2008 onwards) and amend as appropriate. 2. Consult with members of the public using the Citizens Panel surveys to assess the perception of the level of antisocial behaviour in Aberdeenshire.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Aberdeenshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy (2008 onwards) and amend as appropriate. 2. Consult with members of the public using the Citizens Panel surveys to assess the perception of the level of antisocial behaviour in Aberdeenshire.
Responsible person(s)	Kathleen Power, Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy Coordinator
Resource Implications	Staff time –Community Safety Partners' budgets. The Aberdeenshire Community Safety Partnership will receive £575,000 from Aberdeenshire Council for the financial year 2008/09. This funding will be divided amongst what was previously known as Antisocial Behaviour, Community Safety, Community Wardens and the Local Action Fund.
Performance Measures	TBC

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE2 Providing a Corporate Communications Service
Objective	To manage the reputation of the Council through effective delivery of internal and external communications, public affairs, consultation, graphic design services and photography.
Action Plan	CE 2.1
Outcome sought	The corporate communications team is effective, professional and proactive, providing communications and design support to all council services in order to positively represent the organisation to residents and partners.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of Corporate Communications modernisation review, resulting in an improved structure. 2. The 3-year Corporate Communications strategy was adopted by P&R Committee in November 2007. 3. New communication technologies are being developed by the team. The Aberdeenshire Live Network will be extended by a further 10 screens by April 2008 and plans are in place to work in partnership with the police to develop the network further. 4. A Council A-Z has been developed and distributed to all residents with Council Tax bills. 5. An officer dedicated to internal communications has been appointed to make improvements to communications across the Council. 6. The Core Brief has been re-launched and is distributed to managers every 2 weeks. 7. The internal staff magazine 'Accent' has been developed and improved. 8. Improvements have been made to the Public Performance Report, although further work is required during 2008. 9. Continued media support to all services, including regular news updates to Aberdeenshire Live, Arcadia and the Website. 10. Extensive reputation management work in relation to major news events. 11. An Aberdeenshire image library has been developed and implemented. 12. The Unit provides communications support to the North Sea Regional Advisory Council as part of the Council's secretariat role.
Risk if action is not taken	The corporate communications strategy is not implemented, leading to an incoherent approach to communications, damaging the Council's reputation. The Corporate Communications Service fails to meet the needs of the Council and of Aberdeenshire citizens.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a proposal for Council newspapers/advertorials in weekly papers. 2. Develop a new approach to Public Performance Reporting. 3. Continue the development of proactive media relations. 4. Monitor and encourage submissions for corporate awards. 5. Develop an online digital press cuttings resource. 6. Extend the roll-out of the Aberdeenshire Live network, developing a partnership approach with Grampian Police.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a network of marketing professionals bringing together skills from across the Council. 2. Develop a partnership protocol for communications. 3. Lead the re-design and development of Arcadia. 4. Develop new communications methods e.g. videocasts, poster sites. 5. Prepare a crisis communications strategy.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an online press office. 2. Develop Aberdeenshire Council branded merchandise. 3. Review of Service newsletters.

Responsible person(s)	Kate Bond, Head of Corporate Communications
Resource Implications	Staff time – CCU budget Increasing investment in ICT hardware and software systems.
Performance Measures	<u>Employee survey</u> Net agreement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communications are relevant improves from +29% to +40% by 2008. • the Council is open with its employee improves from -13% to +5% by 2008. • the Council's communications are excellent improves from +29% to +40% by 2008. <u>Residents survey</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Overall I am satisfied with the information I get on Council services" improves by 10% by 2008.

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE2 Providing a Corporate Communications Service
Objective	To actively coordinate, manage and promote effective engagement and consultation across Aberdeenshire.
Action Plan	CE 2.2
Outcome sought	Aberdeenshire citizens are engaged with the work of local government and there is increased participation in the local democratic process.
Current Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Currently piloting a new database for consultation activity across the Council, ready for full implementation in late Spring 2008. 2. A revised consultation strategy has been approved by Policy & Resources Committee. 3. A consultation toolkit providing advice and guidance to staff is nearing completion. 4. A process is in place for communicating consultation activity across Aberdeenshire and encouraging activity.
Risk if action is not taken	Aberdeenshire citizens disengage from local government and do not feel involved in local decision making.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote consultation activity across the Council (internal). 2. Increase the engagement and participation of citizens by developing improved access to consultation activity (external). 3. Promote the consultation 'We asked....You said....We did' campaign.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and report back on the effectiveness of the consultation strategy. 2. Share information about consultation activity amongst partners. 3. Develop new technical streams for consultation activity e.g. Web, mobile phone.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate the potential of a partnership approach to promoting and coordinating consultations across Aberdeenshire.
Responsible person(s)	Kate Bond, Head of Corporate Communications
Resource Implications	Staff time – CCU budget Increasing investment in ICT hardware and software systems.
Performance Measures	<u>Residents survey</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How good do you think the Council is at taking account of your views over matters which concern you” – improve indicator by 10% by 2008.

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE2 Providing a Corporate Communications Service
Objective	Standardise and coordinate the design of all Council published, broadcast and web-based material, raising quality and professional standards whilst delivering cost and efficiency savings.
Action Plan	CE 2.3
Outcome sought	All Council published, broadcast and web-based materials conform to corporate standards as set by the Corporate Communications Unit. Cost and efficiency savings are achieved.
Current Position	The modernisation review of Corporate Communications has been completed and all graphic designers and the Council's photographer have been relocated into the communications service from 1 st April 2008.
Risk if action is not taken	Perceptions of the Council as a professional organisation are low. Cost and efficiency savings are not realised.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a new corporate ID and roll out across the Council. 2. Review the display and distribution of public information. 3. Ensure all Council graphic design work is handled through Corporate Communications. 4. Develop and adopt a consistent approach to City and Shire branding and communicate how these should be used in Council material.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the use of the Council's logo in all partnership or funding agreements. 2. Review the effectiveness of public information. 3. Agree a corporate approach to the translation of information. 4. Ensure all public information is managed through a central database.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the effectiveness of the new design arrangements.
Responsible person(s)	Kate Bond, Head of Corporate Communications
Resource Implications	Staff time – CCU budget
Performance Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measurable cost and efficiency savings in the production of council publications and broadcast and web-based materials. 2. Improved satisfaction relating to how well informed people feel they are through the use of public information.

Theme	Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE3 Administering and advising Area Committees and local Councillors
Objective	To ensure that Area Committees and local Councillors receive appropriate and timely advice to assist in achieving quality decision making on local and policy matters.
Action Plan	CE 3.1
Outcome sought	Well informed and timely decisions made at Area Committees.
Current Position	Area Committees are administered by Area Managers with support from Area Committee Officers.
Risk if action is not taken	Poor decisions or delay in decisions affect the confidence of the public in the Council.
Actions 08/09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to administer Area Committees efficiently and effectively ensuring that appropriate advice is available. 2. Identify and address training and development needs for Councillors. 3. Further embed working arrangements for multimember wards. 4. Advise members on policy matters.
Actions 09/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to administer Area Committees efficiently and effectively ensuring that appropriate advice is available. 2. Identify and address any training and development needs. 3. Advise members on policy matters.
Actions 10/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to administer Area Committees efficiently and effectively ensuring that appropriate advice is available. 2. Identify and address any training and development needs. 3. Advise members on policy matters.
Responsible person(s)	Area Managers.
Resource Implications	Staff time – Area Budgets
Performance Measures	<p>% Agendas issued on time.</p> <p>% Area Committee minutes without correction.</p> <p>Training needs identified and addressed.</p> <p>Working protocols in place.</p>

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE4 Producing and implementing local community plans.
Objective	To have an agreed process for the production and implementation of local community plans
Action Plan	CE 4.1
Outcome sought	Local community plans produced on time, in a consistent format and implemented according to an agreed action plan.
Current Position	Following a comprehensive review of the council and partner plans a new format for two yearly local community plans has been agreed. These will contain locally driven responses to the Community Planning themes and the revised timescales will allow for full and proper consideration by public partners and the Council's services to ensure the fit of activity to community needs. The first round of these plans will appear in April 2008.
Risk if action is not taken	Failure to consistently implement the local community plans across the six areas. The local community plans fail to articulate local community needs and aspirations.
Actions 08/09	1. Deliver the 2008-10 local community plans on schedule in all six areas. 2. Develop an effective monitoring system to ensure actions are completed on time.
Actions 09/10	1. Monitoring of the 2008-10 local community plans
Actions 10/11	1. Deliver the 2010-12 local community plans on schedule in all six areas.
Responsible person(s)	Area Managers
Resource Implications	Development of the local community plans will be met from within the existing Area Managers budgets. Implementation will require use of a variety of service budgets and increasingly rely on partnership funding.
Performance Measures	1. Number of local community plans delivered on schedule. 2. % implementation rates achieved

Theme	Community Wellbeing, Jobs and the Economy, Lifelong Learning, Sustainable Environment, Developing our Partnerships, Corporate Improvement
Core Activity	CE5 Developing and maintaining relationships with the community in each of the six Areas.
Objective	To ensure that the Council is seen to be close and accessible to the communities it serves.
Action Plan	CE 5.1
Outcome sought	Communities (especially through community councils) are confident in their relationship with the Council
Current Position	Area Managers are seen as a contact for community councils and groups, a range of support and forums exist across the 6 Areas.
Risk if action is not taken	Poor understanding by and lack of confidence of public in the Council.
Actions 08/09	1. To continue to support community councils and other groups as appropriate to local circumstances. 2. To ensure that local views and issues are taken into account in policy making.
Actions 09/10	1. To continue to support community councils and other groups as appropriate to local circumstances. 2. To ensure that local views and issues are taken into account in policy making.
Actions 10/11	1. To continue to support community councils and other groups as appropriate to local circumstances 2. To ensure that local views and issues are taken into account in policy making.
Responsible person(s)	Area Managers.
Resource Implications	Staff time – Area Budgets
Performance Measures	1. Level of satisfaction measured in biannual survey and categorised as good or above. 2. Attendance of Area Manager representation at policy and budget setting meetings.