

**CORPORATE &
NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

**SERVICE PERFORMANCE
PLAN**

2009-2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Our Service Performance Plan for 2009-2012 sets out the priorities for Corporate and Neighbourhood Services over the next year and beyond. The Plan sets out our service objectives under each of the goals of the Council and the outcomes contained within the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 Our Service Performance Plan was revised in 2008 to take account of the Council's Corporate Plan, as well as the Falkirk Council Area's Community Planning Partnerships Single Outcome Agreement. This Plan takes account of the new SOA for 2009 /2011 which has recently been approved by the Community Planning Partnership.
- 1.3 Our Service Performance Plan looks back at the successes achieved since our previous Plan and sets out key objectives, tasks and performance measures for the Service, as we seek to contribute to making our area where people want to work, live, and visit - **'the place to be'**. This is the vision for our area as set out in our area's Strategic Community Plan and by which we measure all that we do.
- 1.4 This plan covers all the aspects of service provide by Corporate and Neighbourhood Services. This ensures that we work as one service to utilise all our resources to deliver on our local outcomes.
- 1.5 Our Service's objectives, tasks and performance measures have been aligned with the Council's Corporate Goals of:
 - Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy;
 - Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities;
 - Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination in all its forms; and
 - Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to work, live and visit.
- 1.6 In addition, the Service Plan recognises the need to ensure we work in a manner that underpins the values of the Council i.e. Partnership, Public Service and Performance. We also confirm our commitment to stimulating partnership working amongst agencies, organisations, citizens and communities. Most importantly we understand that we need to work in partnership with our employees in order to achieve the Council's priorities and therefore meet the needs and aspirations of our communities.
- 1.7 The Service continues to meet the challenges of supporting the Community Planning Partnership achieve the vision for our area. We will continue to examine the needs of the people and communities within our area and ensure our services are delivered in the best way to meet their changing needs. The services we deliver and the way we are organised to deliver these is subject to continuous scrutiny and inspection both internally by our Members and externally. We have plans in place to address previous audit and inspection reports and will seek to ensure our services are continuously improving to meet these challenges.

1.8 Our main priorities over the life of this Plan include:

- Improving the way we deliver our services to ensure they are efficient, effective and continue to meet the changing needs of our communities;
- Supporting the Council and its Community Planning Partners to deliver on our joint local outcomes;
- Promoting equality and equity of access in all that we do;
- Promoting environmentally friendly initiatives; and
- Being an employer of choice.

1.9 Our Service Performance Plan is supported by Divisional Plans that provide more detail on how we will achieve each of our objectives and monitor progress effectively.

1.10 This Service Plan has been developed in a time of change. In particular the Council is currently in the process of reviewing service structures. While this may change how we are organised to deliver our services, it fundamentally will not change what we are striving to deliver. As such the priorities and actions within our plan will not change.

1.11 Our objectives for the next year are challenging, however I am confident that based on our track record of achievement, with the co-operation and support of all employees within the Service, Elected Members, Trades Unions, colleagues in other Services and our external partners, significant progress will be made in achieving the objectives of this Plan and making our area the place to be in the third millennium.

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DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2. SERVICE PROFILE & PURPOSE

Background

- 2.1 Corporate and Neighbourhood Services was established by Council in June 2008. It brings together the services previously provided by Corporate and Commercial Services and Housing. The key benefit underpinning this change was the ability to offer enhanced support to front-line services and also allow a more customer focussed approach to service delivery. The Council also took the decision in June 2008, to combine responsibility for all aspects of roads maintenance and improvement under Development Services.
- 2.2 The variety and scope of the services we deliver is diverse, ranging from policy development and housing strategy to catering and litter collection, with all of them influencing the quality of life for our citizens.
- 2.3 Our total revenue budget in 2009/10 is £132m gross expenditure. The budget for housing is £60m.
- 2.4 We have approximately 1,800 employees within the Service who are located in our main headquarters buildings at the Municipal Buildings and the Forum in Callendar Business Park and also at various depots and local offices across the Council area and in all the Council's schools, libraries and other operational buildings.

Service Purpose

- 2.5 The common purpose of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services is to:

'Support and deliver the best in Scotland for Falkirk.'

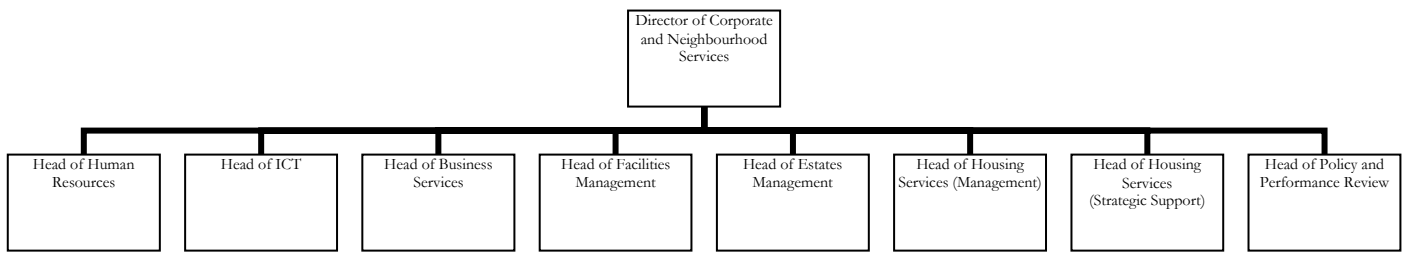
- 2.6 We aim to achieve this by encouraging our employees to promote the following values:

excellence, new ideas, excitement, respect, good team players, enthusiasm, trust, integrity and with constructive challenge.

Profile

- 2.7 Our Service comprises a number of operating Divisions. Our current established structure is set out in the diagram below:

Management Team

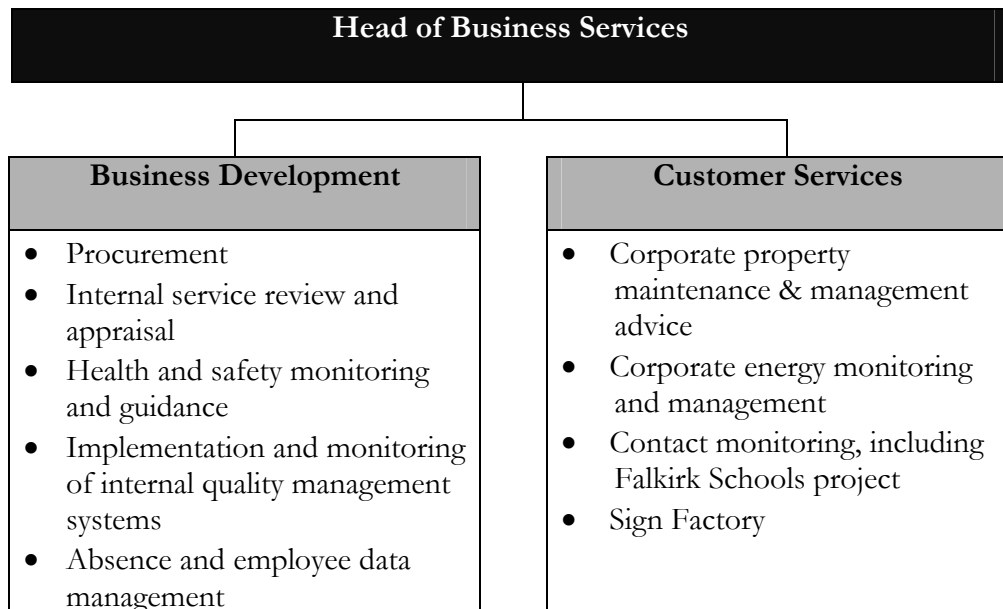


2.8 There are currently a number of vacancies in our Management Team. Arrangements have been put in place to ensure continuity of service delivery and support to employees pending the Council's review of service structures. For example the Head of Facilities Management also has responsibility for Housing Management and the Head of Business Services has responsibility for some aspects of Estates Management and Facilities Management.

2.9 The Divisions each comprise a number of operating units, the functions of which are shown below.

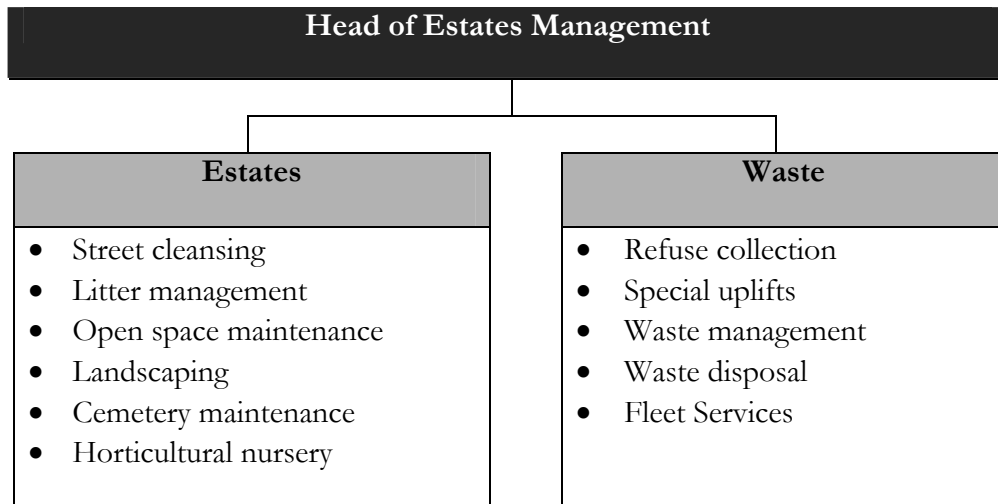
Business Services

2.10 The aim of this Division is to promote and implement continuous improvement in the efficiency of corporate purchasing and procurement, energy management and property management services on behalf of all Council Services. The Business Services Division also provides a support function to front line services in terms of business planning, service reviews, health & safety, quality assurance, personnel and administration. In addition, Business Services independently monitors and reports on service performance, in terms of financial, quality, customer satisfaction and operational matters.



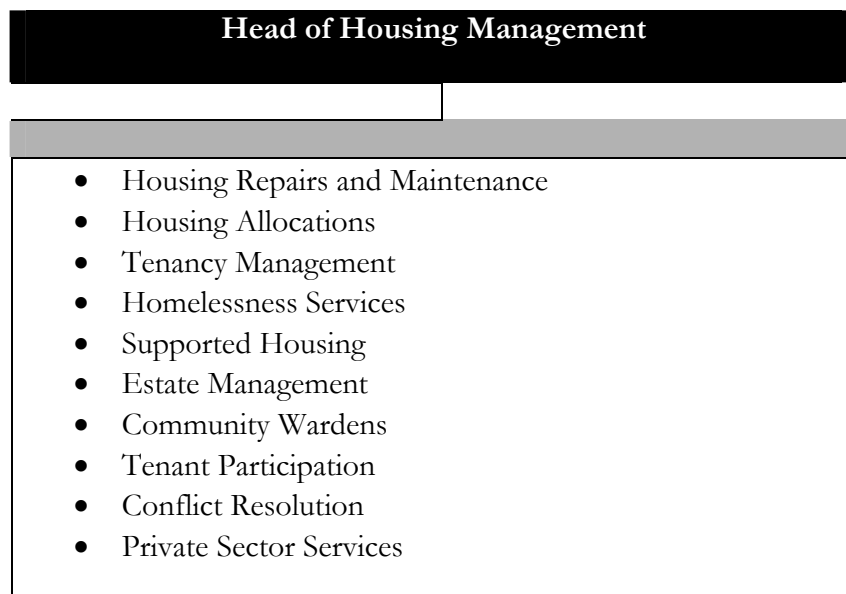
Estates Management

2.11 This Division has responsibility for “street care” matters such as refuse collection and disposal, street cleansing and grounds maintenance together with Fleet Services. Following the establishment of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services in June 2008, roads services are now being managed by Development Services. Pending the finalisation of the review of Council structures, waste services are managed directly by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services and Estates Management functions managed by the Head of Business Services.



Housing Services

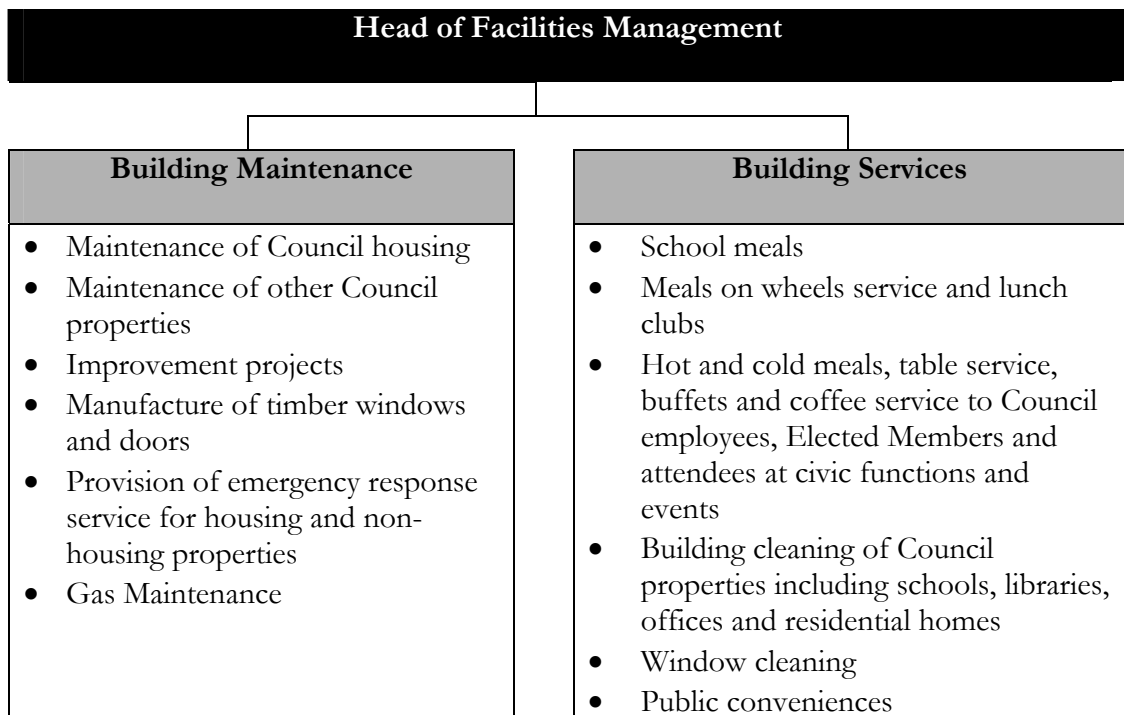
2.12 The Housing Service is organised under 2 arms, Housing Management and Strategic Support. The aim of the Housing Management division is to provide high quality housing and estate management services to the Council’s tenants and housing applicants as well as assistance to some private sector tenants and home owners. The Strategic Support Unit has a range of functions covering both the Council’s responsibilities in relation to strategic housing planning, investment, regeneration and partnership activity as well as other tasks across the Housing Service in respect of information and research, ICT, performance management and service planning.





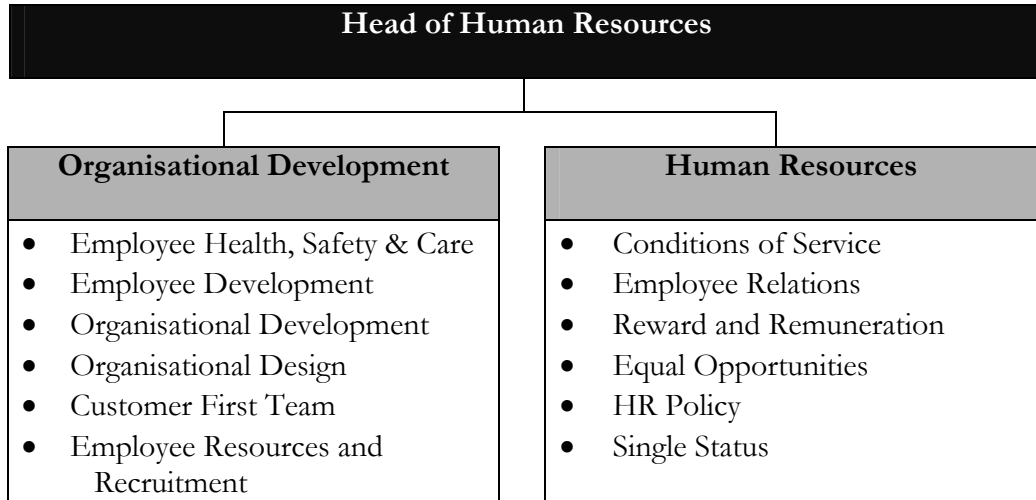
Facilities Management

2.13 The Facilities Management Division consists of the Building Maintenance Division and the Building Cleaning and Catering operations. This Division carries out a range of activities all related to the maintenance and servicing of Council properties. The role of Head of Facilities Management is currently combined with that of Head of Housing Management. This has allowed further co-ordination and integration with the maintenance service provided to our tenants. As such, the Building Services responsibilities below are currently being managed by the Head of Business Services.



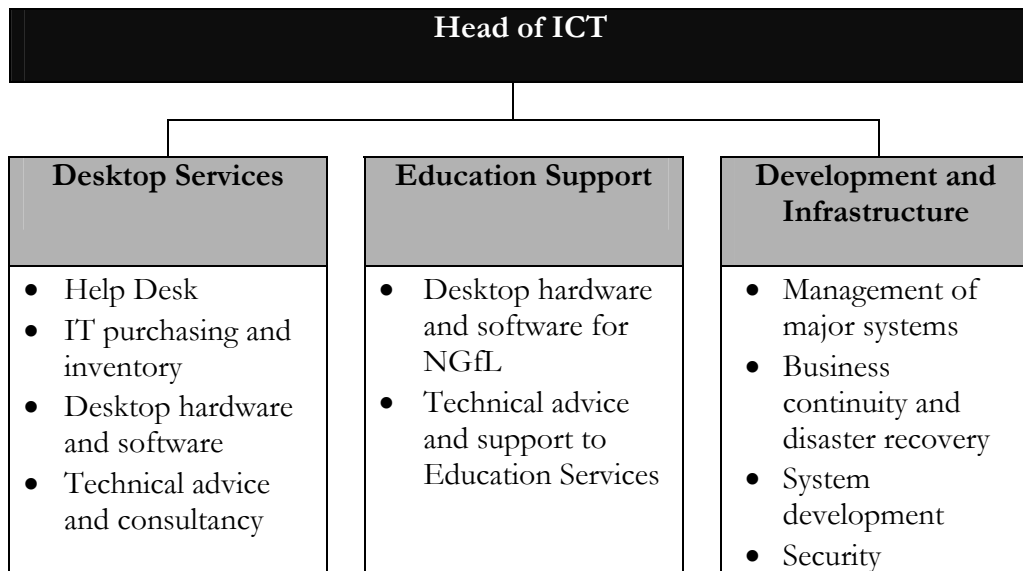
Human Resources

2.14 The key aim of the Human Resources Division confirms the Council’s commitment to be an employer of choice with employees who are happy, healthy and here. In developing and delivering on the vision, the Human Resources Division consists of two Units as detailed below:



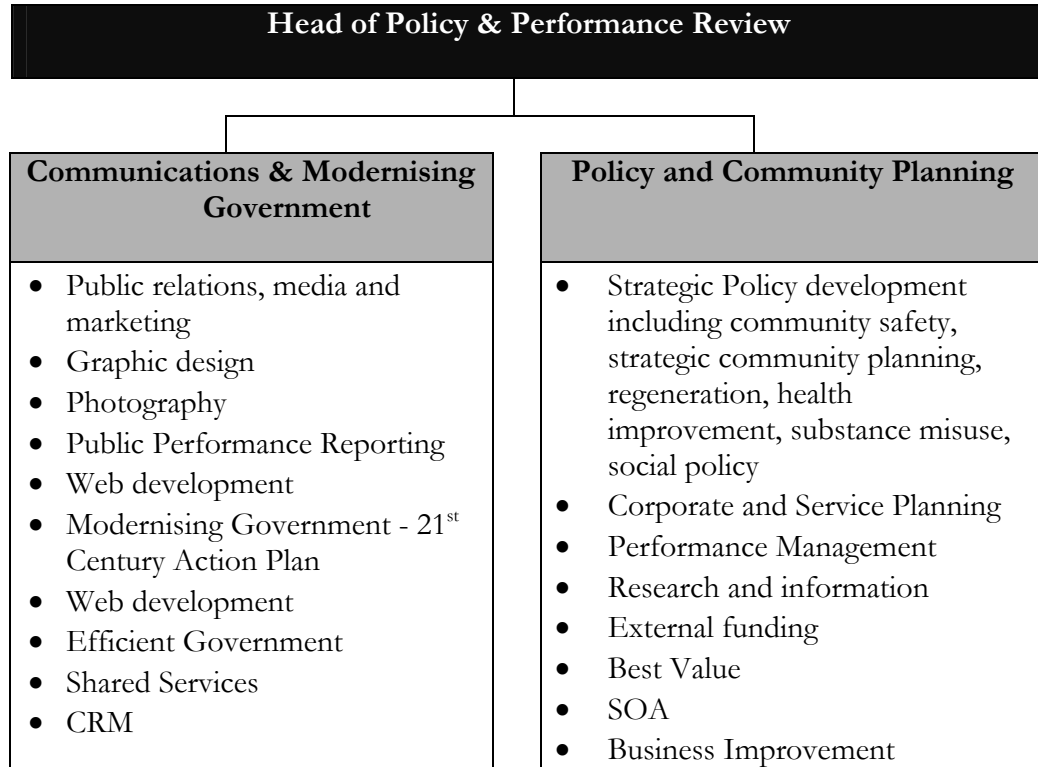
Information, Communications & Technology (ICT)

2.15 The aim of the ICT Division is to provide quality solutions for the information, technology and communications that support and promote the priorities of the Council. The Division consists of three Units that provide key functions and services as shown. This Division is currently directly managed by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services.



Policy & Performance Review

2.16 The key aim of the Policy and Performance Review Division is to provide a professional service, which supports, develops and reviews the Council's corporate management and strategic policy priorities.



3. CONTEXT & ENVIRONMENT

Context

- 3.1 As a diverse Service we provide a range of essential services to our communities and also internally to the Council. To do this, we must ensure we understand the complexity of the needs of our stakeholders. We also appreciate that these stakeholders will have different interests in what we do at different times and on different issues. We have noted our main stakeholders and our relationship with them in Section 9 of this Plan. We are committed to consulting our stakeholders to ensure we understand their expectations of and views on the services we provide.

External Environment

- 3.2 There are a number of external factors that will influence the work of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services during the life of this plan. While a number of these are not new, their impact will continue to influence the work of the Service for some time. This year however we also must ensure we understand how the current recession will impact on the delivery of our services, our customers and our communities. The Council has adopted an Economic Action Plan, and we will ensure that we play our part in addressing the issues contained therein.
- 3.3 We also understand that over the last few years the demographics of our area have changed considerably. Not only has our population increased but we now have a higher birth rate than death rate. This puts pressures on our services to ensure we are not only addressing the needs of older people but ensuring we are continuing to provide much needed services to children, young people and families. Unfortunately due to the recession, the area has experienced an increase in its unemployment rate over the last few months, as well as an increase in people referring to other agencies and services with debt and money problems. All these factors continue to put pressures on our services that we must meet.
- 3.4 In particular we know that the economic recession will impact directly on our tenants. Recently, there have been insufficient lets to meet the demand for permanent accommodation for homeless applicants in particular. This in turn means that the Council's temporary accommodation has become pressured and increasing numbers of applicants have required to be housed in temporary bed & breakfast accommodation, at considerable cost. The abolition of the priority need test will increase this pressure further and as such poses a significant challenge for the Council in meeting statutory duties.
- 3.5 There is a need to tackle this issue on several fronts; by continuing to improve on measures to prevent homelessness, by increasing the supply of both permanent and temporary accommodation, and by making use of the private sector where appropriate.
- 3.6 The Council's economic downturn action plan sets out commitment to promote investment in new affordable housing and stimulate new housing development through the following measures:
- developing 300 affordable houses in the next three years;
 - developing partnerships with local RSLs and other housing agencies to deliver new homes for rent or low cost home ownership;
 - conducting a Seminar with housing agencies, including Homes for Scotland to stimulate investment in house construction;
 - exploring opportunities for house construction on development sites; and

- including community benefits clauses to new investment contracts.
- 3.7 Financial difficulties faced by households in the area may impact on service delivery, for example through increased pressure on the waiting list and on homelessness services, and reduced income through an increase in rent arrears. These issues will be monitored and efforts will be concentrated on providing support to households facing difficult circumstances by working in partnership with colleagues in Finance to identify ways in which rent arrears can be better managed. Section 11 of the Homelessness etc Scotland Act 2003 requires other landlords, RSL's, creditors etc. to notify us of cases where they are taking court action to repossess tenancies and homes in order to let us take early intervention.
- 3.8 The Scottish Government's Firm Foundations document, issued in October 2007, sets out a vision for the future of housing in Scotland involving an increased supply of housing across all tenures, more choice of housing for people on lower incomes, housing developments that contribute to sustainable mixed communities and social housing that provides better value for public expenditure. Even before the impact of the current recession, Firm Foundations raised a number of challenges for the Council in planning future service delivery. The current economic situation which is having a significant impact on the supply of affordable housing means that there is increased pressure on the Council to work in partnership to maximise the funding available for the delivery of affordable housing and to look at innovative ways of meeting housing needs.
- 3.9 Experience of previous recessions is that public spending reduces as the economy recovers, which means that the Service must prepare for budgetary restrictions in future years. Measures to facilitate this are likely to focus on increased collaborative working, reduced duplication and increased efficiency.
- 3.10 The Scottish Government have set a target for all local authorities to eradicate fuel poverty 'as far as reasonably practical' by 2016, which involves a holistic approach looking at all the factors in fuel poverty: energy efficiency and energy use, energy prices and tariffs, and incomes. The increased costs of energy, together with increasing unemployment, are pulling people back into fuel poverty which means that achieving this target represents a significant challenge.
- 3.11 We will continue to work to meet the challenges of the Local Government Scotland Act 2003 which has a major influence on the delivery of all Council Services. This is particularly true in respect of our approach to Best Value and Community Planning. We understand that while we demonstrate many of the characteristics of best value, we must continuously seek improvements in our systems and processes that lead directly to improved, efficient and effective services. Our role is to ensure that as a Service we can demonstrate continuous improvement but also support the Council and other services in this. This will be a focus of activity over the next year and beyond as the new Best Value Audit regime is developed.
- 3.12 A continuing challenge for the Council and our services is ensuring that within a context of continuous improvement we are also striving to be efficient and effective as possible. We must work with all our partners to make sure that any changes positively benefit our services, employees and, of course, the people we provide services to. We understand that we will be seeking to deliver improved services with fewer resources and that provides a challenge for us all. As a Service we are working with other services to audit and review existing service provision, to develop a 'lean' approach to service delivery and drive out necessary efficiency savings. This corporate approach to the quality of services provided by the Council ensures that our customers receive the same quality of service provision on each and every occasion. Our aim is to ensure services are provided to a high standard and at a cost that allows us to meet the needs of our communities.

- 3.13 Part of this process is the development of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) that the Council and our Community Planning Partners agreed with the Scottish Government. This has established a robust performance framework by which we can assess the impact we collectively are having on our area. This year we have refreshed our SOA with partners and demonstrated further progress on actions that will achieve our agreed outcomes.
- 3.14 In order to ensure all our partners contribute effectively to the achievement of the SOA, we will over the coming months work with them to refresh and renew our Strategic Community Plan.
- 3.15 The Service has always been committed to ensuring we play our part in meeting the Council's aspirations with regards to sustainability. This has included not only looking at fundamental changes to the way we deliver services but also some of the small changes we can all do to reduce our impact on the environment. We also are committed to working with other services to deliver the Council's Carbon Reduction Strategy that will help to meet national targets.
- 3.16 Community Safety, including anti social behaviour, substance misuse, health and the wider regeneration strategy, will also require involvement of all our Services, both in translating the strategies into action and in supporting their implementation. The implementation of a new Strategic Community Plan and revised community planning process for the Council area will be a major focus of activity over the coming year and beyond. We have to ensure our community planning activity is adding value and actually taking forward the vision for our area.
- 3.17 In terms of housing management services, the key challenge is working towards the vision of delivering world class services across the core business areas of void management, allocations, tenancy management, tenancy sustainment, repairs and maintenance, homelessness services, supported housing, private sector services, conflict resolution, estate management, and tenant participation.
- 3.18 In terms of strategic housing functions, the Service has to respond to a range of requirements associated with the preparation of the next Local Housing Strategy (LHS). Under new arrangements for the preparation of local housing strategies which must be fully integrated with Local Development Plans, the next full LHS will cover the period 2011 -2016. However an immediate priority is the preparation of a LHS update which will act as a bridge between the current plan (2004-2009) and the new plan in 2011. Within this context there are specific challenges associated with meeting the 2012 homelessness target, the 2015 SHQS target, the 2016 target for the eradication of fuel poverty and other requirements associated with home energy efficiency, affordable housing provision and new private sector housing responsibilities resulting from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.
- 3.19 Communities Scotland's inspection in 2007/08 was a major influence on activity across the Service. Over the course of the Service Plan period a key driver of Service priorities will remain the Improvement Plan prepared following Communities Scotland's inspection. This Plan includes 99 specific improvement actions, the majority of which were required to be completed during 2008/09, while the remainder will be dealt with in 2009/10. Progress on the Improvement Plan is reported to Members through the Housing and Social Care Committee and is monitored closely by the Service through our performance management framework.

Internal Environment

- 3.20 A key driver for the Council is ensuring Services are aligned to deliver on the priorities within our Corporate Plan. Our last service performance plan was completely revised in order to ensure our services maximised their contribution to the Council's priorities i.e. local outcomes, as set out in the new Corporate Plan. This Plan reaffirms our commitment to ensuring these local outcomes are delivered.
- 3.21 Our Service strives to take forward the Council's Goals and Values, in the context of improving customer care, increased public expectation of the services we deliver and with an increasing focus on best value. We have through various processes identified key areas of service improvement and this work will intensify over the next year as we refine our approach to quality management, self assessment service review and efficient government.
- 3.22 As mentioned previously the Council is currently reviewing its service structures. As this review has not concluded it is too early to anticipate how this may impact on the way we are organised to deliver services. We must however in the meantime ensure that, where appropriate, we are integrating and redesigning services to better meet our customer's needs. Throughout any reorganisation we must also ensure we are delivering the services our customers, both internal and external, require and to the standards they expect. We must also ensure that our employees and trade union colleagues are kept fully abreast of the impact of any proposed changes.
- 3.23 An important area of work for the Council in the next year will be workforce planning in line with the work being undertaken at a national level by CoSLA and the Improvement Service. This aims to ensure we work collectively with other local authorities in ensuring our workforce is skilled and trained to meet the Council's future changing requirements.
- 3.24 Modernising the way we deliver our services has a major impact on the work that we do and how we support other Council services. Corporate and Neighbourhood Services has a number of roles in progressing the modernising agenda – from co-ordinating and driving the overall programme of modernisation within the Council, working with services on the development of our recently launched intranet, further developing our CRM system, ensuring our IT infrastructure meets our aspirations for service delivery and making sure our services meet our customers needs at the first point of contact through the further development of our customer contact centre. Over the next year we will be reviewing our approach to Modernising Government through our 21st Century Action Plan.
- 3.25 Over the next year we will continue to develop the work of our Customer First team which includes our One Stop Shops, contact centre and Emergency Control Teams, with the aim of ensuring effective customer service at the same standard whichever method a customer uses to contact us. We will make use of the nationally developed certificate in Excellence in Customer Service to do this.
- 3.26 In order to progress the national modernising agenda, we will seek to deliver the actions set out in Council's Procurement Strategy in line with on-going national developments in procurement and increasing efficiency targets.
- 3.27 Following the introduction of single status we must consider the impact on related recent case law and how this impacts on all of our employee groups. We will also be taking steps over the next year to conclude a review of craft employee conditions.

- 3.28 For a number of years, the Council has worked hard to tackle the major issue of absence. The results of this work have shown marked improvements in the recent months in absence figures. Despite this, it remains one of the Council's poorest performing Statutory Performance Indicators. Work will continue over the next year with the aim of further reducing absence both within the Service and in supporting other services do the same.
- 3.29 All of this will complement the Service's developing workforce plan that will in turn underpin the agreed Workforce Strategy for the Council – Better People, Better Services. It is essential that all Divisions of the Service use this within their work plans to further develop the employment culture within the Council to reflect the vision within the strategy. All Divisions are required to develop workforce plans which will support this as well as address potential skills gaps, ensuring the Service is fit for purpose both now and in the future.
- 3.30 In order to ensure our commercial activities remain competitive and provide value for money, we will continue to review them. In addition, we will implement the improvements actions following from the Best Value Review of Building Maintenance STO undertaken in 2008/09. We will also conclude a review of our corporate policy function to redefine our role in supporting the Council achieve its priorities.
- 3.31 The delivery of all our services must be set within a clear commitment to risk management and the health and safety of our employees and our communities. We have over a number of years developed an awareness of the risks we must mitigate against in order to continue to deliver quality services. This means planning for pandemic flu, maintaining the reputation and trust our communities have in the Council, as well as ensuring we can continue to maintain the delivery of critical services in the event of a major emergency.

4. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SERVICE PLAN & KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 4.1 This section summarises some of the key issues and priorities addressed by the Service over the life of our previous Service Performance Plan.
- 4.2 The Service is committed to ensuring that our employees have the necessary skills and training to help them deliver on the priorities of the Council. We established a programme of regular one-to-one meetings at which training needs are discussed and resources committed to giving employees access to training and professional development opportunities. We have underpinned this with a process of leadership competencies in order that we can ensure our managers are equipped to lead our services appropriately to meet the challenges we face over the coming years and beyond. We are also developing and implementing training assessments for all operational employees.
- 4.3 Work has started in Housing to ensure processes are in place to gain IIP accreditation. This builds on work that has taken place over the last year to look at employee issues within the division and ensure they are addressed appropriately.
- 4.4 The Council was one of the first in Scotland to introduce Single Status. This has had a major impact on grades and conditions of service. The appeals process is well underway and should be completed this year. This should help bring closure to some issues relating to employee morale. The Council must however, remain competitive as an employer. Simultaneously, cognisance must be taken of developing equal pay case law and changes made if required to the package. Regular equality checks must also be carried out to ensure pay and conditions packages remain equality proof.
- 4.5 In order that the Council achieves its priorities as set out in our Corporate Plan, the Service has listed priorities and achievements under our goals and values. Over the last year we have made considerable progress against those outcomes. The following sets out some of these key achievements though it should be stressed that not everything the Service has achieved over the last year is listed.

Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy;

- One of the core themes of the Council's Procurement Strategy is to develop procurement good practice in order to maximise community benefits through regeneration and supporting the local economy. The outcomes of our Community Benefits in Procurement work delivered 45 apprenticeship and other trainee work placements for young people in the Falkirk Council area during 2008/09 in a range of construction related contracts, including our new school build programme and affordable housing construction. Our work in this area was featured in a Scottish Government Report on Community Benefits in Procurement.
- In addition, during 2007/08 the Council spent approximately £77 million with businesses located within the Falkirk Council area. This equates to 42.5% of the Council's total procurement expenditure and is slightly higher than previous year's figures 41%. Through the implementation of the Council's Local Company Engagement Strategy, the Council is aiming to further build on this.
- The Service has over the last year employed 19 modern apprentices.
- We have worked with various housing agencies including Homes for Scotland to stimulate investment in housing construction in the area. The Council has continued to develop its

current house building programme by constructing seven new Council houses in Falkirk, Stenhousemuir and Denny for people with disabilities.

- The first Strategic Housing Plan which informs future housing partnership developments with Registered Social Landlords was approved this year.
- A number of units within the Service worked to support the successful HELIX lottery bid. This includes external funding advice, branding and design work, as well as website development and media co-ordination. The work undertaken alongside the HELIX partners was commended as the Best Local Government Communications Partnership in the UK by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and awarded Silver at the 2007 CIPR Civic Pride Awards.
- We continued to fund a taxi marshalling service within Falkirk Town Centre. This ensured our town centres were attractive places in terms of night time economies.

Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities;

- Our school meal uptake continues to be above the national average.
- We are one of the first Councils in Scotland to achieve the Gold Healthy Working Lives Award, which replaces the Gold SHAW award which the Council held for several years. The Healthy Working Lives award assesses not just our approach to health promotion, well being and lifestyle support as was covered by the SHAW award. It also assesses our health and safety initiatives, sustainability initiatives and the advice we provide to all employees in these areas.
- The Service continues to support the work of our Community Safety Partnership and also the Anti Social Behaviour Strategy. Again these partnerships delivered a number of significant achievements. This included delivering along with partners the Safer Streets initiative.
- We have reviewed the work of our Community Wardens and Enforcement Teams to ensure they can provide services to those areas most in need. We have also continued to support the safer streets initiative and developed with partners in Forth Valley an innovative solution to information sharing on Anti Social Behaviour.
- The Service launched a Council wide 'Premises Managers Handbook', which ensures all premises managers have appropriate information and guidance as to their role. This is supported by training and considered by a number of other Councils to be an example of best practice.
- We have reviewed arrangements for the provision of adaptations for tenants with particular needs. Following consultation with service users and staff in our Housing Division and Social Work Services, revised joint working arrangements have been introduced to ensure the consistency of service delivery across the Council area.
- The service reviewed health and safety procedures in relation to the appropriate statutory requirements for gas, asbestos and electricity.
- Housing has recently contributed to the multi-agency liaison arrangements to provide services and improve outcomes for children affected by domestic abuse as part of the GIRFEC Domestic Abuse project currently being piloted in Falkirk.
- We have established a dedicated voids team to reduce the turn around time for void properties, thereby improving rent loss and controlling costs.
- A sample local house conditions survey was commissioned of all the Council's housing stock, as well as an all tenure house conditions survey, with future phases to be completed in 2009.

Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination in all its forms;

- We reviewed the Council's Domestic Abuse strategy to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support both the public and employees;
- The Service worked with partners to develop 'IDEAL' information on diversity and equality agencies locally. This will improve our consultation on all equality issues.
- The Service also developed a new on line method of carrying out Equality Impact Assessments which allows better monitoring of progress and more robust systems for assessment.
- We co-ordinated the Council's response to the Fairer Scotland Fund, ensuring resources are targeted appropriately at our most disadvantaged communities. We continue to monitor the impact of this funding through our SOA.
- Uptake of free school meals is in line with previous year levels, with secondary schools uptake at 71% and primary school uptake at 93%. These uptake levels are recognised as the being the highest in mainland Scotland.
- The Service developed the Council's Equality Scheme which unlike many organisations covered all areas of equality in a single scheme. This has made it much simpler for the Council to effectively direct its resources at essential areas of development to tackle equality issues. It also reflects the changing trend at a national level with the three former Commissions covering race, gender and disability being merged into the Equality and Human Rights Commission. To support this, we developed 6 key equality priorities which have now been agreed and are being implemented within all Services. These have allowed the Service Equality Action Plans to be further developed and more focused on the priorities which suit the Falkirk Council area. Good progress was made on this over the last year.
- Through our Community Planning we published six information booklets for migrant workers living and working in the area. These were launched at our annual community planning conference.
- We developed a Homelessness Strategy for the period 2008-2013 to direct activity to reduce homelessness in the area and to support vulnerable people to sustain their accommodation.
- Our housing service introduced a housing support needs assessment as part of our homelessness assessment. This has assisted in identifying applicants who are vulnerable and require housing support to sustain a tenancy and allows staff to refer applicants with particular support needs to specialist services. The use of the housing support matrix has enabled Falkirk Council to meet the interim target for 2009 with regard to the abolition of the "priority need" test for homeless applicants by 2012.
- We entered into a Public Social Partnership with Grangemouth Enterprises and the Falkirk Homeless Project (Quickstart) that provides furniture to homeless people and families and maximises the benefits to the wider community in terms of waste management and employment / training opportunities.
- £138,000 was secured from the Scottish Government for further improvements to the Travelling Persons Site at Redding.
- Our Housing Allocation policy was reviewed to ensure that priority is given to those applicants in the greatest housing need that the best use is made of the Council's housing stock and that the opportunities for applicant choice are maximised through choice-based letting arrangements. The review involved comprehensive and extensive consultation with stakeholders.

- By establishing a central team to process housing applications, maintain the housing list and match applicants with suitable vacancies, we have improved service delivery by reducing timescales for processing information and ensuring consistency.

Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to work, live and visit.

- We launched a revised version of the Community Litter Plan for the next three years. The Plan builds upon previous progress, in improving the cleanliness of the area, through the provision of more resources to tackle the litter problem, raising public awareness and in developing positive partnership working with communities and local groups.
- Performance in relation to numbers of missed bins and customer complaints relating to the Refuse Collection Service shows significant improvement on previous year performance, with a reduction for both indicators of 37%.
- Service performance in relation to the number of special uplifts completed within five days has fallen slightly on previous years levels; due to service difficulties experienced during one month of 2008/09. Overall performance for 2008/09 was 89%.
- We continue to make progress towards meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. Through the Housing Investment Programme work was completed in the following areas:
 - Kitchen & bathroom replacement to 1239 properties
 - Completion of upgrading to high rise block – Belmont Tower
 - Window replacement to 45 properties
 - Re-roofing to 119 properties
 - Electrical upgrading works to around 150 properties
 - Re-rendering to 204 properties
- We have continued to increase the uptake of the combined heat and power community heating project to 6 blocks of high rise flats in Falkirk, currently benefiting over 300 households.
- In 2008/09, approximately £450,000 was accessed from a variety of sources, such as Communities Scotland's Warm Deal Programme and Energy Efficiency Commitment funding from the power companies, thus maximising the use of external funding opportunities to implement energy efficiency improvements.
- The Council approved a Home Energy Strategy, which incorporates the Council's Fuel Poverty Strategy and action plan to help eradicate fuel poverty by the Scottish Government's target of 2016.
- We have worked to reduce domestic energy use across the Council area by 10% since 2005 and carbon dioxide emissions by 9% over the same period, as the Council makes progress towards implementing its Home Energy Conservation Act responsibilities. A reduction in home energy use of 24% has now been achieved since 1997.

Improving Our Services

- The Service issued in excess of £75m in contracts last year, which continued to derive significant financial savings for the Council. In particular, a new contract for Homecare and Housing Support (£30m) was tendered, together with the establishment for the first time of a joint contract with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils for Employee Counselling and Occupational Health Services.
- Our customers continue to rate our services highly, with around 90% of customers rating our services as average or above.

- We worked with partners on a number of initiatives to promote the Council and our area. We continued to develop our web site which was then awarded top prize in the online category at the 2008 Chartered Institute of Public Relations Awards.
- We have recently launched an updated intranet for the Council. This has included developing further online applications such as an enhanced directory.
- The Service has introduced a 'repairs by appointment' system which now accounts for around 38% of all response repairs. Over 99% of all repairs have been carried out at the appointed time with 80% of these repairs completed first time. An 'On the Spot' repairs service introduced last year also allows customers to have additional small repairs which had not originally reported to be carried out when tradesmen are at the property. In addition we purchased a new computerised repairs diagnostic tool kit which provides staff with better information and guidance on repairs. This complements a web based repairs system that enables tenants to report repairs online through the Council's web site.
- The Institute of Leadership and Management has recently awarded us as a Joint Runner Up in their Employer of the Year award which is a significant achievement for the Council.
- We worked with services to deliver an integrated Customer Complaints system. This has been developed and will soon be available to Members to manage their work. We have also implemented a corporate performance management system – Covalent.
- We have worked to ensure full integration of our MECs service within the Customer First Team. This ensures effective and efficient service delivery to the most vulnerable people in our communities.
- The Service implemented the National Recruitment Portal which provides a new method of advertising and shortlisting vacancies for all Council posts. It helps promote the image of local government whilst contributing to the savings in advertising through on line adverts.
- In addition to supporting the implementation of the Council's Corporate Customer First and Performance Management systems, the Service displays local performance reports in our Neighbourhood offices.

In addition to all of the above, the Service supported:

- The development of the Council's Corporate Plan;
- The development of the Councils and Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement and performance management framework; and
- The continued development of the Council's Improvement framework.

5. **KEY SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN**

5.1 In order to ensure our service focuses our activities to achieve the best outcomes we have two overriding commitments:

- Improve the way we manage our Service; and
- Improve the services we deliver to our customers.

5.2 Our key Service objectives, the actions required to achieve them and the timescales for their completion are highlighted in our Action Plan (over page). This Action Plan is supported by Divisional Action Plans that detail the operational tasks required and assign individual responsibilities. Later in this Plan we note how we will monitor our performance in line with the Council's Public Performance Reporting Framework.

**Promoting – Public Service;
Performance; and
Partnership**

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>We will lead the Strategic Community Planning process to ensure the vision for the area is achieved</p>	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the Strategic Community Plan to reflect the outcomes and performance indicators included within the Single Outcome Agreement; • Support the Council and our partners to agree with the Scottish Government, a Single Outcome Agreement for our area; • Prepare a six month monitoring statement for the SOA; • Work with Services and partners to ensure appropriate monitoring and reporting of the Single Outcome Agreement; • Continue to support the Council and our partners in developing a Strategic Community Planning process that is fit for purpose and is focused on the outcomes set out in our SOA; • Work with Community Services to develop a community engagement strategy; and • Organise an annual community conference for the Partnership. 	<p>September 2009</p> <p>May 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>On going</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>November 2009</p>	<p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p>

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>We will review the way all our services are delivered to ensure quality, value for money and that we are focused on meeting the needs of our customers</p>	<p>To achieve this we will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Council to review and update our Best Value Improvement Plan; • Support the Council to respond to the requirements of the new Best Value Audit Framework; • Further develop and improve our public performance reporting to reflect our SOA; • Develop a suite of performance indicators of the Council; • Strengthen our performance management framework to ensure it reflects the revised SCP, SOA and Corporate Plan; • Continue to develop Covalent to support performance reporting across the Council and thereafter to Community Planning Partners; • Develop and thereafter implement a corporate quality management framework across the Council to ensure a consistent approach to continuous improvement; • Support the Council's programme of Strategic Service Reviews and service improvements; • Consider the implementation of the Improvement Services' Customer Satisfaction framework; • Support the Services to implement the outcomes of the review of customer care; • Launch the Customer Service Excellence Qualification to support our customer service standards; • Develop a charter for our Customer First Work; • Review the funding the Council provides to external organisations to ensure we match funding against local outcomes; • Improve business continuity for key systems in the event of a power failure; • Upgrade the Council's wide area network (WAN) links, with particular emphasis on ensuring that Education Services meet the requirements of the National GLOW project; 	Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		August 2009	Head of P&PR
		September 2009	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		November 2009	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		October 2009	Head of P&PR
		April 2009	Head of HR
		October 2009	Head of HR
		September 2009	Head of P&PR
		March 2010	D of C&NS
March 2011	D of C&NS		

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Council in its review of service structures; • Implement the improvement actions following from the Best Value Review of Building Maintenance STO; • Implement financial savings proposals to enable the achievement of the Council's efficiency target; • Continue to develop a robust Performance Management Framework in the context of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Improvement Plan, including key performance information, indicators and targets; and • Continue to develop and implement quality assurance processes for the Housing Service, including property maintenance, contract management, housing allocations and homelessness assessments. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>D of C&NS & Head of HR Head of FM</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>
<p>We will promote the Council as an employer of choice to existing and prospective employees</p>	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote best practice as an employer; • Further develop our approach to employee and trade union communication and consultation; • Continually develop our workforce; • Promote health initiatives amongst our workforce; • Monitor the implementation of the national Recruitment portal and further develop the system; • Launch the ILM Coaching programme for Managers; • Continue to expand our IIP accreditation across the Service; • Develop a workforce plan covering relevant functions within each of our Divisions; and • Continue to implement the Council's training and development policy, APDS scheme and aim to have 80% of employees with active TNAs. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All H of S</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of HR</p> <p>Head of HR</p> <p>Head of BS & Head of Housing</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>All H of S</p>

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>We will look to modernise the way we deliver our services to ensure we are as efficient and effective as we can be.</p>	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and contribute to the Council’s approach to efficient government and ensure our savings targets are identified and thereafter met; • Review and develop the Council’s customer first system; • Support the Forth Valley Data Sharing Partnership and support the development of our GI services; • Revise the Council’s ICT Strategy to ensure that it takes into account service plans, national agendas and the changing business requirements of the Council; • Review the Council’s Modernising Government Strategy to ensure it continues to meet our aspirations for modern customer services; • Develop a consistent business improvement process that support the Council to achieve efficient and effective services; • Develop self service options for our citizens on our web site including a e-enabled booking and payment system; • Provide support to the new community schools project to ensure that the ICT infrastructure delivered by the contractor is fit for purpose and to ensure that the ICT hardware is transferred to the new buildings on time and in working order; • Standardise all PC hardware and software in secondary schools; • Replace existing air conditioning units within the computer suite to increase capacity and provide efficient cooling; • Implement the new web filtering software and the monitoring and management reporting of access; • Progress the procurement and implementation of the new Integrated Housing Management System; and • Implement a pilot ‘Mystery Shopping’ exercise for Housing services. 	Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		August 2010	D of C&NS
		December 2009	Head of P&PR
		September 2009	Head of P&PR
		Ongoing	Head of P&PR
		August 2009	D of C&NS
		December 2009	D of C&NS
		July 2009	D of C&NS
		December 2009	D of C&NS
		January 2010	Head of Housing
August 2009	Head of Housing		

Continuing to develop a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
Our area will be recognised as having a culture and ethos of aspiration and ambition.	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the major corporate initiatives that assist our area to improve; • Develop and utilise our IT infrastructure to promote our area; • Promote the quality of the services we provide; and • Support the education curriculum through the best utilisation of ICT. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All H of S</p> <p>D of C&NS</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>D of C&NS</p>
The wealth and prosperity of our area will increase	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target external funding opportunities to support economic development; • Continue to expand our approach to Community Benefits in Procurement; • Develop a financial inclusion strategy; • Support the Council's Economic Action Plan; • Develop our approach to encouraging the social economy; • Support the development of debt and money advice services through the Fairer Scotland Fund; and • Further developing our procurement strategy to promote local business engagement. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of BS</p>
Our workforce will be highly skilled	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 5% of our workforce are modern apprentices; • Further support programmes that encourage young people into employment through the FSF; • Promote workforce development across the public sector; 	<p>March 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of HR</p>

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote working in the public sector through participation in the national recruitment portal; and • Ensure the implementation of APDS across the Council. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of HR</p> <p>Head of HR</p>
<p>The quality of our infrastructure will help promote the growth of the local economy</p>	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and contribute to the Council’s Asset Management Strategy and the Schools Estate Management Plans; • Continue to provide quality and efficient Catering and Cleaning services within our new NPDO schools; • Continue to support the Town Centre Management Group to develop our town centres; • Ensure we have and utilise the most up to date research and information to ensure we are targeting action where it is required; • Promoting high quality IT infrastructure in our area; and • Implement the Housing Investment Programme to ensure the Council’s housing stock meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2015</p>	<p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>D of C&NS</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>

Improving the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
Our citizens will be supported to make positive health choices and lifestyles in order that they can live longer	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote healthy living through the Council’s various publications; • Support the review of our planning and delivery structures for alcohol and drugs; • Support the development of an action plan to tackle health inequalities; • Continue to promote and develop our healthy choice menus; • Review the implementation of our Health Needs Assessment action plans; • Support street sport initiatives; • Support our Education colleagues in continuing to develop health promoting schools; and • Continue to promote health in the workplace for all our employees. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of P&PR Head of BS</p> <p>All H of S</p>
People with have equitable access to local health support and care	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our meals on wheels provision to ensure it meets the aspirations of older people; • Support the implementation of the Homecare and Housing Support contract with Social Work to deliver service improvement and efficiencies; and • Further develop our appointments and ID system for employees visiting people in their own homes. 	<p>Dec 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of FM</p>

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
Our citizens and communities will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and well being	<p>To achieve this we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve our cleanliness standards by further developing our litter strategy; • Implement the review of our community and environmental warden schemes to ensure they appropriately meet the needs of our communities; and • Continue to develop safety standards for all our employees. • Provide a co-ordinated response to anti social behaviour – specifically we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to work with partners to focus on issues raised through our existing Problem Solving Partnerships; ▪ Continue to ensure our Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour initiatives continue to meet the future needs of our area; ▪ Review our Conflict Resolution Service Structure; and ▪ Review our approach to Anti Social Behaviour following the publication of the National Framework. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>August 2009</p>	<p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of FM</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p>
Our citizens will be protected	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure our response in the Civil Contingencies Act works effectively and efficiently both locally and regionally; • Develop risk assessment and safety strategies for our employees and contractors; • Ensure gas safety, asbestos, electrical checks are carried out timeously and appropriately; • Continue to develop and test our Business Continuity plan; • Develop appropriate health surveillance processes for our employees; • Continue to support the work of MAPPAs; and • Work with partners to ensure our CCTV network meets the needs of our area. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>D of C&NS</p> <p>All H of S</p> <p>Heads of BS/FM</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of HR</p> <p>D of C&NS</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p>

Increasing our efforts to tackle discrimination and disadvantage in all its forms

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
Our citizens continue to access the critical services that meet their needs.	To achieve this we will; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our services are accessible to all our customers and citizens appropriately; • Ensure our buildings meet our customers needs and are accessible; • Improve the uptake of Meals on Wheels; • Maintain the uptake of Schools Meals; and • Provide staff training in equalities. 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	All H of S Heads of BS/FM Head of BS Head of BS All H of S
Vulnerable Children will be protected	To achieve this we will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all our staff are aware of the critical role they play in our child protection arrangements; • Continue to support the Data Sharing Partnership and in particular the development of child protection messaging system; and • Support Social Work to review options on the provision of services for looked after and accommodated children. 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	All H of S Head of P&PR Head of P&PR
Disadvantaged communities will benefit from better services.	To achieve this we will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to ensure the implementation of the Fairer Scotland Fund; • Support the Council in developing a social policy and poverty strategy; • Promote and improving the image of our areas of need; and • Promote income maximisation, debt and money advice services for low income groups and employees through the Fairer Scotland Fund. 	Ongoing November 2009 Ongoing Ongoing	Head of P&PR Head of P&PR Head of P&PR Head of P&PR
Our housing continues	To achieve this we will:		

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare an interim Local Housing Strategy Statement update prior to the preparation of the next full Local Housing Strategy; 	December 2009	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a full local housing Needs Assessment for all tenures; 	March 2010	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a Local Housing Strategy for 2011-2016; 	June 2011	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies, plans and strategies, including the introduction of housing options interviews to ensure that local housing needs are addressed; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Housing Investment Programme to ensure the Council's housing stock meets the SHQS by 2015; 	December 2009	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a new Standard Delivery Plan for inclusion in the Local Housing Strategy 2009-2014; 	December 2009	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Homelessness Strategy 2008 – 2013 to ensure the 2012 target is met; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a stock strategy for the Council's own properties that will assess the long term future of areas of low demand housing and set out a range of measures to ensure that the properties/land can be used to best effect; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress a Council new-build programme, having regard to available resources, development opportunities and community benefits; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the local Private Sector Landlords' Forum to maximise the amount of affordable housing that is available in the local private rented sector; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with planning to ensure that the Council's affordable housing policy is applied in all appropriate circumstances; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore appropriate development opportunities for RSLs and working with them to progress viable projects to increase the supply of social rented housing in the area; 	Ongoing	Head of Housing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a revised housing allocations policy and choice-based letting arrangements; 	March 2010	Head of Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Tenant Participation Strategy and further development of joint working with tenants groups to encourage involvement and influence service improvements within the 	Ongoing	Head of Housing	

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
	context of the Scottish Housing Regulator (formerly Communities Scotland) Improvement Plan; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review housing support services for homeless people and those who require extra help to maintain their tenancies; and • Review the provision of aids & adaptations procedures and practice guidance with social work. 	March 2010 March 2010	Head of Housing Head of Housing

Creating and Sustaining an Environment in which People want to live, work and visit

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
We will be greener	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement new approaches to waste minimisation and recycling; • Work with our service sustainability team to implement programme of sustainable actions across the service; • Continue to ensure our IT procurement policy that promotes sustainability; • Continue to support carbon reduction measures within the Service and across the Council; • Develop a Corporate equipment and materials procurement guide that promotes sustainability; • Expand the implementation of vehicle tracking; • Develop the use of pooled vehicles; • Develop IT standards that reduce our use of energy; and • Progress the action plan of the Home Energy Strategy 2008-2011 to help improve the energy efficiency of properties and alleviate fuel poverty by 2016. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing Dec 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>D of C&NS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>D of C&NS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Heads of BS/FM Head of BS D of C&NS</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>
We will improve the built environment	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an annual programme of energy efficiently projects within public and operational building; • Carry out a Local House Condition Survey to assess future investment needs to ensure that the existing local housing stock can continue to meet people's needs; • Prepare a Private Sector Housing Conditions Strategy which will outline the Council's response to new responsibilities associated with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheme of Assistance ▪ Housing Renewal Areas ▪ Below Tolerable Standard Housing 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p>	<p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>

Objective	Task	Timescale	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify housing regeneration priorities in order to maximise the resources available through the Strategic Housing Investment Framework; and • Continue to develop management arrangements for multi tenure estates, including factoring services, revised procedures to allow communal repairs to progress and other mechanisms to help owners maintain and improve their properties. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>
Our open spaces will be attractive, accessible and safe	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement measures to improve the cleanliness of our area; • Continue to develop and implement our litter strategy; and • Implement the Council's Open Space Strategy in conjunction with other Council Services 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p> <p>Head of BS</p>
Our profile will reflect our area as a destination of choice.	<p>To achieve this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Larbert and Stenhousmuir transport strategy; and • Continue to ensure the Council's publications are of the highest quality and reflect the aspirations of our area. 	<p>Dec 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of P&PR</p> <p>Head of P&PR</p>

6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & REPORTING

- 6.1 The Service has developed a number of performance indicators that will be used as internal management tools and external indicators that we believe will provide customers with information on the standards of service they can expect to receive and the actual level of service being provided.
- 6.2 The external performance indicators for the Service have been shown on the basis of the contribution they make to achieving the Council's Corporate Plan objectives. In addition, a number of corporate indicators are shown where the objective / performance level does not sit within a single Corporate Plan theme.
- 6.3 The Service reports quarterly to the Council's Best Value Forum on our key performance indicators. We have sought to reflect those measures within our action plan. A full set of indicators, as well as targets against previous performance, is set out in appendix 2 of this plan. This section notes our key areas of performance as well as noting the areas of improvement we will be focussing on over the next year.
- 6.4 During the course of a year the Service will consult with a range of customers and stakeholders on the suitability of our measures. The purpose of this is to determine what performance information the Service will contribute to the Council's approach to public performance reporting as well as our improvement agenda.
- 6.5 The Service uses a number of indicators to measure performance. To ensure we are delivering appropriate services of an acceptable quality, we review our performance indicators each year. This has meant that 8 new indicators are included within this Service Plan – comparison of performance against targets is therefore not available for these indicators. However of our existing 24 performance measures, we met or exceeded our targets in 12 indicators. In another 8 indicators we improved on the previous year's performance but failed to meet our 2008/9 target. There were 3 indicators where we were unable to meet our target and previous year's performance. At the time of publication of this Service Plan, there is one indicator where information was not yet available.
- 6.6 In addition to looking at our performance against quantitative indicators, the Service, in line with the Council's approach to best value, is seeking to examine all areas of service delivery in order to identify more fully areas of improvement. The criteria we are using to measure our services against are:
- Statutory and local performance indicators;
 - Customer evaluations of service;
 - External inspections by official bodies, such as Communities Scotland;
 - Quality systems;
 - Resources and priorities;
 - Staff appraisal and development;
 - Equal opportunities;
 - Partnership and joint working;
 - Sustainability;
 - Best value reviews; and
 - Leadership.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 As with all Services, we must understand and plan to reduce the risks we face in order to deliver the commitments in this plan. While we have highlighted some of these earlier in the plan as part of the context and environment in which we work, this plan for the first time explicitly sets out those risks as well as how we will manage these.

Risks	Impact / Probability	Responses
Service Reorganisation – This has the potential to affect morale of employees and thus service delivery.	Medium	The Service will seek to integrate relevant areas of service delivery as well as ensure all employees are kept informed of changes through team meetings, one to ones etc.
Vacancies – There are currently a number of vacancies at Head of Service Level that could lead to service failure.	High	We will, following service restructuring, ensure that all divisions of the Service have appropriate management structures.
Equal Pay – there are currently 590 tribunal cases outstanding against the Council in relation to equal pay.	Medium	The Council is defending these cases and assessing the strategies to tackle these.
Community Engagement -Failure to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach to community consultation and engagement	Medium	The Service will ensure that resources are available to support Services in undertaking consultation and engagement appropriately. We will also work with services to take forward the outcomes of the customer service review.
Quality Management / Business Improvement. The new audit of Best Value will rely on a consistent self assessment. We will also have to ensure that we contribute to the Council's efficiency targets.	Medium	We will work with services to implement a consistent quality management framework and business improvement process.
Waste Management – Increasing waste recycling targets and penalties arising from the failure to meet targets	Low	The provision of new recycling facilities, as well as a co-ordinated approach to waste management will mitigate against this risk. On going monitoring of targets will continue.
Procurement – Increasing incidence of legal remedies, resulting in potential significant financial, service delivery and reputational damage	Medium	The service will ensure staff are trained and aware of procurement legislation and professional support and advice will be sought where appropriate.
Health & Safety – Failure to meet legislative requirements may result in significant safety hazards to our employees and the public, with potential financial, service delivery and reputational damage arising from non-compliance.	Medium	The service will ensure all staff are trained and aware of health and safety requirements and have in place appropriate risk assessments and hazard prevention mechanisms. Appropriate professional support, advice and monitoring will be established where appropriate.
Housing Services Improvement Plan – Failure to complete the actions in the plan could result in interventions and sanctions from the Scottish Housing Regulator.	High	The Service will ensure that all the actions contained within the plan are completed on target and will review the outcomes of these. The improvement plan will be the subject of updates reports to Members.

8. RESOURCES

8.1 To deliver its functions Corporate and Neighbourhood Services has the following resources allocated to each Division.

Finance

Division	Budget 2009/10 £m
Business Services	2.7
Estates Management	31.2
Facilities Management	30.0
HR	3.3
ICT	2.7
Policy & Performance Review	2.0
Housing Services HRA	48.0
General Fund	12.0
TOTAL	131.9

Human

8.2 We recognise that we cannot deliver any service without the skills and talents of our employees. The staffing profile for each Division is noted below:

Division	Employee Profile	
	Head Count	FTE
Housing Management	225	217
Strategic Support	37	35
Policy and Performance Review – including Directorate	40	37
Human Resources (including Customer First)	96	79
ICT	62	58
Facilities Management	990	739
Estates Management	339	336
Business Services	45	43
TOTAL	1834	1544

9. STAKEHOLDERS

9.1 The Service has a number of stakeholders that includes:

Stakeholder	Relationship
The public – residents, visitors and potential residents.	Customers of direct service provision
	Partners in the delivery of certain key objectives
	Consultees on various issues
	Providing feedback on service provision and delivery
Elected Members i.e. All Members, MPs, MSPs, MEPs	Scrutinisers of our performance
	Determiners of resources available to us
	Partners in the development of future services
	Advocates for constituents
	Lobby for particular issues
Other Council Services i.e. Community Services, Education Services, Finance, Law and Administration, Social Work, Development Services	Partners in the delivery of services
	Contract us to provide service
	Scrutinisers of our performance
	Recipients of our services
	Providers of Service
Other Public Agencies e.g. NHS FV, SEFV, Central Scotland Police, Central Scotland Fire & Rescue Service, SESTRAN, SEPA, Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Funding Bodies etc	Partners in the delivery of service
	Partners in the development of policy and strategy
	Recipients of our services
	Contract us to provide services
	Provider of resources
Community and Voluntary Organisations e.g. CVS Falkirk and District, Registered Social Landlords, Community Councils, neighbourhood orgs, CABs, community safety groups, special interest groups, and community planning partnership	Partners in the delivery of service
	Contractors in the delivery of service
	Partners in policy development
	Consultees in policy development
	Scrutinisers of our performance
Other Private Agencies – Businesses, Business Panel, Private sector landlords, house building companies.	Contractors in the provision of service
	Partners in service provision
	Recipients of services
	Consultees on policy and service delivery issues
Employees	Providers of service
	Partners in the delivery of services
	Recipients of service
	Consultees on all issues
Trades Unions	Consultees on all employee related issues

10. GOALS AND VALUES OF THE COUNCIL

10.1 The goals and values of the Council and how they relate to the service we deliver is noted below. It must be stressed that this relationship is indicative and that all that we do has its origins in these goals and values.

Goals and Values	Link to Function
Further develop a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy	Regeneration Social policy New Housing Provision of jobs Provision of training for employees, apprentices etc External Funding Advice
Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities	Community safety strategy Substance misuse strategy Health and Safety in the workplace Health Improvement Plan – Feel Good Falkirk Domestic Violence Estate Management Enforcement and community wardens Conflict resolution Racial Attacks and Harassment Facilities and Housing Management
Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination in all its forms	Equal Opportunities Social and Financial Inclusion Homelessness Fuel Poverty Recruitment and Selection procedures Training and development
Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to live, work and visit	Estates management Housing Management Home energy Repairs and maintenance of housing Facilities management Regeneration Recycling of IT equipment Community safety Neighbourhood initiatives
PUBLIC SERVICE, which means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness • Listening and responding • Being accessible • Promoting Plain English 	Employee Care Trade Union Liaison Community and customer consultation Tenant and resident participation Equal Opportunities Team Meetings Public Performance Reporting Communications

<p>PERFORMANCE, which means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing quality • Achieving value for money • Promoting innovation • Seeking continuous improvement 	<p>Public Performance Reporting Seeking quality standards, charter mark Performance measurement / monitoring IIP standard Best Value / service reviews Efficient Government Procurement</p>
<p>PARTNERSHIP, which means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication • Sharing decision making • Encouraging participation 	<p>Community Planning Communication work Consultation guidance Modernising Government Efficient Government Voluntary sector liaison Trade Union and Employee participation</p>

Corporate & Neighbourhood Services

Performance Statement 2009/10

Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use		Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10
Our workforce will be highly skilled	1.	The number of apprentices and skillseekers recruited within the Service	The number of apprentices recruited in 2007/08 was 15	16	19	10

Continuing to improve the health, safety & wellbeing of our citizens & communities

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use		Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10
Our citizens will be supported to make positive health choices and lifestyles in order that they can live longer.	2.	% of pupils who take a school meal	Our performance in 2007/08 was 48%. The national average is 46%	48%	47%	47%
Our citizens will be protected	3.	% emergency repairs completed on target i.e. 24 hours	Our performance in 2007/08 was 93%	100%	96%	100%
	4.	% of all repairs completed on target	Our performance in 2007/08 was 84%	96%	88%	91%
	5.	% of gas safety checks carried out within statutory timescales	Our performance in 2007/08 was 93%	100%	98%	100%
	6.	% of repairs/technical inspections where an appointment was made and kept	New indicator	n/a	98%	95%
	7.	Recalls as a % of all jobs ordered	New indicator	n/a	n/a	2%
	8.	Proportion of repairs ordered as emergency	New indicator	n/a	37%	30%

Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use		Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10
Our citizens continue to access the critical services that meet their needs.	9.	The % of eligible primary school children who take up free school meals	Our performance in 2007/08 was 92%.	92%	94%	93%
	10.	The % of eligible secondary school children who take up free school meals	Our performance in 2007/08 was 72%.	77%	72%	72%
Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area.	11.	Current tenant arrears as % of net amount of rent due (HRA dwellings)	Our performance in 2007/08 was 5.4%	5.3%	5.7%	5.1%
	12.	% of tenants with > 13 weeks arrears	Our performance in 2007/08 was 5.1%	4.3%	5.6%	4.9%
	13.	Total tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears in the year	Our performance in 2007/08 was 77	77	53	50
	14.	Average re let time for all properties (days)	New indicator	n/a	27	40
	15.	% rent loss due to voids	Our performance in 2007/08 was 1.5%	1.3%	1 %	1.1%
	16.	% of homelessness decision notifications issued within 28 days of date of initial presentation	Our performance in 2007/08 was 43%	75%	68%	80%

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use	Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10	
Contd..... Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area.	17.	% of cases reassessed as homeless within 12 months of the previous case being completed	Our performance in 2007/08 was 3.3%	9%	TBC	TBC
	18.	% of new tenancies sustained for 12 months	New indicator	n/a	92%	93%
	19.	% of homeless applicants assessed as in priority need as a % of all applicants assessed as homeless	New indicator	n/a	86%	88%
	20.	% of priority homeless applicants where duty to provide permanent accommodation was discharged within 6 months	New indicator	n/a	67%	70%
	21.	Total priority homeless applicants waiting for permanent accommodation for longer than 6 months	New indicator	n/a	690	690

Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to work, live and visit

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use	Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10
We will be greener	22. The number of missed bins per 100,000 collections	Our performance in 2007/08 was 168 (monthly)	140	102	100
	23. The number of refuse collection complaints per 1,000 households	Our performance in 2007/08 was 83	75	55	50
	24. Special uplifts completed within 5 days	Performance in 2007/08 was 93%.	90%	90%	90%
	25. % of our customers who rate our services average or above:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse Collection • Street Cleansing • Grounds Maintenance • Housing Repairs • Gas Maintenance • ICT User Satisfaction • HR Training • Customer Contact Centre • Housing 	91% 95% 88% 100% 98% 84% 87% 99% 91%	90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90%	87% 91% 90% 97% 92% 91% 96% 100% 94%	90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90% 90%

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use	Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10	
Contd..... We will be greener	26.	Assessment survey scores of cleanliness in public spaces	The average assessment score for 2007/08 was 70	73	71	72
	27.	The percentage of the vehicle fleet which has reduced-emission technology	The percentage in 2007/08 was 88%	90%	98%	100%

Reportable Management Indicators

Corporate Aim	The Performance Measure we use		Performance in 07/08	Falkirk Target 08/09	Performance 08/09	Target 09/10
Promoting Public Service Performance Partnership	28.	Sickness absence - % of days lost	2007/08 APT&C – 5.8%	APT&C – 4%	4.5%	4%
			2007/08 Craft & Manual – 8.4%	C&M – 4%	6.8%	6%
	29.	Financial Performance	Statutory Trading Operations	£0.875m	£1.126m	£0.48m
			Non Statutory Trading Operations	£0.175m	£0.222m	£0.09m
			Non Contract Functions	£23.5m	£26.1m	£23.9m
30.	Number of days lost through Health and Safety incidents	The number of days lost in 2007/08 was 1,377	1,300	1,339	1,100	
31.	% of customer complaints / enquiries dealt with in 7 working days Corporate and Commercial divisions	Performance in 2007/8 was 79%	85%	77%	85%	
32.	% of FOI enquiries dealt with in 20 working days	Performance in 2007/8 was 100%	100%	100%	100%	
		Housing division	80%	77%	85%	

